

Jessie Haynes

www.jessiehaynes.com

Press

Sunday, December 26, 2010

Toys for Tots Live Music Benefit at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall by RJ Tuttle

On December 15th the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall in Riverhead held the 7th Annual Toys for Tots Open Mic. The combination toy drive, open mic and holiday party was hosted and coordinated by Jessie Haynes, a local musician and founder of Original Voices, a once a month open mic featuring musicians performing original material.

Ms. Haynes said, "It was a cool night!" and "thanks so much to everyone who came, helped and played!". She added that a magnificent 117 toys were collected

Phil Bland of Shirley, who plays bass with the band Satchel Boogie said that this years turnout of people and the amount of toys collected far exceeded that of previous years. He suggested that the increasing economic woes in our area more than likely played a part..in sparking peoples generosity.

The biggest star of the evening was Taylor Dunn of Hampton Bays. The magnanimous and kindhearted thirteen year old collected over 40 toys for needy children of the area. Ms. Dunn also does a great deal of charity work with her church, Christ Our Savior in Hampton Bays, where her grandfather is the pastor. When asked, she said it made her feel really good to help impoverished children.

Jessie Haynes, an enigmatic singer/songwriter from East Quogue was the first performer of the evening. Jessie played a wonderful set with help from the house band consisting of John Brzoza on guitar, Phil Bland on bass guitar and Alex Sarkis on the drums. I received a copy of Jessie's latest album, Vampire Kiss and it is truly amazing. Find and reach her at Jessiehaynes.com.

Next up was the delightful trio of Kathy, Joe and Jimmy all from Hampton Bays. The Group featured vocalist Kathy Dunn and legendary local saxophonist Carl. Maestro Carl also offered his services to any of the performers who wished for him to accompany them on stage. Carl can be found all over Long Island playing eight nights a week with a plethora of different artists.

Liza Coppola, a solo singer/guitarist from Mattituck, charmed the audience with renditions of some of her favorite music. Original Voices makes an exception to the no cover material rule for the holiday party performances. This allows for some very festive versions of familiar and not so familiar songs by signed artists.

Rupert Wates, an extraordinarily talented singer/songwriter from Manhattan, captivated the crowd with a short set of beautiful original tunes. Mr. Wates hails originally from London, England and can be found entertaining at music venues up and down the eastern seaboard and online at Rupertwates.com.

Celestial, an alternative rock band from Hampton Bays performed a seductively powerful collection of their material. Featuring Gregg Gennari on vocals and guitar and Lisa Dee on the fretless electric bass, Celestial were the leading Long Island vote getters in the Ernie Ball Warped Tour contest this past summer. Both Gregg and Lisa are also very dedicated event coordinators and volunteers at the Vail-Leavitt. They are hard at work on their latest album and can be found at Celestialband.com.

The teenage group Human Error (yes, cleverly spelled with three R's) from East Hampton really turned up the intensity with their original brand of old style punk and ska. The youngsters rocked and wowed the audience with superb stage presence and musicianship. Human Error features lead singer and drummer Sage Gibbons of East Hampton, bassist Sam de Poto of Shelter Island and guitarist Adin Doyle from Sag Harbor. Watch out for these guys! Find them on both Facebook and Myspace.

Satchel Boogie from West Islip, "blew the doors off the place". Fronted by powerfully voiced Steven Meadors who is originally from Arkansas and Oklahoma, the band impressed all in attendance with their soulful blues rock sound. Mr. Meadors was supported by the aforementioned house band, who are in fact his full time band. They play frequently in Manhattan at such venues as The Bitter End, National Underground and Arlene's Grocery. Hear their live album at Satchelboogie.com.

A special thanks to all the musicians and volunteers for their altruism and unselfishness in such dire economic times. The volunteering group included; Maureen Hernandez from Patchogue, Scott E., the host and a performer on the downstairs all acoustic stage known as the "Black Box" and soundman Art Williams of Viper Studios in Bohemia.

Truly the greatest thing one can do during the holiday season and any time of year is to bring joy and happiness to ones who otherwise would have very little.

