

The IMAGINARIES

Watching husband and wife duo The Imaginaries' Maggie McClure (piano, keyboard, vocals) and Shane Henry (guitar, vocals) perform songs off their self-titled debut album, *The Imaginaries*, you instantly see the chemistry and the deep commitment they share with each other and to their music. Formed on the open plains of their home state of Oklahoma, their love of performing, writing music, and their faith all make up the glue that keeps them grounded and focused on the dream of turning what they've imagined for themselves into the reality of The Imaginaries.

Produced by the duo, the album marks the beginning of their journey as a band after both singer songwriters have enjoyed their own successes as solo artists. It all began when The Imaginaries traveled to Muscle Shoals, AL to perform a couple of songs for Grammy-Award winning engineer John Cuniberti's YouTube series called "The OneMic Series" which showcases recording artists performing two songs each around one AEA R88 stereo ribbon microphone. They had such an amazing experience being there that the duo decided to return to record their album enlisting the help of session musicians and legendary Muscle Shoals "Swampers," including bassist David Hood (Aretha Franklin, Etta James, Paul Simon), Little Richard guitarist Kelvin Holly (Jason Isbell, Gregg Allman, Neil Young), bassist Shonna Tucker (John Paul White, The Secret Sisters), and keyboardist NC Thurman (Hank Williams Jr, Gregg Allman, Little Richard). They also flew in their drummer Rob Humphreys (Leonard Cohen, Jason Mraz) for the recording and worked with Chad Copelin (Sufjan Stevens, Christina Perri, Ben Rector) back in Oklahoma for keys and additional production as well as keyboardist Dan Walker (Heart). The experience left a profound effect on the duo. "These musicians all have incredible resumes. With their experience and background, they brought so much musicality and life to these recordings," says Maggie. "The album was tracked live with everyone playing in the room, which made the performances authentic and organic," adds Shane. "We took the same approach as we did with the OneMic series only this time using multiple mics for all the instruments."

What came out of those recording sessions were songs filled with effortless harmonies combined with heartfelt lyrics and real-life lessons "inspired by personal experiences, our relationship, our struggles, and overcoming challenges," says Maggie. "And we've had a lot of those on our journey to release this album," says Shane. Originally planned for a 2019 release date, the album had several major setbacks beginning when Shane was struck with a serious illness that sidelined him for many months. Following his recovery, the duo was chosen from dozens of competing artists to open for the 16th Annual Brian Setzer Orchestra's annual Christmas Rocks Tour only for it to be suddenly canceled because Brian came down with a severe case of tinnitus. Then Maggie had unexpected invasive gum surgery which kept her from singing for two months. During this time, they worked diligently on booking shows for Spring/Summer 2020 to support their pending album release when Coronavirus pandemic took hold of the world, so the duo decided to switch gears and release three singles and three videos to build up to the album release.

"Revival" is a spiritual swampy roots song about finding hope and salvation. "It came to be as a merging of three separate song ideas," says Maggie. "Our faith certainly has an impact on our lives and therefore our songwriting, so the themes of the song are complete with biblical references from 'not storing up treasures on earth' to the warnings of 'the love of money' with an adventurous undertone of spreading the good news." The video / short film received a lot of attention on the film festival circuit with its *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* meets *Bonnie and Clyde* theme. "Walking On A Wire," a song written about

facing obstacles head on and pushing through to overcome them “is a song about the balancing act that artists face daily,” says Maggie. “It’s about opportunities that we’ve been given that have then been taken away due to circumstances completely out of our control. But it’s also a song about keeping the faith and staying the course, no matter what.” “Thinking 'Bout You” is a sincere acoustic-driven song about missing someone you care about but don’t get to be with because of distance. “I wrote the song for my nieces who live in Portland, Oregon,” says Shane, “The sentiment is for anyone you love and can’t always be with. The song says that even though there is distance between us, I will always be there for you, so stay true to yourself and keep your chin up when things get tough... I’ve got your back.”

Growing up in Oklahoma, Maggie from the large city of Norman and Shane from the tiny 700-person town of Verden, both caught the music bug early. Maggie was given her first keyboard by her parents when she was only a year old and at eight she received her first karaoke machine singing to her favorites, Bonnie Raitt and Sarah McLachlan. She would later meet Raitt which made a huge impression on Maggie who didn’t truly find her voice until she was in middle school when she turned to music to help her find her way after her parents’ divorce and the passing of two grandparents over the course of the same year. “Music became my only way to communicate and to make sense of what I was feeling when words alone were at most times too intimidating,” says Maggie. As a result, she began performing and playing in bands throughout her younger years and through college striving to make her dreams of singing, songwriting, and performing full time a reality. Since then she has opened for Sara Bareilles and Walk Off The Earth, has had over 45 original song placements on TV shows such as *Dr. Phil*, *Cougar Town*, *The Real World*, *The Vineyard*, and *The Hills*, in TV movies like Hallmark Channel’s *My Christmas Love*, and in the feature films *Cowgirls N’ Angels* and *A Cowgirl’s Story*. She also had a small recurring role on ABC’s *The Middle* and was cast in the Disney show *Violetta* as the lead character’s English singing voice (singing on 80 episodes). Maggie also sang the National Anthem at the very first NBA playoff game in Oklahoma history with more than 18,000 people in attendance, and recently reprised her performance and performed the official holiday halftime show at Madison Square Garden for the NY Knicks along with Shane.

Shane was 12-years old when his dad, who played guitar and made a point of exposing him to the Beatles, Stevie Wonder and Jimi Hendrix, took him to see two shows that changed his life: Tom Petty at the Civic Center in Oklahoma City, and B.B. King, Buddy Guy and Bonnie Raitt at the Tulsa Blues Festival. Inspired to learn guitar, Shane pursued the skill with a passion. At 19, Shane made the move north to Minneapolis to work and record with songwriter/producer Kevin Bowe (Etta James, Joe Cocker) and from there his career took off. He played 30 dates on tour with B.B. King, and also toured with Etta James, Buddy Guy, Joe Bonamassa, George Thorogood and the Destroyers, Johnny Winter, Edwin McCain, the Neville Brothers, and Grand Funk Railroad to name a few. He has had many song placements on NBC, CBS, Discovery Channel, Hallmark Channel, and the E! Television network, as well as in feature films.

After a year and a half filled with multiple challenges, along with the new reality of virtual performances and press interviews, the duo, are looking forward to finally releasing their debut album. “We are so excited for the world to hear The Imaginaries’ debut album in its entirety,” says the duo. “The recording experience was amazing, having had the opportunity to collaborate with so many incredibly talented individuals, and we are so proud to finally release this collection of songs.”