



NEW RELEASE

BLACK HEN MUSIC

## Roxanne Potvin Play

For fans of **Roxanne Potvin**, the Juno award nominated Montreal based singer-songwriter, two years might seem like an unbearably long time between albums, but just one spin through the songs on *'Play'* will be more than enough to convince them that it's been worth the wait.

Back in 2009, after wailing around the blues for her past four albums – a journey that saw her work with luminaries such as **Colin Linden**, **John Hiatt** and **Bruce Cockburn** and tour with **Sue Foley** and **Deborah Coleman** – Roxanne decided it was time to pull back and reassess what she'd been doing. She explains, "I'd left Toronto, my record company, manager and I had parted ways and I was truly starting again. I'd moved back to Montreal to be closer to my family and began to accept the fact that I had no clue what I was going to do." At first, she felt boxed in by her own expectations, but once she managed to shake free of them and started to enjoy playing music for the simple joy of it again, magical things began to happen. "When I started out, I was heavily influenced by blues, soul and R and B and that was reflected on my first two albums. The third album started showing shifts in direction as I explored further. I love listening to that kind of music, but if I was still only writing blues based songs, I wouldn't be honest with myself because that's not exclusively where I'm at anymore. Writing for this album gave me confidence to do something different."

Potvin continues, "I had been listening to all different types of music and learning to approach writing as a discipline. I found myself going back to the **Beatles** and **Beck**. They were so great at writing songs like *'Happiness is a warm Gun'* with bizarre imagery and word associations." Taking a cue from these artists, the cinematic film noir narrative of *"Coral Reef Fishes"* and the poignant reminiscence of *"Sea Shells"* are both standout tracks on *"Play"* and are certainly amongst the finest songs Potvin has ever written.

Roxanne was happy with her routine of playing and writing songs with no specific outcome in mind when fate intervened. "I hadn't been playing live at all when I was invited to open up for a friend on a short European tour. I had a blast and that started me thinking about recording again, when an email came from **Steve Dawson** who runs the **Black Hen** label out of Vancouver. We'd played a gig together in 2006 and we had talked about doing some recording together, so the timing couldn't have been better."

That was last April. A flurry of activity followed as a reinvigorated Roxanne flew into high gear to finish off a bunch of new songs before heading out to Vancouver to hook up with Dawson. Over the next five days, Potvin, Dawson and his crack session band consisting of **Geoff Hicks** (drums), **Chris Gestrin** (keys) and **Keith Lowe** (bass) recorded an old school album live off the floor. Looking back, it was the most comfortable experience of Roxanne's professional life. "I came in. The songs had never been performed as a band and we just went into the studio and played. It wasn't a struggle. More than anything else I wanted to have fun. It was kind of like building a castle out of all the things I liked without asking myself too many questions about what I was doing. A good example of that is the song *"You Told Me"*. I wanted 'more sugar pie and bacon' on these songs." Keep listening and you'll know that Roxanne's achieved this in spades. From the hook filled punk pop of *"Dis-moi que tu m'aimes"* – a tongue in cheek song about begging to be loved – to the whimsical nostalgia of *"Magic Rainbows"* the songs on *"Play"* are ambitious, but never lose the loose limbed joyful feeling that inspired them. On the funky keyboard driven *"Pretty Girls"*, Potvin snarls her way through one of the most biting songs ever written about our culture's fascination with beauty. Clearly Roxanne can rock with the best of them when she wants to.

With *"Play"* Roxanne Potvin has achieved something that few artists ever succeed in doing - she's expanded her style and grown as an artist while still keeping the grit and authenticity that is so appealing about her music. Hear for yourself: just press *"Play"*.

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