

## Mp3 Debra Arlyn - Complicated Mess



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A SEXY, SOULFUL AND YET WHOLESOME POP/R&B SOUND. IT'S ALL ABOUT DEBRA'S INCREDIBLE VOICE, COMBINED WITH HER MATURE ACCESSIBLE SONGWRITING. 10 MP3 Songs

POP: Piano, ROCK: Modern Rock Details: PRESS QUOTES AND REVIEWS: "Confident and self-assured at 20 years old, singer/songwriter/keyboardist Debra Arlyn demonstrated a sense of maturity and poise that takes most performers years to cultivate. With a voice that recalls the power of Kelly Clarkson, Christina Aguilera and even Mariah Carey, Arlyn was always in control of her instrument and utilized it to great effect. Whether belting out a song with swelling chorus, being sultry like a torch singer or showing a quieter vulnerability dropping down her voice down a key or two, Arlyn exhibited the talent of a seasoned pro." - ALL-ACCESS Magazine "I like this record, she's very good and the album as a whole is a very slick production, it sounds and looks very major label." - COLLECTED SOUL "Guide to women in music" "Debra Arlyn has grown from an aspiring pop starlet into a singer-songwriter of impressive vocal and emotional dynamics." - ENTERTAINER "Arlyn has the pipes and point-of-view of a mature songwriter. This young artist is working at a high level and is ripe for major label interest." - LA MUSIC CONNECTION MAGAZINE. "Debra is nonetheless getting music-bizzers abuzz over her TRL- ready voice (a sweet but strong instrument capable not merely of Mariah-like melismatic feats but of real emotion, too) and her more wholesome, less-buxom Britney looks." - WILLAMETTE WEEKLY "Between her sexy, soulful, infinitely accessible (and, thankfully, unassisted by auto-tune) croon and her whitebread good looks, Arlyn could successfully become a pop diva." - SPLENDID MAGAZINE "ONCE AND FUTURE 'IDOL' By Marty Hughley THE OREGONIAN "American Idol" has become one of the most attention-grabbing cultural phenomena of our time, and a viable stepping stone to at least short-term pop stardom. But Corvallis singer Debra Arlyn should be congratulated for falling short of that televised brass

ring. Arlyn won a 2003 "Oregon Idol" competition sponsored by the media conglomerate Clear Channel, but was cut in an early round at the real deal in Los Angeles. So instead of focusing on the superficialities of performance and the interpretive challenges of wretched songs, Arlyn has had the freedom to work on what ultimately counts, or at least what ought to: writing and delivering a good, honest song, making music that reflects her heart, not her marketing plan. And that work is starting to pay off with "Complicated Mess," the 21-year-old pop hopeful's promising new album. Handling all writing, vocals and keyboards, and producing this (only her second album) on her own, Arlyn sounds impressively mature and confident. Her voice is warm and clear and can affect both a youthful lightness and a richer, more soul-inflected feeling, and she's sussed how to shape the sound of guitars and a taut rhythm section in ways that both support her vocals and build the emotional resonance of the songs. But as appealing as her voice is (and on that count she has a refreshing sense for when not to use her power and melismatic athleticism), it's the songs that mark Arlyn as a talent to watch. The title track in particular builds around a memorable central hook that's dramatic but never oversold, and throughout the 10 songs she shows a knack for concise structures and graceful melodies. Most notably for a young artist shooting for the mainstream moon, she doesn't slip into the cheesy musical resolutions or lyric cliches that tend to hamper artists of this stripe. Forging a path to stardom from the base of what's essentially a family-run label out of Corvallis won't be as easy as withstanding Simon Cowell's sarcasm might have been. But Arlyn's clearly headed down the right road. And she might end up someone actually worth idolizing.

