

Singer Sarah-Jane is taking control of her career in the music business

FORMER Communard Sarah-Jane Morris is taking control with the release of her new album next Monday.

Sarah-Jane, whose 1986 single *Don't Leave Me This Way* with Jimmy Sommerville and Richard Coles was a worldwide smash and stayed

at the top of the UK charts for 14 weeks, has dispensed with managers and set up her own record label called Fallen Angel.

The singer, who was brought up in Preston-on-Stour and studied drama at Stratford College with the aforementioned Richard

Coles and Ben Elton, is hoping that the album *August* will firmly re-establish her as one of the country's top female singer-songwriters and establish Fallen Angel as a label for other female singer-songwriters.

"I don't want women to have to struggle like I did," said Sarah-Jane.

The album, which features the guitarist Mark Riba, marks a break from the past at the same time as embracing the best things about it.

Significantly, it opens with a blues version of *Don't Leave Me This Way*.

"I have done it to

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reclaim the song for myself," says Sarah-Jane, whose husband, ex-Pogue David Coulter, co-runs the music course at Stratford College.

The years between the heady days of 1980s pop stardom and now have been anything but dull for Sarah-Jane. Apart from getting married and starting a family, she had her 1989 single *Me and Mrs Jones* banned by Radio 1 because it was thought to be a lesbian song (it wasn't).

Simply Red

She toured with Simply Red and had a string of hits in countries such as Japan, Italy, Germany, France and Spain. She was even No 1 three times in Greece.

She admits that following the Radio 1 business, she neglected the UK, which is why she has spent this year travelling up and down the country, performing at 50 venues with anything from a

full band to two guitars.

Added to that her website has received 15,000 hits since March and she has done a couple of dates in the States prior to a more comprehensive tour next year. In fact, her final New York gig was on September 10 and her flight was the last out of New York prior to the terrorist atrocities the following day.

With Blue Note, the EMI jazz label, showing interest in her next album *Love and Pain* due out next summer, the future is certainly looking bright for Sarah-Jane.

"I have a good career. I prefer to be in control. It's a Madonna trip," she says.

"But I would rather be me than Madonna because she doesn't have a private life."

Sarah-Jane Morris' new album *August* will be on sale from November 26 at HMV in High Street, Stratford.

► *I want to be in control: Singer Sarah-Jane Morris.*

