

Atlantic Canada > Lifestyles

Singing someone 'Home to Newfoundland'

To celebrate her first album, songwriter Evelyn Jess is buying one lucky person a plane ticket to Newfoundland from anywhere in Canada

Andrew Waterman · Posted: 11 hours ago | Updated: 6 hours ago | 5 Min Read



Evelyn Jess and Jordan Young sit on the rocks near Manuels River. Jess's first single from her upcoming EP is called "Home to Newfoundland." To promote the song, she's put together a contest where anyone who tags a friend and shares the video will be entered in a chance to win a one-way ticket to Newfoundland from anywhere in Canada.

CONCEPTION BAY SOUTH, N.L. — With the sound of Manuels River flowing behind her, local singer/songwriter Evelyn Jess — legal name Jessica Evelyn Bemister — sat at a picnic table across from her collaborator Jordan Young, as the two joked

Newfoundland.”

“The million-dollar question is, ‘Who are you going to bring home?’ And then they got the decision to make,” she said. “How many friends and family are calling them (saying), ‘B’y, you should bring me home.’”

Young said the longing-for-home theme of the song is something to which many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians living away can relate.

“But here we are literally (saying), ‘No, we’ll buy you a ticket, come on with ya.’”

Jess followed with, “Yes, come on we goes.”

While it was Young's idea to buy someone a one-way ticket from anywhere in Canada, it wasn't difficult to convince Jess, who described the idea as genius.

"B’y, that’s everything," she said.

Written in 2016, Jess describes it as a song about being proud of Newfoundland, and longing for home. It's a sentiment she knows well after having done seasonal work in Nova Scotia for several years and spending some time in Alberta, where she says she did a little bit of everything.

Evelyn Jess - Home To Newfoundland (Official Music...



“(I was a) waitress (in Alberta) for a little bit and then I was cleaning condos for an oil company,” she said. “But also, when I was waitressing up there, I worked in a karaoke bar and the host was moving away so I (asked), ‘Do you need somebody to cover this gig?’

“So, that’s kind of where I got my foot in the door with music. (On) Friday nights, I used to pack the bar and all kinds of people used to come out. That’s when I (realized), ‘This is what I want to do, singing and making people happy.’”



After meeting Young at an open mic event in 2018, the two collaborated over the coming years. They began work on an album in 2019, but the COVID-19 pandemic put that process on pause.

Now they’re preparing to release her first album, a six-song EP called “Bare Bones” scheduled to come out in late November,

The fact it’s happening for her at the age of 32 is just fine by her.

“It has been a long time (coming), but ... I’m really glad that it happened now, because if all the attention and the lifestyle of a musician came when I was 19, 20, I was a bit more of a party animal back then and I would have squandered it, I think,” she said. “But when you take so long to earn something and you work toward something, it’s like ‘oh my gosh, finally, I can breathe.’

“You know, it’s a break. You can see your foot getting in the door.”

"When you take so long to earn something and you work toward something, it’s like ‘oh my gosh, finally, I can breathe.’"— Evelyn Jess

Young said it was a delight to produce the EP for Jess, someone he describes as a strikingly honest songwriter.

“Jess has got a wonderful voice and a strong sense of melody. I remember walking away from the first time I saw her perform and having some of the songs stuck in my head. God knows I’ve heard enough songs down at open mics, so I knew that was something a bit unusual,” he said. “When I started getting into them and hearing and feeling the lyrics more, there was a real plain-spoken beauty there and I really liked it.”



Evelyn Jess — Facebook/[@evelynjessmusic](https://www.facebook.com/evelynjessmusic)

For Jess, the honesty in her songs comes naturally.

“I grew up a queer kid, I was closeted, I never came out until I left school,” she said. “So, when I found the guitar, it was my outlet. ... I just used to sit and write about my feelings and get them out on paper. ... That means the most to me.”

While the single will be released at The Ship Pub on Friday, Aug. 20, the draw for the one-way plane ticket from anywhere in Canada to Newfoundland will take

To enter, visit [Evelyn Jess Music on Facebook](#), tag the friend you want to bring home on the post pinned to the top of the page and share the video for "Home to Newfoundland."

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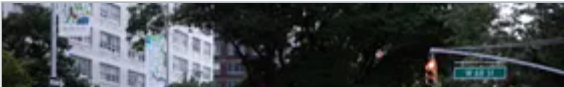
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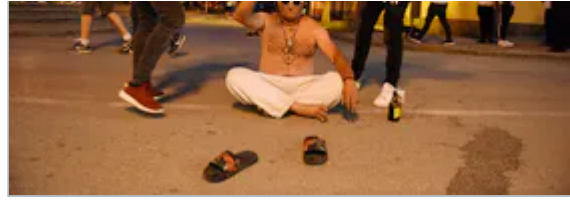
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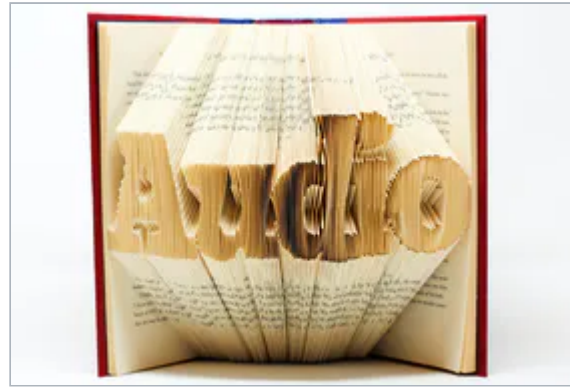
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