

# Melissa Lauren

With a boundless, soaring voice and musical vision to match, Toronto-based songwriter Melissa Lauren is that rarest of performers, one as comfortable in blues and roots-y soul as in pop, and in the space where the genres converge. Whether covering a classic or elevating an original, Lauren never fails to locate a song's emotional core. Her captivating third album, *My Voice* – produced by ace multi-instrumentalist Tyler Emond (Tyler Shaw, Alessia Cara, Matt Dusk) – finds Lauren exploring the human voice; it's barriers, triumphs, inequities between voices, and how we can help amplify each other, via 11 songs perfectly reflecting the times. The album has received international airplay, playlisting, and accolades. The third single released, a heart-wrenching version of Jann Arden's "Insensitive", was featured on CBC Radio's 'Under the Covers.' Rendering songwriting nominations in the International Songwriting Competition, and Unsigned Only, "the album builds on Lauren's extensive career both as a solo artist and collaborator with a diverse range of performers, from the Toronto All Star Big Band while still a teenager to co-writes with Juno award winning Ernesto Cervini, Steven Taetz, and Montreal electronic producer Hibernate. Melissa celebrated the release of *My Voice* with a North American tour, the throughline is Lauren's electrifying voice and engaging performance style, which has thrilled audiences across North America and around the world.



---

## Touring Highlights

Folk Alliance International (Kansas City)  
Folk Music Ontario Conference (London, ON)  
Opus Jazz Club (Budapest)  
BFlat Jazz Club (Berlin)  
Yardbird Suite (Edmonton)  
The Bassment (Saskatoon)  
Live on Blu (Portland, MN)  
Live on Jasper (Edmonton)  
Niagara International Jazz Festival  
New Skool Rules Festival (Rotterdam, NL)

The Carleton (Halifax)  
Halifax International Jazz Festival  
Toronto International Jazz Festival  
Markham International Jazz Festival  
NXNE (Toronto)  
Upstairs Jazz (Montreal)  
YYC Winter Jazz Festival (Calgary)  
Ironwood (Calgary)  
King Eddy (Calgary)  
Rockwood Music Hall (New York)



[melissalaurenhiltz@gmail.com](mailto:melissalaurenhiltz@gmail.com)



[melissalaurenmusic.ca](http://melissalaurenmusic.ca)



[melissalaurenhiltz](https://www.instagram.com/melissalaurenhiltz)

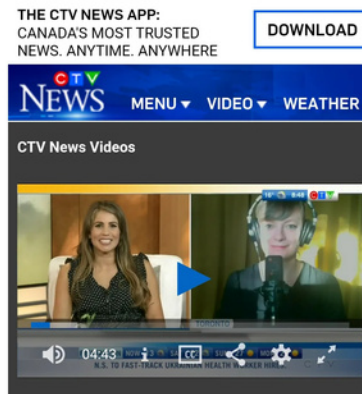
# Industry Feedback and Press



06:02 01:15:5

Backstage With Douglas McLean

The Sound Cafe Presents  
A Conversation With Melissa Lauren



GLOBAL NEWS MORNING HALIFAX

**Singer-songwriter  
Melissa Lauren Kicks off  
North American Tour in  
the Maritimes**

"

*"I won't rest until I am my best for you." The Toronto Chanteuse can now put up her feet - she's lovely with her strummy and breezy elegance, which is absolutely good to us. "*

- Brad Wheeler, The Globe and Mail

*It's a confident album with plenty of charm. If you like your jazz outside of the box, this is the album for you."*

- Garvia Baily, Big City Small World, CBC

*"Lauren has a beguiling voice that mixes sweet playfulness with solid technique, control and range."*

- Cathy Riches, Wholenote Magazine

*"Melissa Lauren is a real singer, good in the way Blossom Dearie or Stacie Kent are good. Once you hear her sing, you want to keep listening."*

- Stanley Fefferman, The Opus One Review

*"Melissa Lauren can sing. And Write...she takes gorgeous risks turning notes inside-out without ever landing flat or straining. As a Songwriter, she's a winner."*

- Marc Myers, Jazzwax

*"Melissa Lauren's voice is equal parts lovely and sincere. Her reputation as one of Toronto's most talented and prolific singers has been well-earned and easily deserved."-Jaymz Bee, JAZZ.FM91*



melissalaurenhiltz@gmail.com



melissalaurenmusic.ca



melissalaurenhiltz

# MY VOICE Artist Statement

---

“My Voice is about making sure that every voice has a chance to be heard. The barriers that get in the way of the voice being carried continue to prevail; some of us struggle to find our voice. Recognizing the privilege I hold, this is one artist’s perspective of some of the ways the voice interacts with the world, other people, and its own body and mind. To be honest, many of the songs were born from arguments with my husband; 2020 almost ruined us. It soon became clear that not hearing each other was a big problem; ironically, physically closer than we had ever been.

I began thinking outward and it occurred to me that many of us were living in microcosms of the world..inside of our homes. Relationships ruptured or grew closer. Many lived in longing and loneliness with only a screen to talk to, or no one to hear their voice.

