

The Secret's Out: Emma Peel Rocks With Style!

Read this article, memorize, then eat it ...

A new band with a name drawn from an old TV series. Emma Peel is a name that still excites us Generation X-er boys, and now there's a great reason to revisit all those fantasies again. Indie Sounds got a de-brief from the band's front gal, Leslie Mendelson.

Indie Sounds: Your name is Leslie, so where does Emma Peel come from?

Leslie Mendelson: I like the idea of having a band name. My name is fine and all, but when I started working with the group it felt more like a band situation. I love groups that have a name that almost sounds like a person's name.

Emma Peel came to mind because it was a name that if you knew who she was then you got it, if not, then it still sounds a cool name. Emma Peel is a character from a 60's British cult television show *The Avengers* - a highly entertaining tongue-in-cheek spy drama. She is smart, sexy, she kicks major ass and it's campy and fun. It ties my sound together, since I draw a lot from 60's pop songwriters, especially the girl groups that Phil Spector produced.

IS: How did you come to form the band? Who's in it?

LM: I was introduced to Mike Visceglia (bass) almost three years ago. I had just moved to Queens from South Setauket, L.I. and was trying to get an act together. Mike basically told me to get *my* act together and to call him when I did.

Two years later, a few gigs and an album [self-titled] under my belt, I called him and

asked him to hook up a band for my CD release party. So he did, and I met Jack Petruzzelli (guitar) and Doug Yowell (drums). For the last few months, the ever talented Thad DeBrock has been playing guitar when Jack went on the road with Rufus Wainwright. This summer should be interesting. Mike's leaving for a little bit to

started off as a rockin' country blues band. With the influences of Andrew Bertrand (drums), John Franzese (bass) and Mojo (keyboards), the band slowly became a funky dance band. We had a blast. Some of my favorite gigs were in the smallest dives in the middle of nowhere.



Emma Peel photos by Jason Hwang

go to Europe with Suzanne Vega. So you will see a few different line ups this month.

IS What's your history before the band?

LM: When I was in college, I used to play in a band called Mother Freedom. We were a funky pop band with two main writers, myself and Greg Bucking (guitar). We

After the band dispersed, I played a lot of solo piano gigs around NYC for dinner and obnoxious bar crowds. Sometimes you can only say no to "piano man" so many times in a night. Nonetheless, I got to play. That's something right?

IS: As a band, you play a number of songs from your debut solo album. What's the plan



for an Emma Peel record?

LM: Right now, we are making a plan to record an album, or at least an EP (which would be so cool because of the initials). Over the last few months, the band has been bringing in new tunes, so I think we are only playing maybe three or four off my solo album. A band recording is so necessary. So far, we've laid down a couple of tracks. It's turning out great.

IS: Will the band continue to play your material for the foreseeable future, or will it get more collaborative in terms of writing?

LM: It already has. I have always done a lot of co-writing. I really enjoy getting other people's perspectives on a song. Sometimes the song comes out in one breath, and that's a beautiful thing. Most of the time for me, I come up with a hook, and then work it out with whomever I think would best be suited to the style of the song.

IS: And do you expect to be playing more guitar in the future, or will the piano be your main instrument?

LM: I think I will be playing more piano. Not only do I look better playing it, it is my first instrument, and I feel more relaxed and confident. I groove better as well and my writing style really suits the instrument.

IS: What NYC venues do you like to play at, and go to see music at?

LM: Well since I only play a few rooms right now, I like them the best. The Living Room, The Bitter End, Rockwood Music Hall. I love seeing music at those places as well. They all have a vibe about them and the sound is always great. I also like Tonic on a given night and Barbes in Park Slope. They usually have some avant garde or old school jazz or chamber music there. It varies a lot. Southpaw is cool too. I love going to see shows at Madison Square Garden. It's always an amazing experience. I saw Madonna last summer and I loved it. I was



sad when I heard that the vocals were pre-recorded but I still think that she put on a good show.

