

Date: Mar 27, 2011; Section: Section I Progress; Page: 31



Elizabethton native Erin Aubrey has made the leap to Nashville to begin her career as a recording artist.

Budding musician heads to Nashville to see what future might hold for her

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One of these days, Erin Aubrey will sit down and write a song about today. The 23-year-old musician is leaving home for the first time and heading to Nashville to pursue stardom.

"I've lived in East Tennessee since the day I was born," said Aubrey, who took a break from packing to speak with the Johnson City Press. "I'm really sad to leave my family and to leave all my friends here and my church, but I'm just completely thrilled at the possibilities that are in Nashville. ... I'm excited to be in a place where things stay open past 9 p.m."

After saving up money from waiting tables, teaching music lessons and working at a day-care, Aubrey recorded and released her first album, "All These Ours," in October. The collection of songs fuses pop, jazz and charming honesty.

"All the songs came from everyday experiences that we all go through concerning love, relationships and loss," Aubrey said.

Her memorable lyrics are both personal and relatable.

"Honestly, I've always been the type of person that's an open book," said Aubrey. "I really wouldn't have it any other way. It makes it really easy to get into (the songs) when I'm performing. It really helps me connect with the audience."

The sales from the album — through area vendors and online outlets — have already surpassed Aubrey's expectations.

The former Elizabethton Cyclone began playing piano in first grade at the urging of her mother.

"It was kind of a battle," said Aubrey. "Basically I was bribed into it, but I'm really glad I did it."

She said singing has been part of her life as long as she can remember.

"I was in the church choir at church singing solos."

Aubrey cited Norah Jones and classic jazz voices such as Billie

Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald as major influences. She said her favorite artists currently are Ingrid Michaelson and the Avett Brothers.

"I love to listen to clever writing," she said. "It inspires my own."

The turning point in Aubrey's career was her semester spent at the Contemporary Music Center in Martha's Vineyard, Mass. Aubrey, who graduated from Milligan College in December, joined 31 other students in the fall of 2009 to learn about song writing, recording and production.

"Before that, I'd kind of always dreamt of doing music but didn't think that I was really good enough, and I didn't think it was a really logical career idea," said Aubrey. "When I went up to Martha's Vineyard, I'd just planned on going up there to live my dream for one semester. But the first day I got on stage and started performing, I thought, 'I cannot give this up.'"

Beyond the classroom sessions and practical experience, Aubrey also made important friends, two of whom will join her in Nashville as members of her band.

Aubrey has prepared the first five songs for her next album and is anxious to get back in the studio.

"When you write a song, it's like a skeleton. But in the studio you kind of put flesh on it," said Aubrey. "It's hard work ... I'm a perfectionist and everyone in the studio is a perfectionist."

Earlier today, Aubrey spoke to Daniel Boone High School music classes about following dreams. As it was Aubrey's last day at home, the topic of discussion was especially relevant.

"Just to come out with an album and to be able to perform as much as I have has been a dream come true," said Aubrey. "I did not expect this to happen. But it really is the only thing I want to be doing. I don't know why I was ever going to settle for anything else."

Aubrey's music is available for listening at myspace.com/erinaubreymusic and for purchase on Amazon and iTunes.