



Jerry Cherry On Why His Life Is Sweeter In NYC ... That's When He's Not On The Road With Chubby Checker

I first got to know Jerry Cherry via the now defunct Late Night at Rockwood Music Hall mayhem. He always seemed to have an original approach to his song; some trick up his sleeve (when he wasn't stripping his shirt off, that is). My first impression was, well, a bit of a WTF?

It was a little bit of a surprise, then, when he dropped his CD on me, and when I got to see him perform properly with his band. Both superb experiences. What also struck me is how much on the scene Jerry is. He's always out checking on and supporting other musicians, and always with flyers for his next show, always promoting. Time for *Indie Sounds* to find out more ...

Indie Sounds: Jerry Cherry is ... a man, a band, or both?

Jerry Cherry: I would have to say both. Even though I'm the driving force behind it, I have to give a lot of credit to the musicians that I play with. The band brings my music up to a creative level that I would never be able to do on my own. My cellist Xue Yang has also been writing string arrangements for my songs that are so beautiful. She is so gifted and I'm so lucky to have met her.

IS: So tell us how James Giamundo got his start in life and got into music?

Jerry: I had a very unusual childhood. I moved around a lot when I was very young. My mother was a very free spirited woman with a very wild heart. Growing up in that type of atmosphere and performing my first show when I was 14 at a bar she owned called Cookies Place gave me my start in the biz.

I also lived with my grandparents for a while as a kid. My grandfather always had an acoustic guitar lying around.

As a kid, probably around seven, I loved to bang on the strings while crawling on the ground. I guess some things never change.

IS: How did you end up in Florida?

Jerry: I was born in Brooklyn. East New York. My parents got divorced when I was three. I stuck around for a few more years before retiring to Florida at six. My grand parents lived in Florida so while mom was



Photo by Courtney Collins

AC/DC, Van Halen and Ozzy Osbourne. Those were the bands that did it for me. My mom took me to see AC/DC on my 11th birthday. I knew then that there was nothing else I would ever do but music and perform. I had a very supportive family growing up. My hair was down to my ass when I was 14. I got whistled at a lot.

getting it together after the divorce, my older sister and I left the Big Apple for the Sunshine State to stay with them.

IS: What brought you back to NYC?

Jerry: I started Jerry Cherry in Florida in early 2004, just after a visit I had to New



York. At that time I was thinking about moving to New York but decided to stay in Florida. However, after another trip to New York in the August of 2004, I realized that it was the place I needed to be to get anywhere in the world of music.

I had a great experience one night that made me come to the realization to move here. I grew up in Florida, like I said, and made many amazing friends and musicians there over the years. Singer/keyboardist Robbie Gennet [of Everclear, and other bands] was one of them. He mentioned to me that his sister Abby Gennet was performing at the Delancey on one of the nights I would be in New York. I went and saw her show and was blown away. Her band is called Slunt. I was very impressed to see such a vibrant music scene, especially on a week night at 2am.

What really made my mind up was a conversation I had on my last night before returning to Florida. It was with a homeless person. I had told him that I wasn't sure about making the move or not to New York. He told me that I have to go where the million dollars is. The million dollars won't come to you. Words of wisdom. Then he asked me for six bucks.

IS: You've got your debut CD out. It took a while to make. Tell us about it?

Jerry: Yes, I made a record. It's called *Life Is Sweeter...* It did take a while to make. I think that is because it was my first record. I've done many recordings before, one, two, even three at a time. To record eleven songs and to have continuity to them is a much bigger challenge. Especially as I was producing it myself. What was I thinking? There are so many aspects to think about when recording an album. At the time, the only thing I thought about was how to make these 11 songs the best I could make them.

Everybody who's involved in the process is so important. There was trial and error like most projects. I lied in bed every night wondering if I would ever be finished with

it. The album is a story line of one year of my life in New York. Most of the songs were written in that year. It's about moving to the city and seeing the endless possibilities, then falling in love and sharing your life and passion on this crazy island. Love takes many twisted turns and sometimes you crash. You then find yourself searching for who you were before love came to town. It's hard to except the choices that you have to make sometimes. It's also hard to let go of someone special. And then you click your ruby slippers and somehow find your way home. That's what this album is all about.

