

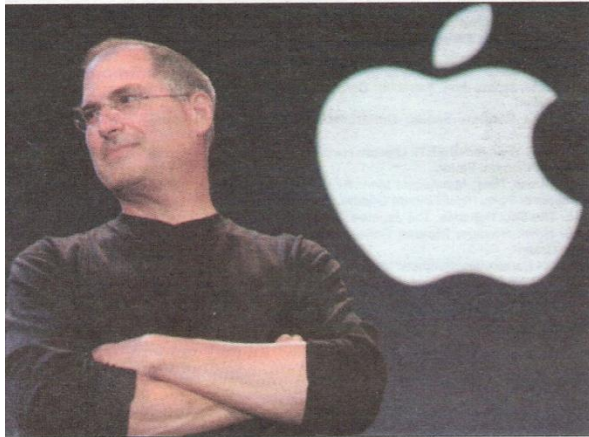
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# METRONOME

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# Ashley Jordan

by Brian M. Owens

You'll never meet anyone as poised and driven as singer/songwriter/guitarist, Ashley Jordan in any walk of life, let alone the music business. I was first introduced to her when she released her debut CD, *Simple Love*, at age 17. Since then, she's graduated high school (yes, high school) and has just released her second album *Liquid Words*. We spoke one August day and she filled me in on her busy life and the wonderful music that drives her...

**METRANOME:** We haven't talked for awhile. How have you been?

Ashley Jordan: It's crazy. It's so good to talk to you again.

**METRANOME:** Are you a senior in high school now or did you graduate?

I graduated this past year.

**METRANOME:** That must be very liberating?

Oh it is, especially with everyone going back to school now.

**METRANOME:** You have a brand new album that you're releasing October 3rd. What is the name of the CD?

It's called *Liquid Words*. I'm really excited about it. I started recording with Don Hooper of Juke Village in January, so it's been a big project, but it's been a lot of fun.

**METRANOME:** When did you wrap up the recording?

A couple of months back. We just mastered it and worked on the art work. It's been a big group effort. Really cool musicians are on the CD and there was a lot of collaboration. I'm really excited about it.

**METRANOME:** How did you meet Don Hooper?

It was at the last Bolton Fair. He and Steve Beckwith were performing and I got to meet Don. He has a recording studio and I was talking with him about wanting to record a new CD. A while later, he asked me if I wanted to do some recording and it worked out great. We have a great working relationship, and with my family as well.

**METRANOME:** Having you been busy playing since last we spoke?

Yeah. Some of my past performances were really great. I've done over 100 shows since then. I'm letting the calendar simmer down a little bit now just because I'm in a transition of playing with other musicians because I want to create the sound that's on the new album.

**METRANOME:** Do you plan on having a band backing you up now?

Yeah, it's going to be pretty exciting.

**METRANOME:** Who are some of the folks in the band?

John Loud on drums, Adam Bergeron on piano, Karen Sakisian on pedal steel, Don Hooper (my producer) on bass, Steve Beckwith on lead guitar and Steve Latt on fiddle. It's going to be a pretty full show. I want to try to set up a tour in New England.

**METRANOME:** How many songs are on the new album?

There are fourteen songs. It ended up being a lot of originals, but I also put a cover on by Lori McKenna that I absolutely love called "Stealing Kisses." I have a song that I collaborated with Don too called "Good Girl." There's also a song called "That Smile" that I collaborated with two Belgium songwriters. It's a long story, but I got to make that song my own.

**METRANOME:** How did you meet these



**Belgium songwriters?**

On my first CD, I did a cover of the song, "You Are Not Alone." That's a song that was made famous by Michael Jackson. The songwriter's found the cover that I did and liked it. They just won back the rights to that song in a Belgium court because it's their melody.

**METRANOME:** These folks wrote the original music to the song? Did Michael Jackson rip it off from them?

No, I think that R. Kelly did (laughs). They just won back the rights and were checking out who had done renditions of the song. They found me. It was really surprising.

**METRANOME:** That must have been a scary phone call at first?

Yeah. But it ended up being really cool. They had this song that they had done a demo of but wanted me to turn it in to an Americanized version of. It's been a long process with the song,

but it came out really cool in the end.

**METRANOME:** Did you have to pay them royalties or a mechanical licensing fee or will they collect royalties as the song is played?

They're willing to put it out there for me since I am doing the song. They're going to promote it.

**METRANOME:** That's one of the nicer stories that I've heard from this business. Usually someone is getting sued and losing their home (laughing).

Yeah.

**METRANOME:** What are some of the songs on the new CD that you're most proud of?

The first song on the CD is "Liquid Words" and is the first song I wrote after finishing my first album, *Simple Love*. Playing live, people really seem to like it. It's honest and talks about walking away from a guy (who will not be named) and just saying, "Their liquid words had turned

to glue." I couldn't tru

With this album it's what I think and I hope while to be able to c songs and be able to because they know it or something they've

**METRANOME:** It so very personal one f

Oh yeah, definitely

**METRANOME:** Are i on the break up you

Some are ones I school and going th emotions and finally leave the good girl be

**METRANOME:** Whe band, will you be p acoustic guitar?

I've been playing sounds cool. You hea head when you're fir then when they final that's what it sounds

**METRANOME:** Wha do you play?

It's a Martin. It ha

**METRANOME:** The very personal to yo lyrics come first or

It's funny because tell them sometimes i of times I'll have the like that, but it doesn't sometimes I write so put a melody to that r what's going to happ the album I actually (laughs). People ask in math class... I sai you're not really payi a song.

