

RED-Y FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

Halie Loren brings festive cheer to Newport

By BARBARA B. COVELL
For the TODAY

This is the season for music and song, family and friends, light and joy. Halie Loren knows how to deliver. This Alaska-raised Oregonian with a crystal-clear voice has been rocking international audiences with her diverse style and genre-bending approach to classics and original fare. Although critically acclaimed as a jazz artist, Loren thinks of herself as a singer-songwriter. She has released nine albums, each a powerhouse of her stylistic approach to timeless and modern music that appeals to audiences of all ages.

Now she returns to the Newport Performing Arts Center to present a concert of holiday magic with nostalgic favorites done in familiar fashion along with songs that play with seasonal themes in unexpected ways. Joining Loren are Matt Treder on piano, Sean Peterson on bass, Rob Birdwell on trumpet and Charlie Doggett on drums. Together this classic quintet will bring a little extra warmth, tranquility, humor and light to Newport audiences.

The concerts are presented by the Newport Symphony Orchestra at the Ocean, but the NSO will not be performing.

Among the holiday favorites Loren and her band perform are "Home for the Holidays," "The Christmas Song," "Let it Snow," "Winter Wonderland," "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and other up-tempo classics.

"I love doing holiday songs and will put my whole heart into it," Loren said. "I look forward to the holidays and am happy to share seasonal songs with people also celebrating. It will be really fun, definitely for multiple generations to enjoy," adding, "I have worked with all of these musicians for a long time and will enjoy spending the holidays with them."

Tredor and Loren have been playing together for 20 years and collaborated on a holiday album together entitled "Many Times, Many Ways." It will be available for purchase before and after the show.

So, how does a girl who grew up in Sitka, Alaska, become an international sensation with diverse audiences in North America, Asia and Europe?

"Music has always been a part of my life," Loren said. "I started writing music at 13 and had my first gig at 14. I was dedicated from early on. Growing up, I realized it was a part of me. My family was very supportive and involved in my music. It's a hard road to travel, I'm so glad I never felt unsupported."

Loren fell in love with songwriting at an early age, playing the piano and keyboards. At the age of 17, she moved to Nashville for two years and wrote music with other songwriters.

"This was the most important two years in my developmental process of being a musician," she said. "I realized it could be a viable thing, a real career, a labor of love."

Loren attended the University of Oregon, receiving her degree in Visual Arts. She began to develop herself stylistically. She was categorized as a jazz singer, but is quick to say, "I do a lot of other types of music, explore different genres. Stylistic labels limit people. My music is a blend of the styles I love."

Loren is a lover of languages and cultures. Her repertoire is multi-lingual, she performs in Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, Japanese and Korean, garnering national and international awards, critical and chart success. Her phonetics are spot on.

"I love to be able to deliver the story and unfold music as it is meant to be sung," she said.

Loren does a lot of touring, sometimes juggling a heavy schedule with the challenges of air travel. Sometimes her band tours with her. Other times she meets up with different musicians, forges new friendships, always loving the collaboration with creative people.

"I am an extremely blessed person to be able to do this," she said.

The Saturday, Dec. 14, concert is at 7:30 pm, followed on Sunday Dec. 15, by a 2 pm matinee. Tickets, \$27 to \$42 or \$10 for students, can be purchased at the PAC box office by calling 541-265-2787 or online at NewportSymphony.org. Family and groups of six or more can save 50 percent on Sunday's matinee performance by purchasing standard or premium tickets at the PAC box office.

For more information, go to HalieLoren.com.

