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FROM HARSTAD TO BEVERLY HILLS

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On June 15 Cecilia goes on stage with her own "One-Woman Show" at Fine Arts Theatre in Beverly Hills





On stage: Cecilia on stage during last year's show in Hollywood.

Photo: Private



Many may remember her as Cecilia Knutsen, the girl who, after finishing music education in high school at Heggen, she moved to Oslo at the age of 18 to study singing at the conservatoire of music. At age 15, she had already won the talent competition for Northern Norway, and her path within music had for long been clear.

- I wanted to sing classical music

- I remember auditioning for Arne Bendiksen's record company. They wanted me to sing pop songs, but I didn't want to. It was more the classic way I wanted to go. My heart wanted to sing classical music, says Cecilia.

Many things indicate that the choices she made then, and the choices she made later in life, have brought her far as an artist. Few from Harstad can show a similar touring, which has brought her to Asia, Oceania, North America and Europe.

On stage in Grieg-hallen

After 12 years in the US over two periods,

most of them in Los Angeles, seven album releases and 300,000 records sold, she and her husband chose to move home to Norway in 2017, and they now live in Svelvik.

That did not mean that Cecilia chose to put her singing career on the shelf. Last year she held her first show in Los Angeles. In just over two weeks, she will be on stage at Grieghallen in Bergen, at artist Linda Fosse's show "Follow the Dream". Then it's off to Los Angeles for the premiere of her own "One Woman Show".

Periods of ups and downs

- After the overwhelming response I got after the show last year, I regained my faith that this is what I want to do. There have been periods of ups and downs the past years, where at times I thought my career was over. But now I'm going full speed ahead and believe the showcase in Beverly Hills will be a hit, says Cecilia, who adds that she has invited people from both the music business and media to the show.

- I know that there will be people from Las Vegas coming to the show, whatever that means if they like it, she says with a slight chuckle.



Celebrity meeting: When Cecilia performed her concert in Los Angeles last year, Kofi, who is also a close friend of Cher, came to hear her sing.

Photo: Private



Harstad stories: In her July show, Cecilia tells stories from Harstad and how it was to live above the Arctic Circle.

Photo: Private



Home visit: She always tries to include a trip to the cabin at Steinsåsvannet when she visits Harstad.

Photo: Private

Stories from Harstad

The fact that she has not forgotten her roots is evident in her show, based on what she is telling.

- Between the songs I tell stories about how it was to grow up in a small town north of the Arctic Circle, about the Northern Light, the Polar Night, and the Midnight Sun. These are stories many find exotic. I have even included a story from my childhood where we often had to eat fish because it was healthy and good for you, she says with a laugh.

- Interested in the spiritual life

From the start of her career, Cecilia has been very interested in the spiritual, which is reflected in her songs. This has been essential to her success in the spiritual and New Age arenas, especially in the US and Asia where these genres are common.

- I have never regretted my choices or those together with my husband, like when we sold everything we owned and moved to the US. I'm proud of my life. It has been a lot of patience and hard work, but now a new chapter of my life is starting, and my belief in success has to be stronger than the fear of failure. To dare to try has so far been a success for me, says Cecilia and elaborates further:

- I'm dead honest

- With this show I feel I show more of myself as an artist. It is a concert version which I believe is something new and different in the way of communicating with the audience though my songs and stories. I'm dead honest and telling about what has happened to me, from the deep valleys to the highest peaks. If my voice can inspire others, it will mean everything for me, she says.

- Frequent contact with dad

During the years in the US, she admits that trips home to Harstad has not been as often as she wanted.

- I was home in August last year, but have frequent contact with dad. No matter where I am in the world, Harstad will always have a place in my heart, says Cecilia.

- It would have been great

When we ask her if it is a possibility that her show will be performed at the great hall in Harstad cultural center, she answers:

- Of course, that could be possible. It would have been great to perform my show in Harstad when it becomes possible. Let's see what the future brings, says Cecilia.

Between my songs I tell stories about how it was to grow up in a small town north of the Arctic Circle, the Northern Light, the Polar Night, and the Midnight Sun.

Cecilia Lima Knutsen