

JESSIE JONES

In 2013, Jessie Jones gave up her possessions, vanished into the nothingness of farm country, and found herself on interstellar overdrive – far away from her Disneyfied home in Orange County. For three years, she had fronted Burger Records' Feeding People, who were, for a time, OC's answer to Black Sabbath. The teenage byproduct of gloomy acid trips and gospel choirs, Feeding People released two albums, got signed to Innovative Leisure in 2011, and played Low End Theory with Radiohead's Thom Yorke. The 19-year-old Jones, with her bluesy growl and whimsical melodies, was being compared to Jefferson Airplane's Grace Slick, Janis Joplin, and Screaming Females' Marissa Paternoster.

"Jessie Jones' voice is even more compelling than her backstory," said Spin's David Bevan in 2013. The reality is that there's no separating Jones' backstory from her cosmic instrument, which was momentarily dulled by the breakup of Feeding People in 2013, and her own existential crisis.

Jones' gothic interpretation of psychedelic-blues, fueled by her curiosity of secret societies and the occult, nearly drove her to madness. But she survived by reconnecting with humanity on the purest level. "I was living in this magic school bus, and three little witchy girls wanted me to sing Katy Perry and Dolly Parton songs for them," says Jones. "Just seeing how happy it made them started to inspire me to play music again." Hitching rides on backcountry bus routes, Jones landed on the eucalyptus-scented hills of Laurel Canyon. At 21, Jones' childlike appreciation of rock and roll was renewed.

In 2014, her voice returned to her with primal intent; like the caterwauling echoes of coyotes deep in the Hollywood hills. Earlier this year, Jones began singing with paranormal proto-metal outfit Death Valley Girls, which allowed her to release her demons and find salvation during what Jones describes as the "most cosmically ordained project" of her life.

Now, with a tattered roadmap pointing towards a worldly exploration of pop music, Jones has transcended the bullshit by creating a sound that defies the doom of Feeding People by wrapping her melodies around sitar riffs, intergalactic synths, and dreamy-eyed optimism that's as innocent (and creepy) as a children's storybook.

Reveling in the quantum wobble of her own alternative reality, Jones is now releasing her self-titled debut on Burger Records by channeling the voices in her head; not quite the sanitarium blues of Roky Erickson, but a mélange of Jim Morrison mysticism; a more stripped-down MGMT meets early-Grouplove; and Syd Barrett reverie. Under the guidance of producer Bobby Harlow (The Go) and Burger's Studio B, Jones' debut this summer will include guest appearances by drummer Duke Mushroom, violinist Hannah Glass, and Studio B regular King Tuff. "The album is sort of schizophrenic," says Jones, who now treats her voice like a conduit of the spirits that recharged her once infallible instrument.