Debra's Official Bio: Debra Arlyn, an emerging piano-pop singer/songwriter, has defined her sound by producing her new album *Complicated Mess*. While being compared to Kelly Clarkson and Christina Aguilera, Arlyn maintains originality by blending classic songwriting (i.e. Carol King) with contemporary arrangements that move the listener beyond cookie-cutter pop. Just as Kelly Clarkson distanced herself from *American Idol*, Arlyn has distanced herself from being the 2003 Oregon Idol. *Complicated Mess* captures the essence of a young woman growing up. Songs talk about transitions; dealing with life, changes in relationships and the struggle of following dreams. It doesn't follow the cliché of a dark, melancholy singer/songwriter or a giddy optimistic teen. Rather it reflects a depth and understanding of the human experience with a healthy dose of bitter sweetness. A good example is *Why Can't We Start Over?* This song also shows off Arlyn's self-taught piano style, and was featured on the WB TV show *Related*. Since signing with Homeslice Music, Arlyn released her debut album, *Thinking Out Loud* (produced by Epic artist Justin King), was featured in

Billboard, and named one of the Hot 100 Artists by LAs Music Connection Magazine. She has performed at the Hotel Caf in LA, the Knitting Factory, NARM in San Diego, NEMO in Boston, and shared bills with Portland stars Geoff Byrd Scott Fisher. Dont discount Arlyn because of her polished blonde appearance. Declared by the industry as The girl with the incredible voice, its clear this girl can really sing. By writing, performing and producing Complicated Mess, Debra Arlyn proves she has the talent and soulfulness of a true artist. Debra's Musical Accomplishments: 1. New cd Complicated Mess released 8/06 by Burnside Distribution Company and Homeslice Music Records. 2. Single Let It Go from Complicated Mess receiving radio airplay including KINK 102fm. 3. Twice featured artist on Portlands PDXposed entertainment TV show 5/06. 4. Included in the Top 100 Unsigned Artists by Music Connection magazine 12/05. 5. 2 Songs featured on Warner Bros TV show Related 6. Voted Top Female Pop Vocalist of all time on GarageBand.com. 7. Wrote and recorded soundtrack for the indie movie Clear Cut screened at the Sundance Film Festival 2006. 8. Finalist in 2004-05 Unisong International Contest. 9. Featured artist in Clear-channels and Garagebandprogram NEW!DISCOVER MUSIC. 10. Performed at NARM 2005, NEMO 2005, WFA 2006 and NACA 2006 11. Won the Clear Channel 2003 "Oregon Idol" contest, and was flown to L.A. to compete for the American Idol TV show. "IT'S SUCH A BEAUTIFUL, COMPLICATED MESS." By Jason Gearhart Recently, NORTHWEST NOISE was fortunate enough to conduct an online interview with the lovely and talented Northwest pop sensation, DEBRA ARLYN. Arlyn has recently completed her sophomore record titled Complicated Mess, only a year after her debut album Thinking Out Loud created a positive buzz within the national and independent music communities. Arlyn answered a wide variety of questions about her personal endeavors and interests. Id like to call the overall theme to this Northwest Noise online interview piece, Debra Arlyn: Musician in Transition! Read on, my children! NW: First off, how are you enjoying your summer so far with the release of your sophomore record Complicated Mess and your tour schedule up and down the west coast? DA: Im very excited about the official release of my CD coming up August 8th. We have tons of fun shows to support the release, from Portland down to San Diego, and its always a blast to travel and play shows in different cities. There really is no better way to spend a summer. NW: Epic Records recording artist and native Oregonian Justin King produced and lent his musical talents to your debut album Thinking Out Loud. How did you meet King and what was it like working with him on that record? DA: Justin probably doesnt realize what a HUGE influence he was on me. I met him through a mutual friend that had worked with him

