



EXENE CERVENKA THE EXCITEMENT OF MAYBE

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Life has its own built-in forms of emotional and creative inertia. And while some people experience a gradual falling off of whatever it is that makes them unique and vibrant, that doesn't seem to be the case with **Exene Cervenka**. The 54 year-old singer/songwriter's life work has been all about constructing, deconstructing, persevering, and building back up again with new creative adjustments. Sometimes a broken bone leads to a strengthening of the rest of the body.

Many know Exene as a lead member and co-founder of the legendary **Los Angeles punk rock band, X**. While that's a good place to begin, it hardly defines her. Following the formal breakup of X—a band she still performs with on occasion—Exene continued her transformation into a more formidable solo artist by continuing to write musically – with the release of two critically acclaimed solo albums (1989's *Old Wives' Tale* and 1990's *Running Scared*), within the print medium through poetry and books, in spoken word performances, and as a visual artist. She has also been a member of the groups **Auntie Christ**, the **Original Sinners** and the **Knitters**.

After the many years of performing and writing with collaborative outlets and in the various non-musical vehicles, in October of 2009 Exene added another notch to her creative credits when she released her first solo album in 19 years with *Somewhere Gone*.

The Excitement of Maybe is the next chapter. Maybe it's the one that follows the run-in with an unexpected adventure, where the simplicity of real life seems more attractive than even the most exotic of circumstances. Throughout *The Excitement of Maybe* is Exene's characteristic blend of folk, deep country and poppy, wide-

open spaces. Tracks like "Already In Love" swell with an uplifting punch of horn lines, **Dave Alvin (The Blasters, X)** on electric guitar, and the soulful undertone of a Hammond Organ. Other players on the album include oft-used jazz bassist **Christian McBride (Diana Krall, Chick Corea, Sting)** and fellow Bloodshot Records artist **Maggie Björklund** (who will tour with Exene in spring '11 and release her American solo debut with *Coming Home* on March 22nd).



The album brings together the potential and innocence of young love, the gravity of departure, and the symbolic changing of seasons. "Dirty Snow" draws comparison to the "dirty snow of Oklahoma" to a leaving lover, as Exene coos, "wait until I can forget/baby please don't leave me yet." Björklund's swooning pedal steel guitar and Jessy Greene's mournful violin arrangement of "Beyond You" emote two individuals holding on while crossing their fingers for better luck ahead. And really, who hasn't teetered in a relationship thinking: *Will this work?...should I stay?...I know there's better times around the corner.*

"I listened to love songs on the AM radio in our old 1959 Dodge," Exene recalls.

"In the early sixties I heard great song after great song. Ray Price, The Shirelles, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Brenda Lee, Ray Charles. And almost all of them love songs. Sad ones, happy ones, funny ones, tragic ones. That's what five-year-old Exene figured out. But love, on the other hand, I can't ever seem to figure out."

The Excitement of Maybe is Exene Cervenka's second solo album on Bloodshot Records. As aforementioned, Exene will tour with labelmate Maggie Björklund in the spring of this year.

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