Hannah Wicklund

*The Prize*

On *The Prize*, the new full-length from Nashville, TN songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and visual artist Hannah Wicklund, soaring melodies sail above expertly constructed, eloquent – and undeniably hooky – arrangements. Pair her aching, enchanting vocals, all woodsmoke and honey, with her signature fiery guitar work, and you already have a profoundly compelling formula. Add in arena ready, shout-along choruses and a radio-ready sheen courtesy of producer Sam Kiszka (Greta Van Fleet), and you have a record ready to take its rightful place among those rare creations that can be considered truly timeless.

Growing up on the beaches of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, Wicklund has always had music in her bones. Through hard work and determination, she built her career on her own. Starting her band at 8 years old, then graduating at sixteen and hitting the road, she has performed at Firefly Music Festival, Shaky Knees Music Festival, Bourbon & Beyond, Summerfest, and Kaboo Del Mar, toured as direct support for Marcus King on his North American tour and opened for Greta Van Fleet on the Canadian leg of their *Dreams In Gold* tour. Wicklund released her debut LP - *Hannah Wicklund & The Steppin Stones -*on her own label, Strawberry Moon Records, in 2018.

The songs on *The Prize* were hashed out slowly, growing up together like siblings. Born for the most part in Wicklund’s childhood home, they matured across the country during a bit of a wander. After some time in South Carolina, she ventured up to the Poconos, PA, where her grandparents had built a darling little A-Frame cabin in the 60’s. “Most of the songs took their final form in that house” says Wicklund, “which would be the last time I got to spend inside that family heirloom before it was sold- a very fitting full circle moment.”

Songs in hand, Wicklund moved back to Nashville, TN. Produced by and featuring Sam Kiszka of Greta Van Fleet on bass, keys and organ, and accompanied by Daniel Wagner of Greta Van Fleet on drums, it was in East Iris studio that the album only started to truly take shape and come to life. “As soon as we met, we were off to the races and the album began to unfold effortlessly” tells Wicklund. “It was a level of collaboration I never thought I’d experience with a fellow musician.”

A multimedia creative, Wicklund moves between visual art and music effortlessly, truly bringing the world of *The Prize*to life. Each song on the record has an accompanying large scale oil painting, depicting a unique scene for each song, but all taking place within the same setting- a castle floating on a cloud.

“When I was a kid, if I wasn’t practicing guitar, I was in the living room with my mom (the artist) drawing mandalas and the ‘Patterns of my Youth’ print you see tied to this record” explains Wicklund. “Art and music are natural mirrors of each other, both portraying emotions, but each conveying a distinct point of view. Whether it’s songs or paintings, they are all pieces of myself. This project was my first time really blending my two worlds so completely, and it's been a full circle experience I am profoundly grateful for.”

Both the music of *The Prize* and its visual components deal broadly with the transition into womanhood. Yet while for Wicklund the baton was truly passed with the completion of this album, it speaks to the universal sisterhood. “Part of becoming a woman is trusting your innate feminine instinct and power, which us ladies are all born with, and can choose to tap into at any age” she explains. “Whether you are 6 or 60, I hope the messages of self-love, self-exploration and resilience will resonate.”

Indeed, *The Prize* is a beautiful representation of what raw feminine power and determination look, feel, and sound like. Carved with pain during the most wounded and fragile point in our young heroine’s life, this record is for anyone that has ever had to look inward in order to move onward. “This album was so radically healing for me, and I hope it can inspire and perhaps play a role in someone else’s story” says Wicklund. “I want us all to remember, it can be lonely and is never easy ‘doing the work’, but we are each worthy of our own love, time, and dedication.” So, we have *The Prize:* A deeply mature, fully realized vision of an artist who has truly found her stride.