

TV / MUSIC / ENTERTAINMENT

COUNTRY ROCK BAND BIO BASED ON INTERVIEW • CLIENT: NEON WEST

Soul, it's been defined as the principle of life—in feelings, thoughts, or emotions. Whether it's in a stroke of color across a painter's canvas, a simple yet perfect guitarist's chord, or a haunting, beautiful note sung with conviction. When you feel the soul of an artist, there's a connection, and we are drawn in like insects to a flame.

For Lee, Rick, and Joel of NeonWest, music has always been their soul and it courses through their veins like lifeblood. With a songbook of individual stories as interesting as they are diverse, NeonWest was a long time in the making, but their audiences agree that it was sure worth the wait.

Influenced by the soulful sounds of Linda Rondstadt and Patsy Cline emanating from her parents' 8-track stereo, Lee Lucas penned her first song at the tender age of five. Gathering friends and relatives from the neighborhood as her audience, she performed passionately, and often! Music was the reason, and her path was clear.

Arriving in Florida with nothing more than a few bags and a burning desire to make music her life, a twenty-something Lee began circulating her audition tape. With comparisons to rock legend Grace Slick, it didn't take long before ears started perking up to Lee's talent. The tape made it into the hands of a young Florida guitarist by the name of Rick Lucas and a meeting was quickly set up. Rick, long established in the Florida music scene in spite of his youth, had been a member of the extremely successful hard rock band, Rampage. Rick's enigmatic guitar stylings fused well with Lee's sultry, alto tones and provocative lyrics—a marriage was born, literally and metaphorically.

With a passion for music as well as a passion for each other, Rick and Lee Lucas moved to the Northeast to be near the NY music scene. The powerful rock act, Sibil was soon born after their arrival and the band was combustible almost overnight. With sold out clubs, successful tours, and major radio airplay, the band was on its way, culminating just two quick years later with a spot on a giant rock bill with heavy hitters, Dave Navarro and Saliva. On top of their game, they began to feel the call of the West; it was time for a mini-tour—destination LA.

The LA scene was raw and full of energy and just the kind of musical stomping ground Rick and Lee were hoping to find. It was a good fit. Returning home to prepare for the big move to LA became a pivotal moment in the ballad of NeonWest. Over the next few months, while settling their affairs and preparing for the band's transition to LA, Rick and Lee were turned on to roots-based country music by the most unlikely of musical sources—their parents. Rick and Lee, while accomplished rockers, were drawn in by the honesty and clever simplicity of the new country sound. Lee's long love of the timeless sounds of Patsy Cline, and their new found love for artists like Keith Urban began to light a new fire in their souls.

Arriving in LA later in the year, Rick and Lee began to test out their new songs on eager LA audiences—the reaction was chemical and a new link in the musical chain was formed—hail country music reborn—welcome NeonWest. A hot show early after landing in LA drew the attention of accomplished performer and recording artist, Joel “JM” Winkles. Joel—a multi-instrumentalist (guitars, banjo, harmonica, and bass) and veteran of the scene having opened for huge acts such as Dave Grohl’s Foo Fighters, Rusted Root, and Molly Hatchet—was more than enthusiastic! Joel offered his services on the spot, and his talent could not be denied—NeonWest was born. Hailing from West Virginia originally, Joel’s connection to the heart and soul of the NeonWest sound was real, and born of an almost visceral need to reconnect with his roots.

NeonWest has been burning up local LA stages and regional tours. With honest, from the heart, soon to be classics such as “Chase it” and “Famous,” the band has been connecting with audiences and making lifelong fans. Their music has a swagger and style that is all its own, based in resonant roots that hit you right in the heart—a palpable connection to a musical twang that just feels right. When you feel it in your soul, you know it’s NeonWest—a long drive from Nashville, but a short trip to the heart and soul of music.