

A Homegrown *Country Star*

Sugar Land singer Katie Armiger takes the Nashville music scene by storm while touring across the nation

Written by Jennifer Heath

Loving music from an early age, Katie Armiger has spent many years singing around the state and nation and enjoys co-writing many of her own songs

Photo by Stephen Shepherd

Local vocalist Katie Armiger sings the praises of Sugar Land all the time. Granted, she can't help but sing, but that hasn't stopped her from telling everyone she knows about her hometown. "I love Sugar Land so much," she says. "There really isn't another place out there like it." And Armiger, even though she's only 19, would know, since she's been traveling around the U.S. performing to packed venues and sold out stadiums lately. "Singing wasn't something I just woke up one day and thought about," she says. "It was something I always knew I loved."

Sweet Beginnings

Armiger always loved to sing. "The first songs I sang were 'Walking After Midnight' and 'Wide Open Spaces,'" she recalls. "I got involved through a local Sugar Land vocal coach named Jeannie Bryant, and I started training with her and singing all around Texas at age 9."

Armiger began writing songs and poetry when she was 10. At 14, she won Houston's Best Country Singer competition, an event sponsored by the New 93Q country radio station. This led her to record a two-song demo. The album began picking up steam, and her recognition level heated up, too.

She began traveling and touring with top-notch country acts like Jason Aldean, Craig Morgan, and Luke Bryan. Armiger continued writing her own songs, which became a journal of her life. "I write most of my songs," she says. "I get my inspiration from everything; things that have happened to me, my family, or my friends."

A Star on the Rise

In 2007, Armiger released a self-titled debut album with Cold River Records, co-writing seven of 11 songs. A year later, Armiger came out with her second album, *Believe*. After that, critics really began noticing her. Radio and Records named her the Highest Charting Independent Female Artist of 2008 with the song "Unseen." Armiger also earned the highest debut for a solo independent artist since 2003 on the MusicRow chart with her single "17 in Abilene."

Movin' to the Music

Armiger recently released the album *Confessions of a Nice Girl*, co-writing nine of 13 tracks. Her songs "Kiss Me Now" and the catchy "Best Song Ever" have tapped into the Billboard country charts. Her third album will be re-released this year to include three new songs and a dance mix. "I think you either love it or you hate it," Armiger says about the album. "But it's like a good book; you are always wanting more. That's what I want my fans to feel. I want them to want more and to be excited."

Her fans seem to agree. Armiger has been touring around the U.S. with Clay Walker, Little Big Town, Darius Rucker, and other country music stars promoting her songs. She will play at the 2011 State Fair of Texas on its main stage. "In the spring, I'll probably start working on another album," she says.

Hometown Girl

To further pursue her passion for singing, Armiger moved out of her parents' Sugar Land home and found her own place in Nashville in 2010. She used her experience to write the song "Leaving Home," an anthem to her mother. "All of my family still lives in Sugar Land," Armiger says. "Nobody ever wants to leave."



Get to Know Katie Armiger

Favorite movie:

The Matrix

Favorite food:

Macaroni and cheese

Teen crush:

Orlando Bloom from the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy

Favorite artist:

Martina McBride

Future goals:

To sing at the Grand Ole Opry and be named female vocalist of the year at the CMA Awards

Favorite song to sing:

"Whatever You Say" by Martina McBride

Performer she'd love to sing with:

Keith Urban

Favorite place to visit:

Her home in Sugar Land

-Adapted from katiearmiger.com



“For me, ‘making it’ means getting to continually travel around and do shows and meet fans that come out to all of those shows, so I do think I’ve ‘made it.’”

–Katie Armiger

She remembers hanging out with friends at the mall, walking around Town Square, and being a typical teenager after school. She still comes back to Texas when she can, either for tour dates or holidays. For now, though, she’s living the life she always dreamed she’d have.

“I think the term ‘making it’ is different for everybody,” Armiger says. “For me, ‘making it’ means getting to continually travel around and do shows and meet fans that come out to all of those shows, so I do think I’ve ‘made it.’”

Persistence Pays Off

For the young fans she inspires, though, Armiger admits it takes determination and hard work to reach Music Row in Nashville, TN. “I would tell them that the music industry is a very hard business to break into,” she says. “If it is what you truly want to do, though, you should go after your dreams no matter what. Persistence pays off.”

Years from now, Armiger says she hopes the country music industry will continue to be her home. “Ten years from now, I see myself still in the music industry, touring and singing for lots of people,” she says. “And maybe even [releasing] a greatest hits album.” SLM

JENNIFER HEATH always wanted to be a singer, but is settling on being a mom to her wonderful boys Landry and Ryan.

Armiger arrives at the 44th annual CMA Awards in 2010



Photo by Donn Jones