Anyone interested in playing or volunteering at future events please visit www.vail-leavitt.org/originalvoices.htm

http://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Frobbyjack.blogspot.com%2F&h=505745lv3Op2N_OTpNI5CHPa-bQ

<http://riverhead.patch.com/>

<http://northfork.patch.com/>

LI Pulse: Before Vampires Were Sparkly, Jessie Haynes Was Awesome

Author: Rorie Kelly | Published: Monday, October 25, 2010



So there is a new vampire-flavored album out on Long Island this week. But guys, I have to let you know, Jessie Haynes was being awesome and spooky before Stephenie Meyers had her whole fangirl vampire dream and built *Twilight* out of it. I would go so far as to say that Jessie Haynes is the sort of persona that might result if [Laura Nyro](#) and [Laurell K Hamilton](#) got together and had a kid.

Both Jessie and her new album, *Vampire Kiss*, are many-layered. The mood of the album wafts from ethereal, to dark and intense, to calmly reflective. It sort of takes you on a journey through Jessie's mind—but not exactly in a way that makes you feel like you've got her figured out. She's a bit sneakier than that.

So, OK, fancy adjectives aside, what will you actually hear on this record? The title track swoops in on you with tight, funky harmonies and rhythms that manage to bring the energy of a live performance to a studio recording. Some songs are folksy and mournful. Others are simply raw. There are lots of cool, moody guitar arrangements, lots of harmonies, lots of lyrics that make you do a mental double-take.

So, Jessie is playing around a lot this fall and you can catch her AND pick up the album at any number of places in the near future. She's playing in the Patchogue Theatre lobby both this Sunday for the Autumn Arts Festival, and on November 4th for the "Joni in the Lobby" Joni Mitchell Tribute. Further east, she hosts, and performs at, Original Voices at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall—a singer/songwriter series that features local original acts. Go to any of those places, pick up *Vampire Kiss* and catch a great live performance. And check out <http://www.jessiehaynes.com/> for streaming music and additional tour dates.



Author: Rorie Kelly

Rorie Kelly is a singer/songwriter from various parts of Long Island. She recently released her debut CD called "Wish Upon a Bottlecap." Rorie and her band play regularly in NYC and on the island. Please visit roriekelly.com for more information and pretty songs

LI PULSE: Four Emerging LI Songwriters & The Music Houses They Play

Author: Rorie Kelly | Published: Wednesday, June 30, 2010

Larrin Gerard/Live in the Lobby at the Patchogue Theatre

Larrin Gerard has that gift of straightforward songwriting that makes you feel like she knows everything in the shadows of your heart. Sometimes it's sweet, and sometimes it's agonizing, but you still come away from it feeling a little better, a little more like you know who you are.

Larrin, like many Long Island musicians, has transplanted herself to New York City—and like many transplants, she still feels like an Islander at heart. Despite the trek, she is at home in the Patchogue music scene that has sprouted up over the last few years. “The town of Patchogue has become like this music hotspot, there's no way to ignore it. Patchogue when I was growing up was very different than it is now; it was like this forgotten little township.” One of Larrin's first performances in the area was at *Live in the Lobby* at the Patchogue Theatre. She was invited to play by the concert series' curator Christopher Capobianco after he'd heard her at one of the local open mic nights. It was an excellent match, because Larrin has always been a major supporter of the local scene, and the Lobby has become a central hub for the scene itself.

The *Live in the Lobby* concert series features local original musicians in (you guessed it) the Patchogue Theatre's lobby—which itself seats 50, with plenty of standing room. It is currently in its fifth season and is consistently well attended. The showcase, like the theater itself, is run entirely by volunteers, and has given local original musicians a space where they can be a real, visible part of Long Island culture.

More information about Larrin Gerard can be found at myspace.com/larringerard and youtube.com/justlarrin. More information about *Live in the Lobby* can be found at liveinthelobby.org.



Jessie Haynes/The Vail Leavitt Music Hall

Jessie Haynes has spent her life playing music across the east and west coasts, and occasionally internationally as well. Lately she's made a home for herself on the east end, heading up a concert series at a beautiful old restored theater in Riverhead. The Vail Leavitt Music Hall is an antique theater run entirely by volunteers, which may just have a ghost or two amongst its velvet curtains and balconies. Jessie feels like her involvement with the Vail has a measure of fate in it. “For years The Vail was just this really cool and kind of mysterious place that was always looming in the back of my mind. There was a little voice that would remind me that sooner or later I should try to get involved there. I don't think I really had a choice.”

