



Spotlight

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# JOCELYN & CHRIS

AT SHOWROOM



By Nicole S. Colson | Photos by Kiki Vassilakis



Later they learned by doing, but brother-and-sister duo, Jocelyn & Chris, first learned by listening.

The pair, last name Arndt, will be playing at the Colonial Theatre's SHOWROOM on Saturday, October 2, and thank their teacher parents for jump-starting their career as singer-songwriters and musicians.

"They would describe themselves as music lovers; they never played or sang," said Jocelyn. "We grew up with this great music collection and love of music around us." She described the pantry in their old farmhouse, which their mother and father converted into a music library. If they were bored, they were sent inside the little room for their education.

"It was half-books, half-CDs," she went on. "We cut our teeth on rock 'n' roll and jazz and blues—it was just there for the taking."

They each have their own musical influences: Chris said he gravitated toward "slower" blues and blues-y players like David Gilmour, BB King, Jimmy Page and Mark Knopfler.

Jocelyn's are, she describes, "singers who tell you exactly who they are within three seconds of opening their mouth." She lists Freddie Mercury, Aretha Franklin, Pat Benatar and Janis Joplin in that category.

Jocelyn started playing piano as a 4th grader and her brother began on guitar in 3rd grade (he is 25 and she is 26) and would often practice in the living room side by side. Then came talent shows and they both began to write their own music. A local DJ who had seen them perform invited them to perform an original song on the radio station in their hometown in upstate New York; and when they were in high school heading off to college, they met their producer, David Bourgeois.

"He said, 'You guys are good enough to take a stab at doing this for a living,'" said Chris.

They describe their sound as rock with a blues tint; and their look is like they just stepped off the stage at Woodstock.

"What we write about is modern," said Jocelyn. "We have a tendency to lean into melodies and hooks that bring it more into today's music. We're taking classic rock influences but we're not trying to be classic rock tribute artists."

Chris has a free-flowing approach to his writing.

"I write whatever I feel based on what I listen to today and what I associate with it," he said. "The fact we both grew up being inspired by classic blues and soul artists, I bring blues-y components. It's one of the spices but not the main component of the stew."

They began their dual life of going to school during the week and being rock 'n' rollers, performing on weekends.

Since then, the pair and their band have released seven albums, had three Billboard Top 40 hit songs, appeared on "The Today Show" and had coverage in The Huffington Post, Paste Magazine and the Daily Mail.

Then came the pandemic and no performances for a year and a half. During that time, said Chris, the two were "holed up" with their parents, grandparents, three cats and a dog.

They started live streaming shows they called "couch concerts" seven days a week.

During that time, they also began working on an album they will finish this winter.

They went back on the road in July, doing 10 shows in 10 days around the country.

"There's no substitute for live music," said Jocelyn. "We do whatever we need to do to play in any capacity."

This tour was different for Chris.

"Everyone was so thankful," he said.

Because education, musical or otherwise, is very important to the siblings, they each worked while touring through almost every state and writing music on their college degrees from Harvard University. Jocelyn has a degree in English and Chris in computer science.

"Before we knew music was a possibility, we planned on gearing up to go to college," said Chris. "We went into (this career) thinking if we could juggle both it was worth it. We have always been believers that if you can do more, keep doing that."

Jocelyn & Chris perform Saturday, October 2, at 8 p.m. at The Colonial Theatre's SHOWROOM, 20 Commercial Street, Keene. Tickets are \$17-\$25 and can be ordered at the colonial.org. Proof of vaccination or negative results of a COVID-19 PCR test administered within 72 hours is required for admittance to events at SHOWROOM. In addition, masks are required to be worn at all times while at the venue. You may pull your mask down when eating or drinking only, regardless of your vaccination status.