IS: Who else in the NYC scene do you like to go see?

LM: Have Her Home By Ten is the coolest band in town. Great songs, great attitude. They always get me going. Also Joan As Police Woman. Joan Wasser is such an amazing musician and songwriter. It is always a shot in the arm to go see her when she is in town.

IS: And any gig news for you?

LM: Yes! We've just confirmed that we'll be in residency at The Living Room in July. Every Tuesday at 10pm. We're all really looking forward to that. Please come out and see us, and say hello.

Weblink: www.lesliemendelson.com



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Editor and Publisher: Pete Harris
pete@indiesoundsny.com

Designer:/Cover banner photos: Ananda Bates, ananda@acousticroot.com

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

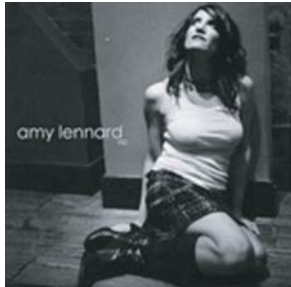
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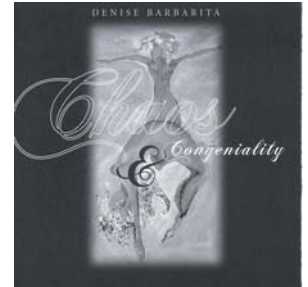
WHAT'S NEW ON CD



Amy Lennard
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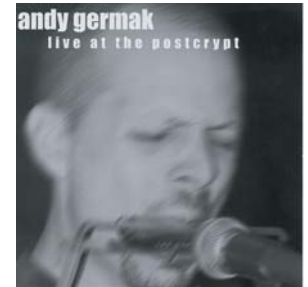
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Chaos & Congeniality
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Girlyman
Little Star
www.girlyman.com



Crescent and Frost
Open Doors
www.crescentandfrost.com



Andy Germak
Live at the Postscript
www.andygermak.com

SCENE AND HEARD

* **SAVE THE DATE:** Harris Radio will be celebrating its third birthday on Sunday, July 31, 7pm onwards @ Rockwood Music Hall. Check out www.harrisradio.com for the lineup, and stop by to say hello!

* Boudoir Bar on Smith Street in Brooklyn has re-introduced live acoustic music every Friday night. Contact Donathen for more info and booking on (718) 624 8878.

* New website alert. When you're next in cyberspace, check out these new websites:

- www.chrisbrownmusic.com
- www.crescentandfrost.com
- www.danafuchs.com

Dana's website includes live footage from recent performances at BB King's. A live DVD is due for release later this year.

* Acme Underground is now the Ace of Clubs. This venerable basement venue is at 9 Great Jones Street in Noho.

* Congratulations to Ana Egge, who heads out on tour with Lucinda Williams this summer. Check out www.anaegge.net for tour info and to purchase her excellent new CD *Out Past the Lights*.





THE LISTENING ROOM

Liberty Heights Tap Room

A bar that brews its own beer, serves great home-cooked food, and has live music. It sounds like heaven. And it is. Jump on the bus and get out to Red Hook soon!

Indie Sounds did and shared a beer with venue owner and manager Steve Deptula.

About Liberty Heights Tap Room

Location: 34 Van Dyke St. (corner of Dwight St.), Red Hook, Brooklyn.

Date opened: Music began in 2002

Capacity: 40

Nights when live music is performed: Open mic every Thursday. Pre-booked sets on Friday and Saturday, usually three per night.

Typical genres: No specific genre, but the booking focus is on Brooklyn-based original music.

Backline: Complete drum kit, two guitar amps, bass amp, and an electric piano. Sound system has eight mic inputs and four direct inputs, plus two separate monitor mixes.

Cover charge: Usually no cover charge, unless acts want one.

Contact: Steve Deptula,
steve@libertyheightstaproom.com.

Indie Sounds: What's the history of live music at the Liberty Heights Tap Room?