before, and I asked him if he would produce my songs for me. I cant believe he actually accepted because he was so busy with his own thing at the time, but Im so thankful he did. I learned so much from him. Every time I listen to Thinking Out Loud and I hear him playing on it, it makes me smile. NW: You produced the Complicated Mess record all by yourself. What did you learn from King as far as producing a record and did you draw from any other sources to help guide you in your debut producing effort? DA: Justin taught me about crafting a song through producing, how to make the chorus stand out, and how to simplify melodies so theyre more accessible to listeners. He also was very aware of song length for things like radio. The last thing Justin said to me at the end of our sessions was to never let anyone tell me what to do. To do music that was from my hearthe probably doesnt remember saying that, but it stuck with me. As far as other influences I had, I mostly just listened to a lot of records that were out at the time. A lot of Coldplay and of course Kelly Clarkson. I wasnt trying to copy them or anything, but they were great inspiration. NW: Both of your albums have similarities and differences in the messages and stories you sing about. Can you expound on some of the similarities and differences between Thinking Out Loud and Complicated Mess? Is the theme within each record a similar one or has your latest release evolved into a whole new thematic machine, so to speak? DA: Thinking Out Loud wasnt as consistent as Complicated Mess is musically or thematically. Thinking Out Loud was more or less about love and being in love and musically it definitely wandered a bit. With Complicated Mess, every song in a sense is telling the same message; which is that life, and all its various situations like love or following dreams, is a struggle and its complicated. It never works out like we think. I actually remember lying in my bed one night thinking about stuff and saying out loud its such a Complicated Mess. And I knew I had to write a song with that in mind. Thats why the first line of that song is I close my eyes when I lay down at night. Its interesting though that I talk about things being difficult and messy but I dont mean it in a negative way like oh look how tough my life is. I just mean it as more of an observation. Hence why I put the word beautiful in front of Complicated Mess, because it really is fascinating to me how life works out sometimes. NW: Has your music gotten radio airplay? If so, what Portland and non-Portland stations was your music played on? Are you still getting solid airplay? What tracks from both albums have been promoted and played? DA: I have been played on various radio stations: Eugene 104.7 KDUK, Portland KINK 101.9 to name a couple. I also am being featured in the Clearchannel and Garagebandprogram NEW!DISCOVER MUSIC, which means I am on over 400 Clearchannel radio station websites. NW: Whats it been like to have performed

on the same billing with other prominent Portland, Oregon musicians such as Geoff Byrd and Scott Fisher? Have you learned any ins and outs about the music industry and touring from these up and coming artists or from other artists? DA: Ive talked a lot with Geoff about the music scene in the Northwest and hes helped guide me a lot. I loved sharing stages with both guys because I really enjoy theyre music. I love Scotts lyrics. He talks about things that are important and his music makes you feel good at the same time. If only he would return my emails NW: Out of all your musician friends from the Portland crew, whos the biggest wise ass of the bunch? DA: Paul from Intervision 5. ;) NW: Has there been one particular gig youve done that stands out more than all the others? If so, which one and why? DA: I had a great show in January at the Room 5 Lounge in LA. Very intimate venue that was absolutely packed. Great response from the audience and the band played well together. NW: If I recall correctly, you were discovered through the Oregon Idol competition in 2003 by winning the whole thing. Do you embrace that period of your musical journey, the show giving you the exposure to help your career take off from its musical launching pad or is that time with the show a memory youre glad to forget about and move on from? If you have distanced yourself from that show, why have you decided to do so? DA: That experience was great. I got a lot of exposure and attention from it which helped me a lot. Im not purposely deciding to distance myself from being the Oregon Idol, I just have to make it clear to people that I do more than just sing. I am a singer/songwriter who plays piano and writes 100 of her music. When people think of American Idol, they think of a person who performs other peoples songs. And I dont do that. NW: Going back to the very beginnings of your musical evolution, at what age did you learn to play the piano? Did you teach yourself to play the piano and to sing? DA: Ive never had any vocal lessons or piano lessons. Some would argue thats not a great thing. Ha ha. But it has developed into something that makes me different I think. I taught myself how to play piano at 15. I cant read music so I memorize everything in my head. My dad always worries Im going to fall and bump my head and my career will be over... NW: Do you come from a musical family that inspired you to explore the music building within your soul? DA: My dad was a musician all of his life. Lets just say Tony Arlyn and The Mama Feels Goods was the most under-appreciated band of the 70s era. NW: I was grinning ear to ear when I found out your music had been featured on the WB television series Related. Which song or songs were chosen for the series? DA: Three songs were played on the show, most notably Why Cant We Start Over? from Complicated Mess. They had an actress on the show perform the song. That was awesome and difficult

