

Red Molly

Short Bio:

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The Boston Globe says: "Everything Red Molly sings is delivered with tick-tight arrangements, crystalline vocals, and caramel harmonies. But what is most striking is the ardor they bring to everything they do, whether snuggling into the sweet parochialism of an old spiritual, or the gritty pathos of a Gillian Welch tune. They come on less like stars strutting for their minions than pals sharing their favorite songs. In the friendly world of the coffeehouse, that remains a star-making quality."

Extended Bio:

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On a July evening in 2004, at their campsite at the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival, Laurie MacAllister, Abbie Gardner and Carolann Solebello harmonized for the very first time. As they sang their campmates off to sleep, they knew they had stumbled into something extraordinary. Audiences seem to agree. Since that summer night, Red Molly has consistently brought concert-goers to their feet with stunning three-part harmonies, crisp musicianship and a warm, engaging stage presence. They have earned a devoted and ever-widening fan base, and have begun to tour nationally. These ladies have a lot of fun on stage, and it's contagious.

The magic of Red Molly stems partly from the richness and diversity of each member's "pre-Molly" experiences. Laurie (vocals, banjo, bass, guitar) left a career in psychology to pursue her love of singing. She worked for several years as a backup singer, and also released two solo albums, *These Old Clothes* (1999) and *The Things I Choose To Do* (2004). Abbie (vocals, Dobro, guitar) has a background in jazz, bluegrass, classical and a cappella music. She released two solo albums, *My Craziest Dream* (2004), a collection of swing standards featuring her father Herb Gardner on piano, and *Honey on My Grave* (2006), a collection of acoustic originals. In May 2008, she released a duo album, *Bad Nights/Better Days*, with Anthony da Costa. Carolann (vocals, guitar, bass, mandolin) spent several years as a professional theater actor before releasing her first solo album, *Just Across the Water* (2000). She went on to release two albums with power folk quartet CC Railroad, *Smile Whatever* (2001) and *Black Horse Motel* (2004). In 2009, Carolann released a new solo acoustic recording, *Glass of Desire*.

In July 2006, Red Molly's first full-length CD, *Never Been to Vegas* (2006), was released. Recorded on a December evening before a studio audience of fans and friends, *Never Been to Vegas* is a collection of fourteen carefully-chosen songs that span more than a century of great

American songwriting. *Never Been to Vegas* quickly climbed into the Top 30 on the Radio & Records Americana chart, a rare accomplishment for an independent album. And listeners of WUMB radio Boston voted the CD one of the Top 10 CDs of 2006.

Red Molly's latest release, *Love and Other Tragedies* (2008), is their first full-length studio album. Produced by Ben Wisch, it finds the women of Red Molly adding a little spice to their winning recipe. The new album features a fuller, more "polished" sound than their previous releases, due in part to the contributions of guest artists Mike Weatherly (upright bass), Duke Levine (mandola, lap steel), and Jake Armerding (fiddle). In addition, the ladies incorporated more original songs into the mix this time. Songs written by Laurie, Abbie, and Carolann mingle admirably with songs by well-known contemporary writers Gillian Welch and Susan Werner, up-and-coming artists Amy Speace and George Wirth, traditional American gospel tunes, and standards from the bluegrass and jazz worlds. "Beaumont Rest Stop" and "Honey on My Grave" were both featured in Sing Out! Magazine and "The Mind of a Soldier" won the 2008 John Lennon Songwriting Contest (Folk). "Summertime" was the #1 song on Folk DJ in July 2008. *Love and Other Tragedies* was listed in the Top 100 Albums for 2008 by the Americana Music Association, spent ten weeks in the TOP 15 on the Radio & Records Americana chart, reached #3 on the Roots Music Report chart (June 2008), and entered the Folk DJ Top Albums list at #1 (July 2008).

Red Molly is currently touring in support of *Love and Other Tragedies*, while planning a new CD, for release in early 2010.

Quotes:

"These three women are known for their exquisite harmonies and exceptional musicianship. If you love gorgeous voices, energy, and just plain fun, then Red Molly is a must-see."-Jake Jacobson, Circle of Friends Coffeehouse (Franklin, MA)

"Red Molly's awesome instrumentation, perfectly executed harmonies, and turbo-charged energy had the crowd roaring for more. If this weren't a tightly-scheduled festival, they would have been called back for two encores, at least." -Ray Massucco, Vermont Festivals (Bellows Falls, VT)

"Everything Red Molly sings is delivered with tick-tight arrangements, crystalline vocals, and caramel harmonies." -Scott Alarik, The Boston Globe (Boston, MA)

"Musicologists in the future will look at Red Molly as one of the best examples of folk music of this era." -Ron Olesko, WFDU Radio (Teaneck, NJ)

"We presented Red Molly at Irvington Town Hall Theatre, and they had the crowd standing on their feet, screaming for more. Listen to their latest recording, *Love and Other Tragedies*, and it will become instantly clear why they are taking the northeast by storm." -Cliff Seltzer, The Mainstage Concert Series (Westchester, NY)

"*Love and Other Tragedies*: Outstanding songwriting, harmonies and musicianship. Their best work to date." -Brian Quinn, WUMB Radio (Boston, MA)

FAQs:

Did you know each other before you formed the band at the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival in 2004?