IS: So who performs what on the CD?

Jerry: I sang and played all the guitars, grand piano, synth and some tambourine. I also had many great musicians perform on this record. Felipe Torres played drums. Ricardo Rodrigues played bass. Dan Torres played trumpet and sang some backround vocals. Jody Redhage played the cello. Kiku Enomoto and Olivier Manchon played violin. I had a horn section that consisted of Alan Ferber on trombone, David Smith on trumpet, and Dan Pratt on sax. Jared Gold played some C3 organ, and my engineer Mike Rogers played lots of percussion as well.

IS: Describe your live act. And who plays with you live?

Jerry: I try to express and deliver my songs the best that I can. I like to give it all and leave everything on the stage. It comes from within. What was I feeling when I wrote the song? How do I feel about it now? The show takes you through many emotions. You may start out thinking, this guy thinks he's a fucking rock star. Then you might say, ah that song is pretty. Then you'll be mesmerized sonically with some of the layers of sounds including the string section. You might be captivated by the lyrical content. Then we'll just rock your face off. We have a wide variety of songs and styles.

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Indie Sounds NY serves the New York independent music scene. Each month, Indie Sounds seeks out the singer/songwriters, the bands, the places and the people who make up a unique and vibrant artistic community.

Indie Sounds NY is brought to you by Harris Radio, an internet radio station broadcasting 24/7 on www.harrisradio.com, playing great music from unsigned artists and independent labels. And Canadians. Harris Radio also operates www.gigapple.com.

Original design: Ananda Bates,
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**New Release Rap****Low Water**
Twisting the Neck of the Swan

The latest from Brooklyn's Low Water is the third to be spun on Harris Radio. Three great albums in a row. *Indie Sounds* talked to frontman Johnny Leitera.

Indie Sounds: Another intriguing name for this album - *Twisting the Neck of the Swan*. What's it all about?

Johnny Leitera: The album title is a reference to Mexican poet Enrique Gonzalez Martinez who basically encouraged young writers to write from the heart. I came across the quote in a Garcia Marquez novel and liked the sentiment.

As for the other titles of our records - *Hard Words in a Speakeasy* is from W.C. Fields, and *Who Said That Life Is Over?* is a quote from one of the songs on that record. So you can see there's a "range of influence" if you will. Oh, and all of our record titles have seven syllables.

IS: Who performed on the album?

Johnny: I play guitars and am the main vocalist, Joe Burch is on drums and percussion, and Dave Rubin is on bass,

guitars, keyboards, and wrote the string quartet for the song *Go*. We all sing backing vocals. We also had some help from our friend Jason Titus and members of Momenta Quartet as well.

IS: Who else was involved in its production?

Johnny: We did basic tracking at Little Loud studios in Williamsburg, all the overdubs were done at our place in Bushwick, and the record was mixed by Drew Fischer at Future Shock Studio in Greenpoint.

IS: How does this album differ or evolve from your earlier releases?

Johnny: We took our time on this record, and were patient and allowed the songs to become their own entities. The song *Charge* is a "song cycle" in the sense that it's made up of several short pieces that are woven together in a way that really came about during the mixing process.

We try album to album to reference things visually and sonically - even lyrically - so there's a kind of "tapestry" that is being developed from record to record. We brought in Drew to mix this one as well. He has such a great feel for what we're trying to do. He was a perfect fit.

IS: Plans for the album's release?

Johnny: We're having our record release show at Public Assembly on December 4th. Along with our friends Heidi Sidelinker, Rich Girls and Breaking Laces. DJ Shingara's will be spinning and there will be a performance by the modern dance troupe Sleepdance. The record is available at CD Baby and it's up on iTunes.

