



→ Elaine Ryan joins a pair of B.C. singer-songwriters at Whyte Horse Café, June 1. SUBMITTED PHOTO

# For The Birds flocks to the Whyte Horse

DREW HOSHKIW CANMORE

→ Three singer-songwriters, collectively known as For The Birds, are touring together and will land for a show at the Whyte Horse Café, June 1.

Elaine Ryan, Aspen Switzer and Genevieve Rainey, all from southern B.C., met at a music contest last June, and though they were initially competing, they quickly became friends. A fourth member, Kim McMechan, was unable to participate in this tour.

"There was a contest for a local opener for Sarah McLachlan's Lilith Tour, and the three of us met through that contest," said Ryan, speaking on behalf of the collective. "We were all in the top six and we decided to get together and collaborate. And so we did some shows last September and October and had a great time and really got into doing harmonies on each other's songs. So we put a tour together."

Over the next six weeks, the trio will be playing throughout B.C. and Alberta.

"The three of us are on stage at the same time and we each take turns doing the lead vocals, while the others do harmony," said Ryan. "It's really great, you get tired of singing your own stuff after a while and it really exposes you to different styles and types of composition. It's a refreshing kind of format."

It was a love of each other's music that drew them together, said Ryan.

"They're really strong musicians; I listened to their stuff and really enjoyed their music and sometimes it's hard to find, when you're independent, singer-songwriters," she said. "There's a lot out there, but they're all at varying levels of skill and experience and so sometimes it can be hard to find people who are equally invested in music."

For much of the performance, all three will play guitar, though occasionally they will mix it up with a mandolin or ukulele. There will, however, be no underlying drums or bass. All of their music is very much focused on the words, said Ryan.

"We all just write about our experiences and try to portray them in as poetic a way as we can," she explained. "All of our music is very lyric driven."

Ryan described her own music as being influenced by the likes of Ani DiFranco, Tracy Chapman, Ben Harper and Joni Mitchell, and that all three are of a similar vein.

"We're all in the acoustic singer-songwriter girl-with-a-guitar kind of genre," said Ryan.

"My own songs I'd call political love songs – we all try to write our own versions

of what the truth is," she explained. "I try to give love songs a bit more of a nuanced edge to them. I identify as a feminist singer-songwriter, so a lot of my songs are about solidarity or domestic violence or that sort of thing, but by no means all of them."

Though Ryan has personally never played in Canmore, she does have fond memories of the area and hopes it will be a highlight of the tour.

"Canmore is just so beautiful and anyone would want to stop through," she said. "There are a few spots on the way we're really excited to play. I'll bet Canmore gets a lot of good music coming through."



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**ELAINE RYAN**



"It's a very different kind of a tour than a rock band tour. I went across Canada with another singer-songwriter last June – I love touring with women, and especially these two, we all get along really well. It's more of a therapy session."

During the tour, For The Birds hopes to make a stop in B.C. for a few days to record together.

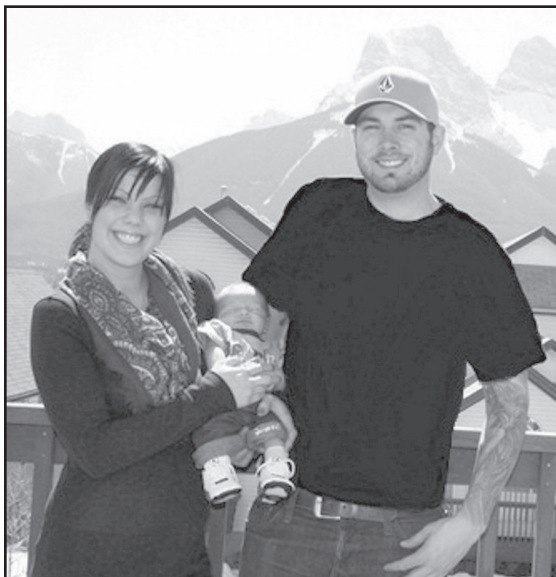
"We're looking into that," said Ryan. "We have a couple of free days when we'll be in the Okanagan, and we're looking to use that time to record a group EP."

"We'll choose a few different songs and do them with harmonies."

As for where the name of the band comes from, Ryan said it's a reference to a British band.

"It's from The Streets, 'Here we call them birds, not bitches,'" she laughed. "It refers to us being women and we thought it was cute and funny."

For more information and to hear some of their music, visit their websites at [www.elaineryan.ca](http://www.elaineryan.ca), [www.aspenswitzer.com](http://www.aspenswitzer.com) and [www.myspace.com/genevievierainey](http://www.myspace.com/genevievierainey)



*Congrats to  
Jordan Remple &  
Samantha Wheeler  
on the birth of  
Tyler Royce Gordon Remple,  
April 1, 2011.*

*From proud grandparents:  
Ron & Paula Remple  
and great grandma  
Kathleen Wheeler!*

## The Town of Canmore

Serving the community to enhance our quality of life.

### Notice of Road Closure for IFSC Bouldering World Cup Opening Ceremonies

On **May 26 at 6:30pm until May 26 at 8:30pm** the Alpine Club of Canada and Mountain Equipment Co-op will be hosting the IFSC Bouldering World Cup Opening Ceremonies on the Canmore Civic Centre Plaza.

To safely accommodate scheduled activities in the downtown area, the following roadways will be closed to vehicular traffic.

- 7th Avenue from the alley behind the Canmore Hotel to Walk of Champions (9 Street).

For further information please contact Dung Nguyen, Event Manager at 403-678-8803 or email: [info@thevision.com](mailto:info@thevision.com)

