

# Colleen McFarland headlines Feb. 24 S.O.S. concert at Act II Playhouse

By David W. Wannop  
Correspondent

The S.O.S. series of concerts featuring original singer-songwriters has scored big with its lineup on Feb. 24. The group Denzien, who also produce the show, will feature regional favorite Aaron Snow along with cool class act Colleen McFarland. Based in Collingswood, N.J., McFarland has entered the songwriter scene through diligence, tenacity and patience. Her guitar, piano and vocal combination are quite a potent potion.

McFarland has had her hands full of late, for her CD, "Three Miles from Odessa," which refers to Delaware and not the Ukraine, has been spotlighted on radio stations across the nation. She is also a member of the all-women's piano tour called Eastern Keyboard, which features the area's best pianist/songwriters, and she has a long running songwriter circle at the Three Beans Coffee Company in Haddonfield, N.J. Not bad for this youngest of nine children

originally from St. Louis County, Missouri.

"I grew up very middle class with my one brother and eight sisters. I just happened to be the independent black sheep, but in a good way. Most of my family still lives around St. Louis and they are very supportive. Two of my sisters drove five-and-a-half hours to Nashville to see me play." Her smashing performance at the Bluebird in Nashville is being

downloaded off the Internet by many fans.

McFarland has traveled far from her first professional gigs. "I started singing professionally at 15 with a wedding and party band. Then I joined a rock cover band. We played Illinois and I lied about my age so I could work. Three or four nights a week I would be gigging and I put myself through college that way. It didn't help my operatic recitals. I would come to school with a raspy voice. We performed mostly Mozart," she recalls.

Those college days as a vocal major required McFarland to take piano as well. She continued to



Colleen McFarland brings her unique song stylings to Act II Playhouse for the Feb. 24 Songwriters Original Showcase.

perform all night and studied

opera and jazz throughout the day.

Upon completing her undergraduate studies, McFarland entered the prestigious Berklee School of Music in Boston.

However, money was tight, and somebody back home was pinning for her, so she returned to St. Louis. She began to work at a studio, which also did advertisements. McFarland became the voice of a number of nationally promoted products.

Coincidentally, there happened to be an intern at the studio from the Berklee School of Music. This man, record producer Tim Craven, eventually became McFarland's husband. They moved back to Boston, where she started to write songs at a more fervent pace.

However, guitar was now her instrument of choice. "I consider myself to be more of a songwriter/vocalist than a guitarist/pianist. My piano songs were kind of rhythm and blues but now they are more theatrical. My guitar songs were more singer/songwriter but now they are more rhythm and blues."

All of McFarland's performances today are an attempt to make everyone feel a part of it. So if you want to be included, all you have to do is show up!

**IF YOU GO**  
**Songwriters Original Showcase (S.O.S.),**  
 featuring Colleen McFarland & Aaron Snow, will take place at Act II Playhouse, 56 E. Butler Ave., Ardmore, Saturday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m. Tickets: \$15. Info: (215) 643-1313, (215) 854-0200, or www.siet-1.com/sos

