

BIOGRAPHY

There are two stories you can tell as a songwriter: yours or someone else’s.

For Amy Allen, the turning point came when she was performing a record-breaking, #1 hit. She’d written the song for a major popstar and was playing it live for the first time at a Grammy event. As Allen stepped offstage, one thought pursued her: “Why did I stop doing this? It’s all I ever wanted.”

After a meteoric two-year rise from struggling musician to one of the industry's most in-demand songwriters, Amy Allen made the gutsy decision to step-away from her furious success as a hitmaker for others and to return to her original path as an artist.  The result is a collection of songs for her debut solo LP.

“I started playing music when I was eight,” she recalls. By the time she was 10 years old, Amy was writing songs. For more than a decade Allen wrote uniquely for herself, honing her skills as a five-tool player, becoming a writer, a producer, a player and a performer. She enrolled at Berklee College of Music, known for illustrious alumni such as John Mayer and Quincy Jones. Post-graduation, she launched herself into New York, forming upstart band, Amy & The Engine.

But Amy’s life took a twist when she met Scott Harris, a songwriter and producer for Shawn Mendes, Dermot Kennedy, and Taylor Swift. He opened her eyes to the world of pop writing for major artists. Dazzled by her talent, Scott became her mentor. He had never represented another songwriter before, but Amy inspired him to launch a publishing company so that she could become his first signing.

After penning 'Back To You' for Selena Gomez in 2018, Allen decided to break from her band and move to Los Angeles - the big leagues for songwriters. She knew she could be a better writer and that she needed experience to grow. “My songwriting was changing in a good way and in a scary way,” she says. With each new genre and artist, Amy grew exponentially, which was reflected in her lightning-fast commercial success. The Maine-native has since had a fairytale run collaborating with the biggest names in music, including Halsey, Camilla Cabello, Shawn Mendes and Sam Smith. Most recently she's been celebrating the success of 'Adore You,' co-written with Harry Styles, and her inclusion in the Forbes 30 Under 30 list in 2020.

From a house in Santa Monica, Allen radiates a new energy. She isn’t coasting on her recent successes but giving voice and freedom to the performer she’s always dreamed of being. Her debut album is the result of a time of consolidation, taking world class skills she acquired working in pop music and infusing them into her years of experience as a singer/songwriter and live performer.  It was a process that involved a lot of relearning, of quieting the part of her that doesn't settle on a chorus until she can hear it on Top 40 radio. “I want to make something that feels authentic to me,” she says.  Allen's songs are lived-in tales, reminiscent of the American troubadours that have come before her - heroes like Tom Petty or Sheryl Crow, Carole King or John Prine or Bruce Springsteen.

A songwriter for her generation, Amy offers a birds-eye view of life as a young woman in 2020 America. “I was much more free to say exactly how I feel,” she says. “I can name the street I grew up on and use details that are emotionally driving for me. Pieces that color the songs to make them uniquely mine.” Following her stellar successes in songwriting, she came back to the drawing board with infinitely more tools at her disposal. “It felt like I was finally able to have the voice and write the songs that I've been waiting my whole life to write,” she says. “There was stuff I needed to go through to write this album. I didn't have the perspective before.”

Throughout the album, Amy reveals herself in small details and grapples with big ideas. The first release, a timeless ballad titled 'Queen Of Silver Linings,' introduces the record as an intimate conversation. The song is about safeguarding an almost certainly doomed love - relentlessly choosing to see the good in bad situations. As Allen explains, “I'm one of three sisters, grew up in a small town and we're all our mother's daughters. We wanna fix things and make things right and hold onto love when we think we have it.” Amy takes a quick turn, however, on second-single, 'Difficult.' She confesses, “I wish I could love you, I'm difficult,” in a chorus that recalls early Liz Phair.

Allen struggles with the implications of her independence throughout the record and in 'Tastes Like Love,' she sings about falling head over heels in love despite the fear that she will be sidetracked by it. “A strong undercurrent on this album is me trying to stake out being an independent woman and still being able to have a relationship,” she offers. “That constant balance of career and going down my own path while also loving somebody.”

In ‘Scared Of Love,’ she begins, “Dozen roses on the kitchen counter stresses me out.” On the particularly prescient and stand-out track 'What A Time To Be Alive', she explores the world we live in, wondering, “Would you wanna be growing tall when the giants fall like raindrops from the sky?”

In makingher debut album, Amy sought collaborators from beyond her hit-making universe in order to create a statement truly authentic to her. Dan Wilson (Adele, Semisonic, Dixie Chicks), Ethan Gruska (Phoebe Bridgers, Fiona Apple), Ian Fitchuk and Daniel Tashian (Kacey Musgraves), rapper Jon Bellion and the London-based established songwriter Eg White all made their mark here. These were the people who understood the fabric of music Allen grew up on. She also worked with Kid Harpoon and Tyler Johnson (Harry Styles). “Every song was a different journey,” she recalls.

Now that she’s created a body of work truly her own, Amy is itching to get back out on a stage.   “I've done this my whole life,” she says, recalling years as a kid in Maine, playing every cafe and dive bar possible. “I'm so ready to get back. You're behind glass as a songwriter and I've always thrived on human connection.”

She grows emotional recalling the first time she heard 'Brass In Pocket' by The Pretenders. “I remember being like, 'I wanna make somebody feel like that makes me feel. I just wanna write songs that cut through and connect and make me feel like I'm on fire.” With her upcoming album, Amy Allen has done just that: “I have my own outlet again.”

