

Considering her country music lineage, Holly Williams took up music later in life than you might expect, learning the guitar and writing her first song when she was 17. Her passion for clothes came even later.

"When I was 18, 19, I had atrocious, horrible style," Williams says. "I didn't even think about stuff. I just went to Wet Seal all the time."

That all changed when her musical career started taking off a few years ago, and touring exposed her to styles she'd never seen at the mall.

"A lot of my touring was in Europe, so being over there, especially, and learning about all these designers that we didn't have over here. That's when it started."

Williams' new store H. Audrey, in the red-hot Hill Center, aims to provide Nashville with sophisticated designs at all price points. Upstairs, you'll also find a gallery housing classic rock and country photos from famed photographers Henry Diltz, Jim Marshall and Elliott Landy — rare prints and original shots of the Beatles, Dylan, Jimi Hendrix and more.

Williams originally planned to open the store during some downtime while she was between record deals. But that plan flew out the window when she signed with MCA and started working on a new album just as the store opened in November.

These days, her schedule's still pretty hectic, but Williams says her two careers balance out well. When the store's at its busiest, during the holiday season, the music industry essentially closes shop. And as shopping business dries up in the summer, she's hoping to head out on tour — but she's admittedly a little nervous about leaving the store behind.

"It literally feels like you're leaving your toddler for the first time with a babysitter," she says. "When I head overseas, it'll be scary, but I trust my employees."

HOLLY WILLIAMS

Owner, H. Audrey/singer-songwriter

Holly Williams, pictured at Bluebird Cafe, has been juggling her music career with ownership duties at her new Green Hills boutique, H. Audrey.