How do you describe Born To Wander, a band that can make the top of the jazz *and* the jam band charts?

“soulful and amazing”

-The Scene, CO

“perfect balance. Jazz? Americana? Old Timey? Forget the labels.”

-KUCI Radio, CA

“no genre left unclaimed”

-WTJU, Charlottesville VA

“classic coffee shop scat”

-KAMP Radio, AZ

Whatever it is, the music of Born To Wander is definitely honest and stripped-down. Engaging. Soulful jazz-americana with an acoustic aesthetic. Comparisons to other bands are difficult at best. The unique sound comes from the instrumentation (vocals, guitar, bass), the songs themselves, and the well-traveled imaginations of the band mates, Kate Skinner (vocals), Steve Kovalcheck (guitar), and Erik Applegate (bass).

Steve calls it “jazz meets roots,” But Kate avoids the labels and says “we just want to play songs that groove and feel good, and we want to create an intimate setting…like we’re playing in your living room.” Erik adds, “One constant that runs through all of our material is a connection to the blues- the spirit that is at the core of all American popular music.” Even the band name was an attempt to describe their wide-ranging musical tastes and influences.

On their self-titled debut release, Born To Wander focused their imaginations on a truly diverse collection of songs from the widest view of Americana. Irving Berlin, Hank Williams, Richie Havens, Michael Jackson, even Queen. “We were going for a nostalgic mood, but with a forward-thinking approach,” says Kate with a smile. “It’s stuff you can either dance to or hold hands to,” says Erik, “laugh at or cry to.”

The response has been strong- Born To Wander reached the CMJ Jazz top 40 and the RELIX Magazine/jam band top 30, and their version of “Glitter In The Air” made the NonHollywood list of 50 Best P!NK Cover songs.

The band has been performing and exploring music together since 2009. “Right away there was a strong musical and personal chemistry,” says Erik, “it was like despite our very different upbringings and backgrounds, that somehow a lot of the same kinds of bands impacted us.” Their gigging home was a renovated old-time movie theater, and that setting inspired them to try out all sorts of originals and covers, from Joni Mitchell to Alison Krauss to Grover Washington, Jr. to Bonnie Raitt. It was always a democracy- each of the members having an equal say in what songs they did and how they were treated. “That was a great time for us,” says Erik. “We really got to spend a lot of time performing together and developing our sound.” They loved the vibe that playing without a drummer gave the music- with each person having more musical space to affect the overall texture of the sound.

The mix of the individuals adds to what Born To Wander is, too. Kate grew up in Utah singing bluegrass and studying classical piano, and went on to become an accomplished jazz pianist, and award-winning composer as well as a singer. Steve grew up around all sorts of great musicians in the guitar mecca of Nashville, then was a member of Columbia Records artist Robinella and the CC String Band, with whom he got to work with all-star producer Russ Titelman. Midwest-born Erik has played in everything from pit orchestras to heavy metal bands, and has been called a “top-notch acoustic bass performer” by jazzreview.com. So, as you can imagine, their combined sound is their own.

So what’s next for the band? Of course, they will be playing shows in support of the album, but they are already hard at work writing songs for their follow-up EP of originals, due out in Summer 2015.