Steve Deptula: To date, it's been mostly bands and performers that are newly formed, just starting out and I give them a shot. Many do quite well and bring out an



audience. Some of the more experienced bands that have come in are Jen Chapin, Lex Grey & the Urban Pioneers and Millers Farm.

From time to time, we've had some better known out of towners, such as Chris & Meredith Thompson from Mass., the Bow Thayer Band from Vermont. We've even had bands from Ireland play their first gigs in the USA (often recommended by Larry Kerwan from Black 47).

IS: You say that you focus on Brooklyn-based unsigned acts? Why?

SD: I mainly stick to Brooklyn-based original bands because the venue is a little off the beaten path in Red Hook and folks from Manhattan and other areas won't come out here. I find that the Brooklyn bands are usually able to draw their friends and fans here to see them perform.

IS: How do you balance running a neighborhood bar with a music venue?

SD: If by chance I don't have any bands on a Friday or Saturday, I will just get the evening's restaurant dinner business and maybe a few stragglers in for some drinks afterwards. The music is what drives the later in the evening business.

IS: Most people think of Red Hook as beyond Mars. How easy is it to get to your place?

SD: Driving is easy because of the ample street parking, but those using public transit just have to get over their 'subway to bus hang up' because the B77 bus ride is very short and

it stops right at our front door. There is also car service.

IS: You also put on shows featuring teenagers? Are these actually any good?

SD: The Rockin' Teens Showcase has been an overwhelming success. I've gotten great press with it and the kids get to perform in a night club atmosphere, which they cannot get anywhere else, plus their parents absolutely love it and me as well. There are many very talented and organized performers between the ages of 9 and 15 that have come through.

IS: What's your personal history?

SD: In my youth, I played in several rock bands; then I got a job with a sound company that took me all across the country, in and out of every kind of music venue. After that, I ran Irving Plaza in the early 80's, it was real tough because we had the Ritz (now Webster Hall) as direct competition who basically out bid us for good acts.

Then, I worked in woodworking and interior renovations for a while and was home brewing beer as a hobby. In 1994, I founded and built Park Slope Brewing Co., a brewpub on 6th Ave. in Park Slope. It was very successful and in 1996, I decided to become a Red Hook pioneer like Greg O'Connell and bought three ajoined buildings on the corner of Van Dyke St. and Dwight St. for pocket change. I moved my microbrewery here and quietly ran a small factory only operation. The Tap Room opened in 2001.

IS: Do you have a message for Mike Bloomberg or Marty Markowitz?

SD: Yes, promote Red Hook more, and dispel all the hearsay and bad rap that seems to stifle Red Hook's growth. Install a subway stop here. If Roosevelt Island can have one, then so can Red Hook.

Weblink: www.libertyheightstaproom.com





INDUSTRY INSIDER

Liberated Matter

Working behind the scenes to make the NYC scene what it is, Liberated Matter brings musicians together through their concert series, and currently is guiding the career of some of the brightest new acts out there. Indie Sounds talked to the shy and retiring nice guys, Wes and Jay.

Indie Sounds: What is Liberated Matter? And where's it going?

Wes: Liberated Matter was started in February 2004. After meeting Jay at the famed AntiHootNanny open mic at Sidewalk Café, we decided, within an hour of meeting, to start an independent music company. Liberated Matter's first activity was creating a concert series called Cross-Pollination. This idea emerged with a goal of stimulating the community feel among musicians by pairing up artists to share a set and a meal.

We also do a Cross-Pollination in Philadelphia at the World Cafe Live. In addition, we organize nights at Pianos, Rockwood Music Hall, and other venues. We're working on a second series right now, a monthly one, called East Village Stew.

Aside from these events, we manage a female singer/songwriter called JAYMAY, and a rock band called Echolalia.

