

BIO FOR JOHNETTE NAPOLITANO/SCARRED

“Amazing, you’re amazing.”

From “Amazing”/*Scarred*

An L.A. daughter whose name is synonymous with songs about the city’s honking traffic blur and Hollywood Boulevard’s forgotten dreamers, Johnette Napolitano has followed her musical fancies for more than two decades, most famously with Concrete Blonde, as a singer-songwriter-musician whose boundless voice was an instrument of power and passion.

The lurking smells and secret lairs of the French Quarter after hours took listeners into deepest, darkest New Orleans on “Bloodletting (The Vampire Song).” No bus tour of the stars’ homes was as evocative of the long-gone glamour of Tinseltown Town as “Still in Hollywood” (the *real* “I Love L.A.”). Concrete Blonde’s biggest hit, the haunting, soothing “Joey,” became a radio staple that fans still cheer for at her solo shows. Along the way, she’s explored other musical avenues with Pretty & Twisted, Vowel Movement, The Heads, and a collaboration with Concrete Blonde and Los Illegals. *Scarred*, Napolitano’s staggering new solo album, finds the artist in an unconstrained, more cinematic phase of an already rich career. Living under Joshua Tree’s endless sky and bazillion stars has inspired the songwriter to dig into emotional new territory. “I’d figured by this point in my life, I’d be in writing/art/semi-retirement mode, and wanted to

be in a place like this and just be Georgia O'Keeffe," she says. "I can make all the noise I want because there isn't anything out here, so the only thing to do is write and work on my art stuff. If you'd had told me I'd still be making records and touring at this point, I wouldn't have believed it, but why the hell not? But it's very spacy out here, and quiet, and I can hear ideas come through. I don't know what it is about the place, but it just clears my head."

Scarred's 12 songs are startling, spectacular and sublime. Chilling, thrilling choruses? Yep -- snaky and shaky and more soaring than ever.

A pixie-dusting of triangle begins the opener that is "Amazing." When *that voice* -- Johnette's cushiony, come-hither murmur -- enters, you're off on a gripping, melodic thrill ride. "Amazing" explodes into a chorus that is pure Johnette -- full throated, engines gunning. This surreal and lyrical paean to envy plunges the listener into a state like a warm shot of tequila.

Johnette's soul-baring lyrics and commanding vocal skill reach torrid new heights, from the spellbinding, gospel-y wailings on "Poem for a Native" to the sweet, melodic charms of "Just Like Time." The title song features Will Crewdson's swooping guitar that leaves the listener groggy with blessed relief. She finds an artistic compatriot in "My Diane," a tender tribute to photographer Diane Arbus, who could "find the rose on every thorn."

Scarred is the culmination of a project that began when Crewdson met Johnette in a small London record store several years ago. Crewdson was in the English band Rachel Stamp at the time. The two became friends, and Crewdson eventually sent her some musical tracks. "He works with a guy named Sultan Ahmed, calling themselves Catfish Scar, and they co-wrote and recorded all these amazing tracks and sent me some during Hurricane Katrina. I didn't sleep for a long time the week of the hurricane and was in a rather manic

state and started writing to the tracks, and Will just kept sending me more and I just kept pounding stuff out,” explains Johnette. “Will came out to L.A. and we recorded some, I flew to London and we recorded more, and it started to take the shape of a real record. At one point in London, I wrote lyrics to four songs and recorded them in two days. I just like the sonics of their tracks -- I'd always been in a guitar band so I really like all the nuances and textures of the Catfish tracks.”

Challenging, raw, gorgeous -- *Scarred* is filled with the most intimate songs the singer's ever shared with fans. The beginning of an exciting new chapter for Johnette Napolitano?

Bet on it.

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