



# Cyndi Lauper Shows Her True Colors With 'Avalon'

The singer talks of her career and brand new album

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Most people know Cyndi Lauper for her flamboyant personality, multicolored hair, and the carefree sounds of her 1984 hit, "Girls Just Want To Have Fun," which launched her career in the pop world.

Her debut album, "She's So Unusual," sold more than 9 million copies worldwide, and she has received awards from MTV, the American Music Awards, and the Grammys. Now, some 13 years later, she has just released her fifth album, "Sisters of Avalon." And starting May 1, Lauper will begin touring the United States with Tina Turner.

She says she is looking forward to traveling the US again to hear the variety of accents. "Those things are musical, those things are inspiring," she says.

The diversity helps Lauper write songs. That's the stimulus - seeing other ways of life and trying to incorporate that into her songs.

"In the '80s I tried to reflect what was around me," Lauper said in a telephone interview from New York. "It's important and urgent that we have new rhythms all the time," she adds, referring to her new album.

At the height of her career in the mid-'80s, Lauper sang upbeat pop tunes about love, relationships, and having fun. She still deals with the same themes today, but has evolved into a more mature artist by experimenting with hip-hop, electro-reggae, and jazz.

On "Sisters of Avalon," she weaves together six-strings and violin; drum loops and accordion; and synthesizers and mandolin. The album was written and recorded in Tennessee and Connecticut and finished in an old mansion in Tuxedo Park, N.Y., where she lived and worked at that time.

Lauper says she loves to write and record music at her home. "It's your own thing. It's calm. You get up at 4 a.m. and record this guitar part," she says.

To improve from her last album, "Hat Full of Stars," Lauper says she "needed it to be more cohesive." She accomplished this by writing with one person, not the usual crew of 10.

And Lauper says she worked well with her writing partner, Jan Pulsford, who is one of her band members.

"It has a wild energy to it that takes you on a journey," she says. Persuaded by her producer, Mark Saunders, Lauper recorded her music on the computer instead of tapes.

"It's kind of weird when you're working with a bunch of cyberfreaks. There wasn't a lot of get-together, sit-down, and talk," she says. In fact, there was so much equipment that there was no space for a living room in the house, she says.

Before the latest album, Lauper had gone on world tours promoting her previous two albums, "Hat Full of Stars" and "12 Deadly Cyns and Then Some," a compilation album.

She says touring in Italy was meaningful because that's where her roots are. "It's not just me singing. It's my mother, my grandmother, my grandmother's mother, her mother."

She has also been directing videos. "When I direct myself in a video, it's more like performance art. You make the painting and then you stand in the painting. And the camera becomes your dance partner," she says.

In 1994, Lauper married actor David Thornton, who stars in the current movie "Unhook the Stars." Lauper also wrote and recorded the title track.

"He's handsome, he's tall, he's gorgeous, he's funny, and sweet. Yeah, I like this guy. I'll keep him," she says.

They don't have children, but they do have three cats and a dog who likes to eat everything. And when she is not making music, Lauper says she has eclectic listening tastes, ranging from Sponge, to Dr. Dre, to Appalachian music.

As for the future, Lauper doesn't reveal any definite plans. With her experience on the big screen in the 1988 film, "Vibes," and a recurring guest-star role in the popular TV show "Mad About You," she says she'll take another acting gig if it's fun and creative, but she couldn't stay away from music too long.

"[Music] is the closest I've come to any kind of religion because it is so soulful and so pure."

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