

BIOGRAPHY

Stars MINDI ABAIR

Where do you go from #1? If you're singer, songwriter and saxophonist Mindi Abair—whose 2006 release *Life Less Ordinary* debuted at the top of Billboard's contemporary jazz chart—you step out of your comfort zone, reach deep inside, follow your heart, write a bunch of killer songs showcasing your dynamic vocals like never before and, yes, aim for the *Stars*.

With the highly anticipated release of Abair's aptly titled debut produced by her company 23 Music Group on Peak Records, a division of the Concord Music Group, the amazingly versatile artist bursts onto the pop scene with gale force. She adds a refreshingly unique voice to an exciting new generation of crossover artists who are, like her, powerful instrumentalists as well as thought-provoking singer/songwriters. Beginning with the promotion of the title cut "Stars" to AC Radio, the Florida raised, Los Angeles-based performer's unique hybrid sound and mix of cool vulnerability and utter conviction is going to give all of them—**John Mayer, Feist, Corinne Bailey Rae, Sara Bareilles, Norah Jones**—a run for their barrier breaking money.

Perhaps **John Taylor**, famed **Duran Duran** bassist, says it best about her stunning melodies and thought provoking lyrics: "Mindi is unique. Listen to her new album *Stars*, a genre-busting, breathtaking combination of contemporary jazz and Top 40 torch songs. It will be love at first listen." Helping Abair and her collaborator/producer **Matthew Hager** realize her creative and fearless musical vision is a choice group of stalwarts from the pop world: keyboardist **Ricky Peterson (John Mayer, Prince)**, drummer **Abe Laboriel, Jr. (Paul McCartney, Sting)** and cellist **Richard Dodd (Faith Hill, Foo Fighters)**. ▶





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Already a groundbreaking star in the contemporary jazz world, Abair has had three #1 hit singles on the Radio & Records charts, her last CD debuted #1 on Billboard's Contemporary Jazz chart, and her debut album stayed in the Top 10 for 19 consecutive weeks and was named the #1 most played Contemporary Jazz CD of 2003 by **Jazz Week**. She also hosts a popular weekly syndicated radio show called "Chill with Mindi Abair" that is broadcast in 40 markets in the U.S. and abroad. Each week, she features cutting edge music by artists such as **Zero 7, Air, Thievery Corporation**, and remixes of classic jazz artists such as **Billie Holiday** and **Nina Simone**. A hugely popular solo concert and festival attraction over the past seven years throughout the U.S., Abair recently performed for fans in Japan, Istanbul and Romania.

Abair established herself as a major presence in the pop world in the mid-90s when she toured as a singer and sax player with **Adam Sandler**. She's been on the road with **Mandy Moore**, was hand-picked by **Josh Groban** as his opening act on his sold out fall tour in 2004,



and even performed with **Duran Duran** for their U.S. comeback tour. Bassist **John Taylor** co-wrote the title track to Abair's first release *It Just Happens That Way* and co-wrote and plays acoustic guitar on the new collection's "F.L.A. Swing." She also became a role model for thousands of screaming teen girls all over the world touring with **The Backstreet Boys** on their famous 1999-2000 Millennium Tour. Abair contributed to **Keb' Mo's** award winning "Peace Back by Popular Demand,"

Adam Sandler's platinum CD "What's Your Name?," and the All-Star album *Forever For Always For Luther*; and she's been featured on **The Drew Carey Show**, **HGTV's Ground Rules** and **The Food Network's Emeril Live**.

Abair's lively and aggressive, full-scale immersion in the pop/rock singer/songwriter world on *Stars* is not a departure, but rather a natural extension of the high profile success she's had with many of her previous vocal songs. "I Can Remember" from *Come As You Are* was featured in the opening episode of the Aaron Spelling hit "Summerland," while "Every Time" was featured in last year's **Robin Williams/Mandy Moore** comedy "License To Wed." Panasonic also featured her video for "Every Time" on their Jumbotron in Times Square in 2005; and the singer scored big with the song "I Can't Wait For Christmas," which was featured in 2005 on the **Bath and Body Works Christmas CD** and the **Pier One Christmas CD**, selling a combined total of more than 800,000 units. The song has gone on to become a perennial pop holiday favorite.

One critical rave from **JAZZIZ** magazine could apply just as easily to the vibe of Abair's latest emotionally compelling melodies and thought provoking lyrics on *Stars*: "She's #1 for her distinctive, original sound, perfect melodies, grooves and overall sense of fun." **Josh Groban** has commented: "I was a fan the moment I saw a tape of one of her concerts. Her ability to connect with the crowd and appeal to jazz fans as well as those who aren't familiar with her makes her an exciting artist, and I was thrilled to have her as a guest on my tour." Blues giant **Keb' Mo'** takes it deeper: "She speaks to all of our souls. Do yourself a favor and check out her music."

Abair's ultimate goal on *Stars* is to bring light to the darkness, an unapologetic, optimistic sense of hope and idealism. Case in point: the lilting folk/pop tune "Change" reminds us that change is the one thing we can count on, and also the concept that can bring us all together. On the powerful first single and title track, she looks to the "Stars" as a connective thread between lovers who are far apart in physical distance. The **Elton John** influenced and piano-driven "On and On" reflects wistfully on the innocence of her small town youth (in St. Petersburg, Florida) and the way music has become an integral spiritual part of so many people's lives.

Abair's heartfelt "I Wonder" could very well be her generation's twist on John Lennon's "Imagine," a song that finds her contemplating a world in which people actually do love one another, offer hope to each other and treat others as they wished to be treated. "Here For You" is an uplifting, autobiographical old school soul/blues ballad that chronicles her incredible years long friendship with her longtime collaborator/producer **Matthew Hager**.

"Audiences today are more open than ever to artists who play instruments, write their own songs and have something meaningful to say," Abair says. "While I was writing the songs for *Stars*, I felt very optimistic, expressing a lot of joy and hope. We need that spirit to take hold of us today, and I am excited about expressing these ideas through songs that are meaningful to me and reflective of my journey and the many roads I've taken. I'm going for broke, making the record I've always wanted to make with songs that honestly portray my innermost feelings about my own life and the world around me."

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