

BIOGRAPHY OF KORILINAE CAROTHERS

A musician's path to her/his muse is sometimes an easy one. Other times, it is filled with potential pitfalls or unexpected obstacles. Kori Linae Carothers faced just that when, during a kindergarten health screening at the age of 5, it was discovered she was deaf in her left ear. Her young peers found out and the teasing began. In addition, throughout elementary and high school, Kori was constantly told she would never become a musician. Undeterred, she kept learning and practicing, never surrendering her dream. Despite these discouragements, Carothers was passionate about her calling and now, years later, she is an acclaimed pianist and keyboard player with four albums to her credit. Clearly, she is an example of a person following her muse with courage, humor, and determination.

One of six children, Kori was born in Cedar City, Utah. Her parents were not musicians but as Kori recounted, "My parents had a respectable collection of 45 records from *South Pacific*, *Oklahoma* and many LPs from the Boston Pops and quite a nice collection of Herb Alpert albums" all of which were in constant rotation on the family record player. As far as performing, perhaps Kori inherited of her spark and talent from her paternal grandmother, who played piano to accompany silent movies. Because her older sister had the radio on all the time, Kori soon became familiar with big-name artists of that time: Led Zeppelin, The Beatles, Carly Simon, Seals and Croft, James Taylor, et al. In a strange twist, it was not any of these pop/rock stars that caught her early fancy, but the now-iconic John Williams' soundtrack to *Star Wars*, which her parents purchased for her on cassette. Yet, the influence that cemented her commitment to music was a more typical source. "...the group that made me want to be a musician and compose music was the Beatles. I absolutely loved their earlier material."

Having taken classical piano lesson since the age of 8, Kori took the proverbial "next step" and began composing her own songs at the age of 14. While some of her siblings also took music lessons on various instruments when they were children, Kori's love affair didn't wane—it propelled her to attend Brigham Young University to pursue a major in music. Her dream had crystalized inside her—she wanted to compose and record her own music. Driven in equal parts to both prove her early naysayers wrong as well as to follow her love of music itself, she dove in head first to her studies, but sometimes the best intentions are not always easily fulfilled. "I got really burnt out on college and went home and started working at a graphics company and worked on my music on the side."

Another of Kori Carothers' "tipping points" most likely occurred when she discovered the Windham Hill label, featuring (now legendary) artists such as George Winston, Liz Story, Alex DeGrassi, Scott Cossu, the Celtic-fusion band Nightnoise, et al. Upon hearing the label's music, Carothers recounts "I thought I had died and gone to heaven." If the label's music had that effect, one can only imagine how it was to meet the "founding father" himself. In 2008, while working with producer and musician Jeff Silverman in Nashville, an opportunity presented itself and she was introduced to the Grammy-winning guitarist and founder of Windham Hill Records, Will Ackerman. Upon hearing her music, Ackerman invited her to his Imaginary Road Studios in Vermont to record her next album, *Trillium*. The two kindred spirits hit it off and Kori revisited the IR studios in 2014 to record her first solo piano album, *Fire In The Rainstorm*.

A full-time musician and stay-at-home mother of four "very creative and rascally children" Kori continues to be influenced by sources as disparate as nature, people (including past boyfriends!), and even the fantasy works of noted author Anne McCaffrey. She aspires to record a Christmas album as well as an album of electronic music accompanied by a live orchestra. When she mulls over why she continues to record and release music, she admits that more commercial success would be fantastic but in the end "...the true goal... is to touch people's lives. Letting them know... when they hear it, it's authentic, real, and speaking to their souls." The combination of passion and intimacy that her fans will hear on *Fire In The Rainstorm* will certainly go a long way toward fulfilling that goal for this warm, engaging, talented and humorous artist. ~ Bill Binkelman

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