

# MACKENZIE ROARK AND THE HOTPANTS

**MACKENZIE ROARK AND  
THE HOTPANTS ANNOUNCE  
THE RELEASE OF THEIR  
NEW ALBUM  
“GHOST OF ROCK AND ROLL”**

**LISTEN TO THE  
FULL ALBUM  
HERE!**



Mackenzie Roark and the Hotpants is an Americana rock band from Richmond, Virginia, known for energetic and engaging live shows that bridge the gap between Americana charm and rock 'n' roll grit. With a voice that carries the weight of lived experience and lyrics steeped in raw storytelling, Roark crafts songs that explore love, loss, resilience, and the search for meaning—all wrapped in the kind of gritty, roots-driven melodies that feel as timeless as they are urgent. Known for their powerhouse performances, the Hotpants round out Roark’s dynamic songwriting with the fiery tones of fiddle, electric guitar riffs, funky basslines, and tight harmonies. They have been working on songs for their first full release under the “Hotpants” moniker since the formation of the band in 2023, and have completely self-funded and self-produced this project with the help of Red Amp Audio in Richmond, and Infrasonic Sound in Nashville.

## HISTORY

Mackenzie Roark has been playing music in and around Virginia for over a decade, not only on big stages and at festivals, but also in dive bars, breweries, wineries, barbecue joints, coffee shops, and wherever else has live music programming. Raised on a mix of songwriters like Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen, and classic rock icons like ELO, The Rolling Stones, and Heart, Roark's songwriting walks the line between Americana, alt-country, and rock and roll, channeling an energy that's both fiery and introspective. With degrees in both English and Creative Writing, she's applied her education to her songwriting, placing high importance on the integrity and meaning of the songs themselves, continually working towards that elusive "masterpiece" – the lifelong pursuit of all true artists. After years of working her way into prominence in Richmond's thriving music scene as a solo artist and as part of many other bands, she formed Mackenzie Roark and the Hotpants (MRHP) in 2023 to bring her songs to life in a live setting.

## DISCOGRAPHY

- Mother Tounge (2016) - Produced by Mark Bryan of Hootie and the Blowfish, this debut EP shows a promising start for Roark's future in music. Leaning more heavily into traditional country and folk sounds, Roark's songwriting prowess is clearly seen in "Rosalee", a heart-wrenching story song inspired by the songwriting style of John Prine, Townes Van Zandt, and Emmylou Harris.
- Rollin' High, Feelin' Low (2022) – A solid debut album showcasing Roark's blend of Americana grit, honky-tonk swagger, and folk-rock storytelling. The record features standout tracks like "Highway I've Been On" and "Little Pills", solidifying her place as a rising voice in modern roots music.

## NOTABLE PERFORMANCES

- Friday Cheers (Richmond) - Large outdoor concert series, at which MRHP opened for Daniel Donato's Cosmic Country
- AmericanaFest (Nashville) - MRHP played several AmericanaFest showcases put on by Freight Train Management
- FloydFest (Floyd, VA) - MRHP competed in and WON the On-the-Rise competition at Floydfest against 12 other up-and-coming regional bands
- Bristol Rhythm and Roots Festival (Bristol)
- 30A Songwriters Festival (Grayton Beach, Florida)
- Red Wing Roots Festival (Mount Solon, Virginia)
- All major venues in Richmond, VA including: The Broadberry, Richmond Music Hall, The Camel, Gallery5, Fuzzy Cactus, Ashland Theater, Reveler, The Norva (Norfolk)

## THE FACTS

**WHO:** Mackenzie Roark and the Hotpants

**WHAT:** Ghost of Rock and Roll (all major formats, plus streaming)

**RIYL:** Grace Potter, Daniel Romano's Outfit, Sierra Ferrell, Shannon and the Clams, Nikki Lane, Shovels and Rope, Sarah Shook and the Disarmers, The Nude Party

**WHERE:** Richmond, VA

**WHEN:** June 6th, 2025

**WHY:** Because the world needs it

**HOW:** Red Amp Audio, Vocal Rest Records, and Freight Train Management

**WARNING:** This album will make you believe that rock and roll ISN'T dead, music "these days" DOES have soul, and that the future of art ISN'T totally f\*cked.



**WATCH THE OFFICIAL VIDEO FOR "TAKE MY MONEY"**



# TRACK LISTING



**Take My Money** - Song about wanting to pay your way out of guilt.

**Late Bloomer** - Song about the lessons that don't come easy.

**Rich Man** - Song about spinning your wheels and learning to love the way it **feels**.

**Hot American Red Blood** - Song about reality not living up to the fantasy you've built in your head.

**Last Call** - "Hell hath no fury than a woman scorned" but in song-form.

**Cigarettes and TV Dinners** - Song about aimless searching and careless habits.

**Killin' Time** - Song about the in-between life moments that happen waiting for your ship to come in.

**Ghost of Rock and Roll** - Song about purpose, our tools and our masters, and the never-ending search for identity.

**Broken Jukebox Blues** - Simple country tune about life as a gigging jukebox.



# INTERVIEW WITH MACKENZIE ROARK

**Q: Can you tell us a bit about the journey leading up to this project? How long have you been working on it?**

A: This album has been in the works for a while. When I formed the band in 2022/2023, after the release of *Rollin' High*, it wasn't long before our sound really started to take shape as something separate from my solo work up to that point. We realized we were more of a rock band than a country band, and we've been eager to show the world these songs as long as we've been playing them. The oldest song on this album, "Cigarettes and TV Dinners", came about in 2017 when I was going through my first divorce, and the newest, "Ghost of Rock and Roll" (the song), was finalized in late 2024 after working on it for 2 or so years. So the whole thing spans several years of my life.