Web: www.lowwatermusic.com

MySpace: lowwater

See www.indiesounds.com for the full version of this interview.

WHAT'S NEW ON CD

Laura Vecchione
Girl in the Band
www.lauravmusic.com



This Reporter
Five Smooth Stones
www.myspace.com/thisreporter



The States
The Path of Least Resistance
www.thestatesonline.com





The L Word

With Lauren Jonik

Dorit

Artists often become categorized by - and locked into - the genre in which they first become known. But, to assume that someone is capable only of expressing himself/herself through a singular means is to limit the creative potential that we all possess.

Singer/songwriter/dancer Dorit has been staring down this very challenge and, perhaps most importantly, overcoming it.



Though Dorit's immersion into the world of music began as a young child and she was a proficient pianist throughout her teen years, she discovered her talent for Middle Eastern dance in her early twenties.

"My friend gave me an article about a belly dance school and two days later, I was in a dance class. Two weeks later, I was in Turkey. Two months later, I was in Egypt and I was performing in New York City within nine months," she says.

And, it was her sense of rhythm that was developed by her musical training that allowed her to excel in the field. "The live musicians love playing with me because I'm paying attention to what they're doing. I do solos with a percussionist and it's not just me showing off movements, it's me becoming part of the team," she begins before continuing, "I am so much more in tune with the musical part of the dance than anything else."

The daughter of first generation immigrants of Argentinean and Polish descent, Dorit worked at MTV as a segment producer before fully embracing her own artistic pursuits, but as she began performing as a belly dancer, her skills rapidly garnered attention both from within the dance community and without.

"One time I was doing a show at a hotspot in New York and I came out with my finger cymbals at first. This guy with tattoos surrounded by models started banging on the table. He was staring at my hands and rhythm. I found out later that it was

Tommy Lee. And he wasn't looking at my body or at me, he was looking at my hands," she recalls.

Dorit studied dance with the late Serena Wilson of Serena Studios, who was a legend in the Middle Eastern dance scene. Wilson opened one of the first belly dance studios and helped to legitimize the art form in the US, appearing on the cover of *Life* magazine in the 1970s.

"When she died last year, her family asked me to take over her classes, so I'm teaching two of her classes. I'm actually giving back to the students because I'm teaching them how to be musicians with their bodies and not just learning dance movements."

"At least I will have trained a generation of dancers to have musicality in their dance and that's what I'm known for in the dance world," Dorit explains. Noting Dorit's many talents, Wilson encouraged her to pursue music performance, as well.

Fascinated with varied musical styles, Dorit's sound is an evolving blend of her influences. "I grew up with my parents listening to opera and me playing classical music and hearing the Top 40. Then, I started listening to the Gypsy Kings and then I started listening to Arabic music for ten years," she says, almost marveling at the diversity of her interests.

Inspired by the extremes in emotion in her songwriting, Dorit says, "It may just be that somebody said something and it turned me on in some way. Or, it might be a really interesting story," that spurs her to write. The song *Rise* came forth from a difficult time in her life. "It's being a phoenix - the idea where you die to be reborn again."

And, her personal favorite song, *Wonder Woman*, pays homage to the character that inspired her from childhood. "The idea was that she had her quiet job where she was saving the world and then, when she needed to, she was in her regalia," Dorit begins with a



laugh. "I wanted to be part of that group that saves the world with powers - just with the power of truth."

Currently performing her own material solo around NYC, Dorit also recently appeared in the gypsy rock musical *Viva Patshiva* and is making a video for her first single, a song that centers around female empowerment.

"I realized that nobody is going to be the hero that I want them to be, so I just have to do it myself. The video is about women being their hero, whoever they want to be and being fierce and fun."

But, when asked what superpower she would choose if given the opportunity, she answers with a smile, "To be able to really inspire a huge amount of people through music - I think that would be like a superpower."

Dorit is next performing at Banjo Jim's on Tuesday, November 25th, at 11pm.

