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Brothers through a friend. They let us open for them at a show at the Crystal Ballroom and that's really what just really kind of kicked it all into gear.

S.Z.: *Guitarist Jeff Munger joined the band a few months later than the rest of you. Tell me about meeting Jeff.*

S.F.: I met Jeff because he was doing a lot of street busking – playing his music on the street. I was at Last Thursday on Alberta and I was with a friend who was selling her art and I was playing some music on the street. It was my first time doing that. I was just walking down Alberta and I saw Jeff and he has a distinct look to him. He was playing a folk song. He stuck out in my mind. It seemed like I would run into him everywhere.

I was living and working on Hawthorne and I would walk down to work and he was out there every single day. I would always stop and talk to him and give him money. Everybody always gets stopped on Hawthorne, but I always give money to musicians. We really became friends and then I asked him to join the band. He was another piece that we needed for the band.

S.Z.: *It seems that the move was a critical part of you finding a voice as a lyricist and vocalist.*

S.F.: For sure. Portland forced me to grow up. I was only 18 or 19 when I moved here. I had done that backpack trip around Europe, but it was my first time having to find a job and all that. There are some songs that I have written about Portland, but more and more the way I write lyrics is changing all of the time. I've been learning as I've been playing.

S.Z.: *Where does your motivation for writing a song come from?*

S.F.: A lot of the songs I have for the new record are about girl power. They are about women having a voice in music. They are about me finding my voice as an artist and the rock 'n' roll lifestyle that I am experiencing: my view of that, just hanging with the boys because I'm on tour all of the time with the guys. There are some songs that are just about that: "Hey, I'm tough too."

S.Z.: *Let's talk about your sound. Rock 'n' roll is a recurring theme that comes up when you talk about the sound that you have, what exactly is the sound of the Sound Outside?*

S.F.: The genres are a really irritating thing. It seems kind of redundant. Rock 'n' roll can encompass that sound of really anything from punk to more folk rock. All the styles cross over and bleed into each other so much that if you have too much of a genre it means that you're not doing your job right. We call our music rock 'n' roll because it means anything inspired which can be under the umbrella of rock 'n' roll, which is really vague on purpose.

S.Z.: *Let's talk about vocal delivery. You pack a wallop of a punch with the way you sing. How did you build your vocal delivery style?*

S.F.: My sister does musical theater, so I was exposed to a lot of that kind of stuff and I even had some vocal training growing up. But I just wanted to create my own voice. I just try to let loose and not judge myself for what I was doing. I just want to have as much fun as possible and treat my voice like an instrument. I was listening to a lot of Tom Waits and he just does things with his voice where he is actually in control of his voice – as much as that's possible. Now I'm peeling away the mask I was putting on my voice. I am just trying to project a powerful voice. I think this record is more that.

S.Z.: *"Dirty Radio" was recorded all on analog. What was the importance of analog recording?*

S.F.: It's arguable that it really is more warm when you hear it versus a digital recording. Those are my feelings, I like the warmth of the sound. Really at this point, it hasn't been that much more expensive to record on tape. I think just the tradition of that and being in a studio where you aren't surrounded by computer screens ... As a musician, there is an element of having to get it right, then and there. Digital recording gives you so many opportunities to make mistakes and correct yourself and make this huge project. Really, many projects can be done live and quickly and capture something that can be really special.

S.Z.: *How about "Untamed Beast?" Did you record to analog again?*

S.F.: Yeah.

S.Z.: *In "They Told Me", a track from your upcoming Untamed Beast release, you sing, "Jealousy is an untamed beast and that untamed beast lives inside of me." What makes you jealous? Or does the song refer to the jealousy of others?*

S.F.: I guess normal things (laughs). I think that song is mostly about sometimes I feel shame for getting dramatic about situations and people try to talk me out of that. And that song is kind of saying, well, hey I'm allowed to feel however I feel even if it's not what you think is appropriate. I don't want to do anything that somebody tells me to do. It was a personal story of how I felt jealous.

S.Z.: *You've actually had quite a few amazing experiences opening for and performing with some amazing performers. Do you have a favorite?*

S.F.: I got to meet Jack White, that was pretty cool. But when I first came to Portland and I was hearing about local people. I would look up to a lot of those players and I was listening to a lot of M. Ward at the time. I got to meet (Portland-based producer and songwriter) Mike Coykendall, who we eventually got to work with. I also got to work with Adam Selzer, who has worked with M. Ward. That was really amazing for me. Now, of course, I see them (the members of M. Ward) all over and they're friends of mine. I have to remember the way that felt at the time. I've had a chance to become friends with Laura Veirs and Tucker Martine. I'm still amazed at how nice all the local big shots are here in Portland.

S.Z.: *Your father is a master puppeteer. What has he taught you about performance?*

S.F.: Really, that I can't fight it. I wanted to do something behind the scenes, but then I moved to Portland and this is what I did immediately. My parents are my biggest fans and they never pressure me to go to college or have any sort of normal life like that. They have always just been supportive of whatever I want to do.

S.Z.: *You like to provoke your listeners. What do you want your audience to know about you?*

S.F.: (Laughs a lot) That, really, I'm a big nerd.

Sallie Ford and the Sound Outside will perform a free show at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 19 at Music Millinnum, 3158 E. Burnside. They will be offering pre-sales of their new album, "Untamed Beast."

Memories

By Ron Stanford

Memories weigh me down
Memories make me laugh
Memories stuck in mud
Memories are a gas.

We need to forget the past
Forgetting what lies behind
Leave it to the diarist
Someone who has the time.

Speech writers need a job
Editors need a break
I'm staging drum circles
Learning to give and take.

Rewriting history
Reliving my childhood
Recasting old shadows
Reviving what was new.

Change. Change. Change.
Change your behavior.
Change your point of view.
When you wrote novel material,
And had the tiger by the tail.

You're still young enough to play
Haven't lost your sense of humor
Go up there and give it a bash
Just like in the days of your prime.

Flash bulb memories burn
Deeply into the night.
Play the same song a different way
Looking to God's inspiration.



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