Jessie's concert series, *Original Voices at the Vail*, is a monthly showcase featuring Long Island songwriters. There's an intimate open mic before and after, and the Vail's two stages and decadent atmosphere tend to leave both performers and audiences feeling a little awed. The proceeds go to the not-for-profit organization that runs the Vail, which also presents the Riverhead Blues & Music Festival.

In person, Jessie exudes the unmistakable air of someone who is accustomed to taking journeys, both physically and spiritually. Her enigmatic lyrics and expressive vocals add to that feeling—but you haven't gotten the full story until you've watched her grab a Les Paul and make it wail in the middle of a set. Jessie's music will grab you by the sleeve and take you for a journey of your own if you let it.

Jessie's new cd, *Vampire Kiss*, is due to come out in the next few months. Find out more about her and the Vail at jessiehaynes.com and vail-leavitt.org.



Angela Quiles/The Pisces and the Cup

Angela Quiles is the girl you knew in high school who dressed in black and was kind of quiet, and turned out to have notebooks full of the most moving art, poetry and lyrics. Angela's dark, moody songs have been dubbed by friends with the genre “funeral pop,” and their themes range from relationships to biographical portraits to religious allegory. Simple, hooky guitar playing accompanies a vocal style that is both raw and theatrical.

Angela got her start in the recently-closed Pisces Cafe, which was an itty bitty Mecca of art and music in the heart of Babylon Village. “Pisces was like my niche, my place, my comfort zone... Jeff [one of the cafe's owners] always encouraged artists, and he encouraged me too.” Since the cafe's closure in December 2009, Angela says she felt lost for a while. She's gravitated recently to The Cup in Wantagh, which has been featuring original Long Island musicians and artists for years.

The Cup is that rare venue that manages to keep its doors open and thrive while still supporting local art, music and alternative culture. Live acoustic music can be heard nearly for free (\$1 per person,

which goes to the artists) on weekend nights and the walls of the cafe serve as a gallery for local artists. It's also worth noting that the Cup is one of the only places on the Island that folks under 21 can go to hang out and listen to live music on a Saturday night.

More information about Angela Quiles can be found at myspace.com/theinfamouspapercup. More information about The Cup can be found at thecupcoffeehouse.com.



Jay Scott/The Sage Cafe

It's really hard not to like Jay Scott. His songs are simple and passionate and sneak into your heart without asking for permission. Jay's vocals are raw and soulful and soaring. He gets compared to Joe Cocker sometimes. Here's the similarity—even if you're not always 100% positive what he's saying,

you know for sure he means it. And as you're listening, you find that you mean it, too.

Jay's main focus in songwriting is honesty. "I have never had a problem with saying what's on my mind even if it sometimes gets me in trouble... I began writing songs because I felt like I needed to get something off my chest." Jay's a family man and a lot of his recent songs focus on his kids.

Patchogue is Jay's hometown and as he's quick to point out, "You don't always have to go to the city for good music." He recorded his live album, *Homegrown*, in the lobby of the Patchogue Theatre, has been playing at the Brickhouse with various other musicians since 2002, and recently has been doing a lot of gigging at the Sage Cafe in nearby Blue Point.

The Sage Cafe is a homey pub and eatery with Blue Point beer on tap and lots of music and events throughout the week. They focus pretty exclusively on local, original music. On Saturday nights, music gets going around 10pm and has been known to carry on into the wee hours of the morning.

More information about Jay Scott can be found at jayscottlive.com. More information about The Sage Cafe can be found at sagecafebluepointliny.com.



Author: Rorie Kelly

Rorie Kelly is a singer/songwriter from various parts of Long Island. She and her band play regularly in NYC and on the island, and are releasing a CD called *Wish Upon a Bottlecap* any minute now. Please visit roriekelly.com for more information and pretty songs.

An intimate evening of local music at the Sage Cafe in Blue Point

April 11, 11:32 PM ■ [Long Island City Guide Examiner](#) ■ John Myers

On Saturday, April 24th, local singer-songwriters Jay Scott and Jessie Haynes

will be teaming up for a live performance at the Sage Café in Blue Point. These two accomplished local artists have established themselves in the music industry and are sure to give extra-special performances before a home crowd.