MySpace: [sweeetdorit](#)

To read this article online, with additional photos, check out www.indiesoundsny.com.

Lauren Jonik is a freelance writer and photographer based in Brooklyn who enjoys blending her love of music with her passion for writing.

She is the founder and editor of the website www.soundaffects.net and contributes to several online and print publications.

Lauren also writes bios and press releases for bands and artists and is available for hire for photography and promotional projects. Please contact her at lauren@soundaffects.net for more information.

Pictures Of You



Taking the final bow. The Undisputed Heavyweights at the end of their farewell gig at Bowery Ballroom last month.

It was a night of great music in a room full of love. This band will be remembered for a very long time.

Photo by BJ Barratt, Fine-Line Foto. She takes some pretty awesome photos.



The Abrams Brothers play superb teenage bluegrass, from Ontario, Canada.

John, James and Elijah cannot buy themselves a beer - not at home and especially not at The Living Room, where they are regular visitors.

Their latest album, *Blue on Brown*, is a tribute to both Bob Dylan and Arlo Guthrie, produced by Chris Brown and including many familiar NYC names, including: Tony Scherr, Anton Fier, Teddy Kumpel, Michael Blake, Jane Scarpentoni and Kate Fenner.

More at: www.theabramsbros.com

Calling all photographers! *Indie Sounds* is looking for the best shots of musicians and bands, especially live, for www.indiesoundsny.com. Full credit will be given.





Scene and Heard

The Times They Are A-Changin'

This is issue #38 of *Indie Sounds NY* and #40, slated for February 2009, will be the final one in print. From then, the publication will continue - indeed expand - online at www.indiesoundsny.com, which has been updated daily since the beginning of 2008.

Some things will stay the same. There will be a monthly feature on a local NYC artist, a monthly New Release Rap article on a recently released CD, and Lauren Jonik's L Word will continue to delve deeper every month into the mind and makeup of an artist. Oh, and Kendall's Hit List will continue weekly, every Wednesday. I mean, we could never take that away!

There will be other weekly set pieces, and more news on a daily basis on what's going on in the NYC indie scene. So tell us about your new CD (or online music) releases, your CD release parties, your collaborative showcases, new videos you've posted to YouTube, competitions you've done well in.

We're also looking - seriously looking - for feature contributions from musicians. Tell us about your experiences in learning some new instrument or recording technique or

technology. Tell us about your best ever gig. Your worst ever gig. About a gig you went to and loved. And what you really think of venues that you play.

Tell us about how you planned for your regional tour, what CMJ, SXSW, NACA was like, why you use Twitter, how you promote gigs. Let the world know what's working for you and how you divide your time between making music and promoting it.

And photos too. Especially live ones. Have you had any really great photos taken of you? Get some exposure for yourself and for the photographer. Full credit will be given.

Think of this as DIY publicity. We're not going to let you blow your own trumpet or slag someone or something off gratuitously, but we will look to publish articles and opinions that are inspirational, educational and well thought out (and decently written).

Got an idea? Drop us a line and pitch us at pete@indiesoundsny.com.

Why is this happening? Nope, nothing to do with the crap economy. Rather, it's to do with trying to do the best job of getting the word on the NYC indie music scene out, and just a feeling that it's time for a change.

There are also changes coming to Harris Radio, but more about that next time. It's all good. Very good!

Rehab (formerly Club Midway, formerly Scenic) is no more, at least as a music venue. Word is that booker Jasper Coolidge is moving on to book Fontana's.

AmieStreet.com is new and improved with a new music player, gifting and wishlists.

Fast Forward



All Together Now: Breaking Laces Look To The Stars

Smiling, Seth Mausky On (Pseudo) Marriage and Making The Band

I first saw the Laces when they were just getting started, at the defunct Club 111 in Brooklyn. I knew a couple of guys had come from Darby Jones (who played Hattie Reddy's beach party in 2002) and wanted to check them out. Not bad. Fast forward to a few months back and I got to see some amazing gigs at the Cutting Room. The band was tight, the music was just as good as the CDs, and the live set was tremendous fun. This was a real find! Indie Sounds caught up with band member Seth Mausky one-on-one to find out their secret.