to watch someone else sing my song. NW: Is it true that Friends co-creator and executive producer Marta Kauffman discovered your music for Related? If so, how did it make you feel that she wanted your music featured on the show? DA: I did have a meeting with Marta and the music supervisor for Related. They heard about me through a review in Music Connection Magazine. I almost had the opportunity to be on the show, but I think the lack of acting experience did me in. Its flattering that they liked my music, and I really appreciate the opportunity they gave me. NW: Okay Debra, heres where it gets good for your fans! Let the asking of the personal and random questions begin! Ill start by asking how you find a healthy balance between your singing career, family, friends and a love life. DA: I dont really. Music will always come first, but I am young still and I dont like feeling that Im missing out on things with my friends and stuff. Sometimes that gets the better of me and I lose focus. Fortunately my family is so involved with my career and helping to build it, that they keep me in line. And as far as the love life always have time for that. Ha ha. Jk. NW: Outside of making music, are there any other interests, pursuits or talents that you have? DA: I scored a documentary that showed in Sundance this year, and I really enjoyed that. I would love to compose music for films. Its completely different than writing pop songs obviously and I would love to pursue that. NW: I saw a myspace video from the show PDXposed where you were flying a kite on the Oregon coast. Have you been brushing up on your kite flying skills since the taping of that segment? Please dont break the hearts of your fans by telling them youre not a singing/kite flying professional! DA: Ha ha. No kite flying recently. Having my ass kicked by PDXposed host Jon Olson is enough to discourage anyone from kite flying. NW: Okay Debra, what do you like better; a beautiful sunrise or sunset? DA: Definitely a beautiful sunrise. Theres so much hope at the beginning of each day, I really like the feeling of waking up with the sun. It doesnt happen often, but when it does, I enjoy it. I almost feel bad when the sunsets. Like I didnt make the most of my day. NW: Do you have any guilty pleasures? If so, what are they? DA: Hmmlets see. I love watching a suspenseful movie in my house by myself with all the lights off. I love dancing around in my room to Britney Spears, Madonna, or Janet Jackson, and then pretending Im Britney Spears, Madonna or Janet Jackson. I love having my head massaged. I enjoy the occasional Myspace. I love Jason Mraz. I love buying new clothes from Charlette Rouse even when I cant afford it, and I love Mexican food even though I know my metabolism will slow down soon. NW: What kind of hair products do you use to give it that extra glisten and shine? DA: Ha ha. Pantene pro-V. Do I smell an endorsement?? NW: Whats currently playing on your iPod or music player the most? DA: Unlike the

rest of the universe, I dont have an i-pod. In my cd player right now is Madonnas latest album. I freaking love it. NW: Is there an instrument you dont know how to play that youd like to learn? DA: Bass. I would love to be able to make people groove and dance. Plus you dont see a lot of women bass players fronting a band. Sheryl Crow does sometimes I think thats cool. NW: Can you bench press your keyboard? DA: Havent tried. But Im guessing probably not. NW: Do you have numchuck skills? DA: My brother is a second degree adult black belt. So I can say yes. NW: Are you a cat or dog person? DA: Im a puppy person. NW: Do you have any bad habits? DA: I swear entirely too much and have a vulgar sense of humor. Im not very ladylike once you get to know me. NW: Do you have any fears? DA: Yes. Im afraid of being dropped in the middle of the ocean with no land in sight. Im afraid of heights. Im afraid I always have something coming out of my nose when Im on camera. Im afraid of being put into situations when Im not prepared. Im of afraid of dying young. Im afraid to pick up the hair that gets stuck in the shower drain. Yuck. NW: Should I be getting more than four and a half hours of sleep per night? DA: Sleep is over-rated. NW: Whats your favorite food? DA: Mexican!! NW: Whats your least favorite food? DA: Chinese!! NW: Will the Northwest Noise podcast be fortunate enough to interview you as a guest on a future show? DA: ANYTIME!! Well, there you have it readers. Youve gotten to know some pretty intimate happenings within the mind, body and soul of Debra Arlyn. Arlyns prowess on the piano and lyrics of love and life gone awry shows a maturity not many 21 year old musicians possess. Shes only just begun her journey in life, but shes destined for stardom. And perhaps more importantly, shes destined to be the kind of artist who stays true to her roots in creating the kind of music she wants made. The record industry suits in their comfortable offices be damned! Debra Arlyns around to stay for a long time, but shes staying her way, period. Want to read the ENTIRE interview? Go to: [northwestnoise "ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC"](#)

