

Jessica Willis Fisher’s second solo album, *Blooming*, is rooted in growth, healing, and embracing a new season in her life.

“There are some flowers that bloom one time and that’s it, but how about we go with the flowers that come back every year?” she says. “I aspire to be a perennial, if you will. Beautiful things take time to grow, to let things evolve. That's where I feel all these songs have come from. This is the next chapter of both my story and my artistry. For me, those are linked in every way.”

Recorded in Nashville and produced by Ben Fowler, the acoustic nature of *Blooming* allows Willis Fisher’s pure soprano to shine alongside her thoughtful songwriting and distinctive fiddle playing. With a love for literature and the influence of Celtic music, she has blended elements of folk, Irish, bluegrass and Americana music into these nine songs while establishing her own creative vision. That open-minded musical approach is especially clear in “Dogwood,” one of the album’s most revealing songs.

“‘Dogwood’ is about embracing the uniqueness of who you are, accepting every part of yourself,” she says. “Even our deepest wounds can have a special kind of beauty. The world is better for having all of us, and our differences.”

A sense of renewal is central to “Healing,” a rousing anthem that would immediately capture the attention of any festival audience. In addition, the joyous “June” sparkles with anticipation of a new season, “One of a Kind” evokes her tender, romantic side, and “Build a House” conveys the importance of companionship, commitment, and being curious to the whole world.

“Overall, this is a pretty positive record. I'm living a life I didn't think I was going to have, in many ways,” says Willis Fisher, who married her husband, Sean, in 2017. “I have a lot to be grateful for, a lot to celebrate just seeing how far I’ve come in the last few years.”

There are moments where her personal struggles do come to the forefront. Perhaps the most vulnerable song of the album, “Honest” reflects the heartfelt approach Willis Fisher has taken with her audience as well as herself. “‘Honest’ is my way of maintaining my integrity,” she says. “Being honest isn't easy all the time, and I think we have an idea in our head about what love might be, or what honesty might be, or what courage might be, and then the lived experience of it is so much more nuanced and even conflicted.”

That sense of conflict is particularly evident in “Seeds,” as she sings, “How do I grow when I’m tangled in the weeds? What if it dies? What if it seeds?” Acknowledging the past but with a desire to live in the present, she observes, “There were seeds planted in my life that I do not want to grow. Those toxic things need to be weeded out. It’s a never-ending process.”

At the intersection of old-time and Irish music, Willis Fisher found inspiration to write “Find a Lover,” a catchy song that sounds like it’s been passed down for a few hundred years. (She likes to describe it “as if Dolly Parton was Snow White in the Appalachian Mountains.”) In a similar vein, she adds her own spirit to “The Fox,” a traditional song she loved as a young girl. Her version concludes with a fiddle tune written by the Scottish composer Adam Sutherland. “It's not necessarily the deepest song, rather it’s an homage to the music that most influenced me in my musical development,” she says. “I learned to sing by singing really old songs. I learned to play by learning really old tunes. And I wrote original fiddle tunes before I wrote songs.”

Willis Fisher’s debut solo album, 2022’s *Brand New Day*, served as a reset for her career. The intensely personal songs captured a dramatic moment of change as she explored the emotions of breaking away from her sexually abusive father, which also meant an abrupt departure from the family’s band, the Willis Clan. Today she continues to advocate for survivors, sharing her own story with others who have faced similar situations. For many who have heard her message, she also serves as a beacon for new paths forward.

After publishing *Unspeakable: Surviving My Childhood and Finding My Voice*, a memoir about those traumatic experiences, Willis Fisher returned to songwriting to express a new era in her life and career. The result is *Blooming*, with an album title that suggests her story is still being told.

“The energy of starting over really directed and dominated my first record. That period, while very important, is further in my rearview now,” she says. “There's a new level of freedom in embracing who I’ve found myself to be a few more turns down the road. It’s one thing to survive, it’s another to thrive. I hope to cultivate an environment that will help me to grow as a person and an artist in a sustainable way. Now, the way I'm approaching this is asking, ‘How do I do this forever?’ I never want to stop making music.”