Indie Sounds: So who is Breaking Laces?
Seth Mausky: We all ourselves a three-piece electro-instrumental indie rock band. I am the drummer, and also handle live electronics and samples. Wilbur (Duffy) Harting is our super sweet vocalist and he rocks an awesome guitar that live shows. Rob Chesnick plays bass and keyboards, and sings backing vocals (oh yes, he sings, too). For our live set, we call on Harlow, the saxophone, and Prudence, the keyboard.

He knew did he hand get together?
Seth: We try to convince people that we meet as a bandmates first or in the presentable side in the back of ready publications, but it was really just a long string of good fortune that brought us all together.

As the scene here, Billy had gotten serious about music and had put a great album together (Duffy's debut). He wanted to play some shows so he gave me a call and we reconnected. For the time it was just a gig from the get go and I knew we were on to something. Both saw the Laces play as a show and basically just told me to get him to the band. Of course, he was a perfect fit and



WWW.HARRISRADIO.COM | WWW.INDIESOUNDSNY.COM | NOVEMBER 2008

Back in November 2006, Breaking Laces had just released their *Astonomy is my life, but I love you* EP and were in the middle of yet another tour.

Since then, the band won a prestigious Starbucks contest that sent them to perform in Hawaii and presumably took care of their coffee habits for some time.

They also recorded a live album - *Live at Seaside* - and made it available via Fuzz.com, a company that now also manages them. And they've continued to tour

The hot news is that their next studio album, *Undercover Cool*, will be released in January. Teaser tracks are posted on the band's MySpace, and a video for the single *Here to Stay* is on their website.

Web: www.breakinglaces.com

MySpace: breakinglaces

Next Month in Indie Sounds NY

On the Cover:
Emily Zuzik

Look out for the January issue at all good NYC music venues.

Or download it at:

www.indiesoundsny.com



JERRY CHERRY ...

Continued from page 2

There is a fine line that holds it all together and that's the connection with the audience. I'm grateful for having an amazing live band. Jamie Alegre is on the drums. Ricardo Rodrigues is on the bass. Xue Yang Liu is on the cello, and Francesca Dardini plays the violin. Sometimes Dave Smith comes out and plays the trumpet with us as well.

IS: What live venues have you been playing in NYC?

Jerry: I've performed at almost every venue in the city. They all have their feel and vibes. I had a really fun show playing at Uncle Mikes in Tribeca. The Bitter End was also fun. Don Hill's has an amazing sound system. The Annex, Rehab, The Delancey. All great venues. It always seems that I get the most excited when I play at Rockwood Music Hall. I've had many great nights there and it really is a cosy little room. I just played my first show in Brooklyn at Spike Hill. That's a very cool place.

IS: So you even managed to get banned from a certain venue?

Jerry: Yes I did. It was during Late Night at Rockwood Music Hall. It was a weekly Wednesday night show where musicians would go up on stage and play a song from the Billboard Top 100 from a predetermined year. For weeks I would perform there and I would walk on the tables because they were right there in front of me. It was a way for me to get closer to everyone in the audience. They sorta looked like stage wings at a Madonna concert. I couldn't help going out on them.

One night before the show, owner Ken Rockwood said to me "no tables." And I said ok. As soon as I started playing *Oh Girl* by Paul Young, the crowd started egging me on to do my thing. I looked up at the crows

nest where Ken runs sound and noticed he wasn't there. I couldn't resist so I jumped out onto the tables and before I knew it Ken ran in and busted me, yelling "I said no tables." I felt so bad. Ken's such a great guy and I should've respected his wishes.

