

# WADING IN: FLEDGLINGS

FLORIDA MUSICIANS ON THE RISE

By Christina Cush

## A New Monday

WITH POP-PUNK ROOTS IN THE SUNSHINE STATE, CASSADEE POPE FINDS A NEW VIBE WITH A NASHVILLE SOUND

Cassadee Pope turned the Big 3-0 this August.

It can be a nerve-wracking milestone for someone without a strong inner compass, but not for this hazel-eyed, dog-loving gal.

She's already had an epic musical journey, fronting pop-punk band Hey Monday after attending Wellington High School and touring in Japan, Singapore and New Zealand in 2009 while opening for

Fall Out Boy. She landed on season three of *The Voice*, and ended up with country megastar Blake Shelton as her mentor. Soon after winning, she released an album, with two singles hitting No. 1 on the Billboard country charts.

Almost six years later, with a second album and a move to Nashville behind her, we caught up with this busy crooner right before she left on a multistop USO tour.

### DOES BLAKE SHELTON DOG-SIT YOUR FRENCH BULLDOG, CUPPY?

CP: I keep in touch with him a little bit, but we don't hang out. He let me do this album release at his Nashville bar, Ole Red, in January. I have his cell number—I can text him.

### HAS YOUR HOME STATE INFLUENCED YOU?

CP: Florida is such a melting pot. Growing up and moving around the state—living in Boca, Wellington, West Palm and Royal Palm—I was meeting people of different cultures, races and ways of life. That was so influential. I grew up with different hobbies and tastes in music and fashion. It took me a while to harness who I wanted to be because of that.

# 5

## FAN FAVES

by Cassadee Pope

- 1 "TAKE YOU HOME"  
*Stages*
- 2 "WASTING ALL THESE TEARS"  
*Frame by Frame*
- 3 "IF MY HEART HAD A HEART"  
*Stages*
- 4 "SUMMER"  
*Summer EP*
- 5 "ONE MORE RED LIGHT"  
*Stages*

### WHAT'S YOUR VIBE NOW?

CP: I've landed in an authentic spot. Now, I look at myself solely as country, with pop and rock influences. My style is dark roots in my hair, wearing sporty or wild clothes, mixing a little leather and lace. In my new songs, I'm vulnerable but try to be strong and stand up for myself. That translates to my fashion.

### WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT FLORIDA?

CP: I miss the beach. I love boogie boarding and rolling with waves. Thankfully, I have family in Fort Lauderdale, so I have a place to stay. But I love Nashville in the fall, when the temperature drops and the leaves change.

### DO YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE PLAYING SUNSHINE STATE VENUES?

CP: It's nerve-wracking to play at home. When you see familiar faces, you feel like you have to prove that you're doing well and getting better than your last show. But when you play somewhere new, they're automatically excited to see you.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

CP: I'll be hanging out with Cuppy, my boyfriend Sam [Palladio] and his whippet, River. Sam is a musician and actor [he played Gunnar in *Nashville*], and it's fun to date someone in a different part of the entertainment industry. It's festival season, so pretty much every weekend I'll be performing. I'm also accumulating songs for my new record that I'll try to release by early 2020, if I feel like songs are ready to go.

NICHOLAS GARVIN



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