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For Immediate Release

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**Vocalist Danielle Wertz Offers Emotive Sophomore Statement with *Other Side*, due out  
March 10, 2023 via Outside In Music**



*“Unlike many of her contemporaries there is truth in her voice. Untarnished by the politics of music, what’s brought forth is pure, innocent and simply beautiful,” Carmel DeSoto, Jazz Music Archives*

*“A masterful ballad interpreter [...] a singer worthy of wider recognition,” Ken Dryden, The New York City Jazz Record*

**Outside In Music** is proud to announce the **March 10, 2023** release of ***Other Side***, the stunning sophomore statement from vocalist **Danielle Wertz**. Wistful and highly expressive, this daring enterprise is both an immersive sensory experience and a polished showcase of Wertz’s seasoned and unique artistry. Fearless while navigating new landscapes, Wertz brings our most existential questions to the forefront, creating a musical work that is hypnotic, impassioned and familiar at once.

Alongside a visceral cast of esteemed collaborators including **Javier Santiago** on piano, organ, rhodes and synthesizers, **Owen Clapp** on bass, **Evan Hyde** on drums and percussion, **Keith Ganz** on both electric and acoustic guitar and **Sam Priven** on alto saxophone, Wertz braves essential questions of the human experience with nuanced expression. The final output

showcases Wertz's preeminent treatment of contemporary instrumentation, where her voice stretches across a vast array of channels within the jazz idiom.

After being named a 2015 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocals competition semi-finalist, Wertz released her impressive 2017 debut ***Intertwined*** in collaboration with visionary Israeli pianist **Tal Cohen**. This buoyant enterprise celebrates Wertz's aptitude for storytelling over eight expansive and highly melodic tunes. With *Intertwined* surfacing, the New York City-based artist continued to fortify her reputation as a distinguished jazz contemporary, placing 2nd in the Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Vocal Competition, then 3rd in the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Vocal Competition in the same year of her debut release. *Intertwined* set the stage for Wertz's savvy approach to jazz composition, exhibiting her reverence for the artform through cutting-edge and dexterous arrangements.

Evident from her early marks, Danielle Wertz has a sensational ability to transform abstract feeling into sound. ***Other Side*** represents a continued exploration of this craft, an invitation for listeners to indulge in something complex and authentic within a personal, emotional realm. After the world crumbled in 2020, Wertz chose to abandon the straight ahead collection of music she planned to record that year. Embracing the turbulent nature of the pandemic, she felt strongly that the music she put out should reflect the inward evolving she was experiencing. In effect, *Other Side* is a musical recount of internal chaos, as Wertz paraphrases, as well as a testament to the age-old philosophy that our greatest ideas, and perhaps most profound, are born from introspection and solitude.

"I produced this album as I untangled my internal world, and this music recounts that chaos. It recounts the anger, the unraveling, the questions, and even some answers. May this music inspire you to turn toward yourself – to look inward, to accept the chaos and the anger, to find ease in the unraveling and to trust that if you stay the course, you will emerge transformed on the *Other Side*," Wertz shares.

Sonically, this unraveling begins with the introduction of identical ambient textures on the two opening tracks, the brief prelude "**April 2020**" followed by "**Spring is Here**." Synthesized sounds repeat and the listener is suspended into an abstract space where one song blends seamlessly into the next, provoking the question of when "April 2020" actually ended. Suddenly, Wertz takes us back 80 years, to the 1930s on an effervescent reimagination of the Rodgers/Hart original. Metamorphic and metal-inspired, "**Spring is Here**" is flushed with intensity, indicative of Wertz's perceptive re-writing process. "This was a tender, sad, intimate arrangement for months until I finally realized it felt incomplete without also acknowledging my anger." Wertz shares. "Living in this paradoxical reality where beautiful flowers were blooming and yet the world was in shambles, wasn't just heartbreaking to me, it was infuriating."

The intensity and fury put forth on "**Spring is Here**" sets the stage for the poignant "**Rest Your Head (One for Natalie)**" where vocal layering brings a bold volume to Wertz's didactic lyrical message. When her lyrics pause, Ganz, Santiago and Priven fill in through stirring solo opportunities held down by a synergetic rhythm section. "**Hall Of Champions**" ensues, an

uplifting original flaunting her adroit employment of the voice as instrument. Lyricless vocals harmonize Priven's warm tone on alto, enclosing the resilient tune gently. "**When The Walls Crumble, We Return**" is another spirited track among the bunch. This high-intensity modern jazz composition sets out to break down the 'walls' of the human ego, rousing listeners to find their most transparent selves.

