

Azalea

Getting to know *Azalea's* music is getting to know Benjamin and Mia Hackett, the husband and wife duo from Hamilton, Ontario. The way their voices blend together in song conjures an imagined romance, much like their own. Before they met, Benjamin and Mia worked hard at their craft but each felt separately, something was missing. Their first songwriting session together led to the discovery that what they were missing was each other. Thirteen years later, their songwriting bond is as strong as ever, and they are producing their best work to date.

Benjamin and Mia have released five albums and a holiday single together, each project holding a special place in their hearts. Their most recent project, "Gypsy's Moonlight Motel", was released on October 13, 2017 and was supported by a multi-province 2 week tour.

The new songs were written and recorded with the usual homegrown heart and soul, at "Sweet Dreams Recording Studio" in their home. Of course, this wouldn't be an *Azalea* album without love songs and rich two-part harmonies. The album sits comfortably in the "Contemporary Roots" genre featuring songs that borrow from North American and Eastern European folk traditions as well as conventional pop sensibilities.

“I See The Church” from the album “Gypsy’s Moonlight Motel”, was nominated at the 2018 IAMA (International Acoustic Music Awards) in the category Best Group/ Duo.

Hamilton Blues Lovers Blog has this to say about the album,

“Hamilton musical duo, *Azalea* keeps growing with every recording and their latest, “Gypsy’s Moonlight Motel” proves it. The production is amazing and they’ve created a fabulous melding of pop and roots music. Their lush vocal harmonies flow through the entire album as the sometimes infectious and always beautiful melodies bolster the sound. It’s a perfect mix of vocals and music that can’t help but effect you emotionally...”

In May 2015 *Azalea* was approached by GigSalad and CD Baby and hand picked to play their junket for Canadian Music Week in Toronto, Ontario. In honour of this occasion, *Azalea* recorded and released a limited edition EP called “Canadian Music Week 2015”. As a salute to GigSalad and CD Baby’s DIY methodology, “Canadian Music Week 2015” was made completely in house with fabric bound hand packaging.

In 2013, *Azalea* released the EP "Inside Out". An album which streamlined their folk-tinged pop sound and showcased songs to tug at the heart strings with haunting melodic and harmonic lines. Reminiscent of *The Civil Wars*, and *Fleetwood Mac* “Inside Out” shed light on *Azalea*’s Alt-Country side. The pitch for its successful crowd- funding campaign gave some insight into their work:

". . . it has always been our goal to release quality music that is culturally relevant and speaks to the heart. . . . However, we wanted to take listeners on a journey

beyond the routine of everyday life to the place that connects them with their emotions, beliefs, and values in a real way.”

In late 2012 *Azalea* released “At the End of This Year...”, their seasonal single which has received the nod of approval from CBC radio.

Azalea’s 2010 release, “Coffee & Kisses EP”, was among the top three finalists for Recording of the Year, Rock Recording of the Year, Instrumentalist of the Year, and Producer of the Year at the 2010 Durham Region Music Awards. The album was featured in prominent music magazines and generated good response from college radio across Ontario.

Years before anyone knew Benjamin and Mia Hackett as *Azalea*, they performed, travelled, and recorded an album as *Benjamin & Mia*. “The Carousel of Life” (2007) is the root of their love for each other and for their musical life together. That first album thrust them into the life they know, love, and hope to express in song, to every listener.

To experience them live, check *Azalea*’s concert schedule. Their chemistry is undeniably adorable - *Azalea*’s “cute factor” has become a distinguishing feature that permeates their live performances and echoes from their lyrics and musical arrangements. Two haunting voices supported by guitar, piano, and their trademark "suitcase-kick-drum" create a breathtaking concert experience. A must see for fans of "The Civil Wars" and the film "Once".

Azalea’s music is available at their [STORE](#) and their concerts.