



- The Music Comes First

by: John Scoles

Her music is described as "country bourbon bluegrass soul," and she's been called the Joan Jett of country, but Romi Mayes is no novelty, and she's ultimately interested in one thing: respect. Stellar vocals, solid guitar playing and an intense live show featuring songs about whiskey, heartache, and bar brawls may make miss your mouth when sippin' your beer, but Romi would be just as happy if they made you miss your eye while dabbing at a tear.

"I want people to listen to me," says the Canadian songstress, whose brand-new album, *Sweet Somethin' Steady*, was produced by Texan, Gurf Morlix, who is well known for his work with Lucinda Williams and Mary Gauthier. "I don't want people to talk about me, unless they've given the music a chance first. Once they've done that, they can say whatever they want, you know what I mean?"

Over the last couple of years, Mayes has become the kind of performer that music writers just can't seem to say enough about. Some of the great quotes that have found their way into her press kit include ones from David Cowling (*Americana UK Magazine*), who wrote, "This is the sort of sound you'd want to hear pouring out of roadhouses as you drive up expecting to get drunk and maybe fall in love," "If you were around the Canadian music scene in the late 80s, and experienced the early buzz surrounding the music of k. d. lang (at least the excitement part of that phenomena), then get ready for another chapter of the same thing," (Larry Delaney, Editor, *Country Music News*), and "Don't mean to gush, but Mayes was one of the highlights of the whole Folk Alliance...Good songs, great attitude, strong vocals, and a smile to set the whole world in a good mood." (Renowned Canadian publicist and music maven Richard Flohil).

Mayes's story is not so different from that of many young musicians who set out with a thumb in the air and a guitar in hand. She spent eight years drifting around western Canada searching for something more out of life, and eventually found it back home in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 2002. What she found was a thriving, nurturing scene that helped hone her talents, and provided her with access to a remarkable collection of musicians who would work with her to really bring her songs to life.

In 2003 she paired up with guitar great Chris Carmichael to form the duo Mayes and Carmichael. In 2004 she added members and formed a band called 'Romi Mayes and The Temporarily Employed' whose members included players from such bands as The Duhks, Fred Eaglesmith, The D.Rangers and Corb Lund Band. At Eaglesmith's 2005 Northern Picnic she performed with Dan Walsh (who at the time was Fred Eaglesmith's dobro/guitar player) and shortly thereafter Walsh parted ways from The Fred Eaglesmith Band to tour with Mayes and Chris Carmichael and to work on the new album produced by Gurf Morlix.

Now at age 31, Mayes is recognized for her raw and driven sound, proving that her years on the road have paid off. Her honest edgy songs and Americana bluegrass guitar style exhibits a great storyteller who has seen the tough road. The warm and gritty vocals that layer all her songs sift through all the bull, and hit straight home.

This past year, the hard-working Mayes has performed over 200 gigs. She has honed her skills sharing the stage with the likes of Ricky Skaggs, Iris Dement, Gurf Morlix, Bo Ramsey, Pieta Brown, Hayes Carll, Lynn Miles, Martha Wainwright, Fred Eaglesmith, Ray Condo, The Rockin' Highliners, Camper Van Beethoven. Her performances have taken her all across North America promoting her 2005 WCMA nominated release "The Living Room Sessions: Volume One," and have included stops at a wide range of prestigious festivals including The Winnipeg Folk Festival, Calgary Folk Festival, South Country Fair, Northern Lights Boreal, Hillside Festival, Folk Alliance in Montreal, NXNE in Toronto, OCFE in Kingston, and SXSW in Austin.

Reviews for *Sweet Somethin' Steady* have been extremely positive, and Mayes has just been nominated for a Canadian Folk Award as Songwriter of the Year. She's excited about the buzz, but remains firmly committed to her craft.



"It doesn't mean shit if you don't work for it," she says. "We're working hard at what we do out here on the road. Don't get me wrong, though, we're not saints. We're not opposed to a little whiskey. But the music comes first."

Romi Mayes knows well what she sings about. As Shain Shapiro, of the Hamilton View wrote, "she's rowdy enough to incite the most scandalous of bar brawls, yet sensitive enough to track down and return the knocked out teeth to the proper recipient the following morning."

Texas Tour Dates

For more visit Romi's website at www.RomiMayes.com

December 7th – Dallas – All Good Café w/ Gurf Morlix and Sam Baker

December 9th – New Braunfels – Rivertree House Concert Series w/ Gurf Morlix and Adam Carroll

December 12th – Austin – Saxon Pub w/ Gurf Morlix and Hayes Carll

December 13th – Austin – The Cactus Café w/ Gurf Morlix, Adam Carroll and Sam

Baker

December 14th – San Marcos - Cheatham Street Warehouse w/ Gurf Morlix and Sam Baker

December 15th – Moulton – Ole Moulton Bank w/ Gurf Morlix and Sam Baker

December 16th – La Grange – Bugle Boy w/ Gurf Morlix and Sam Baker

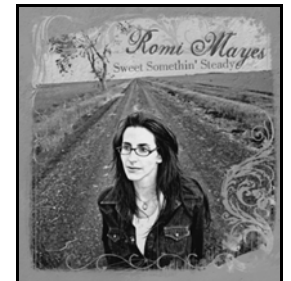
December 17th – New Braunfels – Gruene Hall w/ Gurf Morlix

December 18th – Houston – The Mucky Duck w/ Gurf Morlix and Sam Baker

December 21st – Beaumont – Courville's w/ Gurf Morlix and Sam Baker

December 22nd – Galveston – Old Quarter Acoustic Café w/ Gurf Morlix and Sam Baker

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