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PROFILE **WILLIAM HENDERSON** January 25, 2007

**Drey's Anatomy**

**FROM KARAOKE SINGER TO POP STAR IN SEVEN YEARS**

It's somewhat symbolic, singer Jenna Drey's "homecoming" this weekend. Though she's been back to Boston since leaving in 1999, most recently as part of a star-studded Pride 2006 line-up, she's kicking off a club tour in support of her new single in the same city where she once fought for stage time during karaoke nights.

But how she went from karaoke to headliner in seven short years, that's the story that Drey couldn't help but tell during a recent telephone interview.

"I'm definitely no overnight success," she said. "It took a lot of hard work and pavement pounding."

It didn't hurt that her song "Just Like That" became something of an impromptu battle song during the Boston Red Sox 2004 season. Jon Lander of Mix 98.5, WBMX-FM in Boston, started playing the song first, and Drey eventually recorded a new version of the song in which the chorus was revised to include the phrase "Reverse the Curse, Just Like That."

Each time Drey appeared live on the program, the Red Sox would win their game that night, causing her to be known in some circles (at least, those circles in which the voodoo of Mix 98.5 is enough to reverse an 86-year-old curse) as the good luck charm of the team that won the World Series that year. She disavows, though, any correlation between not singing live on the radio program since 2004 and the way in which the Boston Red Sox have played these past two seasons.

"It was a great experience, so I like to think that I contributed to their success in some crazy way," she said.

Discovered first by Jeff Furst (who co-founded the '80s pop phenomenon The New Kids on the Block), but shortly thereafter by David Frangioni (who had nothing to do with The New Kids on the Block), Drey was paired with Kevin Churko who had previously worked with Shania Twain. After listening to her demo, Churko agreed to produce and collaborate on her first album, "Killin' Me," whose title track climbed as high as number 10 on the Billboard pop chart and number 5 on its



Jenna Drey performs four live shows this weekend singing at Club Café, Chez Est, Bobby's Place, Mirabar. For more information connect to [www.jennadrey.com](http://www.jennadrey.com).

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club chart. Her second single, "Why Should I Believe You," hit number 10 on the club chart.

Which of course is something that not all karaoke singers can claim.

"It's true. I used to sing karaoke with an a cappella group in town while I was in school," she said. "It'll be nice this time to be singing at my own show, not just at a karaoke bar."

The daughter of a soldier and a television actress, Margaret Teele, who appeared in shows with Jerry Lewis, Elvis Presley, and Gomer Pyle, Drey does not credit her talent to heredity, though she acknowledges that her family's support of her musical inclinations began while she was fairly young. Singing lessons at seven, piano lessons at nine, songwriting at 11 - her becoming a singer was never in question.

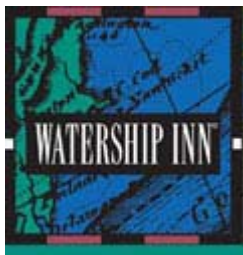
"As a child, my desire always overshadowed my talent," she said. "My desire is what made me strive toward improving my craft as an artist and songwriter. It's been a life long labor of love."

Hit songs don't come easy. Ask Drey. For every "hit" she has, there were 10, sometimes 20, non-hits that went unheard. Music is a tough business. She's the first to admit it. But it's all she knows. Until she decides to stop writing music, it's all she plans to do.

Her shows this weekend will give her time to catch up with friends and, weather permitting, a chance to shop Newbury Street, walk along the Charles, hang out in Harvard Square and take in a meal or three. Living in Miami, it may come with the perk of mostly year-round sunshine, but its restaurants leave a lot to be desired, she said.

"I just really love it in Boston. I guess I feel a sense of connection with the city because that's where I had my education with music," said Drey. "It's kind of like I'm contributing back to the city in some way." •

Catch Jenna Drey at one of her four live shows this weekend. She sings at Club Cafe, 209 Columbus Avenue, Boston, on Jan. 25 at 11 p.m.; Chez Est, 458 Wethersfield Avenue, Hartford, on Jan. 26 at 12 a.m.; Bobby's Place, 60-62 Weir Street, Taunton, Mass. on Jan. 27 at 12 a.m.; and at Mirabar, 35 Richmond Street, Providence, on Jan. 28 at 11 p.m. For more information about Drey, connect to [www.jennadrey.com](http://www.jennadrey.com).



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