

Actor says relaxing in nature lifts spirit

By Jae-Ha Kim
Tribune Content Agency

Emmy-nominated actor Shannon Purser is best known for her work in “Stranger Things” and “Riverdale.” But she’s also a talented musician who pens contemplative songs like her latest, “Leave (Good Ending).” More recently, she was part of the cast of the stage production “La Cage Aux Folles.” “I had the best time,” said Purser, 28. “It was my first experience doing professional theater and I’m desperate to do it again. That show was up at the Pasadena Playhouse, which is a beautiful historic theater.”

This interview with Purser has been edited for clarity and length.

Q: Do you have a preference as to working on location versus on a set?

A: Shooting on location is very exciting because film productions have access to such interesting and unique places. I’ve shot in abandoned mental hospitals, historic homes, various high schools and incredible nature. Filming on a set is also such a cool experience. It’s amazing what a film crew can build — entire homes and worlds in a sound stage in the middle of nowhere! That’s genuine movie magic to me and it never gets old. So much detail goes into every single location you see on screen.

Q: Where are some locations you’ve worked in?

A: I enjoy traveling for work, as well, but it’s sometimes destabilizing. It’s nice to have a familiar



Actor and musician Shannon Purser has Japan and Nordic countries on her travel bucket list. **SHANNON PURSER**

routine when you work near home. I’ve also done a lot of work in Georgia, which is where I grew up, and in Canada — specifically Vancouver and Toronto. I’d love to work internationally again in the future.

Q: If you could pick a location to film a project at, where would it be and why?

A: I recently went to Scotland and I absolutely loved it there. I’d love to shoot a period piece on the Isle of Skye or in Edinburgh.

Q: Have you written or worked on any songs while you were on the road?

A: I love road trips. I do a lot of my best thinking in the car. I remember writing some music on the way to and from set in Vancouver.

Q: Does the music you hear in a particular city or country inspire your own work as a musician and actor?

A: Definitely. I often find myself writing things that remind me of whatever I’m listening to at the time. And I associate a lot of music with particular places. Lorde’s album “Melodrama” will always feel like New York City to me because I listened to it all the time while I lived there.

Q: What is your favorite vacation destination?

A: I love going to a cabin in the mountains. My family

and I often stay in one in the Georgia or North Carolina mountains around the holidays, and I really cherish those trips. As much as I enjoy visiting a city, being in nature is so relaxing and good for my spirit. All I need for a good vacation is a beautiful view and good company.

Q: What’s the most important thing you’ve learned from your travels?

A: Avoid tourist traps as much as you can. The places the locals love are almost always better. And do your best to respect the land and culture of wherever you’re visiting. We’re guests in these spaces.

Q: Where are your favorite weekend getaways?

A: One of my favorite things about living in Los Angeles is that you can drive an hour or so and be at the beach, mountains or desert. I’ve mentioned that I love the mountains. Big Bear is such a beautiful spot. I can’t wait to go back.

Q: Where would you like to go that you have never been?

A: I’d love to visit Japan. I think the variety of nature, the cultural and spiritual history and the cuisine would be incredible to experience. I’d also love to visit a Nordic country like Sweden or Norway. From what I’ve seen, the views are incredible.

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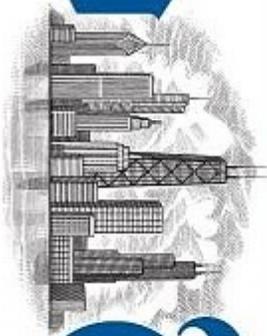


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