Debra Arlyn sits in a worn chair in Bombs Away Cafe on Monroe Avenue, the place is quiet after the noon lunch rush. Its bright outside, and sunlight comes through the cafes clean windows, catching in her eyes as she laughs. She shimmers in the filtered afternoon glow like a star in a small town set to go somewhere ... but still in love with home. At 21, Arlyn has come a long way musically, and she hopes theres a long way still ahead. Her goal is to break into musics mainstream, build a strong fan base and to make music her life, personally and professionally. I dont want to have to get a day job, she laughed. Arlyn, a life-long Corvallis resident, will perform songs from her upcoming album, *Complicated Mess* at Bombs Away Cafe tonight at 9:30. The album is set for release in August. At age 17, Arlyn won Clear

Channels Oregon Idol contest and was flown to L.A. to compete in the American Idol TV competition. Although she was eliminated in the second round, Arlyn said she spoke with Idol judge Randy Jackson afterward. He said she didn't need the show as a stepping stone she already had the talent. Complicated Mess, Arlyn's second full-length album, blends aspects of jazz and R&B into a polished pop package. She said her music takes on the best aspects of the two genres good beats with strong but not overpowering vocals. My music is a combination of different influences I've had in my life, Arlyn said. She compared her vocal style to Christina Aguilera, but with the sincerity of Sarah McLachlan. Arlyn lets her music flow naturally, drawing on personal memories to make songs come alive. I try to remember what was going on and what I was going through at the time, she said. And it comes back quickly. Arlyn's creative mantra is Do what feels right. Writing and composing to the rhythm of her natural flow results in genuine music throughout Complicated Mess. Insincerity of pop artists, along with cookie cutter instrumentals is a pet peeve for Arlyn. Originality and sincerity are what is important to Arlyn in music, as made clear the first time listening to Complicated Mess. I can tell when it's not coming from the heart. It sounds contrived, she said. With most pop artists, you can tell they didn't write the songs they're singing. However, there were no traces of bitterness in her responses. But she is proud of how personal she has kept her album. A lot of songs talk about going through transitions; growing up, dealing with life, changes in relationships and the struggle of following dreams but being practical, she said. Arlyn's idea of practical is different than most. A four-year varsity basketball player through high school, Arlyn continued to play at Linn-Benton. Torn between two talents more importantly two passions Arlyn chose to pursue her music. Arlyn does not end her role in the musical creative process at the lyrics. Using the Apple program Garage Band, Arlyn adds bare bone drum beats, bass lines, guitar lines and even strings. Her band develops Arlyn's work further until everything flows and sounds right. Complicated Mess was recorded in Arlyn's home in eastern Corvallis, which doubles as headquarters for her business, Homeslice Music. Run mostly by Arlyn's family members and associates in Los Angeles, Homeslice gives Arlyn the creative license and freedom she thrives on. Arlyn's favorite tracks on the album reflect the real vibe of her music, strength and creativity, and her natural feel for composing and performing. The opening song, Let It Go, starts the album strong leading into the title track. Complicated Mess is my favorite song (on the album) because I moved away from my lyrical norm, she said. Why Can't We Start Over and Words I Never Meant are two of Arlyn's best R&B songs. In Words... I got to be more funky with it, playing with horns. She wrote the song Why Can't



We Start Over. in 10 minutes, she said the soulful piece was the result of her natural musical flow at the piano. She taught herself how to play when she was 15. It was a nice experience how the song came together when I wrote it. Outside the studio, performing live is a different story for Arlyn. She loves it. The number one thing at live shows is interaction with the people there. I like intimate settings, where I can actually look into peoples faces and talk to them, she said. The second most important thing is having fun with the band, where the music is flowing and everyone enjoys playing.

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