

Lisa was born and raised in the Rochester, New York area, when jazz and swing music seemed to rule the city and surrounding suburbs. I have vivid memories of hiding in my upstairs room when my parents would have dinner parties blasting the records of Frank Sinatra and Peggy Lee. As I listened to their music, I was developing my own musical identity, which had nothing to do with what I was hearing, or so I thought. I first pestered my parents for piano lessons and was started up as a third grader when I touched the keys. I floated to some other destination, a sense of connection and divine.

As a junior high kid my life changed around three events; my fathers phonograph was the first. I spent countless hours leaning over with my ear pitched to the speaker singing all the harmonies to the Supremes, the Beach Boys, and my older brothers 50's be-bop. Second, then came the British invasion and I fell in love as any normal budding musician would. I cut my hair like a Beatle, joined the original fan club, and begged and again pestered my parents for a guitar for Christmas. An electric guitar. (They surprised me and came through). And Third: the discovery of the bevy of female singer-songwriters in the so called "Folk-Rock" revolution. Bingo! I wanted to be one of them! I wanted to be like them! I dreamed inside their music as I listened and knew I would someday write music to channel all my innermost feelings too. I was buying the albums and pouring over the artwork and printed lyrics, always singing along but enjoying the harmony as much or more as the melody. So I played that guitar and sang every day all through high school.

Meanwhile, in my high school life, I had the French horn, my guitar, choir, and group voice classes, and not to forget social pressure that seemed secondary. My first debut performance was at our high school coffeehouse. I then

discovered my first major block...serious stage fright. I recall shaking, literally shaking before and after my one song...my very virginal version of "Leavin' On A Jet Plane"... but it all began at that point... the thrill and high of performing, sharing, and laying your soul out on the line... of wanting to believe you can... instead of maybe... or can't. After school I was singing in a four piece vocal mamas and papas group, at fancy parties, and standing up front as a lead singer in a rock band that played at local dances and some college frat parties.

College? Oh yea. I thought I knew what I wanted there - by the grace of my perfect pitch and sight reading skills I was admitted to the crane school of music at the NY State University in Potsdam. I enjoyed music theory and the private lessons, but disliked feeling inferior to all the opera voices around me. I attended the classes I liked and skipped and ones I didn't like. My head was in a musical fog of doing what everyone else was doing, and I was too immature to organize and prioritize me. But, in all of that, I actually learned solid music theory and how to classically sing.

By now I was pouring over the electric revolution of 70's rock - still loving that British flavor. I began performing in the little pubs with my second guitar, one of the first Yamaha 12 strings. I was performing the songs of my favorite recording artists, and trying out my first couple attempts at songwriting, while that musical "voice" was driving me to perform. And, at the same time, I was totally nervous at measuring up. I too, began experimenting with open tunings and finger picking, but down deep, in the youthful heart, all I wanted was to write and perform.

Fast forward to post college days, I talked the talk, but was slow in walking the walk- daydreaming and baby steps, helped be closer - some playing in the Chatham NY area-

note worthy compliments - but the biological urge to "be in family" took precedence. While being married and having three children, I was lucky to make music, a lot of original music with my long time favorite partner, Sally McCarthy.

We spent twenty glorious years in musicianship and friendship and mommyship. Saw each other through huge life changes as well as our own musical evolution. Opening for famous people, delving into theater arts, and the beginning for me, of teaching music to others. What started as financial reasons, turned out to be my real calling. To be a part of my children's lives in the community, to truly teach the joy of singing and playing and performing, and yet still have my creativity with personal music, was idyllic for many years. First album... born of a combination of country music and Broadway influences... still I wrote it and sang it from my heart. "Full Moon, Montana, and You," a combined effort of the swing band we were playing with and hired professionals I hardly knew – a big learning experience for the first studio album. Many tunes still stand the test of time- I revamp them all the time and audiences love them.

Life flies by and families grow up... there is a time frame where all I remember is loving and being in our family - I branched out into directing musical theater and community events - formed a teen company dedicated to giving back to our community - all my students who studied with me were very serious musical souls, and lived for the thrill of performing, yet they learned team values. I was so very proud of "the calamity kids," and all their major talents. Each and every one of that first company formed, has gone into literal show business or aspects directly related to it. Health issues and career choices began to change the "perfect life". Empty nest, and callings to the western part of the United States, changed life irrevocably.