Jay: I'd add my vision of being known as the nice guy that got ahead. I've heard people warn that being nice, sincere and honest is not the way to go in this biz. Personally I don't feel like I have much of a choice and I know Wes feels the same. As far as what do we want to do, I'd like to help foster a long and successful career with JAYMAY. She is an incredible artist and a great friend. I'd like to continue expanding Cross-Pollination to other cities and an ultimate dream would



Getting Liberated: JAYMAY

be to televise the event presenting performers of legendary status.

IS: What's your background in music? What brought you to NYC?

Wes: My background is label based but first and foremost as a lover of quality music. A snob even. Yes, I admit it. What brought me to NYC was just that. A passion for music. After getting my business degree I was on my way to becoming a consultant when I decided to 180, say no to a job offer for a lot of \$ and move to NYC to be an unpaid intern at a record label. NYC seemed like the right city to pursue this dream. I'm also in a band here, The Undisputed Heavyweights, so creatively it works out as well.

Jay: I bought *Sgt. Pepper's* when I was a freshman in high school, which turned me ever away from top 40. The next year, I was given a guitar for my fifteenth birthday and became obsessed. I had a special penchant for theory and instructional books of all kinds. Loathe to learn the songs of others, I put a high premium on writing and originality which I still maintain.

I studied Chinese and Business in College and like Wes passed up the straight path for passion. I spent my first year out of college working for a great booking agency based out of Lawrence, KS called Ozark Talent. I decided then that NYC was the next stop. I came to immerse myself in music

professionally and artistically.

IS: How did you link up with JAYMAY?

Wes: We met JAYMAY at some point in the past at Sidewalk Cafe during an open mic probably. We booked her for a Cross-Pollination show and got along very well and saw a great opportunity to combine forces. We really believe in her music and talent and couldn't help but wanting to, once again, elevate her to the level we believe she should be at. Artists often either don't have the time, motivation, or skills to handle the business end of their art, so that is where we come in.

IS: What have been some of the highlights of Cross-Pollination? Have they worked well?

Wes: Some of my personal highlights have been Kimya Dawson & Paleface, Jeff Lewis & Andre Herman Dune, Kevin Devine & Paul Shalda, Ian Thomas & Langhorne Slim, Casey Shea & Jeff Jacobson, but really there are way too many to mention. Every time it happens and two musicians cross-pollinate it's quite magical.

Jay: I'd have to add the JAYMAY & Sylvie Lewis show in Philly to that list. Cross-Pollination has some of the best acoustic audiences I've come across, very attuned to quality and attentive to the music.

Weblink: www.liberatedmatter.com

Next Month in Indie Sounds NY

On the Cover: Mark Geary

The Listening Room: Caffe Vivaldi

Look out for the August issue at all good NYC music venues, available from mid-July. Or download it at:

www.indiesoundsny.com



LIVE BEFORE DARK

Brian Scott of donkeys

Never caught a donkeys show? It's all about loud rock music performed by humans, according to their elevator pitch, which now also casts them as psychedelic art punk.

Indie Sounds went down on the farm with the band's guitarist and songwriter Brian Scott.

Indie Sounds: So what do you do?

Brian Scott: I'm a performer/director for Blue Man Group. I am a Blue Man and direct Blue Men, much as the job title suggests. I also do other things the title doesn't suggest, such as casting, training new guys and developing new material.

IS: How long have you been at Blue Man Group? How did you come to get the job?



Brian Mugging for the Camera

BS: I've been with Blue Man since 1995. I auditioned based on a tip from my long time childhood friend and band mate from Vermont, Chris Bowen. He was in Blue Man at the time and he told me he thought I'd do well there. I was living in Boston then, playing rock music in Brave New World. I got hired after two relatively short auditions and one very long (3 day) audition. I spent a summer in New York and learned the show (my apartment was upstairs, directly above the stage at the Astor Place theater and I would practice along with the performance). I did a string of shows at Astor Place and then went back to Boston to open that production in the fall of '95.

IS: How easy is it to balance Blue Man work with music?

