

Caylee Hammack - Bed of Roses Biography

They say the waiting is the hardest part, and five years after the release of her debut album, Capitol Records Nashville artist Caylee Hammack would have to agree. But as a self-described green thumb with an almost-spiritual connection to her garden, the fiery country siren knows true growth takes time.

In fact, her second studio album *Bed of Roses* represents a whole growth cycle – 13 songs planted and nurtured herself, which ultimately developed into a striking sonic landscape of color and beauty. And to her, it wouldn't have been the same without the time.

Now standing tall in the sun, her musical roots intertwined with the country greats – as new shoots branch off to reach the outer edges of psychedelic Americana while fortifying her Country backbone – the last few years of life, love and loss have led Hammack to something extraordinary.

"It's been exhilarating, and also aggravating, having to wait," she admits. "But I think the timing was perfect. I don't think I would've been prepared for this before, but now I feel so confidently grounded in these little steps I've had through the garden of life and music. I've had a blessed life. Even the hardest things I've ever went through. Somehow there was a silver lining or a song in it."

An Ellaville, Georgia native with a stop-you-in-your-tracks vocal – call it a cross between the warbling buzz of hummingbird wings and the sting of a thorn – challenges are nothing new for the singer-songwriter. Counting artists as diverse as David Bowie, Kate Bush, Dolly Parton and Tom Waits as direct influences, her first poems were penned at 8 years old and her first self-recorded song came at 16 – a track aimed squarely at the pills she was prescribed after an athletic-career ending surgery to remove a two-pound tumor in her back. She landed in Nashville by 19 – only to have a house fire burn through most of her life. She wrote from these experiences, soon landing her deal with Capitol Records Nashville, but even her scrappy album debut (*If It Wasn't for You*) was bittersweet. It was born in the depths of the pandemic, which became the soil where her *Bed of Roses* grew.

First, she passed the time with a "Fam Mail" letter writing campaign, connecting one-on-one with fans and often trading favored seeds. She drove alone through the mountains and shared songs around a campfire, laughing and crying with friends over the search for lasting love. And when the world reopened, she hit the stadium stage with Luke Bryan and Brothers Osborne, only to turn and stun tiny listening rooms into rapt silence, or captivate the Grand Ole Opry with her striking mix of old and new.

All told, she racked up 235.8 million career global streams, won an ACM Award for Musical Event of the Year ("Fooled Around And Fell In Love" with Miranda Lambert), and picked up Artist to Watch accolades from *The Bobby Bones Show*, *Rolling Stone* and more. But it never went to Hammack's head, or filled the empty spot in her heart. Buying a fixer upper house with more character than convenience, the first thing she did was start a new garden – planting, pruning, and pulling out weeds like unhelpful beliefs. Now, she says the clarity it brought meant everything.

"In life, we have a garden patch and we get to sow flowers, or we get to sow weeds," Hammack explains. "We can end up sowing pain, but we hope something good is going to come from it. And as a woman – as a little girl who always just wanted a man to bring her flowers – I decided I'd be better off if I just learned how to grow my own."

Bed of Roses is the result of that realization – 13 fresh cut blooms, all but one written or co-written by Hammack herself. Tracing the universal story of a 20-something's coming of age with a mix of gypsy soul, flower-powered twang, and heel stomping red-dirt rock – "we all have different experiences, but we also have similar heartbreaks," she says – it's filled with raw emotions and riveting energy, as the rising star learns to plant and plan not just for a short pop of beauty, but aims to cultivate the nutrient dense, potent ground of experiences she continues to pull from with every song she releases.

“Your bed of roses is the bed you make – you get to decide how you spend your time and how you plant your garden,” she says. “Good love is flowers that come back every year. Bad love, it’s just the thorn. Sometimes you got to till shit up. You’ve got to work through things and it’s not going to be fun. And then one day, your friends come over and you sit as a family on the back porch in the garden. And when they compliment the roses near the gate or the cherry tomatoes speckled about in the pasta, you get the pleasure of realizing, “I grew that, I put love, time, and belief into something and it paid off.”

The title track marked the project’s germination. Inspired by fleeting romance that never took root, Hammack wrote it with Jeff Hyde and Benjy Davis – a bright, earthy anthem with a swampy strut and electrifying vocal, all about embracing the inner peace no part-time partner can give. “He had time to come over at night, but couldn’t stay in the morning and walk around my garden,” she says. “Right beside where he parked his truck, I had just planted all this beautiful stuff, and he didn’t even notice.”

From there the years passed and Hammack’s life grew, and so did the songs. Seasons came and went, new seeds of inspiration drifted in on the wind and took hold – and other things left, making room for something new. Sharing producer credits with studio savant Dann Huff (three songs) and John Osborne of Brothers Osborne (who guided nine more) a bouquet of experimental yet-somehow-timeless sounds emerged, centered in modern country – but accented with the edgy brilliance of music circa “1968-1973.” With live instruments, rich organic textures and a throbbing pulse, they matched the chaotic harmony of nature to Hammack’s otherworldly vocal, washed by waves of tremolo and reverb.

Opened by the title track, a cycle of romantic springtimes and failed harvests unfolds, before Hammack finds her balance. Tracks like “Breaking Dishes” pair a fed-up story of being pushed over the romantic edge with a stormy mix of atmospheric banjo and vocal trills, while the aching, uncomfortable “Back Again” wraps a painful betrayal in a haunting mix of orchestral pop.

“The Hill” rises as a weary-hearted fiddle-and-stomp anthem with a Celtic flair – Hammack’s voice cutting through a mountain of built-up resentment, to wonder if the fight is really worth it. And while “What My Angel Thinks” delivers a meditative dose of country soul, reflecting on past mistakes, the serene “No I Ain’t” reclaims romantic dignity, and “Cleopatra” channels a cunning force of feminine nature – a beguiling roots rocker born to rule (and ruin roses forever).

Elsewhere, the captivating “Mamas” represents the first outside cut of Hammack’s career. Dedicated to an older cousin who passed away during the album’s creation, the track reimagines “Mamas Don’t Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys” with a heart-first twist – “My friend played it for me in her garage that day as I cried over Matthew passing, something hit me when I heard it, I knew he would’ve loved it,” Hammack explains. And with the solo-written, self-produced “Oh, Kara,” she delivers a deeply personal guitar-and-vocal masterclass of solidarity – a revelatory ballad of two women discovering they’d both been played for fools.

By the final track – the gentle soul-and-sway anthem “Tumbleweed Men” – a breezy mix of classic cool and dramatic, technicolor twang helps the songstress remember to stay rooted, and stay patient, reaching the peak of her personal growth. It took time to get there, but these days she’s sleeping easy in the *Bed of Roses* she made. And maybe she can help others get there, too.

“Music has always been something that in the worst times of my life I have clung to, and I want my music to be a safe space for people who are lonely and working through things,” she says. “If this is an album that makes you happy to hear one of the songs again, even a few years from now, then I’ve done my job.”