

Anaïs Mitchell and Rachel Ries release *country e.p.* on Righteous Babe Records; Northeast tour begins in September

Vermont-based singer/songwriter Anaïs Mitchell and Chicagoan Rachel Ries met at a Texas campfire in 2004. Both artists had releases on the same small label—Chicago’s Waterbug Records—before Mitchell joined Ani DiFranco’s Righteous Babe Records and Ries founded her own SoDak Records in 2007. The two friends began doing occasional tours together, for camaraderie and to share touring expenses. “People kept saying, ‘you girls should make a recording,’” says Mitchell. “So finally we did!”

The result is the simply titled *country e.p.*, a five-song collection for which Mitchell and Ries penned two songs each as well as covering a tune by long-time comrade Louis Leford. How “country” is *country e.p.*? There’s an earnest longing, a ‘high lonesome’ quality to these songs that surely belongs to that tradition, but as Ries puts it, “These are a bit more sly, not quite as straightforward as most country.” The relaxed, vintage production features musicians from the artists’ respective Boston and Chicago communities and the vocal harmonies they worked out for their tours.

The split *country e.p.* will be released by Righteous Babe Records in a unique format: a 7” vinyl record includes three of the tracks but comes with a CD version of all five. The 7” component was important to the artists. “We knew it wasn’t the most rational or efficient way to put the recording out there,” says Ries, “but we both felt there was something worthwhile about the tactile quality of vinyl and lacquer.” Adds Mitchell, “Beauty is inefficient.”

Not unlike the members of Toronto’s Broken Social Scene, Mitchell and Ries subscribe to a community ethos when it comes to making music. “Writing and touring can be a pretty lonesome valley,” says Mitchell. “Having friends out there doing the same thing is very precious. That’s kind of what this thing is about, I think, the recording and the tour...a chance [for Rachel and I] to make music together and to honor some of our friends while we’re at it.”

The artists will be joined by a three-piece backing band on a short September tour, before Mitchell heads to Europe in October, first opening for Bon Iver and then on a European tour with labelmates Hamell on Trial and Ani DiFranco.



PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
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Sept 6	Buffalo, NY	Hallwalls at Babeville
Sept 7	Philadelphia, PA	Tin Angel
Sept 10	New York, NY	The Living Room
Sept 11	Northampton, MA	Iron Horse Music Hall
Sept 12	Cambridge, MA	Club Passim
Sept 13	S Burlington, VT	Higher Ground
Sept 14	New Market, NH	Stone Church