BS: It's easy to balance Blue Man with donkeys when we're all in town. It's difficult when we're all traveling. Jamie [Edwards], our guitarist/keyboardist still lives in Boston, he commutes for rehearsals and shows and he's doing a lot of other projects (he just finished doing a record with Nina Gordon and Bob Rock in LA., for example). I travel to Chicago and Berlin pretty regularly for Blue Man, and Josh [Matthews], our drummer, is the full time Blue Man drummer in New York. Jesus, I guess it isn't that easy after all!

IS: Blue Man seems to have fostered quite an extensive day job community for other local musicians and you seem to support one another too. Who else works there from the NYC indie scene?

BS: Yes, quite a few, including Nayon Kim, Karen Rockower and Zach Greenblatt from The Angelic Bombs, Michael Napolitano from Slow Learner,

Jeff Gersh (hot guitarist known around town, plays with Nayon Kim and our drummer, Josh, in Comrade Red), Todd Pelmutter (killer drummer who plays and produces - he produced some Blue Man records and runs the music department there).

IS: What's happening with donkeys?

BS: We're gonna be *rilly famous*, man. Seriously, though, we're gonna be rilly famous. In the mean time, were playing some assorted NYC shows and "shopping" our new EP called *toilets of brooklyn* to some indie labels. We're looking for a nice indie label where the people genuinely like the music and are cool people. I suppose all bands want that but we'll put that ahead of money and fortune and intercourse, mostly. Also, we hope to conquer the world of rock and to take no prisoners. Plus, kill them all and let God sort them out. That kind of thing.

IS: Finally, can you tell us a bit more about the band and its history?

BS: Jamie was touring with Our Lady Peace in Canada - he had been in the Blue Man band in Boston. We exchanged some music a few years ago, looked at each other and decided we might as well join up. He has a deep grasp of everything related to music and plays stuff with all four limbs almost simultaneously live!

I've known Larry Heinemann (bass/keys) for years and we've worked together on lots of Blue Man stuff (we did a tour together supporting David Bowie and Moby a few years ago) and we've always liked and respected each other. I gave him a demo and was thrilled when he dug it.

Josh (drums) I met at the Astor Place Theater here and always enjoyed his playing in the show and his vibe as a person and, because my demos had all been recorded at home with sequenced drums, I wanted someone with a nasty groove to bring those tracks back to the realm of the human.

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IN TOWN, ON TOUR

Nomoredolls

The live music scene in NYC is as much about the acts that come from elsewhere to play here as it is about home-based artists. We kick off this column with Nomoredolls, a hot band from Milan, Italy, who can't get enough of the place, and find out from guitarist Max Tarenzi what the attraction is

Indie Sounds: Who is Nomoredolls?

Max Tarenzi: We formed in 2000 and comprise Cecilia Miradoli (lead vocals), Ferdinando Mazzuca (bass), Nicolò Taccori (drums) and myself (guitars).

IS: How often do you play in NYC?

MT: We come to the USA three or four times per year and play throughout the East Coast, especially the NYC area. The next tour will be our fifth one and the very first one was in December 2003. That time here, we played a crappy place in Manhattan called the Orange Bear but packed it. During that tour, though, we had the chance to play TT's The Bears Place in Boston, opening for Antigone Rising.

IS: What NYC venues have you played?

MT: CBGB, The Knitting Factory (both the Old Office and Main Stage), Continental, Siberia, Cafe 111, the Orange Bear (no comment) and more.

IS: What's been your best experience here?

MT: I must say two: our first time at CBGB in July 2004 and with Lourds at the Knitting Factory Main Room in January 2005. Both times we played to places we love and worked so much to get there. And then we had the chance to prove what we can do.



IS: Why play in NYC?

MT: We love NYC, the vibe, the people we get to know here every time. Musically, we belong to this place and the American audience is the perfect one for us. Our new album, *Nomoredolls*, has been produced in the USA as well. Also, if you can make it in NYC "you can make it anywhere."

IS: How easy was it to get gigs in NYC?

