

POP'S NEW PRINCESS

Tempe's Tatum Lynn is ready to let down her hair

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski

Tatum Lynn was writing songs as a student at Corona Del Sol, while her peers were planning to attend college.

"I wanted to sing and keep writing songs," she says. "I recorded the songs and put them on YouTube. Senior year is when everything clicked."

She figured correctly. On March 5, Lynn will release her debut album, "Let Down Your Hair," which features 14 songs, including the title track.

"I have a lot of stories to tell," she says. "It's not like other records, like Beyoncé's, who tells one story throughout. My goal for this record was to have a song for everyone. I'm really excited about that. It's something I look for in other people's albums. It's not just all sad, not just all happy. It has a mix of everything."

Lynn contends she's a lyrics person, admiring singer-songwriters like Julia Michaels and Selena Gomez.

"The messages I write are really important to me," Lynn says. "'Let Down Your Hair' is important to me. They were words that I was prompted to share. They're powerful to me. I'm excited to get that out for other people to hear."

"Some of my messages, I feel, are a little bit deeper than usual music that's played on the radio."

From the time she was 10 years old, Lynn has yearned to be a pop star. At the age of 19, that commitment paid off as "Later Baby XO" broke into the Billboard Top 40.

The youngest of five children, Lynn honed her vocal skills by singing at her LDS church with her two older sisters and their mom.

As a third-grader, Lynn made her debut as a singer-songwriter at her oldest sister's wedding.

"I always kept a journal, and would turn what I wrote into lyrics," she says. "I wrote a song for my sister's wedding, and it was the first time I felt confident



enough in what I wrote to think it was worth sharing. I kept writing lyrics via my journal all throughout high school, and it really helped shape me as a lyricist."

Lynn posted videos on YouTube, although, she says, she didn't have the confidence to share her voice then.

Now she loves posting on YouTube and getting people's feedback.

At Corona Del Sol, she began singing the national anthem at the school's basketball games. She moved on to a bigger stage when someone from the Arizona Cardinals heard her and asked her to perform at a game.

"I was pretty young when I did that," says Lynn, who also attended Chandler's Kyrene Aprende Middle School. "It was pretty nerve wracking. I would still be very nervous to do that today. It was so much fun, though. I remember one thing about it. I stood next to where the fire appears, near the inflatable tunnel. I could feel the heat. I thought I was going to be hit by the fire."

THE MAKING OF A DEBUT

Lynn's songs for "Let Down Your Hair" came from her journal, with the help of A-list talent. For the album, Lynn wrote with Lauren Christy (Avril

Lavigne, Dua Lipa, Kelly Clarkson), who was part of the award-winning Matrix writing trio; writer/producer John Fields (Pink, Demi Lovato, Jonas Brothers) and Joey Barba, who is featured on the tongue-in-cheek track "Can't Live Without You."

Working with Fields, Lynn says, was inspirational. She enjoyed hearing the tales of his career working with Gomez, Demi Lovato and Pink.

"It was a blessing to work with him," she adds. "I feel I learned a lot from him. He's a perfectionist, which I see in myself as well. It was really nice to have him there, just helping me make the songs perfect."

The album is filled with gems. "Let Down Your Hair" is a pop masterpiece, while "Closer" has the snarl of Pink. "Now U See Me Now U Don't" has a retro edge.

Lynn doesn't want to just help people through her music. At Corona Del Sol, she founded Music as Therapy, a nonprofit dedicated to providing music therapy and instruments to kids in special education classrooms throughout Arizona. She has also devoted much time to suicide prevention after the teen suicide rate went up by 25% in Arizona. She started a school club focused on prevention, and teamed up with a group called Teen Lifeline, a suicide prevention hotline. The track "With Me" is about a rash of suicides at Corona Del Sol.

"I started Music as Therapy when I was 15," she says. "We provide musical instruments and therapists to other nonprofits and schools that can't afford to have music therapy and instruments. It's been a blast. I've helped the kids I grew up with and became their best buddy."

She says between her nonprofit and her forthcoming album, she's excited to continue her career.

"I always say college will always be there," she says. "I learned to trust my gut and to lean on family. I know the industry has its ups and downs. When I started, we didn't know what we were doing. I just trusted my family and trusted our thoughts and what we wanted to do. It built a really good foundation for me. I just trust the process." **E!**

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