Patchogue-based singer-songwriter Jay Scott has been performing across the country for the past ten years, sharing his music with fans from Amagansett to San Diego. In 2008, he released his first solo album *Homegrown* on Paradiddle Records, which was recorded live before a packed audience at the Patchogue Theatre. In between taking care of a family and working hard, Jay continues to write and perform new music. He's recently begun working on his second album at Suffolk Recording Studios in Patchogue, an EP featuring a distinctive remake of the Bob Dylan classic, "Knockin on Heaven's Door." Jay's band includes Chris P. Cauley on drums, Dan Boltze on bass, and Sean Virgo on lead guitar.

Jessie Haynes is a multi-talented artist, writing and performing songs, and plays the guitar. She's toured the world with Blackmore's Night, a band headed by former Deep Purple guitarist Richie Blackmore. She began her solo career soon after. Her most recent CD release was her self-produced "The Secret Life of Cinderella." Her music can be characterized as mesmerizing, with unique perspectives on life, death, and other issues.

The two artists have worked together many times, and Haynes even sang harmony on Scott's "Sometimes", which has been characterized a simple song "having a deep sense of sincere passion."

The performance begins at 10PM at the Sage Café, 4 Montauk Highway in Blue Point. The Sage Café is a long standing pub/eatery in this South Shore region, with friendly service, delicious noshes, and a warm, cozy atmosphere. It's a perfect setting for an evening of good times and great music. The cover charge for the event is \$5.00 and includes a copy of Jay Scott's CD "Homegrown."

Sources:

<http://www.jayscottlive.com/>

<http://www.paradiddlerecords.com/>

<http://www.sagecafebluepointliny.com/www.sagecafebluepointliny.com/Home.html>

Special thanks to Christopher Capobianco.

Publication: The East Hampton Press & The Southampton Press

Love in the Lobby in Patchogue targets kids in need

By Jennett Meriden Russell

Dec 1, 09 1:23 PM

There is only one thing John Brzoza and Jessie Haynes love more than playing their original music: That would be using their talent to help kids in need during the holidays.

"Who doesn't want to do something to give back at Christmas time?" Ms. Haynes, a professional guitarist from East Quogue, said in a recent interview. On Thursday, December 10, Ms. Haynes and Mr. Brzoza, who also hails from East Quogue, will be headlining a special holiday edition of the Patchogue Theatre's "Live in the Lobby" series.

The "Live in the Lobby" concerts, which feature original music of local songwriters and performers, have been running since 2005 in the theater's palatial lobby. The December 10 performance is being dubbed "Love in the Lobby," and is a fund-raiser for the U.S. Marine Corps sponsored "Toys For Tots" program. The national, benevolent program has collected roughly \$500 million in toys for nearly 200 million underprivileged children across the country since its inception in 1947.

Fellow original Long Island artists Jordan Hope and the band Satchel Boogie are also on the "Love in the Lobby" bill. Mr. Brzoza and Ms. Haynes are hoping people will not only attend the concert, but also bring toys for Long Island children who otherwise might not be getting any presents this year.

"It's Christmas time and it's about kids," Ms. Haynes said. "That's all."

"For a kid not to open a gift on Christmas is terrible," added Mr. Brzoza.

Six years ago, Ms. Haynes created a local fund-raising concert for Toys For Tots, featuring local songwriters and performers. The concert was previously presented at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall in Riverhead.

Mr. Brzoza said Patchogue Theatre officials offered him the December 10 gig, and he decided to incorporate the Toys For Tots drive into the pre-Christmas concert.

"We just thought it was a good way to help out the kids and at the same time promote local, original artists," he said.

Patchogue Theatre Director of Communications Christopher Capobianco said that "Love in the Lobby" is a welcome addition to the "Live in the Lobby" repertoire. This past October, the series presented "Lennon in the Lobby," which featured local musicians playing John Lennon tunes.

Mr. Capobianco said that the "Live in the Lobby" concert series has gained a "well-earned" reputation among local musicians and music fans as one of the best venues for original music on Long Island. He also touts the talents of Ms. Haynes and Mr. Brzoza and their songwriting skills.