**Q: What was the overall vision or concept behind this album?**

A: We wanted to make something that felt fresh. I hear so much music that just sounds like copies of each other (boring electro-indie-Billie Eilish voice?), and we've always known that we offer something a little different. Older folks love our music because it reminds them of the type of stuff they grew up on, so we wanted to lean into that and create a rock and roll renaissance album that has modern day relevance. We took that into the recording process as well and tried to do the whole thing as closely to a classic live album as possible.

**Q: How would you describe the evolution of your sound from previous releases to this one? How did the recording process differ from your past projects?**

A: Before the formation of the Hotpants, I was lost in a bit of identity crisis. My previous album could maybe be described as "bright indie country" which was what I had always been comfortable making. But with this sort of commercialized resurgence in country music (both good and bad), I knew that I needed to change course. I'm always looking to do something that hasn't been done a million times over. And while classic rock is nothing new, I wanted to make something that would allow me to unleash my inner rockstar on stage. It's hard to feel that same energy while playing quaint country tunes, so this album has more of an edge.

**Q: How do you feel about the role of live performance in your music-making process? Given the album's focus on live instrumentation, how do you feel it translates to a live setting?**

A: For me, live performance always reigns supreme over recorded work. They're both important, and people love and value recorded music they can listen to at home, but I'm way more of a live performer than a studio musician. I don't even think I could count the amount of shows and gigs I've done over my career, but it's a HUGE part of my life, my livelihood, and my passion. Live performance has informed these recordings in a major way. We pretty much figured out how to best play them live first, then went into the studio. Of course, in the studio, we were able to zoom in and fixate on little moments throughout the songs and really tighten them up, which has only enhanced how the songs sound live. But in short, these songs translate to a live setting very easily because that's where they originated.

**Q: What do you hope listeners take away from your new album once they've had a chance to sit with it?**

A: I hope they walk away feeling charged up. I hope they feel heard. I hope that the emotions and experiences explored in this album - frustration, yearning, fury, defeat, lust, searching, waiting, dreaming - are felt on a personal level for each listener. But I also hope that they somehow feel empowered, and like they aren't alone. The point of art is to connect us - to awaken the Divine within - and I hope that in some small way, this album does that for a few folks.

# PAST PRAISE AND MEDIA MENTIONS

## Rolling Stone

For FloydFest 24, the five-day extravaganza included marquee names like Charley Crockett, Sierra Ferrell, Black Pumas, and Sierra Hull; rising stars including S.G. Goodman, Vincent Neil Emerson, Grace Bowers, and Eggy; and regional acts deserving of the spotlight, from Caitlin Krisko & the Broadcast to Mackenzie Roark & the Hotpants.

"Her music captures the process of digging out of life's hardships and coming out the other side."  
— Pro Country



@obiewilcox6590 6 months ago

This band has the juice

"A haunting blend of twang, grit, and vulnerability."  
— Campfire Tales

## Richmond magazine

### Heart With Attitude

Richmond rockers Mackenzie Roark and the Hotpants are set to release a new album

BY ADAM CHEEK JANUARY 3, 2025



## NORTH OF THE JAMES

"Truth and facts, no alternatives."

### MUSIC

## Ghost of Rock and Roll From Mackenzie Roark



## style WEEKLY

FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM X YOUTUBE

SEARCH

ARTS + CULTURE

STUFF TO DO

NEWS + FEATURES

FOOD + DRINK

OPINI



Mackenzie Roark and the Hotpants (from left, drummer Drew Bernick, bassist Matt Moran, lead singer Mackenzie Roark, violinist Caroline Vain and guitarist Billy Blevins) will celebrate the release of "Ghost of Rock and Roll" at Get Tight Lounge on Friday, June 6. Photo by Katie Condon

MUSIC | June 4, 2025

## Turning Point

Richmond singer Mackenzie Roark deletes social media and dials up her band's sound on new album, "Ghost of Rock and Roll."

Davy Jones

# ALBUM CREDITS

Mackenzie Roark - lead vocals, acoustic guitar, electric rhythm guitar

Billy Bacci - lead guitar, piano, Wurlitzer, organ, harmonica, backing vocals

Caroline Vain - violin, backing vocals

Matt Moran - bass guitar, backing vocals

Drew Barnocky - drums, backing vocals, penny whistle

Leigh Pinner - backing vocals

John Bradberry - lapsteel

Music and lyrics written by Mackenzie Roark

Produced by Billy Bacci

Arranged by Mackenzie Roark and The Hotpants

Recorded at Red Amp Audio by Jody Boyd

Mixed by Jody Boyd

Mastered at Infrasonic by Daniel Bacigalupi

Album Photography by Katie Condon

Album Layout and Design by Darrin Higgins

Released by Vocal Rest Records





THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ  
THROUGH THIS PACKET! I HOPE THIS ALBUM  
LEAVES YOU FEELING EMPOWERED AND  
ENERGIZED. WE'VE POURED SO MUCH INTO ITS  
CREATION, AND OUR ONLY HOPE IS THAT  
OTHERS CAN ENJOY THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR.

WITH LOVE,

*Mackenzie Roark*



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