While much of *Other Side* is written, produced and arranged by Wertz, she nods to early jazz by incorporating a handful of standards, including "**A Sunday Kind of Love**" and "**I Have Dreamed/Dreamsville**," the last of which collapses Rodgers and Hammerstein's "**I Have Dreamed**" with the Mancini/Livingston/Evans classic, "**Dreamsville**" on the bandleader's crystalline lullaby. "**Turn In**," an electrifying ballad, encourages listeners that it is okay to fall apart when the world is on fire, and to weep when the world is weeping; Clapp and Santiago channel this sentiment early with haunting introductory improvisations. Though she sings of a stagnant world, Wertz's range takes a comprehensive journey of vocal stylings and riffs. Another demonstration of Wertz's vast dimensions and stunning lyricism, "**Cloud Shaped Thoughts**" is tinged with an aura of avant-folk and Americana.

Title track "**Other Side**" closes the record, recounting the story of Wertz's father who was disowned by his evangelical mother once he distanced himself from the church. Only after a diagnosis with Alzheimer's disease and consequently losing memory of her religious morals was Wertz's grandmother finally able to unconditionally love and accept her son. Wertz's passionate lyrical message offers a chilling interpretation for her listener. Born from the global isolation we all experienced, *Other Side* was Wertz's canvas for artistic and emotional freedom. Her message on its deeply personal title track is no different, where the isolating and lonely experience of losing one's memory finds a path to freedom and love. In "an attempt to find equilibrium with technique and natural human expression," as John Daversa astutely observes in the album liner notes, Danielle Wertz re-emerges on *Other Side*, a refined and masterful product of a virtuous artist who has embraced her internal world.

### **MORE ABOUT DANIELLE WERTZ**

Danielle Wertz is an award-winning artist on the rise, making a name for herself as a jazz vocalist, composer and arranger. The New York City based artist weaves together elements of jazz, folk and the use of her voice as an instrumental texture to create an intimate and personal musical world. Described as, "untarnished by the politics of music" (Jazz Music Archives) and "at home alongside more contemporary exponents of improvised singing" (LoudMouth, AU) Danielle has rapidly gained national acclaim.

After being named a 2015 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocals Competition semi-finalist, Danielle independently released her debut album, *Intertwined*. This collaboration with Israeli pianist, Tal Cohen, was ranked #4 on Capital Bop's list of "Best DC Jazz Albums of 2017" and has continued to receive high praise since its release. That same year Danielle placed 2nd in the Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Vocal Competition, 3rd in the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Vocal Competition, and co-led a concert with Lena Seikaly celebrating women in jazz at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Danielle has performed in several established national and international venues including The Arsht Center (FL), The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (DC), Blues Alley Jazz (DC), SFJAZZ Center (CA), Nocturne Jazz and Supper Club (CO), The Jazz Station (OR), and the St. Petersburg Jazz Philharmonic Hall (Russia).

In addition to her solo career, Danielle is an avid collaborator. She has recently been featured on recording projects alongside Javier Santiago, Aaron Janik, Mark G. Meadows, Justin Rock, Ambrose Akinmusire, J. Hoard, Elena Pinderhughes, Braxton Cook, Nathan Bickart and Andrew Dixon. She has also had the privilege of performing with many renowned musicians in a professional, non-academic setting including Kate McGarry, Cyrille Aimée, Jeff Denson, Keith Ganz, Shelly Berg, Chris Botti, Michael Bowie, Mark G. Meadows and Chris Grasso.

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### Tracklisting

1. April 2020 (1:20)
2. Spring is Here (5:42)
3. Rest Your Head (One for Natalie) (7:14)
4. Hall of Champions (6:29)
5. A Sunday Kind of Love (6:20)
6. when the walls crumble, we return (6:21)
7. I Have Dreamed / Dreamsville (6:22)
8. Turn In (6:01)
9. Cloud Shaped Thoughts (3:57)
10. Other Side (6:51)