

Country-rock singer Shawna Russell to perform at Kolache Festival

From the red dirt roads near her hometown of Okemah, Oklahoma, south to the Rio Grande, north to Calgary, west to the Pacific, and east to Korea, Shawna Russell has covered the map performing and making music her life. Her sound contains a lifetime of influences gathered from a family with deep musical roots, and a decade of touring the world.

Shawna will be performing at the Prague Kolache Festival on Saturday, May 3, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at the main grandstand. She just released her debut CD, "Goddess" on Way Out West Records on March 4, 2008.

Music has been her destiny. Her father and uncles on both sides of her family have been involved in successful country bands for over 30 years. When she was 13, they formed a band with Shawna. Four years later a Nashville agent saw her perform and remarked she had "everything it takes to be a superstar." At that point she joined her uncle Tim's band, "Way Out West" which was already a successful band on the club circuit.

Her musical influences are diverse: Bonnie Raitt, Sheryl Crow, Stevie Nicks, Trisha Yearwood and Martina McBride; while her style is uniquely her own. She sings, plays acoustic rhythm, lead guitar and occasionally saxophone. She has spent the last three years on the road touring with fellow Oklahoma, Ty England (of Garth Brook's fame), but recently decided to go solo again.

Her CD "Goddess" was recorded in Oklahoma City. Impressed by Shawna's voice, several world-famous musicians came to record with her, including Russ Kunkel, drummer for Carly Simon and James Taylor, and David Santos, bassist for Elton John, Billy Joel and John Fogerty.

Shawna co-wrote twelve of the thirteen songs on the CD. Retro and rockin' to country and contemplative, Shawna Russell stakes her claim with a vocal intensity that will not be denied. It is clear that she means business. To hear some of her music, visit shawnarussell.com.

Shawna's performance at the Kolache Festival is sponsored by Firelake Grand Casino.