

CHRISTINE ALBERT BIO

When Christine Albert gives someone her business card these days, she has a choice to make. After almost four decades making her living as a singer/songwriter, the Austin, Texas-based musician has evolved into an artist whose philanthropic work is at the core of who she is.

In 2005 Christine founded Swan Songs, an Austin area non-profit that fulfills musical last wishes by organizing private concerts for individuals with a terminal illness. Today, Christine guides the organization as Founder & CEO and they have fulfilled over 1000 unique requests for music at the end of life – from Japanese songs to Mariachi, classical cello to Texas blues.

From 2007-2015, Christine served on the national Board of Trustees of The Recording Academy® (the 20,000-member organization that puts on the GRAMMY Awards®). She rose to the top elected leadership position – Chairman of the Board – the first independent artist and only the second woman to do so. In 2017, she returned to the Board as an officer in the Chair Emeritus position.

That is Christine's philanthropic side; then there's the matter of the "artiste."

Christine still takes the stage both as a solo artist and as one half of the powerful folk/Americana duo Albert and Gage, in which she co-stars with husband and musician extraordinaire Chris Gage – bringing an energetic mix of originals, covers by Texas songwriter friends and show-stopping Edith Piaf chansons (yes, in French!) to audiences across Texas, the US and overseas.

As Albert and Gage, Chris and Christine have released six CDs since teaming up in 1997. They also own and operate MoonHouse Records and MoonHouse Studio in South Austin. Of their 2009 release "Dakota Lullaby," *Maverick* magazine said "a palpable joy permeates Chris and Christine's vocals on every one of the twelve musically diverse songs." *The Austin Chronicle's* Margaret Moser wrote, "Half Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme (the non-sappy part) and half Richard and Linda Thompson (before the split), Christine Albert and Chris Gage are as entertaining in performance as their music. The couple's sense of whimsy is strong, but never dilutes the lovely and sometimes plaintive songwriting."

Processing the experience of losing over a dozen close friends and family members, in 2014 Christine was inspired to create her 6th solo CD - "Everything's Beautiful Now" - a collection of songs that explore the transformation and growth that can come from loss.

Mike Davies with Folk Radio UK said "Given the number of funerals that went into the creation of this album, you might have expected to come away feeling torn and desolate, but instead there's a sense of peace, acceptance and hope that, greatly helped by Albert's warm honey vocals, leaves you calm and ready to face whatever tomorrow brings....."

The album was co-produced by Chris and Christine and showcases Gage's impressive instrumental gifts. In addition to her own songs, Christine interprets songs by Jackson Browne, Warren Zevon and Shake Russell & Dana Cooper, as well as "Dakota Lullaby" songwriter Tom Peterson, with guest appearances by Jerry Jeff Walker and Eliza Gilkyson.

Among her many career highlights is the bilingual folk/cabaret fusion of her "Texafrance" series of recordings, described by the *Austin American-Statesman* as "a waltz across Texas with Maurice Chevalier." The enticing

musical mash-up organically blends Christine's European heritage and love of Edith Piaf with the folk/country sound that grew out of her years playing music in New Mexico and Texas.

Christine grew up in Rome, NY but came of age in the honky-tonks and biker bars of New Mexico, joining her first band in Santa Fe at the age of 19. She discovered the fertile Austin music scene when she played the Kerrville Folk Festival with fellow New Mexico singer/songwriter Eliza Gilkyson in 1981. She made the move from Santa Fe to Austin within a year.

Christine has appeared on the nationally-syndicated PBS series *Austin City Limits*. She was awarded "Female Vocalist of the Year" by the Kerrville Folk Festival Music Awards, "Superstar of Austin Music" for her community service work and was inducted into the "2018 Texas Music Hall of Fame" by The Austin Songwriters Group, an organization which Christine co-founded in 1986.

In her "spare time" Christine hosts "Mystery Monday," a weekly show at the Tex-Mex landmark El Mercado restaurant in South Austin that she co-hosts with master of the Telecaster, Bill Kirchen. Originally co-created with the late Sarah Elizabeth Campbell, the popular residency features a rotating cast of guests. The gathering has become a must-do for the Austin roots music scene. Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Butch Hancock, Shake Russell, Michael Hearne, Bill Hearne, Redd Volkaert, Marcia Ball, Rosie Flores, Cindy Cashdollar, Guy Forsyth, Slaid Cleaves, Ruthie Foster, Earl Poole Ball...the list of stellar players who have taken the stage is a virtual who's-who of Austin music. Jimmy LaFave was often in the audience and a frequent co-host and his loss in May 2017 was marked with an emotional, standing room only tribute featuring over a dozen performers, Mystery Monday style.

3rd Coast Music noted that Christine has "one of the best and purest female voices in Austin." She is a life-long musician who is transforming her experience and passion into philanthropic work and initiatives that serve the larger community.

It may be time for more business cards.

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