The next week I returned for some more action. I could see it on host Matt Basile's face that something was wrong. I asked him if I could do a song and he looked at me and said "I don't know man, you have to respect the bosses wishes." I was a bit bummed until the next week when I returned and was welcomed to perform. A few weeks later I mooned everyone. Sometimes it's hard to be professional. Sometimes I get so disgusted at everything that all I have to give is my ass. I was very surprised they let me return after that. I guess I have a nice ass.

IS: What's the Chubby Checker thing you're involved in?

Jerry: I got hooked up with Chubby Checker back in March. My radio promoter Gary Leftowith was not only promoting me but Chubby as well. Gary also produced Chubby's new song and runs his record label. Chubby was getting ready to perform at an industry showcase at The Cutting Room when Gary asked me if I would like to play guitar for the show. Gary is also partners with Mike Rogers who mixed my record. They loved my guitar playing and knew that I would be qualified for the gig.

We did the show and it was a major success. A few months later, Chubby's CD *All The Best* was about to come out and I was invited out to play the release show at The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland. It was then that Chubby's musical director Tommy C asked if I wanted to learn the whole set and go on tour with them. He gave me a week to learn 30 songs. I did it.

We've been touring all over the country on this huge red bus that says Checkerlicious on it. It's been an amazing experience. You can call me Chubby Cherry if you want to, Pete.

IS: And you've done some TV too?

Jerry: Yes, I was on a reality series for two episodes. The show was called *Matched In Manhattan*. It was about a goth girl who couldn't find the perfect man she was searching for because he had to be goth also. After an unsuccessful speed date with five potential conservative, casually dressed regular guys, me being one of them, matchmaker Matt Titus put his plan to work. She was really surprised and blown away when I showed up totally decked out in goth at our dinner date. That was really fun.

I also performed playing guitar with Chubby Checker on the CBS *Early Show*, and the NBC *Today Show*. I performed two songs on a show called *Alive With Clive* in White Plains, NY. I was also recently interviewed by Eddie Muentes on his show *Hit Records Night Life Video* on MNN. You can see all of these shows at my website.

IS: So, what's next?

Jerry: I just finished recording my newest song called *Vampires*. I am giving a free download of it from my website. I'm very excited about the way this one came out. It's a very deep song with a dark Spanish feel to it. It also has a very beautiful string arrangement courtesy of Xue and Fra.

I just filmed a music video for my song *Freak Show*. It's the complete opposite of the spectrum from *Vampires*. This video will have you drooling. I also have a few really cool shows coming up. I'll be performing at Fontana's on November 25th at 9pm. Then I'm back at Rockwood on December 22nd at 10pm. Then I hit the road again with Chubby Checker the day after Christmas for a string of dates. And I also plan on seeing a few more Rich Girls shows!

Web: www.jerrycherry.com

MySpace: jerrycherryband



**Backline****Five Vital Questions For ...
Mark Marshall**

Indie Sounds: Are you really an absolute total guitar whore?

Mark Marshall: Well, I prefer the phrase *putaine la vache*. Actually, I take that back ... I just Googled that shit. I think of it as providing guitar for the string deprived. Yeah, I'm pretty sure I save lives.

IS: Who is the mastermind behind your amazing beard?

Mark: *The White Album*.

IS: Who do you most want to play with?

Mark: That dude in the 14th street F station who plays the hippie flute.

IS: What's your favorite method of relaxation?

Mark: Wandering the streets of NYC.

IS: Whatcha gonna do when they finally come for you?

Mark: What do you know? Am I gonna have to grow another beard and move to a new state again? Sheesh!

Mark is a guitarist, drummer, bassist, recording engineer, producer and composer who plays out with Abby Ahmad, Andy Fitzpatrick, Barnaby Bright, and others

MySpace: davidmarkmarshall

Questions by Tessa Perry,
www.tessaperry.com

**LIVE IN NYC**
From www.gigapple.com

Who: William Rottman

When and Where: The Cutting Room,
Tuesday, December 2nd, 9pm

Web: www.williamrottman.com

MySpace: williamrottman

ONLINE @ INDIESOUNDSNY.COM***** Kendall's Hit List *****

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