

Q&A with *Sugarland*

Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush of the award-winning group Sugarland are getting ready to release their sophomore album, Enjoy the Ride. They took time out of their busy schedules to email us the answers to a few questions especially for our opry.com visitors.

How is the second album different from the first? The same?

Jennifer: "Enjoy the Ride" has all the sass and positivity and vocal melodies that everyone loves and expects of Sugarland. It also, however, has some emotional surprises on a songwriting/storytelling level!

Kristian: The second album is like the first but rocks a little harder, speaks a little deeper, celebrates life a bit louder and wishes out loud.

For Jennifer: What is something you've learned about Kristian in the last two years?

J: Kristian is a courageous and compassionate person who lives life from the heart. The more we work and create together, the more of that I get to see. Artistically, I have loved seeing him grow in the studio.

For Kristian: What is something you've learned about Jennifer in the last two years?

K: Well, I've learned that she loves kettle corn and expensive shoes. Really, I have learned what a talented songwriter she is and what a true heart she possesses.

Have you been "star struck" by anyone since "Baby Girl" came out two years ago?

J: While I was definitely "start struck" with James Taylor and Paul McCartney at the Grammys, I am more so blown away by the talent and professionalism of all the people we've opened for out on the road. It has really been inspiring to see the different ways these artists perform, make life and career choices, and create a road environment.

K: Actually, I am pretty star struck most of the time. Most memorable have been Tim and Faith at our first ACM performance. Good thing I was already talking to them before I actually looked up from my mandolin case because I probably would have stuttered had I known who the voices belonged to. Also, I think at the Grammys last year meeting Paul McCartney and finding out he is a Sugarland fan was quite a shock.

What has been the most surreal thing that has happened to you since you've become successful?

J: Playing the Grammys. It felt absolutely out of body.

K: Reality seemed to come unglued the other day when I was in the grocery store with my 4-year-old and he pulled down a Pringles can with a picture of Jennifer and I on it. He calls them "daddy chips" now. That is surreal.

For Jennifer: Who do you think was most envious of you having met and worked with Bon Jovi?

J: I get fans all the time at meet and greets who are very quick to let me know how envious they are!!!! I think the whole female population was envious. Who wouldn't be? They are beautiful people!!!

Have you been back to the Hermitage Cafe since the taping of "Baby Girl" to say "remember us?"

K: Not yet, but we should go. I love the french fries there ... they have the ridges on them.

What's something you've done to stay sane amid the success of your debut album?

J: Exercise!!! Specifically lately we have been practicing yoga. I used to think it was all a big exaggeration, but now, after having practiced it a few months, I can see the benefit in my body, mind and spirit!!

K: I have placed a good premium on family time. Playing with my kids and hanging out with my wife is my favorite vacation now. Also, Jennifer and I have acquired a good yoga habit.

Is there anyone you'd still like to meet?

J: Tom Petty. Although I am afraid because I love him so much. Sometimes it's better not to meet your idols!! I definitely have to meet Oprah. I think if we had dinner together we could figure out how to change the world!!!

K: Sure, I would love to meet George Lucas, Oprah, Dolly Parton (I've smiled at her but never sat and talked with her, we're both from the same hometown).

Was there a moment you thought, "We've made it!"?

K: I knew we had made a mark when we were nominated for the "Best New Artist" Grammy. Not sure if we have "made it" yet, but we sure are trying.

Have you heard anyone karaoke any of your hits yet?

J: Yes!!!! In Chattanooga recently at a festival. There was a karaoke stage for the fans. Someone did "Baby Girl." Fun!!

Any advice for a young band out there where you were three years ago?

J: Keep going!!!! If you really believe, don't stop!!!

K: Dream big, really big. If something doesn't feel right, it's probably not right. Write the best songs you can. Have a good time, it shows.

Describe your first night at the Grand Ole Opry in one word (or more).

J: I felt officially welcomed into Country Music!! I felt the acceptance from all of those artists who are still inspiring people with their music and from those who have passed through those halls and still haunt the stage!!!

K: Humbling

If we told you we were giving you a week off, how would you spend it?

J: Right now if you asked me I'd say that I'd love to go to my favorite place, Tulum, Mexico, on a yoga retreat. I'd go by myself and leave my cell phone behind!!!!

K: On a beach with my wife and kids, laughing.