Yes, we knew each other from the New York singer/songwriter scene and were camping together with a large group of friends. We were attending the festival as fans of folk music, just casually playing in the campsites. We played an informal showcase at the Acoustic Live booth that weekend, started practicing together within a few weeks, and had a band name by that December. We were part of the Falcon Ridge Emerging Artist Showcase in 2006 and returned for the Most Wanted Song Swap in 2007. In 2008, we were booked as a main stage act at Falcon Ridge.

Where does the band name come from?

It might have come from a favorite pet fish, a grandmother with a fiery disposition, or a certain legendary song by Richard Thompson about a motorcycle ...

How do you describe your music?

We play Americana, which includes acoustic music from various traditions; bluegrass, folk, gospel, Appalachian, country, blues, and even a touch of jazz/swing. A key component in all of our songs is the use of three-part vocal harmonies, as well as driving rhythm guitar and Dobro.

What are your musical influences?

Laurie grew up listening to her parents' collection of folk music, including records by Peter Paul & Mary and Simon & Garfunkel, and developed a love for vocal harmonies. In her teenage years, she listened to Top 40 music, and was especially drawn to the great songwriting and melodies of artists like Billy Joel and Elton John. Years later, she fell in love with the singing and songwriting of artists like Gillian Welch, Patty Griffin, Cheryl Wheeler, and Lynn Miles.

Abbie's father is pianist and trombonist Herb Gardner. Tagging along to his gigs, she fell in love with standards made famous by Billie Holiday and Louis Armstrong. Going to bluegrass festivals with her mom introduced her to the high lonesome harmonies of Tim O'Brien and Bill Monroe. As a teenager, she listened to a lot of Led Zeppelin, Bonnie Raitt, Ry Cooder and Ray Charles. Jerry Douglas, Rob Ickes, Sally Van Meter and Cindy Cashdollar are big influences on her Dobro playing.

As a child, Carolann loved Casey Kasem's American Top 40, and listened religiously every week as artists like The Carpenters, Gladys Knight, Linda Ronstadt, and The Bee Gees climbed the charts. Mom and Dad's radio was always tuned to the local oldies station, where doo-wop and Motown harmonies filled the airwaves. Carolann fell in love with musical theatre as a high school student and spent the next few decades immersed in its classic melodies. After hearing Indigo Girls, Suzanne Vega, Shawn Colvin, and Tracy Chapman on WFUV, though, she had no choice but to pick up an acoustic guitar and follow wherever it led.

How do you pick your songs?

Typically one of us will bring a favorite song to the group to try out. Sometimes there is a specific arrangement in mind, but we often bring raw songs to the table and arrange them together. We try out many more songs than end up in our sets, since we're quite particular about our song choices and those that get added to our regular shows and end up on recordings. We also like to test out brand new songs on our hometown audiences, for feedback and to see how it feels to sing and play that particular song.

How do you arrange your harmonies?

Each song is different, of course, but we tend to feel our way through a harmony arrangement by seeing what notes naturally come out as we sing. If we're stuck, we tend to find the right notes on our instruments and have even gone so far as to use staff paper at times, so we'll remember the

more challenging parts.

Do you all write songs?

Yes, absolutely.

Where did you grow up?

Laurie grew up in Nashua, NH, Abbie in Spring Valley, NY, and Carolann in Staten Island, NY.

Where is Red Molly located now?

Our band address is Brooklyn, NY, where Carolann calls home. Laurie lives in Hoboken, NJ and Abbie lives in Jersey City, NJ.

What did you do before becoming professional musicians?

Laurie has a BA in Psychology from Tufts University and a MA in Psychology from NYU. She was a management consultant for several years, and then a waiter in NYC for several more. She left the restaurant biz forever on August 13, 2006.

Abbie has a BS in Occupational Therapy from Boston University. She worked as an OTR/L on the neurology floor of Helen Hayes Rehabilitation Hospital and then spent several years doing home care pediatrics as part of Rockland County's Early Intervention program. She officially retired in June 2007.

Before turning to music full-time, Carolann earned her living as a high school English teacher, administrative assistant, cater waiter, actor, marketing copywriter, and wedding singer - but not all at the same time. She has a BA in English and an MS in Education from Fordham University that both look lovely hanging on the wall of her home office.

How can I get a Red Molly CD?

- Order CDs [online](#).
- Come to a Red Molly [show](#).
- Download our music from [iTunes](#).
- Call 1-800-BUYMYCD
- Send a check or money order to:
 - Red Molly
 - P.O. Box 404
 - Van Brunt Station
 - Brooklyn, NY 11215

Where can I find out more about each member of the band?

Click on the links below:

[Laurie MacAllister](#)

[Abbie Gardner](#)

[Carolann Solebello](#)