Children struggled to find their voice buried in the everyday work stress that parents had to sift through while home. Some took the opportunity to put the outside world aside and snuggle in. Some of the privileged remain privileged while others were not as lucky, and glaring disparities in the world continue to show their gaping wells.”

Yet by candidly distilling the experience into her songwriting on *My Voice*, Lauren has created an album that serves as a musical touchstone for anyone struggling to articulate the challenges, good and bad, of managing close relationships during difficult times. Call it a sonic roadmap. Ironically, from that uneasy place sprang the vibrant, mostly upbeat songs on *My Voice*, which are exalted by an ace band including Hiltz on various guitars and banjo, Emond on everything from bass to keyboards, mandolin to guitar, as well as drummer-percussionist Dave MacDougall, pedal steel player Kevin “The General” Neal, and Jessica Deutsch on violin and viola.

At the centre of it all is Lauren’s crystal clear, emotive voice which is almost otherworldly in its range. So dexterous are Lauren’s performances that a song by Rufus Wainwright (“Oh What A World”) makes perfect sense alongside one by Cole Porter (“Easy to Love”), another by Irving Berlin (“What’ll I Do”), a Jann Arden pop hit (“Insensitive”) plus Lauren’s own compositions chronicling life in all its messy, lovely, weird, infuriating grandeur.

“Jazz is my first love, and those standards were important to include,” she says, adding – take note jazz fans – that she wrote her own intro for “What’ll I Do” and a set of alternate lyrics to Walter Donaldson’s “My Blue Heaven,” dedicated to her husband and which daughter Leah abetted. Lauren continues: “At the same time, I think there’s something for everyone on this album. Musically, I can grab people who might not typically like jazz while lyrically, there are conversations almost everyone has had at some point in their life. *My Voice* dances between new and old, jazz and pop.”

Indeed, the album does waltz between intriguing themes and shape-shifting aural landscapes. Take the first single, the gently orchestral, undulating Lauren original “The Day We Stopped.” The song was sparked by a moment of mentally stepping outside of a heavy conflict with her husband, to take a minute to feel the sun. “That song was raw and very much in the moment,” she says.

Elsewhere, Lauren gives voice to a woman who kills her abusive husband because a bird on her shoulder tells her to (the inky, snaking, bass-led ballad “My Blue Friend”); contemplates two people lost from each other despite being in the same car (“Back to You,” which drapes Lauren’s silken voice across simple acoustic guitar); and the soaring gospel-tinged title track “which is about illuminating each other’s voices.” Central to the album was producer Emond who Lauren says was uniquely able to interpret her vision, no matter what form that took. “I am proud of how Tyler and I worked within the jazz-pop spectrum, making deliberate choices as to where each song would sit.”

Lauren celebrated the album with a North American Tour with stops in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Vancouver, New York, Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and PEI.

“When I perform live, I share stories and love to interact with the audience. I hope I can make people aware that you do not have to be a musician or expert to share in a musical experience. In addition, I would like to draw a parallel between how different genres of music can work together harmoniously; this is something that should be acknowledged not just artistically, but culturally, socially, spiritually.”





# Discography

**MY VOICE (2022)**

Album/Independent

**LOVE ON THE RUN (2022)**

EP/With Organic aka BrianJohnson

**THE LITTLE ONES (2020)**

Single/Independent

**BLAME IT ON MY YOUTH(2019)**

Single/Independent

**WHEN THE DAY TURNS (2019)**

Single/Independent

**YOUR MESS (2015)**

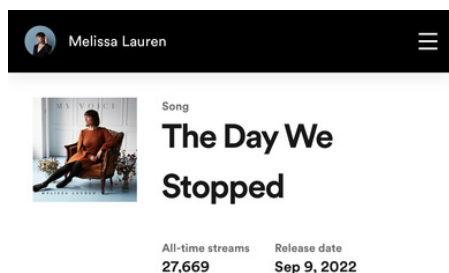
Album/Independent

**THE OTHER SIDE (2012)**

Album/Independent

**LEFT ALONE (2009)**

Single with Hibernate/Perfecto Records



melissalaurenhiltz@gmail.com

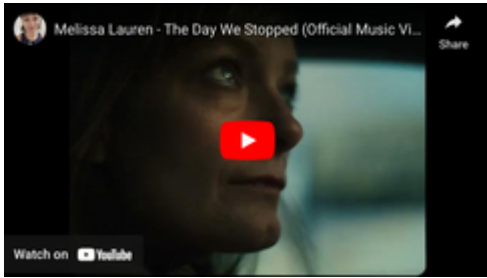


melissalaurenmusic.ca



melissalaurenhiltz

# Videos



**CLICK HERE** 



**CLICK HERE** 



**CLICK HERE** 



**CLICK HERE** 



**CLICK HERE** 



**CLICK HERE** 



**CLICK HERE** 



**CLICK HERE** 

Click the icons below to engage with Melissa on Social Media!

