

Q&A: "The Voice" country star opens up about music journey

[Elizabeth Tzagournis](#)



RaeLynn competed on The Voice in 2012. Credit: Courtesy of Joseph Llanes

At the age of 17, country music star and former contestant on "The Voice," RaeLynn, knew she wanted to be a performer. Her love of music and singing, however, began at an even earlier age. The 22-year-old artist spoke to The Lantern about her self-described "obsession" with Broadway musicals, which turned into a passion for songwriting and performing on stage.

RaeLynn's big break came in 2012 after auditioning and performing on

NBC's hit competition show "The Voice." She was eliminated in week three but formed a strong relationship with her coach Blake Shelton during the show. Her first single, "Boyfriend," was released the same year and was followed by the hits "God Made Girls" in 2014 and "For a Boy" in 2015. Her recent single, "Love Triangle," was ranked among the 25 Best Country Songs of 2016 by Rolling Stone magazine.

Her latest album, "Wild Horse," was released March 24. RaeLynn is currently headlining her own eight-city dance-party show, the Rave Tour, which kicks off on Thursday at 7 p.m at The Bluestone.

RaeLynn spoke about the value of her mentors and family, the vulnerability described in her music in her music and the advice she would offer young artists.

What has your experience been in being so open and vulnerable with your music?

It's nerve-wracking to wear your heart on your sleeve as an artist and to be so vulnerable, but when you do that and it works, it really does work. There's a part that is a little scary with opening up and being so truthful with your lyrics and music, but then it's also really rewarding because a lot of the stories that I have are the same stories my fans have and they feel a connection.

How have you overcome adversity or feelings of failure in the early stages of your career?

The reason I've been able to overcome (adversity is) because I've had people around me like Blake Shelton, and some of these people who have been in the industry for years. They've never given up. It takes a while to put your roots into something and to really build a brand. Anything worth having

takes time, and I think that's what anybody should know, that wants to audition for the show, or wants to be an artist in general and with any career you pick. I'm totally OK with the timing that everything is happening for me.

Where is it you find your support while pursuing your career?

My husband has been my rock throughout this whole journey, and I honestly couldn't do it without him. I always say just as much as your professional life is important, your personal life is important too. I couldn't do what I do as an artist without the support of my husband and my family, because at the end of the day, when all this goes away, those are the people that you have. My family is so amazing, and I'm just so blessed by them. My mom still cries and my dad still cries when they see me perform.

Tell me a little bit about your Rave Tour.

I'm really excited about the Rave Tour, because it's going to be unlike anything else. Nobody in country music has dance parties, and I'm all about it. We're starting out with 30 minutes of great music, then I go on for an hour and a half, then we end with a 30-minute dance party. We're starting off with eight (cities) but if it does (well) then I'll do more.

What is the biggest piece of advice you can offer to young people interested in entering the competitive music industry?

The biggest thing that I've learned is you can't compare yourself to the person to the right of you or the person to the left of you. Everybody's path is different and that's what makes this world so unique and beautiful. We all have a different purpose on earth, and it's always important to know that and to know that it's so awesome to support your peers and to know that your time is going to come one day. That's the biggest piece of advice that I would give is to never give up and to always focus on your story and not

focus on somebody else's.

What are your goals for the near future?

My goal this year is to really build my show. Of course I would love to go on tour with another amazing artist, but I want to really build my fan base and go on tour with my music and have somebody that I believe in as an artist, that's maybe a smaller act than me, go on the road with me. I just want to see my fans (and) when you're on the road with another artist it's mainly their fans. There's nothing like having your fans in a room, and I think that's the one thing that my goal is to build this year.

Editor's Note: This interview was edited for length and clarity.

Correction: A previous version of this article said RaeLynn's Columbus concert was on Wednesday, April 19. In fact, it is on Thursday, April 20.