

Jen Lane and John Antoniuk excited about new duo record

Written by Richard Amery

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Saskatoon based husband and wife folk duo John Antoniuk and Jen Lane have been playing together on stage and on each others' solo albums for several years, but thanks to grants from Saskatchewan Music and Creative Saskatchewan they were finally able to record a new album of themselves playing as a duo.



They come to Lethbridge to play the Owl Acoustic Lounge, Tuesday, Sept. 16.

"We've just been touring our asses off," Antoniuk noted observing Jen Lane has taken the year off from music.

They focus on creating and supporting one of their albums at a time — either a Jen Lane or John Antoniuk and Smokekiller album.

But this time they get to focus on one they made together.

"We recorded five original songs we really like and two covers we love," Antoniuk said.

"We did 15 songs and chipped away at them. One of them I couldn't listen to without hearing the band on it so we decided to save it," he said adding fan demand was the reason they decided to do a record of duets.

"What people really liked was our really stripped down intimate sound. People come up to us and ask if we have a duet record, so we decided to make one," he said adding fans have been disappointed when they found up there wasn't one.

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“This really represents the two vocals,” he said.

“ You’ve got to go with what’s working and what is the people’s favourites. But I like it a lot. It’s very natural,” he said.

They covered Ryan Adams' “ Oh My Sweet Carolina” for sentimental reasons.

“That is the first song we ever played together on and decided to work together and then we fell in love. So that is why we’re together,” he said.

“And we play a lot of Ryan Adams songs in the set.”

They also recorded JJ Cale's “ Crazy Mama.”

{youtube}o4buetRf658{/youtube}

“I bought Jen a record player for Christmas and found that JJ Cale album in the bargain bin and played it all day long on Christmas,” he continued.

He noted he will be helping Jen Lane with her next solo record this winter which they hope to have done by March 2015.

They are always writing new material.

“We just got back from Salt Spring Island. We climbed a mountain and I brought my guitar and wrote two songs I’m really excited about, right there,” he said.

They are excited about returning to Lethbridge for the first time since May 2013.

“This time we’re going to be at the Owl Acoustic Lounge. It will just be the two of us and our guitars and vocal harmonies,” he said adding he is excited to see his Lethbridge friends, Matthew Robinson, Leeroy Stagger, Kyle Harmon and Evan Uschenko who he met while recording his last album with Leeroy Stagger in Rebeltone Studios.

He would have liked to record the duets album here as well, but the grants he received required the money be spent in Saskatchewan.

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— *By Richard Amery, L.A. Beat Editor*