

MINT RECORDS

PO Box 3613, Vancouver, BC Canada V6B 3Y6
phone 604/669.MINT • fax 604/669.6478
info@mintrecs.com • www.mintrecs.com

Carolyn Mark and N.Q. Arbuckle *Let's Just Stay Here*

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I was stuck. I was sat with fingers poised over the typewriter, open mouthed staring off into space, stuck for how to start. I wanted to do a whole philosophical thing on the "nature of collaboration" or some such crapola and then tie it all up with a big bow at the end and have everyone fall in love with me upon reading my sage words. And there'd be a parade! And fireworks! And gold records on the wall and true magical love forever!

That's what I wanted.

But I was stuck.

And then The Engineer (Jameson Elliott) called over to The Mastering Guy (Phil Demetro) to offer him the gig:

"Hey. Yeah. Good, good. Yeah. Got a record for you. It's NQ Arbuckle...yeah... great, great... and they're making a record with Carolyn Mark. Yeah.... oh yeah... great... super great... yeah 1/3 his songs, a 1/3 her songs and 1/3 covers*yeah. 12 tunes. yeah. great..."

* Actually, I wrote 6, Neville wrote 3 and there are 3 covers.

And there it was. So simple. That's how it should start. With the facts. Just the facts ma'am.

So I interviewed myself and see what I had to say:

CM- Wow. You are looking good! Have you lost weight?

CM- Oh stop! You're looking pretty great yourself!

CM- Shall we order some wine?

CM- I really shouldn't before noon but go on.

CM- So you've made another record...

CM- That's not a question. How am I supposed to answer that? I hate that when they don't ask you a question but then want an answer.

CM- Calm down. I was getting there before you interrupted me

CM- Sorry. Long day.

CM- I wanted to ask who's on the record?

CM- Oh. I made this record with NQ Arbuckle from Toronto.

CM- That's not a very rock'n'roll name- NQ Arbuckle. Is that a guy or a band?

CM- It's a band. The NQ in NQ Arbuckle stands for Neville Quinlan. He's the front man. He uses an alias because by day he works in music publishing and if the music business found out that he was an actual

musician, they would be unable to take him seriously. True story.

CM- Interesting.

CM- Actually you probably shouldn't put that in. It could cost him his job and he's just about to have a baby.

CM- Who else is in the band?

CM- John Dinsmore played the bass. We recorded at his studio- the Lincoln County Social Club down in Liberty Village in Toronto. Peter Kesper played all the guitars. Mark Kesper-(Yes they're TWINS (!!!) but they HATE talking about it) on drums. Jameson Elliott was our fantastic engineer- He's got such wonderful board-side manner... sigh... he's like a lady-singer whisperer. And tireless. I know it's cliché but on Let's Just Stay Here he's truly the sixth member of the band.

CM- Was it mostly your tunes or Neville's tunes, or what?

CM- Both. Neville wrote 3 and sings lead on 6 and I wrote 6 and sing lead on 6 (there are 3 covers) and I played piano and sung harmonies on his tunes and he

sang on mine. We're pretty much all over one another. Musically speaking that is.

CM- How did the collaboration come about?

CM- Oh Neville and I have been friends for years and his band's so fantastic... Basically it was an excuse to hang out and make something cool- a noble scaffold upon which to hang our drinking.

Also, I wanted to make a rock record because it scares me and I figured these were the right

men to be my guides. Last summer we toured around Southern Alberta and one day in the van I noticed that the skull and cross bones on my pirate ring had almost faded right away.

"That's 'cause you're riding with the good guys now", said Mark Kesper, drummer very matter o' factly. Though it was roasting hot, I got a shiver.

CM- What's the significance of the title- Let's Just Stay Here?

CM- Oh! Marvelous question! I'm glad you asked!

(Pause) I don't know.

Mostly I thought it would be funny to do a tour and call it the "Let's Just Stay Here Tour" and then it started resonating in other ways, like picking a hotel when you're tired or how with any art you could keep going and retouching forever but then when you all agree that it's done, the let's just stay here consensus, if you will (Will you?) That's the real reason but since action begets purpose, all these other meanings started popping out.

CM- How many records have you released?

CM- Party Girl, Terrible Hostess, The Pros and Cons of Collaboration, Nothing is Free, The Other Women (Corn Sisters), Tribute to the movie Nashville, Just Married-an album of duets, so I guess this makes Eight. But this will be my fifth CM record. All on Mint Records.

And I just made another record with long-time collaborator Tolan McNeil in a trailer in Powell River, BC too. It was an accident. Turns out it's twins!

CM- Interesting. Do you think you make



too many records?

CM- Love isn't always on time.

CM- Describe the sound of Let's Just Stay Here.

CM- Well unlike Nothing is Free, which was all acoustic instruments recorded live in a hall, Let's Just Stay Here is a studio album. Full band. Drums, bass, electric guitar, organ, piano, stacked harmonies. There's guitar riffs! Much more of a rock sound by my standards. According to me. Not like AC/DC rock, like Lucinda Williams/Wilco/Tom Petty rock. There's some country too.

It's basically our Rumours.

CM- What do you think Neville's songs are about?

CM- I think they're all love songs. He's a romantic. But he's not a pussy. When we were recording, Neville and I came across this Billy Idol quote where, summing up his career, he says: "Yeah we drank a lot of beer, fucked a lot of women and had a fucking great time!"

To which Neville responded: "Yes. We drank a lot of sherry, were in a lot of long term relationships and had a lovely time." That's really so him.

CM- Do you think you succeeded in doing what you set out to do with this album?

CM- Ah how does one define success? We'll have to see. My main goal was to piss off The West by hiring a bunch of guys from Toronto!

CM- Well do keep us posted. Thanks for you time today, Carolyn. Don't be a stranger!

CM- It's been a real pleasure, Carolyn. Stay in touch!

Marketing

YVETTE RAY

416-535-9123

Retail Promotions:

DAVE GOWANS

604-669-6468

dave@mintrecs.com



Publicity/Marketing: Yvette Ray
phone 416/535.9123 • fax 416/535.9130
email yvette@mintrecs.com