I relocated to central Montana, as our family had a cabin hideaway that we had spent over a decade of summers in. Part of the move was to create a community theater with a dear collaborator I had grown close to each summer in Montana. Sarah Stevenson built the facility, I moved to Montana to direct, to her producing, and hence, the garage theater came to be. such a time! creating a multi-arts resource where none had ever been before - major history was made and lives on

in all of us. All the stage work and forming yet another teen company, "the Roadsters." Memories such as these are to be treasured forever. There, I began to understand the beauty of sharing knowledge, and being humble, and satisfied all at the same time. My life changed again as I became single - my children began their own lives, and I hungered for writing my own music once more. Dear friends in Lewistown Montana, picked me up off of useless desires, and made it possible to begin... again.. except this time I was in a position to focus, write from all of my experiences, and have a second chance to put it all out there.

Here comes the second CD almost twenty years later... "Naked Heart." Rough cut, truly bare, pure desire and passion....done with Virginia and Bob Wise, in their basement recording studio over popcorn, wine, beer, and deep love. What more can a resurging artist ask for? I play all these tunes still today, and many of them are requested over and over.

So she sings and moves.. to Missoula, Montana.. to find a better music scene and a band. I found more growth musically... found out negative musical people, and positive musical team players. You always learn what is right... but do we listen? I recorded my third CD "Heart Songs." Some redo's more effectively done, some new tunes, so new they

are raw, but still the content speaks for itself. I worked with a all new band, after auditioning many pickers, yet I had much to learn in standing my ground and being clear with what the music needed to be - in Missoula, I was led to Dan Marfisi in L.A. of Joneshouse Studios. He specialized recording in a package at that time- a MP3 format, rhythm tracks pre-done in studio, with approval and input all along the way from the artist - awesome for a still doubting at times me. I went to L.A. for a whole month of intense recording vocals, session players, and mixing and mastering . Dan and I hit it off - he is a straight shooter- he is brilliant in communication regarding the music - he gave me whatever I wanted with clear production and direction.

So "Tame Me" was born and was my first sellable, reliable, get me jobs CD etc. work of music. On the road post "Tame Me," I was adrift - I was in need of a home - didn't totally pay attention to my needs. Only paid attention to the needs of the music. So I went to the east coast... the Carolinas to be exact. I threw myself into the inland scene. I was blessed to discover that humankind is and will be, very loving and supportive. Rock Hill, South Carolina, welcomed me with a following of listeners where I played, other open musicians, wonderful promotional media, and a lead guitar player who was semi-famous in the south and chose to play with me! Danny Guyton and I tore up the classy restaurants and big street fairs, and what he gave me, was a reaffirmation of my worth - I have never up until then, nor have I since, worked with such a talented musician who was beyond good, healthy attitude, and supportive, while fun, all rolled into one package. But the south was not my home - it was my "home" away from home. I missed my family and that is the simple truth of it - I am westernized and family-ized. Hence, I relocated "one more time"- and it is not easy as you get older - to Santa Fe, New Mexico in 2005.

I have been beyond blessed here, to be networking and being visible and drawing in other fine, fine, musicians who wish to play all my original music.

October 2006 I began recording the 5th CD and wow, did it ever go through huge conceptual changes. After researching many studios and options, I chose Stepbridge Studio and Michael Chavez to engineer and assist in producing. The CD changed its name many times, while totally new grooves were found for favorite songs from previous "raw" CD's and creating "new" sounds for freshly written tunes. I felt compelled to include beautiful renditions of earlier favorites, as they needed to be heard properly; like something I needed to honor to let go of. For the first time in my recording life, I made all the decisions, musical and otherwise. I learned so very much, that the final mastering in May 2007, left me exhausted but fulfilled. And so drawn in and curious to continue learning all the aspects of the recording process, particularly the producing and arranging of the songs.

The Treasures and Trash CD was good to me! The single "Count Me In" won country song of the year at the 2008 New Mexico Music Awards. Recorded at Stepbridge Studio, the song "Unspoken" from the record was nominated in the Americana category as well. "Count Me In" was chosen to be included on Violet Femmes Volume 2 CD, of 20 women from around the world. An added element in recent years is the pleasure of producing other songwriters music, as they fulfill their dream of recording a record. Talented students who wish to experience recording their original work morph into performing songwriters, and seek their own artistic "moment in time." I relish the role of directing, editing, listening, and understanding how to have the artist relaxed and satisfied. Communicating between the team of players

and writer, and always seeking the joy spot.

2011 garnered more nominations as a producer and co-writer in the New Mexico Music Awards.