**METRANOME:** How all the people that a

I knew some of instance... I was so h be on the album. S incredible harmonies these awesome pec recorded there or th came together reall Kristen Miller. She pl on some of the new s who is from Nashvill sent them to Don to a was long distance, b

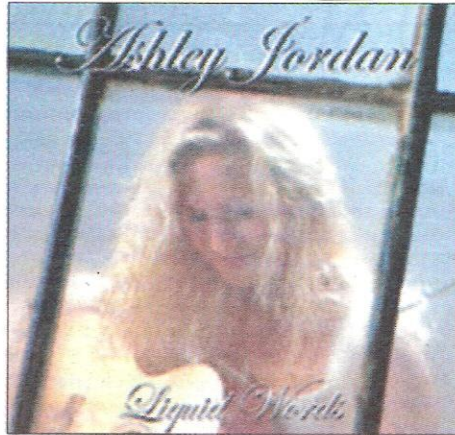
**METRANOME:** Did t the internet?

Yes he did. **METRANOME:** How He was a friend t He's really incredibl instruments.

**METRANOME:** Whe songs, did you have in mind?

Definitely. A lo something, I know rig that should have background noises. I try to create that for I'm talking about. Or "Get On Home." I actu because Don though

**METRANOME:** You



harmonies yourself on your first album, correct?

Yeah. Some of them I did do but actually Kim Jennings is on the first one as well. We've had a long running relationship. I love her. She's really cool.

**METRONOME: Are you going to have a CD release party, and if so, when and where will it take place?**

Yes. It's going to happen at Club Passim in Cambridge on October 9th at 4:30 pm.

**METRONOME: You're not wasting any time. You're launching the CD on the 3rd and six days later you're going to be working it live.**

Definitely. My parents have been very supportive. They're the best. They're definite music lovers and they're pushing for me. It's great to have a good support system.

**METRONOME: Do you have other shows lined up after the CD release at Club Passim?**

Yeah. We're trying to plan a mini tour of New England. A couple of weeks ago I played on WATD with John Shea. I did an interview and played a few songs live so I think after the CD release, I'll be heading back to do that again. I'm going to be performing solo a bit in Harvard Square. I'm street performing actually.

**METRONOME: Are you busking in Harvard Square now?**

Yeah. I started doing it a while back for a festival where they had people come in and musicians were on different street corners and you had your own place. I went and got a permit and have a place down there to go. It's just a great way to meet people. People love music.

**METRONOME: Is the Harvard Square crowd receptive and generous to you and your music?**

Yeah. People are incredibly generous. I was surprised the first time out.

**METRONOME: I know a lot of musicians that play in Harvard Square and love doing it and make a good living at it.**

It's awesome. I have a few little things lined up there too... I'm going to be a judge for the Harvard Battle of The Bands for the Fall Festival. I'm excited about that. I love doing any music related stuff and when Harvard has something going on, I love being a part of it.

**METRONOME: Do you have any plans for college?**

Yeah. This past year in high school I did dual enrollment, so I was taking college courses on campus and on-line and getting credits for doing my high school at the same time. I did that so I could take a year off for the music. That's what I'm going to do for this year.

**METRONOME: What college course were you taking and from what college?**

**whether you're going to college or going to continue to perform and record?**

I going to assess from there and see what happens.

**METRONOME: If you're touring and making a million dollars, college might not make much sense at that point...**

(Laughs) Maybe.

**METRONOME: Did you play at the Bolton Fair again this year?**

Yes. I actually played that a few weeks ago. I played with my producer Don Hooper and Steve Beckwith. We played some of my new songs and we got people up and dancing. It was a really good time.

**METRONOME: Is Steve Beckwith the same guy that builds guitars too?**

Right, Steve Beckwith Strings I believe it's called.

**METRONOME: Has he tried to put one of his guitars in your hands?**

(Laughs) Not yet. It would be kinda cool though... I'm not going to lie.

**METRONOME: Are you doing anything special as far as the way you will release Liquid Words? Any vinyl?**

I've heard of bands doing that. That's a great idea.

**METRONOME: The whole vinyl thing seems to be making a resurgence. I've heard that some of the pressing plants can't keep up with the demand.**

I have some friends that are really in to that.  
**METRONOME: Did you write all the songs for the new album since your last release or are some of the songs older pieces that you brought back to life?**

"Liquid Words" was written right after Simple Love and a lot of the songs followed after that. Then some of them came when we were finishing up the album. I would say, Wait, there's one more and we would record it.

**METRONOME: So you were actually writing during the recording process?**

Yeah. Actually one of the songs came together in the studio. It's called "Good Girl." I had the words and Don had this really upbeat melody so we said, Hey, let's put this on the album too. We made it work.

**METRONOME: What made you choose the Lori McKenna song "Stealing Kisses" as one of the tracks on the CD?**

Lori McKenna is my all time favorite musician. She's my idol. I love her. I've seen her perform a few times at Passim. She's terrific. I was just at a Miranda Lambert concert and she was opening up for her. I was pretty excited about that. I had heard her play "Stealing Kisses" live and just loved the song. I realized that it was one of the songs Faith Hill picked up because she really loved it. I started playing the song and tried to make it my own. It's one of my favorite covers to play.

**METRONOME: Have you played any shows where you opened for a name act?**

I'm waiting to get that one show where I can open for someone. Hopefully Lori McKenna (laughs).

**METRONOME: Have you talked to her about it?**

No. I've met her a few times because my friend John Gerard opened for her at Passim. But I'm waiting for that opportunity where I can open up for someone like her. It would be a real honor.

**METRONOME: Who are some of the other singer/songwriters on the scene that you admire?**

Lori McKenna definitely. Ellis Paul is really