

Fairly Odd Duo – About Us

The Fairly Odd Duo plays acoustic music inspired by Folk, Americana, and Pop artists from many decades, with luscious vocal harmonies and a sense of fun.

Comprised of husband and wife team, J. B. and Michelle Faires, the duo began singing together in 2016. Although they had been married for 20 years at the time, Michelle had never sang in front of J. B. But it was the sudden death of their daughter that summer that would change the way they looked at everything.

J. B. Faires has been a professional musician since age 15, playing bass in country, rock, jazz, Cajun, and world music bands throughout the Midwest. He earned a doctorate in jazz studies playing double bass (string bass) in 2010 and taught music appreciation classes at the university and local colleges.

So Michelle was rather intimidated at the idea of singing in front of him (unless the radio was cranked up along with her), and couldn't imagine performing on stage together. Coming from a background in art, finance, and business management, she was a novice musician.

The spring of 2016 brought with it cut backs at the universities and the couple were scrambling to come up with a new plan. Then in the summer their daughter was caught in the crossfire of a dispute between two felons—murdered, at the age of 23.

“It's still shocking.” J. B. recounts. “It seemed everything stopped that day, like time, our sense of purpose, our plans for the future. As part of the healing process I gravitated toward the acoustic guitar, which had been a pleasant part of many fond camping memories with friends.”

“I wanted to learn a song with him,” says Michelle “and after we sang it together and realized how good it felt, we recognized there was something therapeutic about it.”

The couple then learned a few more songs and performed at their 20th wedding anniversary that fall. Encouraged by their friends and family, they played their first show at a local coffee house before heading to the West Coast for the winter. The Fairly Odd Duo developed their unique repertoire while busking and playing open mic nights in Oregon and Northern California.

Michelle recalls that, “everyone was playing these deep, sad story songs—which can be great, well-written songs—but after a half dozen or so of those, we'd get up and play a love song, or something a little ornery and people really responded.”

Upon returning to the Midwest, it would take the duo another year to really start performing with regularity, gaining confidence along the way. They have now been playing all over Illinois, also venturing into Michigan, and have plans to do a “mini-tour” in Tennessee and north Georgia soon.

Now that they have amassed enough songs to play several hours of music, the couple is focusing on recording their original songs as well. "We try to write from that space of feeling the therapeutic glow we get from singing together, so our songs have that refreshing quality to them," J. B. states.

The Fairly Odd Duo hopes to release a few songs as singles this year, with a full EP recording to be released early in 2020.