A double record release in 2011 “Pony I Rode In On” showcased the jazz influences I grew up with, while “Coming of Age” celebrated true Americana. “Same Sun and Moon” garnered the second NMMA trophy for Americana Song of the Year. My gratefulness to Jono Manson (Kitchen Sink Studio) and Kevin Zoernig for getting us finished on time, while the sky was smoky with forest fires all around Santa Fe. For the release the best onstage players I always count on all performed with me. Adrienne Bellis (my soul sister of harmony) Kevin Zoernig (master of the keys and co-producer with me, and first call arranger), Jeff Sussmann (most creative drummer/percussionist I ever worked with) Jon Myers(the guru bassist with his custom 6 string basses), Bob Bruen (mando at its best, a duo partner and singer), Chase Morrosin (the cellist who performed the parts in the studio), Caitlin Thomas (viola, violin, the “other “voice from heaven) ,and my singin’ daughter Eryn Bent by my side on harmony.

Great show, big birthday, all the cake was gone when I went (fulfilled, exhausted, happy and finished packing up) looking for my piece.

Teaching and mentoring continues (at my home studio and The Candyman Strings and Things, our premier music store in Santa Fe) with adults and youth. Clients begin to “book” my time to produce them, and the passion of building the job as producer takes off. Matching the client to the studio, the engineer, and the instrument pickers is so, so important.

Performing at the local Farmers Markets, outdoor shows,

and house concerts, with occasional forays out of town, completes and fills any spare time left.

2013 NMMA's saw a shift in my entries of original works. The music to me felt like it needed to be lighter and simpler. I spent the summer on the coast of Oregon, directing one of the only Broadway musical works I love: "Godspell." Residing very close to the ocean, I was making new and lasting friends, and forming and encouraging a cast of actors and singers. Two new concept songs flew out that summer. One of the most special kind, the divine driven kind, was written in twenty minutes, "Something About" is simple yet universal. A song for every human on this planet. A new category had been introduced into the NMMAS, Singer Songwriter. After scaling back into a simpler sound, I was honored to have it win that night. Thanks to Kabby Sound for the recording experience. I was in a new space in my life doing that song, new relationship, new living space, and adult students who wanted to learn as much as they could take in as songwriters. Many custom classes at varying experience levels were created and participated in. Still use these class formats today.

Off to Montana to live (or so I thought) that summer of 2013, to develop a new songwriting, musical program at Musicvilla in Bozeman. I almost moved and stayed, as my love for Montana is well known, and the public response to the teaching was awesome. Fast forward a car accident (not my fault), there on Main Street, a concussion, and barely getting back to Santa Fe. Treatment took months, but I slowly eased back to teaching and light performing. It took a toll though, I now deal with levels of PTSD. Too loud anything is not a good space for me. So the music is happier, quieter.

More lovely single tunes in 2014 (a few nominations) and 2015, (many nominations) recorded at The Palace

Recording Studio, also in the same home, personal studio (She Sings Studio) and building I happen to live in with the engineer, Scott Shane. We are busy during the “season”, tracking our own personal music, and creating with clients who write and record many contrasting genres. Even the “younger” clients at ages eight and ten!

At the 2015 NMMAS banquet the singles “In Love and Loss” (co-writer Ken King on lyrics), and “Language of Love,” (my song dedicated to my son, who passed away) respectively won the Singer Songwriter category of the year and “Song of the Year”. At times it takes the opening of the creative gates to move the project along. To realize gratefulness in making original music of the heart.

I'll leave it here on the dawning of 2016. May 13th 2016 a new album is releasing of Christian Folk /Rock /New Thought music. “The Way” is already nominated for this years awards in five categories. We are playing the album with all the original studio musicians, and adding some new young harmony singers from my teaching brood. It is my first collaborative record with a lyricist, allowing me the freedom of channeling the melodies and instrument parts freely.

Every one of my singer songwriter clients garnered a music NMMA nomination as well. So proud of everyone am I! My heart is full for yet again a Song of the Year nomination for my own work. My son inspires and calls to me with the song, “You Are Not Alone,” first penned in 2009. The lyrics are the same, but the music changed and grew to what it is today. ‘Tis a song for every family or close circle of beloveds, when one of their own is walking a different path away from them. We remind them of our heart connection and love.

Let us all live in our roots of believing, sharing, and making music. Music brings self esteem and confidence to anyone who wishes to play it, or play alongside it. This gift of music is very, very, very real. Write and share. Keep the melody and the harmony always coming

— Lisa Carman