

Alana Levandoski

Alana Levandoski's new album "Lions & Werewolves" was recorded in a 100-year-old church in rural Kelwood, Manitoba, and at the upscale Parr Street Studios in Liverpool, England.

The album was produced by British producer Ken Nelson, renowned for his work with Gomez and Coldplay. He has also worked with Badly Drawn Boy, Snow Patrol, Polly Paulusma and Paolo Nutini.

"I had always wanted Ken to record this album," Alana explains. "I wanted someone outside of the roots world who is a fan of popular music," "But I had no idea how I was going to go about getting him. But it was my big dream."

Luckily, one of Alana's writing partners provided a link.

"I was writing "Dangerous One" in Toronto with Simon Wilcox, and she mentioned that she knew Ken from working at his studio," recalls Alana. "We got in touch with Ken and heard my songs. I also played a gig in Liverpool. He agreed to work with me. I think he was intrigued by me, and he thought I was a good songwriter."

Alana had already gained the respect, friendship and endorsement of much of the music world with her outstanding debut album "Unsettled Down" released by Rounder Records in 2006. Her name (as you see above) evokes thundering tributes that go far beyond the customary comments made about promising new artists.

Reviews of "Unsettled Down" were plentiful and enthusiastic. Alana was profiled in numerous UK publications, including Maverick and The London Times and in such national Canadian magazines as Maclean's, Chart and Penguin Eggs.

In 2007, Alana was featured on "Borrowed Tunes Two," a two-CD musical tribute to Neil Young that featured Barenaked Ladies, Ron Sexsmith, and Finger 11.

Following "Unsettled Down," Alana co-wrote with such leading American songwriters as Quinn Loggins, Sam Ashworth, James LeBlanc, Rebecca Lynn Howard, Rachel Thibodeau, and Gary Nichols. She also co-wrote with Canadians Sylvia Tyson, Colin Cripps, and Simon Wilcox.

Alana also toured the U.K. and Europe four times, sharing bills with Dar Williams, Bruce Cockburn, Blue Rodeo, and Lynn Miles. In Canada, she toured nationally with the Corb Lund Band and did dates with Stephen Fearing, the Arrogant Worms, and Tanya Tucker.

The experiences she was having were so related to her work. It is reflected in the emotionally-charged music of "Lions & Werewolves."

"When I began thinking about this record, I knew I wanted an evolution," says Alana. "I also wanted to allow myself to grow

organically, and to listen to my instincts. The album is very organic. Some people might be surprised that it evolved as much as it did. But I had over two years of touring in eight countries. And working with Ken Nelson, I wanted someone from outside of the roots world to put a twist to what I do.

"You know that Ken came to Kelwood to record in the middle of winter," adds Alana laughing. "Ken, his son and his engineering assistant flew in and my dad picked them up at the airport in Winnipeg."

The bed tracks for "Lions and Werewolves" were laid down at St. John Divine Anglican Church in Kelwood. "My brother-in-law made an sound isolation booth out of square hay bales," Levandoski says. Vocals and overdubs were finished at the famed Parr Street Studios in Liverpool.

"I'm really proud of how the album turned out," she says. "It's true. It's very true. It's not a contrived piece of work."

"Levandoski created waves with her debut, "Unsettled Down," and her second album, partly recorded in a church in rural Manitoba has some stunning songs," said Robin Eggar in The Sunday Times.

"I really believe in Alana," adds legendary BBC Radio 2 announcer Bob Harris. "She is part of an emerging generation of new artists who are reflecting the range of influences that make Canadian music so exciting, from the brilliant free-form collective Broken Social Scene, to the authentic Country twang of Corb Lund. Her songs are intelligent, warm and strong. She's a fine artist, and a trouper."

"Lions & Werewolves" was released in Canada July 21, 2009 on Blue Lily Records, distributed by EMI Music Canada.