

Rae Billing

NEW ALBUM - *Blue Black Night*

Released May 2008 in Toronto.

Release Party in Hamilton: Sunday June 1 2008

At the Casbah Lounge (Queen & King)

EARLY SHOW 8-10 pm with JEAN CAFFEINE



Rae's voice and lyrics create a touchstone that is unique on the Canadian landscape. Her voice has been described as "shiver-inducing," "honest and pure, assured and desperate at the same time." And her lyrics and music have been lauded again and again - "full of wide open spaces and bittersweet emotions," and called "late night, pan-Americana rootsy ballads... handled with gutsy femininity."

Rae was the previous lead singer and songwriter of the Toronto alt-country band, **Crybaby**. Lasting just three years, Crybaby won serious critical acclaim with the 1996 debut, *Paintings* (produced by Peter J. Moore). Toronto's *Eye Magazine* placed it alongside offerings from *Lyle Lovett* and *Blackie & The Rodeo Kings* as one of the Top Three Country Albums of 1996, with scribe Greg Boyd praising "the weary sensuality" of Rae's vocals.

The band also elicited kudos south of the border, specifically at Austin's famed *South By Southwest Music Festival* in 1997. Among the many positive reviews, visiting Nashville Scene writer, *Michael McCall*, characterized their music as "tangy country soul" and called Crybaby one of the "notable moments" at the festival.

In 2001, Rae put together a 'solo' album, again working with noted Toronto producer **Peter J. Moore**. This sonic sculptor has a well-deserved reputation for his distinct sound. Rae's first solo album was highly praised. On his cool Top Ten list of 'Anti-Hits', The Toronto Sun/*CANOE's John Sakamoto* placed "Walking In A Dream", the closing cut from the album, as number 3, describing it as "a heartbreaking rumination on a mind 'slipping sideways.'"

Now, after seven long years and including a tour of England and buying a home and moving to Hamilton, Ontario, Rae has finally brought herself back into Peter Moore's studio. With **Blue Black Night**, Rae re-established her connection with old friends, *Cleave Anderson* (Blue Rodeo, The Battered Wives) on drums, *Steve Koch* (Demics, Ron Sexsmith) on guitar and *Derrick Brady* (Hawksley Workman) on bass. On B3 and piano is *Matt Horner* (Mary Margaret O'Hara) and providing backups are *Greg Clarke* (Corndogs) and '*Lucky*' *Pete Lambert* (Kensington Hillbillies), from Crybaby.

Together they offer up a stellar album, in which the 'alt' nature of her music is especially apparent on songs such as "No Closer," which follows in the footsteps of *Gram Parson's* "Sin City" to create a riveting commentary on the times, and "Shatter," which peels back the skin to reveal a small agony.

"There is a depth to her songs few contemporaries have yet to hone." *Jason MacNeil*, All Music Guide.

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