

LARRY WORHOL

Guitar/Keyboard

Has taught music and piano lessons in Katy for over 18 years



ASHLEY WORHOL

Vocals/Keyboard

Played keyboard for the youth worship band at the Fellowship at Cinco Ranch



THE BAND WORHOL

Morton Ranch alumni Ashley Worhol tours the globe with her family's Christian rock band

Written by Ashley Lancaster | Photography courtesy of The Band Worhol

Ashley Worhol never imagined that her love of music would blossom into the successful career she has today. As the lead vocalist, songwriter, producer, and composer for The Band Worhol, she and her family have had the opportunity to travel the world sharing their gift with thousands of people. She and her family still have deep roots in Katy.



MARTY NAUL

Drums

Involvement in several albums and projects that have earned Grammy nominations as recent as 2012



CRAIG MALINOWSKI

Bass Guitar

Has a passion for art and is skilled in painting, drawing, and sculpting

A Natural Gift

From the time she was born, Ashley states that music was as much a part of her daily life as eating and sleeping. As a toddler, the youngster would crawl beneath her father's piano and listen to the notes being played in graceful harmony. By age 4, she had mastered the art of playing a tune by simply listening to the notes. "My parents came running from their bathroom because they heard me playing the theme song from, *Free Willy*. I didn't have any sheet music; I just sat down and picked it out note for note. I think that was the moment my parents knew music was my destiny," she says.

Inspired by his daughter's natural talent and passion, Larry Worhol, a lifelong musician and music teacher in Katy for almost 20 years, began booking public appearances for himself and Ashley around town.

"I believe that Ashley and I inspired each other mutually to grow our passion into a dream. She learned from me, and her enthusiasm motivated me to play again, not just teach," says Larry. Ashley spent the majority of her youth learning to sing and play music while performing at local venues to develop confidence that would help her to succeed later on.

Supportive Teachers

"Any time people asked me what I wanted to be when I got older, I always said, 'a rock star,'" Worhol says. She remembers asking the teachers at Winborn Elementary for permission to skip recess and spend time in the music room singing or playing piano instead.


In addition to perfecting her vocal and instrumental skills, Ashley also had responsibilities as a full-time student at Morton Ranch High School and was active in sports like tennis and basketball. Looking back, she is grateful for the wonderful individuals in Katy ISD who encouraged her.

"I give credit to every single teacher I ever had in Katy ISD for helping me along the way. Even now, I see old teachers at local shows and cannot describe what that support means to me. I have been able to take the lessons they gave me about commitment, perseverance, and self-respect and use them in my life and career today," she says.

After high school, Ashley attended the University of Saint Thomas in Houston (UST), where she studied vocals, violin, and music theory, and graduated with a bachelor's degree


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in music composition. As a student at UST, she was also active in multiple music and vocal clubs. "I've never been one to get in trouble, but I was scolded a few times because my choir director would find me practicing original songs instead of solos I was supposed to rehearse for a performance," she remembers.

A Signature Sound

Never one to follow the crowd, The Band Worhol has a unique sound that has helped it carve out a niche in the music industry. The pageantry, lighting, mixed with gothic and classic rock influences give it the ability to reach a specific audience. Not only is Ashley the lead vocalist and keyboardist, she is also the author of their songs. "As a kid, my favorite word to sing was 'Jesus', and to this day, my lyrics are Christian," she says.

The band has had huge success with several albums, a European tour, multiple appearances opening for mainstream bands like Puddle of Mudd and Saving Abel, and has been featured in *Billboard Magazine* as an emerging artist in 2015.

In light of its success, the group is by no means immune to the challenges that face most musicians today. "With the rise of technology came the rise of free downloads. People can find almost any song they want on the internet. This means the artist or artists no longer make money off royalties or the sale of CDs," Larry says.

But the band is able to roll with the punches and keep moving forward, remembering that the reason they make music is because they love to do so. "The key to recovering from hardship is not giving up. It might take 100 'No's' before you reach that one 'Yes', but by the time you achieve your goal, you are fearless. All great successors had to fail to succeed. Every failure just means you are one step closer to your dream," says Ashley.

Accomplishing Dreams

When they are at home in Katy, the Worhols still enjoy giving music lessons to students, and the band sometimes plays local venues for old time's sake.

To every young Katyite whose dreams venture off the beaten path, Ashley says this, "Dream big! Stay true to who you are and take pride in your goals. Remember that you can be successful in the most elegant manner, and at the beginning of every day think of how you want to be remembered." KM



ASHLEY LANCASTER is an editorial coordinator at Katy Magazine who loves The Band Worhol's single, "Voices from Above."




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