

# Musician Spotlight: Natalia Zuckerman

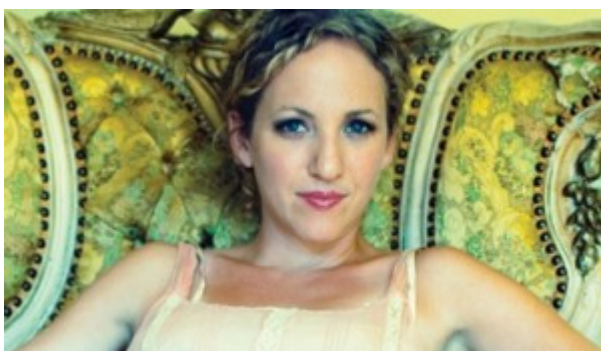


by Butch  
McCarthy

As part of the On Stage Folk Cafe series at the Zeiterion Theater, Natalia Zuckerman will be performing in New Bedford on Thursday, March 24th at 7:30PM. I recently had the pleasure of interviewing Natalia. I started out telling her about the way 'The Z' sets up the stage, with the audience right there with the performer, and the intimacy of it:

**Butch:** Although the theater is pretty big, the artist and the audience are confined to the stage; I think there is seating for about 150 people. I am bummed that I have a gig that night and cannot make your show. I would love to hear you live!

**Natalia:** Shoot! Sorry you can't make it to the show, but hooray on your gig! Have a good one. Thanks for describing the theater, it sounds amazing. I played somewhere like that once, at a huge theater in Ohio. It was great.



**How did you get involved with music?**

**Natalia:** I grew up playing music. My parents are both

musicians, so music was required in my household. I started out on violin and learned a little guitar at a young age. I studied some classical guitar in high school and college, but it wasn't until after college that I really started writing songs and discovering my own sound.

**What do you parents think of your music career?**

**Natalia:** My parents are my biggest supporters. They love that I've found a form of expression that feels like a genuine part of who I am.

**What is your latest project?**

**Natalia:** My new record, my FIFTH solo record, just came out on March 8th on Weasel Records. It's called *Gas Station Roses*. It's the second record I've made with Willy Porter, and it's filled with incredibly performances from Bryan Mir, Dave Schoepke, Meghan Toohey, Garrison Starr, Adrianne Gonzalez, Ray Bonneville, Willy Porter, Patty Larkin, Todd Sickafoose and Aaron Gardner. I'm really proud of this record and can't wait to share it with the world!

**How is the tour going? Do you work solo all the time?**

**Natalia:** For the most part I travel as a solo performer or as a duo, but more and more I am co-billing or opening for folks who have collaborative natures. I think music is best when it's a conversation between people; there's so much more to discover that way. I'm thrilled to be joined by the great Mona Tavakoli for my show in New Bedford. She's an incredible percussionist and vocalist, and adds so much to my music. She makes me hear and play differently. It's a joy!



I'm also on tour with Garrison Starr for almost all my CD

release shows, and she's an amazing collaborator. I get to play and sing on her songs too, so the show just feels organic and fun. I have a side project called Winterbloom that includes myself, Antje Duvekot, Anne Heaton and Meg Hutchinson. We tour in the winter, singing traditional and original holiday songs. It's a total joy. I'll be on tour this spring with Janis Ian and Tom Paxton. I'll get to open the shows and then sit in with them both on their sets. I've been playing a lot with Janis this last year and she's the epitome of what I'm talking about- such a collaborative musician! It's a real honor to work with someone with her experience.

### **Who are your musical influences?**

**Natalia:** Wow. Well, I have so many. Right now I'm back on a Shawn Colvin kick because I just got to open for her in Maryland. She's such an incredible writer- her economy of language, her sense of melody, of the macabre and the transcendent! Not to mention her guitar skills, which are varied and always serve what she's singing. I'm enamored. I'm also listening to the new Radiohead record, which is so layered, so nuanced and deep. I definitely like some variety in my musical diet and am always looking for something that sparks my creativity too. Luckily, I still think there's amazing music being made out there.



**One of my favorite slide guitarists is Bonnie Raitt- any influences there? Your slide guitar playing is terrific, by the way.**

**Natalia:** Bonnie Raitt has one of the smoothest sounds that I've ever heard. It's undeniably her every time, such a signature sound. I definitely try to emulate at least her

nuanced approach and also how sparsely and perfectly she plays. Another artist that I'm a huge fan of is David Lindley, for some of those same reasons- his perfectly placed notes and his economy- he never overplays!

**I just saw Lucinda Williams in Boston and was completely in awe (I think I fell in love too). Are you a fan of hers?**

**Natalia:** Oh man. We've gotta hang out! Bonnie? Lucinda? Two of my favorites for sure. I've seen Bonnie live twice, but I've never seen Lucinda, although I've been dying to.

**What kind of gear do you use?**



**Natalia:** I play a James Goodall guitar and a 1937 Rickenbacker lap steel guitar. I also play a Guild guitar and a Phil Leadbetter Dobro. I use D'Addario strings and Shure microphones and Fender amps.

**Where are you headed after your appearance in New Bedford?**

**Natalia:** The morning after the show we're driving up to Boston to meet Garrison Starr, who I've been on tour with for the last few months. We'll all pile into WERS for a radio show, and then we play at Club Passim in Cambridge that night. Then it's off to New York and Philly, and after that I head to Florida to play with Janis Ian again. I do some more shows with her in April, and also with Susan Werner out on the West Coast before meeting up with Garrison and Mona again in Ann

Arbor, Buffalo and Toronto. The train just keeps moving!

**I hope you have a great time in New Bedford. The Zeiterion Theater Manager in my musical partner and her name is Dori Legge- she'll take good care of you!**

**Natalia:** Thanks!

*You can visit Natalia's website here, and also check out her video for "Gas Station Roses."*

<http://www.localoracle.com/events/location/zeiterion-theater-/>