

# HER LIFE



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on a Budget

**Jes Hudak**  
**RISING YOUNG STAR**



# HERLIFE<sup>®</sup>

## MAGAZINE



JES HUDAK



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When I first tuned into the amazing voice of rising young singer, Jes Hudak, I knew I had discovered something great! This 29-year-old woman has a voice that can definitely make you stand up and take notice. Her broad range, from the operatic "Walk through Walls," which she recently performed on Bravo TV's "Platinum Hit," to her spirited pop sound in "National Holiday," this is a flavorful voice you will want to listen to over and over again.



inspirations

# Jes Hudak

## RISING YOUNG STAR

**M**ove over, my beloved iPod playlist! There's a new voice coming to town and it is proving to be a personal favorite. When Angela Beddoe, *HERLIFE* Magazine Publisher and Editor-in-Chief, called me to tell that she saw this phenomenal singer/songwriter while watching Bravo TV's *Platinum Hit* at 2 am and that I was going to interview her, I was not sure what to think. Now I understand why she was so excited. When I first tuned into the amazing voice of rising young singer, Jes Hudak, I knew I had discovered something great! This 29-year-old woman has a voice that can definitely make you stand up and take notice. Her broad range, from the operatic "Walk through Walls," which she recently performed on Bravo TV's *Platinum Hit*, to her spirited pop sound in "National Holiday," this is a flavorful voice you will want to listen to over and over again.

BY ANN E. BUTENAS

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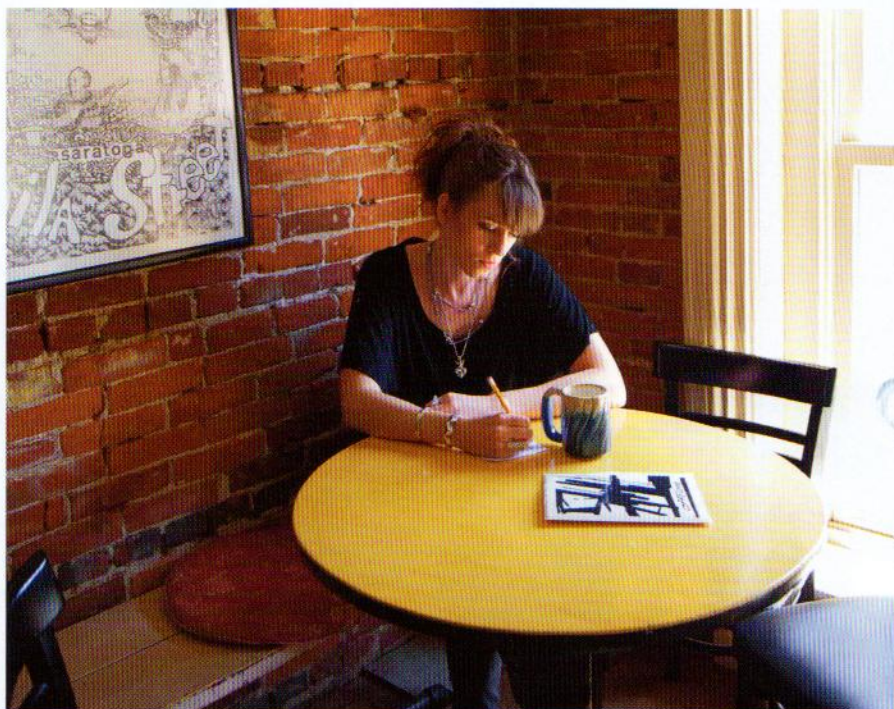


Born in Minnesota, Jes spent the early years of her life in Pennington, New Jersey, before moving to Saratoga Springs at the age of 12. It was at that time she discovered her musical abilities. "I had always played the piano and was drawn to the open mic events at Caffé Lena," said Jes. "I saw a girl about ten years older than me playing her original piano music there and thought that I could do that, too. That experience was an epiphany for me."

Influenced early on by the legendary artist, Tori Amos, Jes honed her skills and challenged her performance fears by garnering many visits to the open mic stage. By age 15, she had recorded her first CD and became a regular performer every Thursday night at the café. By her junior year in high school, she was one of the hosts there, introducing new acts to the stage, a role she initially found terrifying, but soon became quite comfortable with assuming.

She comes by her musical roots quite humbly, crediting her mom with being her biggest influence in the world of music. "She is the biggest music lover out there," laughs Jes. "In fact, she has all but worn out her record collection. My dad is a musician, too, but only as a hobby. He plays the guitar and harmonica."

Jes also has an older brother who lives in Saratoga who was a violin prodigy as a child and is an accomplished



By 2002, Jes had released her *Tiny Dream* CD and then was invited to go on a national tour, not as a singer but as a production assistant, for such heavy weights as Sheryl Crow and Maroon 5. "It was a six-week tour," Jes recalled. "It wasn't easy. I was doing all the work no one else wanted to do, but it was worth it. I also became friends with the members of Maroon 5 during that time."

