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courtney king *FEEL GOOD SWILLER*

Alt rocker Courtney King does not want to be easily classified, so she is covering all bases. She describes her style as rock, punk and blues merging with classical, avant-garde and progressive rock. What's certain is that this singer, songwriter, guitarist and flutist with the siren-like voice has an unforgettable sound that harks back to a classic rock vibe while placing herself distinctly in today's milieu of empowered women artists.

Her debut album *FEEL GOOD SWILLER* features a collection of songs reminiscent of early Heart and its merging of influences such as Led Zeppelin and Jethro Tull with their own distinctly feminine, wistful folk and pop styling. Along with Heart, Courtney references artists that have influenced her as diverse as Paramore, Joan Jett, Jack White, Foo Fighters and Arctic Monkeys, to name a few. Fans describe her as "Jimi Hendrix on the flute" and having a style akin to "Hayley Williams meets P.J. Harvey."

"I dig Courtney King! Her singing and her flute playing are sensuous, cool and really groove," says Robert Dick, considered the most important living modern flute player/composer, and creator of the sliding "glissando" flute headjoint.

"Listening to this album you'll find your share of pure and silvery sounds, as well as downright dirty flute playing," says Courtney. Her powerful, sultry vocals and Ian Anderson-esque rock flute make for a dynamic presence on stage, and Courtney is on fire performing to an audience. *FEEL GOOD SWILLER* has the feel of a live recording, but the tracks were recorded in a studio in Germany, with live drums, mixing and mastering done in Nashville by Grammy-nominated producer/mixer/engineer/drummer Robert Venable (Kelly Clarkson, Twenty One Pilots, Megadeth).

Courtney's background as an indie artist is as unconventional as it is audacious. Hailing from the Chicago suburbs, she received her Bachelor of Music from the prestigious DePaul University and studied flute under leading flutists Mary Stolper and Donald Peck, former principal flute of the Chicago Symphony. After marrying trumpeter Gene King, in 2001 she won an audition for the Air Force Band of Flight in Dayton, OH. Her husband joined her to audition on a whim, and they both got jobs. She played bugle for a time during basic military training and became a member of Band of Flight, playing flute for presidents, foreign dignitaries, civilians and veterans.

"I attended basic military training and learned to shoot an M-16 – just so I could play music for a living. That's how much I love music." Courtney says, adding, "Military bands are amazing, by the

way. I also sang for the concert band, the Night Flight Jazz Ensemble, and was in another chamber group. We toured all the time.”

After having her first child as an active duty band member, King decided not to reenlist, and had two more children as a stay at home mom, while her husband continued as a musician in the Air Force. Transferring to a base near St. Louis she took her Masters in Music and became involved in the local music scene, teaching music classes and homeschooling her kids, then joining a local band as singer and flutist. The band, Slow Down Scarlett, incorporated flute into their songwriting and allowed Courtney to begin exploring free improvisation, blues, jazz and guitar effect pedals on the flute. Slow Down Scarlett gained a strong following as purveyors of “Jambalaya Rock.” The band recorded two albums and played numerous gigs around the Midwest including venues like The House of Blues in Chicago and Delmar Hall in St. Louis.

When her husband received orders to move to Ramstein Air Base in Germany in 2017, Courtney began to find herself as a solo artist. “I had journals and things that I wrote to keep myself creating during a time when I was feeling quite isolated. Being pulled out of the busy existence and set down in the middle of a German village surrounded by green hills and the smell of cows, I got to work making music in my basement.”

With all tracks written and produced herself, Courtney intended to release the album in Germany. But she also imagined playing with her band in St. Louis. Neither was the plan, as it turned out. Her husband received orders to leave Germany early and move to Washington, DC. “And so here I am, back in the United States, two kids in public school, one still homeschooled, releasing my first album.”

Says Robert Venable, “I can count on one hand the number of times an artist has sent me a rocking track with flute in it to mix. I can count on one finger how many times it actually sounded amazing! Courtney has something good brewing... I’m honored to be a part of this project and I’m so excited for the world to hear it!”

FEEL GOOD SWILLER is about making a choice to take charge, says Courtney. “There is a thief. It may come in the form of a broken relationship, unrequited love, a death, anxiety, depression, or unspeakable trauma. Whatever form that thief comes in for your life, it is universal. As difficult as life gets, we always have a choice. To let that thief continue to hang with you, or to constantly, maybe even daily turn towards renewal. So, the overriding message in this album? Sucker punch that thief to the ground and walk away. If he gets up, turn around only long enough to look him in the eye and do it again.”

The album’s ten tracks showcase the depth and breadth of her musical expression, which she calls “a natural exhale to life.” Her favorite song is “Static,” about the isolation of living in another country while recovering from a loss that she realized was a lie. “I was hoping to invoke that cynical, desperate feeling when someone realizes that they’ve been made a fool – only they don’t care because they love too much. The verses that I get to whisper in your ear contrast to the defiant bridge I get to yell from the edge of a cliff. It’s exactly what I wanted.”

She also highlights “Fantastic,” an ironic song using the dissonance of sweet loving lyrics with a melody and guitar riff telling a very different story. And the title track “Feel Good Swiller” is a retro rock tune portraying “the struggle of not wanting to let go of what you want, even when it’s everything you shouldn’t.”

An accomplished guitarist as well as flutist, Courtney’s evolution as a singer, musician and songwriter has been a slow burn with many unforeseen twists and turns, first as an active military servicewoman and now as an Air Force wife. Her mainstay has been her passion for flute, and she credits her six years with Slow Down Scarlett as forever changing her approach to music. FEEL GOOD SWILLER is her best representation of the journey that’s taken her from music school to the military, from the Midwest to Europe and now to her new home in the nation’s capital.

Courtney is a natural teacher – as well as giving music lessons over the years and homeschooling her children, she’s had a dual career as an accredited CrossFit trainer in the U.S. and Germany, “I love helping people realize they are more capable than they know,” she says, “It’s extremely rewarding and was an easy transition from teaching flute.”

It also enhances the energetic physical presence she has in performance. Courtney tells the story of one gig in St. Louis where her electric flute playing was working the crowd to a frenzy. “Suddenly I realized one guy had reached his hand out with a lighter to the end of my flute... expecting flames... a la Ron Burgundy. Well to his surprise, flames did indeed shoot from the end of my flute. That solo was hot!”

Courtney is looking forward to performing her new material at shows in Washington, DC, Chicago and St. Louis this fall. More touring is planned around the country in 2020.