"Jessie Haynes is a beautiful, talented and generous musician, who writes fantastic songs, sings like an angel and is an excellent guitarist," Mr. Capobianco said. "I have become a big fan of her recordings, but she very rarely performs live, so to have her appear at a Live in the Lobby is a big thrill."

Mr. Capobianco also praised Ms. Haynes for her benevolent spirit, noting that he and the Patchogue Theatre board of directors hope the Toys For Tots concert will become an annual event at the theater.

He extolled Mr. Brzoza's generosity and his talents as a guitarist, singer and songwriter, adding that the local musician is always championing Long Island songwriters and performers.

"John has worked with all of the performers on the Love in the Lobby bill," Mr. Capobianco said. "So in addition to doing his songs, he and his band will back up Jessie, Jordan Hope and Satchel Boogie, so this will be a fantastic night of music."

Jessie Haynes burst on the Long Island music scene in the 1990s as lead guitarist and singer for the all-female band Sweet Little Sister. Her searing guitar licks and sultry voice caught the attention of Richie Blackmore, founder of the 1960s and '70s rock band Deep Purple.

He asked her to join his latest partnership, Blackmore's Night, a band that also features his wife, singer Candice Night. In addition to touring with the band, Ms. Haynes also played guitar and sang backup vocals on Mr. Blackmore's albums.

But Ms. Haynes said she eventually tired of enduring long, grueling road tours and putting up with the attitudes of temperamental artists.

The mother of two settled in East Quogue in the early part of the new century and quickly started up a family as well as a solo musical career.

"I've been a hired gun for different bands over the years," she said. "But now I just like to do my own thing, on my own terms, and I don't have to be at the mercy of someone on a tour bus."

Ms. Haynes met Mr. Brzoza in 2005, while he was hosting an open mic at a local watering hole. The two found their musical styles complemented one another and they went on to collaborate on several songs and headlined various live performances, including Patchogue Jam 2 at the Patchogue Theatre in 2006.

Ms. Haynes said that Mr. Brzoza has an uncanny knack for accompanying, and bringing the best out of, any musician. For nearly two decades, Mr. Brzoza has played host for open mic nights across Long Island, providing many local artists their first opportunity to gain wide exposure in the region.

He is widely recognized by fellow musicians and music critics as one of the premier musical talents on Long Island. Michael Lucci of Island Voice magazine described Mr. Brzoza's musical style as "fluid and textural."

"Mr. Brzoza's playing is wholly expressive," Mr. Lucci wrote, "in his use of both traditional techniques and innovative effects, creating mesmerizing aural soundscapes."

Mr. Brzoza has recorded two solo albums and is currently working on a third as yet untitled release. He has also been featured with various other Long Island bands and recently played at two separate birthday parties for pop legends Prince and Sly Stone.

"It was a real thrill to play with Music Hall of Fame players like Vic Wooten and Steve Jordan," Mr. Brzoza said. "There were just some killer players up there."

Mr. Brzoza's open mic band will be backing up Ms. Haynes, as well as accompanying Jordan Hope of Medford, billed as an "experimental" guitarist, and Arkansas native Steven Meadors. Both Ms. Hope and Mr. Meadors also met Mr. Brzoza at local open mics he was hosting.

Mr. Brzoza is currently working in four bands that include his own band mates, Long Island musicians Keyth Strauss on keyboards, guitarist Phil "Killer Philler" Bland, bassist Paul Cruz and drummer Rodney Harris.

He has also performed with such Long Island bands as The Love Junkies, Crayon Harmony, Folk Fiction, Shredds, Europa and The John Brzoza Band.

Mr. Strauss noted that he and other musicians scheduled for next Thursday's performance are not drawn to the event solely out of altruism. He explained that

there are dozens of songwriters on Long Island who are itching to have Mr. Brzoza back up their original tunes.

"John is one of the few guys that can actually command a following of musicians," Mr. Strauss said. "We'll even play with John for free—which we often do—because he's that dynamic a musician to play with."