MT: The first time wasn't easy because we didn't know exactly how it works and we don't even live here! But we had our *Green* EP played by local radios, there were people who liked it and were willing to help us in order to have us performing in front of them. It's been hard work but a beautiful experience of friendship and collaboration. Now it's much easier and we have many more connections and more fans.

IS: What's the latest news from Nomoredolls?

MT: We've just released our self-titled debut album in Europe and are working on distribution in the USA. We also have some media interest - *GQ Magazine* is featuring the band in an article for their July issue.

Also, on June 24, we're opening the Medusa Festival, hosted by NYC rocker Lourds, at CBGBs. We take the stage at 7pm.

Weblink: www.nomoredolls.com

Brian Scott ...

Continued from page 6

Josh has a particularly nasty groove in his playing. It's cool, because for a while I hesitated to get a band together because I was nervous about trying to bring some of the recorded music to life, with actual humans playing it in real time (the material is pretty dense, textural and quirky), and doing stripped-down live versions of the songs was never an option for me - I wanted it all there, shitty sound systems be damned, and things just worked out nicely and organically.

The e.p. was mixed by Andrew Schneider and myself at Larry's studio, "el cabong." We recorded drums at Loho studio and everything else was recorded in our space in Brooklyn or in my apartment.

The music may, if one chooses, be described as "psychedelic art punk". There, I've started the psychedelic art punk scene!

Weblink: www.donkeysmusic.com



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BACKLINE

Five Vital Questions For ...
Mark Geary

Indie Sounds: If you were told the world was ending tomorrow, what would you do?

Mark Geary: Finally stop worrying!



IS: What is your favorite term of abuse?

MG: Stop being such a tight fucking cunt.

IS: Who would you like to be stranded on a desert island with?

MG: Someone who knew how to get off the fucking island!

IS: Favorite sex toy?

MG: Honesty.

IS: What was the first album you ever bought?

MG: Karma Sutra: "The Musical"

More on Mark @ www.markgeary.com.

Questions posed by Tessa Perry,
www.tessaperry.com.

Mark's sophomore CD *Ghosts* is in stores and on cdbaby.com now!

Read more about Mark next month in Indie Sounds NY - check out the August issue, at music venues across NYC.



Open Mic Corner

Micky's Blue Room: In addition to its regular Sunday open mic, Micky's has introduced a Saturday night, with signup at 6pm. The night also features a showcase artist at 9.30pm, stripping a rock 'n roll band down to its bare acoustic essentials. Micky's is at 171 Avenue C (between 10th and 11th streets).

Liberty Heights Tap Room: Every Thursday. Signup at 8.30pm. A great venue in Brooklyn's Red Hook district. A bar with the best home-brewed beer and fantastic food! The Liberty is at 34 Van Dyke Street (corner of Dwight Street). Take the B77 bus right to the door and have a couple of pints!

Rockwood Music Hall: Is the new home for Outmusic's Outloud open mic. Previously at the C-Note, the night takes place on the first Monday of every month. Signup at 7pm. One song each. Full backline available. Entrance is \$3 for Outmusic members, \$5 for others. The Rockwood is at 196 Allen Street (between Houston and Stanton).

WHERE TO FIND INDIE SOUNDS NY

Ace of Clubs
www.aceofclubsnyc.com

Kenny's Castaways
www.kennycastaways.net

Pete's Candy Store
www.petescandystore.com

The C-Note
www.thecnote.com

Arlene's Grocery
www.arlene-grocery.com

Laila Lounge
www.lailalounge.com

Rockwood Music Hall
www.rockwoodmusichall.com

The Living Room
www.livingroomny.com

Caffe Vivaldi
www.caffevivaldi.com

Micky's Blue Room
www.mickysblueroom.com

Southpaw
www.spsounds.com

The Sidewalk Cafe
www.antifolk.net

Galapagos Art Space
www.galapagosartspace.com

Parkside Lounge
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The Bitter End
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