

Alanna Joy

 By [Martin Myers](#)

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Alanna Joy is a singer-songwriter who performs on a regular basis at the V&A Waterfront. She is an artist on the rise and great things are expected of her in the not too distant future. A full album is in the works and should be ready in early 2019. Her debut single *Beautiful Nights* is out now on all digital platforms.

I spoke to her after her spellbinding performance at Music Exchange two weeks ago



■ ***When are you happiest?***

When I'm singing in the car to my favorite songs. When the music is loud enough to drown out the noise of the day.

■ ***What does music mean to you?***

Music, for me, is a way to connect people. To know that you aren't the only one feeling a certain way. Music is an escape from reality. Whether you are sad and listening to a sad song or whether you use music to lift your mood, it's a way to deal with the everyday ups and downs.

■ ***What is the most enjoyable aspect of your work?***

When I know people are connecting with the music. When people tell me that I lifted their mood or played a song that they felt was written just for them. I love people and I love how music connects me to people I usually wouldn't meet. Hearing their stories and how my music connects with their stories gives me hope in humanity and our shared experiences.

▣ ***What drives you...? Ego or Humility?***

A combination of both. The ego lifts you up to a euphoric invincibility while performing. One needs to feel invincible onstage because you are giving a piece of yourself every time you perform. That feeling is incredible, but it also doesn't last. The down after a performance high is intense. And that's when humility plays its role. Reflecting, learning, always being willing and excited to improve oneself and learn from those around you are all-important if you want to avoid becoming stagnant in your art.

▣ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

I've had a drunk guy come up and sing into my microphone about how he wants to marry and make love to me. That was a really interesting experience. At the time it was a bit scary but now I can laugh about it. I think the funniest thing was that afterwards the security guard asked if he was bothering me... like Duh...

▣ ***Which living person do you admire most and why?***

Julie Andrews. She was in many of my favorite childhood movies and her voice was incredible. 'Mary Poppins' and 'The Sound Of Music' were a vital part of my childhood. When I found out that she had lost her voice after a botched vocal surgery, it broke my heart. She continues to inspire me with her perseverance and her ability to continue making art that matters, even after losing something so precious.

▣ ***What is your most treasured possession?***

My acoustic guitar is a beautiful 'Taylor'. My father bought it for me when I was 13, despite not really being able to afford it.

We ate rice and lentils for a month afterwards but that guitar has been my solace, my therapist and my source of happiness ever since. It is the first thing I would grab in a fire.

■ ***It's your round what are you drinking?***

Double Jameson on the rocks with a shot of lime cordial



■ ***What makes you stand out?***

I like to believe that my honesty in songwriting and my ability to connect my music with the audience makes me stand out. I think people can tell when you are truly connected and in the moment, it's hard for them to connect and appreciate your art if you aren't meeting them at least half way.

■ ***If you were not a musician what would you do?***

I was actually going to study neuropsychology before I took the leap to become a full time musician. The brain and the human psychology have always fascinated me. I guess I still get to explore that through my songwriting. I like to use my songwriting to reflect on my experiences and the personalities of people I have met. I use songwriting as my therapy. Which is probably why a lot of my songs are so sad....

■ ***Pick five words to describe yourself?***

Weird, driven, kind, naïve and a bit of a gypsy

■ ***Greatest Movie Ever Made?***

Mary Poppins, it was revolutionary for its time, the techniques used in the world creation and the technology they created for the film inspired many film makers.

■ ***What song changed your life?***

Dido's white flag. I obsessed over that song when I was younger and it's still one of my favorite covers to perform. Her songwriting blew my little teenage mind.

■ ***What is your favorite word?***

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious....Mary Poppins fan for life.



■ ***Your greatest achievement?***

Every time someone says they were transported by my music. Every time someone cries or smiles while listening to my music. Every time someone tells me that they listen to my demo CD or my singles in the car. Every time I put my heart and soul into a performance and people recognize that. I think my greatest achievements are small pieces and experiences that fit together and make this journey worth it.

■ ***What do you complain about most often?***

Being hungry.

■ ***What is your fear?***

Having to give up on music and getting a 'proper job'. It terrifies me. I love the life I have been living for the last three years. It has really high highs and really low lows but it's worth it because I get to create and perform and be free in who I am. I have realized that I would rather live a life of struggle and financial insecurity than grow old knowing I never gave it my all and wondering what could have been.

▀ ***Where would you like to be right now?***

In a forest, next to a stream with a pen, paper and my guitar.

▀ ***Wishes and dreams for the years ahead?***

Release new music that I am proud of and that people connect with. Continue working with the amazing people I have met this year and continue to grow and develop my art and myself as a person.

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