Once that tour ended, Jes took her ambitions for the musical world to a new level. She left the comfort of home and headed to New York City, and jokingly, yet painfully honestly, described herself as "the greenest blade of grass ever."

However, this talented young woman made a living for five strong years there through her music, performing steadily and making a solid name for herself. "Sure, I made some mistakes along the way, taking a few tumbles towards finding myself," noted Jes.

Three years into her adventure in

the Big Apple, Jes met Amy Applebaum (see related story in this issue), an encounter that would positively and dramatically change her life. In fact, when Angela Beddoe, *HERLIFE* Magazine Publisher and Editor-in-Chief found out about Amy, she instinctively knew that she had to feature Amy in this issue, as well. This networking opportunity allowed Angela and the *HERLIFE* team to meet up with Jes

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*"Time was wasting," she mused. She left the university but did pursue additional education shortly thereafter at Skidmore, studying music, French and women's studies.*

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guitarist. "We used to play music together when we were younger," reflected Jes. "He also inspired me to pursue my music."

After graduating from high school, Jes studied music theory composition at UMASS – Amherst for one semester when the realization hit her that she would rather learn her trade through actual experience than behind a text book. "Time was wasting," she mused. She left the university but did pursue additional education shortly thereafter at Skidmore, studying music, French and women's studies. "I do like to be challenged and stimulated mentally," she noted.

and Amy to shoot the cover and at the same time, Jes was shooting a video in which the *HERLIFE* photo shoot will be a part of it. Serendipity is a great story teller!

"When I met Amy, I literally felt stuck professionally. I was doing well, but I was not moving forward," explained Jes. "Amy helped me to find my footing, provided structure and assisted me with creating my goals. In short, she got me back on track. We are like family now. Her amazing energy complements mine."

With all of the bravado of a young star on the rise coupled with the wisdom of a seasoned professional, Jes knew when to pull up roots and aspire for further growth.



"After five years in New York, I knew it was time to move on. I realized I had conquered the city and had accomplished what I went there to do," Jes smiled.

Jes packed up her belongings, her dog, and grabbed a friend, driving across the country to the land where musical dreams take on a life of their own: Hollywood. "I found a tiny house with a yard," said Jes. "I was so excited, as this was a place where I could tap dance in the middle of the night and the neighbors would not complain by banging on the walls or ceilings like they would have done in New York."

Jes now has a roommate who is a producer and they have fashioned a recording studio in their backyard. Who knew going to work in pajamas could be so much fun?

Once in Hollywood, Jes began performing all over the town and soon discovered a hot spot called Café Muse and asked if she could play there, which she did once a week for two years. She eventually created "Jes and Friends" as she hosted performances for other groups who took to the stage there.

With her star clearly rising, another challenge made its presence known. Bravo TV introduced its new show, *Platinum Hit*, and Jes saw this as her chance to go to the next level in her career. "Just as I realized in New York, I recognized that I had played all over Hollywood and was ready to reach for something bigger in my life," explained Jes. *Platinum Hit* has provided that opportunity."

Even though she had made it all the way through Hollywood Week in Season Five of the other hit show, "American Idol," Jes knew that her participation in "Platinum Hit" would be monumentally ground-breaking for her. "Platinum Hit" is Bravo TV's music competition for emerging songwriters. The show follows 12 up-and-coming musicians as they battle through a series of innovative songwriting challenges testing their creativity, patience and drive. Well-known singer Jewel and former American Idol judge Kara DioGuardi are joined by guest judges each week to evaluate the competition.

As we go to press with this magazine, the final outcome of the show has not yet been revealed. Regardless of that outcome, however, Jes is preparing herself for all that lies ahead of her. "I am grateful for all of the experiences I have had so far," said Jes. "I use those experiences as a way to continually improve myself and to grow as a musical artist."

Now that she is crafting her musical talents on a very big platform, she has taken that familiar pop sound of hers and embraced it with an edgier vibe, as evidenced in one of her latest tracks, "Dirty Filthy Liar."

In the world of music, Jes has learned that it is a huge challenge for independent artists to make it big, but she has realized the various strengths upon which she can



call. "The smartest thing you can do is to admit when you need help. It's also the best thing you can do for yourself," emphasized Jes. "I was resistant at first to admit I didn't know what I was doing, but I learned to deal with that and am so grateful for the guidance I have found in Amy."

At the time of this interview, the outcome of Jes' participation on "Platinum Hit" is not yet known, but regardless of what happens, one thing is for sure: Jes is an obvious winner. She learned what she needed to learn in New York and moved on. She has learned so much while in Hollywood. The one address that will make her the best she can be, however, is one she has defined for herself: "I prefer to live in my strengths," she commented. "I may not clean dishes well or sort the laundry perfectly, but I do know music and love to write and perform. This is what I do well." ■

For more information on Jes and her music, visit her web site at [www.jeshudak.com](http://www.jeshudak.com). For more information about "Platinum Hit," check out past episodes as well as upcoming ones at <http://www.bravotv.com/platinum-hit>.