

With an honest, passionate and endearing personality and a sound that is equal parts raw and moving. Courtney Cole has spent many years crafting her music and creating sincere messages in her lyrics that inspire others to live their lives beyond their comfort level.

Cole loved music from the moment she could remember. Cole grew up just 20 minutes outside of one of America's most diverse cities, New Orleans, where music was everywhere. She was exposed to pop, country, zydeco, R&B, jazz, gospel and more wherever she went. At age 5, she took her first bow onstage at a talent show in her church where she and her father lip-synced "I Got You Babe" together, with her father dressed as Sonny while she wore a Cher wig. At age 10, she attended New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA), where she appeared in productions of *The Music Man*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Annie*, *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and her favorite, *Little Shop of Horrors*.

At an early age, she fell in love with strong, powerful female voices such as Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Celine Dion, Shania Twain, and Faith Hill. She loved their sound, identified with their songs, and knew she had found her calling in life. She would spend hours in her room working to match every single note to their songs until she could hit every note. "These women taught me how to sing with passion," she says. "Music has never NOT been a part of my life. It was my way of learning and understanding me. I always connected deeply to the emotion in music and lyric, as I'm a very emotional person. Being able to sing how you feel and connect people to a particular emotion, that's how you change lives! It heals people."

Her love of music drew her to Nashville, where she enrolled in, and eventually graduated from, Belmont University as a commercial voice major. Although singing was her main focus at Belmont, Cole also devoted a good amount of time to writing songs, something she began in high school while learning chords using a pawnshop guitar and a computer program. "I've always heard songs in my head," she says. "But because everybody at Belmont was really good at songwriting, I would only write secretly on my own. I never played them for anybody because I didn't think they were very good."

That changed when she landed an internship at Black River Entertainment and dipped her toe into the music industry. Upon graduation, the company hired her and she rose from publishing assistant to executive assistant and then radio coordinator during her five years at the label and publishing company. Cole got a crash course in the art of songwriting by getting to know the staff songwriters and listening as they came up with songs in a studio next to her office.

"So I started writing after my eight hour work day, from 6pm to 10pm," Cole said. "Finally I started playing them for the publisher and to my surprise, she really liked them! That brought me out of my shell and gave me the boost in confidence I needed to explore my dream professionally."

After nearly two years of learning, making ends meet, and a lot of hard work, she was offered a full-time publishing deal. "To be able to concentrate on music full-time was what I had been working so hard for and to finally get there was amazing," said Cole. "Being in a writing room with some of the songwriters in Nashville that I had admired for so long was surreal."

In the midst of songwriting, Cole has garnered many touring opportunities, opening for Miranda Lambert, Kenny Chesney, Chris Young, Kip Moore, Old Dominion, Granger Smith, Kane Brown, Thompson Square and more at venues across the country. She was singled out as a Spotify Spotlight Artist while *The Huffington Post* named her as one of its "Country Artists to Watch in 2015."

While performing on Miranda Lambert's Roadside Bars & Pink Guitars Tour in the fall of 2015, Cole released her self-titled EP. Produced by Will Weatherly, it featured the fan favorite track "Ladylike," co-written with Jimmy Robbins and GRAMMY, CMA and ACM-Award winner Shane McAnally.

Previously, Cole released her acoustic EP, #NoFilter, as well as her single, "Drunk," which she wrote with Catt Gravitt, Gerald O'Brien and Shirazi, available on iTunes and Spotify. The music video for "Drunk" hit No. 1 on the fan-voted Taste of Country's "Top 10 Countdown" and debuted at No. 8 on CMT Pure's "12-Pack Countdown." The Shotgun Seat observed, "Cole achieves the perfect balance of being simultaneously strong and vulnerable, like an early Taylor Swift."

Meanwhile, Cole had been traveling to and from Los Angeles, dipping her toes into the pop songwriting world. "It took me no time at all to fall in love with Los Angeles," she states after several years of back and forth. "The pop genre has always been near and dear to my heart. It's the majority of what I listened to growing up, so I've always leaned a little more that direction in my songwriting." In 2017, her life shifted in Nashville as she faced several hardships professionally, as well as personally. After spending many amazing years in the vastly developing city, she felt like it was time to start a new chapter. In complete gratitude for all Nashville had shown her, she decided to pack up her hatchback and move to Los Angeles. "I am most grateful for the time I spent in Nashville, because that town taught me how to write a song. In my opinion, there is no other place to learn. It will always be a part of me," she says. As she made the cross-country journey with her mom, she filmed, edited, and wrote the music for an exceptionally raw, honest, and emotional docuseries called, *The Rockumentary*. The series was released on YouTube and is a very beautiful lesson on resilience. "It was really important to me to share my story. With our social platforms today, everyone feels the need to have a perfect life. I had to be real and show that mine was definitely not that at all. I was really going through a really dark spot, and sharing my soul through my music was healing," she says.

Less than a year later, Cole is releasing a new single, 'Spiritual,' on iTunes and Spotify which is a very powerful follow up after the adversity she faced in 2017. The song was inspired by her move to the California coast, as she was finding new love, not only in a person, but with the ocean. "The ocean has always been one of my biggest fears," she says. "I saw such a comparison in my fear of the ocean and my fear of moving forward in my career. So, in my head, it made sense that if I could prove to myself that I could conquer the ocean, I could conquer my career. So I bought a paddle board," she says as she shrugs her shoulders. Now, she is paddling out over three miles through the uncertainty and into the Pacific Ocean on a regular basis, and found a revived strength within herself to release "Spiritual."

Empowered by her desire to make music that heals, Cole is taking it all in and thoroughly enjoying the journey. Her biggest joy besides creating music and getting to perform is making new friends along the journey. "I really cherish this time because there is excitement around every turn and I will never take that for granted," said Cole. I'm grateful that I get to wake up each morning and create and share."