



FROM NALICK'S FACEBOOK PAGE

Anna Nalick ran to the stage shoeless at the New Music Awards in 2006 when she was awarded Adult Contemporary Female Artist of the Year.

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Singer-songwriter Nalick takes a breath (or two)

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OLDSAYBROOK » During the New Music Awards in 2006, Anna Nalick, the singer-songwriter who will appear at The Kate on Nov. 4, was so convinced that Sheryl Crow would take home the award for Adult Contemporary Female Artist of the Year that she kicked off her shoes and relaxed.

When her name was called, according to her official website (annanalick.com), “she ran to the stage shoeless” to ensure she would have enough time to deliver her acceptance speech.

Apparently, the California native was the only one surprised by the acclaim.

Take her debut album, “Wreck of the Day,” which the 31-year-old described as “a collection of songs that resemble those little things that go wrong during each day, but which only make you stronger for the next day’s obstacle,” during a telephone interview from California.

one of the original Ziegfeld Follies.

“I grew up hearing about life on the stage, particularly from the Great Depression era,” Nalick said. “So I got really fascinated by dancing and singing, or any form of theater, as a way to get people out of whatever their current situation was. Give them a few hours to just disappear into another world of laughter and music.”

Still, none of that was enough to stop her from hitting the pause button on her career.

“After I wrote the first album, there was a lot of pressure to make another big, successful song, and I realized I couldn’t write songs based on what was popular at the time,” she said. “I wasn’t willing to lose my integrity just to be famous.”

Released in 2005 under the Sony Music label and produced with an all-star cast of studio musicians, it sold almost a million copies. The influential American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers praised it as “a refreshing blend of sophisticated wordplay, haunting melodies, and sublime textures and atmosphere.”

Then there was “Breathe (2 A.M.),” the first single from “Wreck of the Day,” which meteorically rose to the top of the charts and had music critic Donald Gibson wondering at a voice that “conveyed ... a certain sway — a low, sultry tremble — that revealed as much vulnerability as it did emotional insight.”

Such was the success of “Breathe” that it sold 3 million copies and was featured twice on the hit television drama “Grey’s Anatomy.” It had the 21-year-old put college on hold for a nearly four-year tour around the world. Her video for the track got heavy airplay on VH1 and MTV.

By all indications, in short, there was every reason for this “new breed of singer-songwriter of the 21st century,” as the British blog getreadytorock.com put it, to capitalize on that stunning success, to get straight back on the road with a second album, to keep her name in circulation and her massive fan base nourished.

Besides, the 2006 ASCAP Pop Award winner had entertaining in her DNA. Her grandparents were both Broadway performers. Her grandmother danced with Fred Astaire and worked with the Marx Brothers. Their siblings were in burlesque. Her great aunt was

She split with Sony in 2010. The next year, she released her first independently produced album, “Broken Doll & Odds & Ends” — “a gem of an acoustic album,” according to last.fm — as a sort of “in-between project,” she said. She traveled on her own through Europe. She studied literature and took classes in creative writing and acting at UCLA. All along, she was writing and arranging new material.

This past Tuesday, Nalick released “At Now,” her long-awaited fourth album through pledgemusic.com, an online music platform that facilitates musicians reaching out to their fan base to pre-sell, market, and distribute music projects.

The album, said Nalick, “looks at the past and the future and fuses together everything right and wrong.”

Of course, it’s Nalick who expressed her uncommon odyssey best. “I was a songwriter before I was a singer, and I just wanted to see what I could do with it. I write songs more for my own pleasure or my own sanity sometimes. I’m just lucky that other people care to listen.”

That said, “It’s so important to protect your songs and your music because if you are giving away your baby, you want to make sure it’s safe.”

If her rare talent, unique voice, and independence of spirit are any indication, Nalick will doubtless be shoeless on her own terms soon enough.

Anna Nalick will perform at the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 4, 300 Main St. Old Saybrook. For tickets and information, visit katharinehepburntheater.org or call 877-503-1286. To sample “At Now,” visit pledgemusic.com/annanalick.