



From a young age **Sabrina Carpenter** already had a clear command on what she intended to do with her life: she wanted to sing.

“We have video of me in my kitchen. I was so young and was singing ‘God Bless America,’” the effervescent Carpenter recalls. She was too little to even pronounce all the words correctly, but she knew the performance felt right. “I know a lot of people don’t know what they want to do when they’re that young,” she says in a grand understatement, “but I had a pretty good idea and my heart was pretty much set on it.”

In the years since, Carpenter, 15, has never wavered in her desire and ambition. While her talents have expanded into

acting— she plays the rebellious Maya Hart on Disney Channel’s “Girl Meets World” and is starring in the upcoming Disney Channel original movie “Adventures in Babysitting” — music remains her first love.

Her passion is evident on her full-length album debut, ***Eyes Wide Open***. The Hollywood Records release is an upbeat collection of uplifting, infectious, well-crafted pop songs, many of them co-written by Carpenter, and all delivered in her expressive, appealing soprano.

Because of her TV shooting schedule and other commitments, the album developed over a long and creative arch during which time Sabrina was able to nurture her artistic and musical point of view.

“I learned a lot about what I like and more about myself and my capabilities,” she says. “And what I’m able to do with my voice.” Songwriting also took her on a path of discovery. “It’s very educational and empowering. I learned how to make decisions and be more emphatic about what I want.” Lest she sound too serious, Carpenter adds with a giggle, “I mean it’s hard for me to decide what ice cream flavor I want. I’m 15 that way, I’m a little indecisive at times, but I learned to know what I want.”

Carpenter collaborated with a number of producers on the project, including Brian Malouf, best known for his work with Madonna, Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson, as well as producers Steven Solomon and Matthew Tishler. Meghan Trainor (“All About That Bass”) contributed two songs, “***Can’t Blame A Girl For Trying***,” and “***Darling I’m A Mess***,” as did noted singer/songwriter Audra Mae.

Carpenter knew as soon as she heard current single—the anthemic “***We’ll Be the Stars***”— that she would cut the track about chasing one’s dreams and being fearless. “I had read ‘The Fault In Our Stars’— it’s still one of my favorite books—and so when I heard it, that’s what I instantly thought of in my head,” she says. “It’s a little bit more powerful vocally, range wise, and I just love the whole message.”

Carpenter sings about love on such tracks as “***Two Young Hearts***” and “***Your Love’s Like***,” but it was equally important to her that the album cover a wider spectrum of her experiences and her life, such as on the ballad “***Too Young***,” which she co-wrote with Jon Ingoldsby. “That’s one of my favorite songs on the album,” Carpenter says. “I told Jon about how sometimes I think people feel like I’m too young to make the kind of music I do and be taken seriously, or too young to do certain things that I want to do. This song just speaks to everything about me. We wrote it in half an hour.”

In a time when everyone is so eager to grow up, Carpenter co-wrote songs about appreciating the present moment, such as **“Right Now”** (with Jordan Higgins and Lindsay Rush) and about friendship, the lilting **“Seamless,”** a song partially inspired by her *Girl Meets World* co-star Rowan Blanchard.

Another favorite song is the title track and future single, the expansive **“Eyes Wide Open,”** produced by Mitch Allan (Miley Cyrus, Kelly Clarkson, Jason Derulo). Though she didn’t write it, it tells her story: “Everyone tells me I’m an old soul,” she says, referencing the song’s opening lyric.

Each tune on the album represents a facet of Carpenter’s personality, and she wants her fans to learn more about themselves as they learn more about her. “I just want them to feel refreshed and happy as they listen,” she says. “And I want them to feel that all the stuff that they’re feeling, they’re not going through alone.”

**Eyes Wide Open** is about finding one’s own way in this world. For Carpenter, that path included taking vocal lessons starting when she was in grade school in her hometown of Lehigh, Pa., from the same instructor who had taught her mom several years earlier. A few years later, she entered The Next Miley Cyrus Project, a singing contest run by Carpenter’s former fellow label-mate. She finished third out of more than 10,000 entries, competing with singers much older than her. “That was the start of everything musically for me,” she says. “I learned a lot about entertaining and sharing stories through your voice.”

Eager to continue to showcase her voice, Carpenter was posting weekly videos on YouTube. She covered Ozzy Osbourne and Guns N’ Roses, but she leaned toward songs performed by women with powerhouse voices, like Adele, Christina Aguilera and Carrie Underwood. “Strong voices are the ones I’ve always been attracted to,” she says. “I constantly find myself even with new artists that I adore gravitating toward ones with soul in their voice.”

Guest spots in such shows as “Law & Order SVU” led to relocating to Los Angeles a few years ago. “I’m happy it didn’t happen before then,” she says. “I got to still be a kid and have sleepovers and go to dance school and do all the things that kids want to do.”

Carpenter, who went on her first tour last summer, and has played before audiences as far away as China and Australia, loves the range of emotions singing allows her to present. “With acting, you’re a little more confined to a specific personality, whereas with my music, I’m more myself,” she says. “There are so many different feelings. You’re trying to tell a story where you’re going to be sweet or tell a dark tale where you get to express a little more soul. There are more open roads with music.”

And they all await Carpenter, who intends to explore every one.

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