

The Gertrudes

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After the urgency of their 2021 album, *Emergency to Emergency*, and its pandemic-soaked mania, indie-folkestra, **The Gertrudes** (Kingston, ON) have mellowed. Somewhat.

The band's 2023 release, ***Just to Please You***, (August 18th, Wolfe Island Records / Outside Music Canada) is their first full length album collaboration with Neptune's Machine Producer Jason Mercer (ani difranco, Ron Sexsmith). Mercer taped his minimalist sensitivities onto The Gertrudes' high-octane thunderstorm that results in blending the band's classic indie-folk-rock-experimental vibe into a soundscape that's more of a refined martini than craft beer, more organic farm than community garden. Equal parts silly and serious, this band (including next generation Gertrudes: Arden Rogalsky (drums), George Tilson (vocals), August Erb (electric guitar) and Astrid Erb (vocals) — Matt, Greg & Annie, and Jason's kids respectively) continues to write hopeful and hyper-local songs for and about their community.

"Hope built a fortress in the backyard
Light hung the stars at the edge of
the sky" — *Arms of the Holy* (track 5)

The Gertrudes' sound and lyrics have always paid homage to their beloved **Skeleton Park neighbourhood**, just north of downtown Kingston, where most of the band live, and host the popular Skeleton Park Arts Festival & Concert Series, publish the *The Skeleton Press* newspaper and exhibit adventurous public art in local yards, parks, schools, churches and cafes.

"...these intimate songs play like love-letters written from the streets of Skeleton Park" — **Greg Tilson (The Gertrudes' lead singer)**

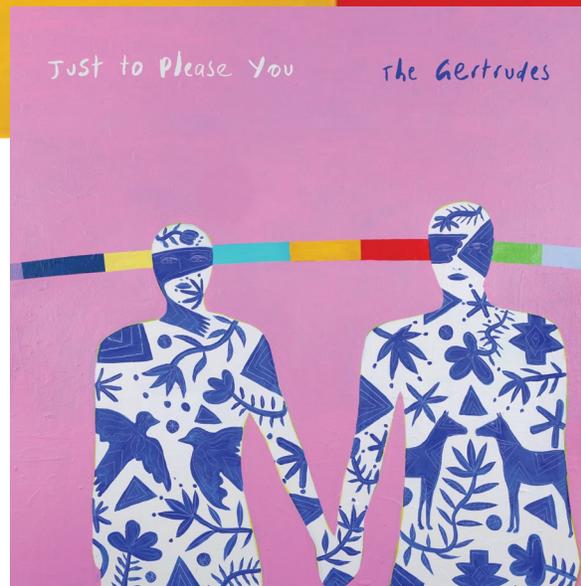
"Such space and tasteful arrangements. Devastatingly good."
— **Stephen Stanley (The Lowest of the Low)**

"A meticulously crafted spectrum of modern folk sounds" — **Exclaim!**

"A Canadian gem!" — **Dave Clark (Rheostatics)**

"My favourite folkestra: The Gertrudes"
— **Charles Spearin (Broken Social Scene)**

Taking inspiration from artists like Wilco and The National, The Gertrudes knit together a sound like an old-time saloon party travelling through deep space. ***Just to Please You*** follows four full length albums and extensive touring across the country, including memorable performances like at the Vancouver Folk Festival and the Halifax Pop Explosion. The Gertrudes have shared the stage with artists like Sarah Harmer, Caexico, and Ricky Skaggs.



Art by Julie Davidson Smith / Design by Vincent Perez

SIDE A

- 1 *Run 'til You Fall* (G. Tilson) 3:30
- 2 *Love of My Heart* (G. Tilson) 4:48
- 3 *Just to Please You* (A. Clifford/ G. Tilson) 3:13
- 4 *The Last Rehearsal* (G. Tilson) 4:43
- 5 *Arms of the Holy* (A. Clifford/ G. Tilson) 4:58

SIDE B

- 6 *The Waiting Land* (A. Clifford/ J. Erb /G. Tilson) 4:50
- 7 *Living in the Wind* (G. Tilson) 4:01
- 8 *Carry On* (A. Clifford/G. Tilson) 4:11
- 9 *Welcome Night* (A. Clifford/ G. Tilson) 4:43
- 10 *Circle the Light* (G. Tilson) 3:49

Produced by Jason Mercer (jasonmerc67.com) and The Gertrudes. Additional recordings by Matt Rogalsky (Memory Device). Mastering by Sandro Perri (sandroperri.com).

THE GERTRUDES ARE:

Meghan Balogh: fiddle, vocals
Pete Bowers: drums
Annie Clifford: fiddle, vocals
August Erb: electric guitar
Jason Erb: keys, bass, vocals
Mariah (Mo) Horner: vocals
Josh Lyon: accordion, keys, bass
Matt Rogalsky: electric guitar, vocals
Greg Tilson: acoustic guitar, vocals

TRACK BY TRACK DESCRIPTIONS:

The constant pulse of the devastating ***Carry On*** tells the story of a tragic and harrowing Skeleton Park neighbourhood fire.

Living in the Wind references the story of Kingston's infamous, Richard "Buddy" Smith's 1972 escape from Millhaven Penitentiary.

Run 'til You Fall tributes band member, Josh Lyon's social justice work for 2SLGBTQ+ congregation in a neighbourhood church.

The Waiting Land is an ode to the vast nuances of our emotional landscapes. Denying them creates deserts of anxiety and neuroses.

The origin story of ***The Last Rehearsal*** is The Gertrudes' debut performance at Kingston's renowned Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts, where the band also hosted a short-term residency and featured over fifty of the finest local guest musicians.

Love of My Heart tells the neighbourhood story of a mother and son who are struggling, together in isolation, during the pandemic.

Arms of the Holy is a prayer to the domestic gods of the hearth, home and treefort.

Dinner can turn a bad day around, so no matter who you are, come on in for the ***Welcome Night*** and have a bowl of something delicious with us.

The title track ***Just to Please You*** and ***Circle the Light*** are both love songs between The Gertrudes' bandmates Greg Tilson and Annie Clifford.