

Jess Morgan – Interview

On new album *Edison Gloriette* Jess Morgan crafts intricate songs of life, love and reflection. A true D-I-Y folk artist, she also crafts her own vinyl records to send to fans. With a tour in support the new release, Jess Morgan chatted to GIGsoup's *Jessica Otterwell* about inspiration, the creative process and naming her new album after a cinema...

When did you know you wanted to be a musician?

I think it was from a really early age – and from trips to guitar shops with my Dad. I got lucky really, being the right age or something, that I got to go along on those trips. I remember seeing rows and rows of those gorgeous Fender guitars and basses. It made the deepest impression. I was always, always going to have one of my own and be able to play it.

It's very impressive that you craft your own vinyl! Why did you decide to take the truly D.I.Y approach? How did you learn the craft?

Thanks. I got a basic idea of some of the materials to begin with a couple of online articles. I was encouraged along by a few friends too. Mostly it's taken a whole heap of trial and error – with mixes, types of silicones, resins and processes. The idea of making pirate copies of records goes way back and I learned about it at a time when I was just doing research for a song about kids seeking out more 'western' music and clothes in countries locked in the Eastern Bloc. At the time of the research, I remember being a little disheartened as had decided after a long time crunching numbers that I couldn't quite afford to put any of my own music onto 7" vinyl. This just stuck out as a little work around I'd like to try.

The short run for Record Store Day this year will probably be my last project with the home-made-records. I could spend a lifetime exploring this, I really could... but I think I need to get back to writing music. Besides, I'm now banned from working in the kitchen!

If you had to pick one song from your new album, Edison Gloriette that truly represents Jess Morgan as an artist, which would you pick and why?

Tricky one. I'd probably say Hymn In The Morning. I like playing the song live – it describes a moment I can picture vividly in my head and musically it's an example of where I'm writing for myself as a solo performer and I'm trying to get as much out of the acoustic guitar as possible. Edison Gloriette is pretty out there name, what is the meaning behind that?

Both 'Edison' and 'Gloriette' are cinema names. I went through a phase of keeping a list on top of my piano. I loved the sounds of the words – they seemed just so exotic, glamorous and they made my mind whirr!

What drives your desire to create?

I'm not sure really. My whole family are creative so I think the idea-junkie side of my personality was really nurtured. I was extremely lucky to grow up the way I did – with liberal, forward thinking, left-wing parents.

Lastly, how is 2017 shaping up for you? What can we expect?

It's looking really exciting actually... and busy with gigs. I start the year with my showcase at the Americana Music Association UK's annual conference – then pretty soon after head out to Germany for two weeks of shows. I have a lot of UK dates in the Spring, some summer festivals and I hope to make it over to France, Norway and Canada before the year is out.

It'll sound horribly nerdy but I've just had a nice pick-up fitted into a classical guitar I bought on a whim from Ebay last year. I wrote half of the album on it and I'm so excited it's going to finally get out on tour with *me*.

Catch Jess Morgan on tour on the following dates. Edison Gloriette is out now on Drabant Music.

Wednesday 1st Feb – AMA showcase – Hackney, venue TBC

Sunday 5th Feb – The Hive, Shrewsbury

Monday 6th Feb – The Gatehouse Theatre, Stafford

Thursday 23rd March – The Burston Crown

Friday 25th March – Portico, Lincoln

Thursday 30th March – Relevant Records, Cambridge

Friday 31st March – The Courthouse, Thirsk

Thursday 13th April – Loughton Folk Club

Saturday 15th April – Record Store Day session – Relevant Records, Cambridge

Saturday 22nd April – Elmsie House, Malvern

Sunday 23rd April – Nights at the Circus, Birmingham

Sunday 30th April – Big Session Festival, Buxton

Thursday 4th May – Cuffern Manor, Pembrokeshire

Saturday 6th May – Winemakers Club, London

Saturday 13th May – Hebden Bridge Roots Festival