

# Lee DeWyze Biography

## FRAMES

Lee DeWyze formally launches the pivotal next stage of what is already a high-profile musical career with his Vanguard Records debut – *Frames*. The 27-year-old DeWyze seriously considered calling the album “Silver Lining,” after the hook-laden song because that phrase succinctly sums up where he’s been and where he’s headed.

“This past year, I hunkered down and wrote an album,” the Chicago native explains. “I wanted to take it back to what I’m really about, which is writing emotionally charged, meaningful songs. It wasn’t like I wanted to find a label and then decide what kind of album to make. I *knew* what kind of album I wanted to make and knew I could make. It’s going back to the kind of music I’ve always loved. I grew up listening to Cat Stevens, Simon & Garfunkel—folk-based acoustic music. Don’t get me wrong—my experience on the show was great. But for someone like me and the kind of music I make, that only takes you so far. It feels really good to get back to the grass roots of what I’m about. The way I see it, everything that’s happened throughout my career has happened so that I can make this record.”

The show DeWyze is referring to is *American Idol*, which he won in 2010. Ironically, the vast majority of the hordes of fans he made during Season Nine have no idea that this powerful and expressive singer is at his core an uncommonly gifted and distinctive songwriter as well as an accomplished musician. DeWyze played guitar, piano, mandolin, banjo and drums during the recording sessions, during which he collaborated with renowned producer/songwriters Toby Gad, Drew Pearson, Matthew Wilder and Phil Allen, as well as mixer extraordinaire Jim Scott. “I’ve never felt a connection with my music, more than I do right now,” DeWyze says, making no effort to hide his excitement. “It’s a very real thing, and it feels right.”

When Kevin Welk, president of Vanguard parent the Welk Music Group, heard the tracks DeWyze had laid down, he was sufficiently blown away to personally offer the artist a deal, and DeWyze jumped at the chance to become part of the label’s prestigious roster. “I am so impressed with Lee as an overall artist,” says Welk. “I always knew he could sing, but his writing is what sold me. This is a career record for him.”

“We are thrilled to be working with Vanguard Records in releasing Lee DeWyze’s sophomore album,” says Jason Morey, EVP and Head of Music of 19 Entertainment. “This record is a clear reflection of who Lee is as an artist.”

“Vanguard is the right fit for me—no question,” DeWyze says of the new relationship. “The company has a family feel and a lot of integrity. They care about who they sign, and they’re really focused on the music. You might think they would’ve had certain expectations because of *Idol*, but that wasn’t the case at all. It was just, ‘We love the music—let’s do this.’ There’s a mutual trust, and that’s a very cool thing.”

He picked up a horde of fans by way of his *Idol* exposure, and those who have managed to catch his live performances in recent months, during which he’s been woodshedding his new material, much of which has been written on the road, have gotten a preview of what’s coming. DeWyze has a big surprise in store for the rest of them.

“People have been asking me, ‘What have you been doing for the last year?’” he says. “To be able to come out of that and show them that *this* is what I’ve been doing—that’s a really good feeling. I’m excited for people to hear it because I know what I’m doing is honest and authentic. There may be pressure, but there are definitely no regrets.”

Before he went on *Idol*, DeWyze recorded a pair of indie albums in his hometown of Chicago that stylistically foreshadowed what he’s doing now, the organic sounds of slide guitars, mandolins and banjos burnishing his folk-rooted songs and vocals. Since then, of course, the ever-cycling mainstream has come around to the kind of music DeWyze has been making all along, apart from his *Idol* side trip, so the timing couldn’t be better for this scintillating return to his sweet spot, coming as it does in the midst of the current folk-rock revolution.

“It’s like that lane is open now,” DeWyze says in anticipation of what he’s preparing to unleash on an unsuspecting world, with assists from his simpatico support team. “I’m finally in the lane I belong in, and I feel like I can just *go*.”

Ladies & gentlemen, start your engines...



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