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Footfall, Local Alt Country Band, Offers Strong Shots with *Whiskey Soaked Heart*

With the release of their second album, *Whiskey Soaked Heart*, Footfall offers Americana listeners the best of the genre: powerful expressions of angst and promises of hope wrapped in bittersweet harmonies. A free show on Saturday, June 11 from 3:00 – 5:00pm at Barely Brothers Records (783 Raymond Ave) will give music lovers a chance to hear plenty of original material from the Twin Cities duo.

Footfall is Jim Christiansen, Debbie Cushman, six hard-working guitars and a mandolin named Honey. Singing and songwriting is shared, and their cover songs showcase the musicians who have influenced them the most, including Jay Farrar (Uncle Tupelo, Son Volt), Hank Williams, Sr. and Bob Dylan. The title track from this new CD has been stopping listeners mid-sentence, bringing coffee house venues like Gingko to pin-drop quiet. “It’s been powerful – and cathartic – to play this new material,” said Cushman.

Bandmates on and off for over fifteen years, in various incarnations, the Footfall duo really crystallized about five years ago. “We were playing some original stuff, just hanging out in my garage,” explained Cushman. “I said, man, it would be great to add slide guitar to this. And Jim just casually said, ‘I can do that’. How do you play music with someone for ten years and not know about this other talent? It was awesome ... really set us on a roll.” Their first album, *Running Toward the Moon* (2014), was picked up by a Triple-A radio promoter in New York City and got spins on over 50 stations across the US and northern Europe. “It’s sort of crazy and cool to have listeners in France and Belgium. They dig us too,” added Christiansen.

Christiansen, originally from Falcon Heights, will return to familiar stomping grounds with this show. As a Hamline University student and member of the Pipers swim team, he spent a number of years in and around the neighborhood prior to embarking on a career as a high school science teacher. Cushman works her day job as a nonprofit administrator just a couple of blocks away from the vinyl store. A Wisconsin transplant, she’s set down roots just on the other side of I-94 in nearby Merriam Park.

Footfall plans to expand their audience even further this summer. A new radio campaign launches soon for *Whiskey Soaked Heart* and they’ll be playing Stone Arch Bridge Festival on June 19. They’re also working on some tour dates farther afield. “It’s an exciting time to be part of the Americana world,” said Cushman. “And so heartwarming to have such great fans here at home.”

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