

LUCY SCHWARTZ



FRESH SOUNDS

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IN THE PAST YEAR, SINGER/SONGWRITER LUCY SCHWARTZ has released a solo album and placed several songs in major film and television productions, including the opening and closing songs for a recent remake of *The Women*. She's won an international songwriting contest, received airplay on trendsetting Santa Monica radio station KCRW, and performed at some of LA's best-known clubs. Not bad for a college freshman.

Lucy is the daughter of well-known television composer David Schwartz, the man behind the music on such shows as *Northern Exposure* and *Arrested Development*. Lucy has contributed vocals to some of her father's television projects, and he co-produced her first album. But, she says, their styles and working methods are distinct.

"I love sharing music with my dad. He's a great composer. Sometimes I just sit around the studio and listen to him write," says Lucy. "But we do very different things. He's got deadlines. If they need a song for a show, it'll be like bam, done in one night."

In contrast, she says, her process is more exploratory. "I usually don't have something in mind. I just sit at the piano and start fiddling around. If I find a little phrase I like, I'll start humming a melody to it, and then just write down nonsense words. Then the song comes from that. It's sort of like a puzzle, just figuring out what goes where until it forms a picture."

Assembling the pieces of her solo album, 2007's *Winter in June*, was another satisfying challenge. "I wrote the songs when I was fifteen and sixteen," says Lucy. "I was in high school, and I wanted to record it just for fun. It took a while, with my being at school. But I enjoyed the process. It's always exciting when you have musicians come and play on your songs."

Once the record was complete, she says, "We put it up on iTunes and MySpace, and things just started happening." A chance encounter between David Schwartz and an influential Los Angeles film and TV music supervisor accelerated things further. "My dad ran into Chris Douridas, who has a radio show on KCRW, and gave him a copy of the CD," Lucy recalls. "And I got a call from Chris later that day, saying, 'Oh, I really love these songs. Would it be okay if I played them on the radio?'"

As music supervisor for *The Women*—starring Meg Ryan, Annette Bening, and Eva Mendez, among others—Douridas asked Lucy if she'd like to write a closing song for the movie. "I wrote it in a couple of days," she says. "Then they were looking for a song for the opening credits, so me and my dad and Gabriel Mann worked on another song together. That was really fun, because it was the first time I co-wrote a song with my dad."

On her recordings, Lucy plays a Yamaha Disklavier. "I really like that piano," she says. "It just sounds beautiful, and I love the feel of a real piano. It's cool, because you can play something and then press a button and have it play back—it's like there's a ghost there, playing for you."

In her dorm room at Occidental College, where space is at a premium, Lucy plays another Yamaha piano: the new NP30 Portable Grand. The NP30 is Yamaha's most compact digital piano—and at only 12 pounds, the most lightweight model. "That keyboard is great because it's so small," Lucy enthuses. "It sits right under my bed in my dorm, and I can take it out and play whenever. I usually just play with headphones. I like the natural piano sound—it sounds great. And it's incredibly light. I can pick it up with my pinkie!"

In addition to her ongoing college studies in music and other disciplines, Lucy plans to continue performing with her band and will be recording a new CD this spring. "I just want to write great songs," she says, "whether it's making more CDs or doing music for film. I don't think I could stop writing songs—it's the thing that I do, and I'm very fortunate that I can have that as my career."