"Love in The Lobby," featuring Jessie Haynes and John Brzoza, begins at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 10, at the Patchogue Theatre at 71 East Main Street in Patchogue. Tickets are \$10 each. Each audience member who brings an unwrapped toy will receive a \$5 beverage voucher that can be used that night at the Patchogue Theatre bar, located in the lobby. For more information, call 207-1313 or visit www.PatchogueTheatre.com.

REVIEW: WITCHES & PAGANS MAGAZINE, Sept. 2009 Issue

Mysterious, beautiful, fey, elusive—all of these words describe poet-musician Jessie Haynes' new CD, *The Secret Life of Cinderella*. This lovely CD is a work of art from start to finish—from the magickal collage liner art, to the poetic power of Haynes' lyrics, to the delicacy and artistry of the instrumentation. In fact, this musical "fairytale"—I think back in the 70s they would have called this a "concept album"—is a fully conceived and lovingly executed multimedia work about the power of imagination as the true source of magic.

It's no surprise that her songwriting and vocals are reminiscent of Suzanne Vega, while some songs have the same trippy Renaissance flavor as very early Pink Floyd.

Jessie Haynes brings her considerable skills and talents as a musician, singer and poet to a project that must obviously have been a labor of love: it is so richly drawn and emotionally diverse. Haynes sings, and plays guitars, bass, keyboards, recorder and percussion. "The Secret Life of Cinderella" ranges from gentle acoustic folk to heartfelt, gritty blues. Her sweet soprano is deceptively delicate on songs like "Beyond the Wishing Well" and "Sister", where the interplay of her voice, soft guitar and powerful lyrics is nothing less than heartbreaking. "The Rowan Tree" is a dark-toned instrumental, redolent of autumn fires and rising mists, and "You and Eye" is a stunning evocation of the Dark Goddess ("She can take us through the Dark") that just gives me goose bumps each time I listen to it. Things heat up a bit on "Fortune Surfer," a sexy, bluesy stomp which expertly pairs Jessie's fey vocals with a restrained but evocative guitar and bass line. Here more of a driving rock edge comes forward and Haynes performs with passion and swagger.

Haynes' *The Secret Life of Cinderella* is a beautifully conceived, produced and performed CD, a lush work of art. Highly recommended.

Leni Hester

WITCHES AND PAGANS MAGAZINE, 2009

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REVIEW: SOUTHAMPTON PRESS, 2008



The Secret Life of Cinderella marks a milestone in the evolution of a singer-songwriter and guitar player who has claimed a style of music all her own.

Her sweet voice sweeps through the speakers. Supporting her musically are pleasing female harmonies and lilting melodies that curve with emotion. Sometimes the music drips a ballad or struts a funky blues that makes snapping fingers seem like the right thing to do. The lyrics can break your heart or send it soaring with happiness.

At the forefront of each song is accomplished musicianship that doesn't trip over itself. What the ear hears is lush music that conjures stories, even if no one is seeing. The recording is a personal way for Ms. Haynes to serve up music that's representative of where she is now as a musician and as a person.

-Pat Rogers, *The Southampton Press*

Rockin' Halloween at Vail-Leavitt

By Pat Rogers Oct 21, 08 3:24 PM

Organizer John Brzoza will play with several bands at the Musicians Masquerade in Riverhead on October 31.

Looking for something different to do this Halloween? Then garb up as your favorite monster, ghoul or temptress and get ready for a full night of live music and horror movies. It all happens when the Musicians Masquerade takes over the entire Vail-Leavitt Music Hall in Riverhead on Halloween.

The doors open at 7 p.m. and close when the last ghoul goes home. There will be continuous live music from Long Island bands in the upstairs theater.

Monster movies and cult favorites like *Rocky Horror Picture Show* will be screened starting at 8 p.m. in the first floor cabaret room.

There will be a cash bar and prizes for best costumes. The event is for 21 and over since there will be a cash bar. All in all, event organizer John Brzoza believes there will be enough zaniness and music to make for a great night worth remembering.

"There will be stories to tell, when it's all over," Mr. Brzoza said. "With all the bands playing and all the characters who are bound to show up, it's guaranteed to be a fun time."

The musical lineup is a cross section of the Long Island music scene. There will be hard rock, country rock, rock, alternative, music with a gothic penchant, punk, and Latin jazz fusion with a lot of jamming. Taking the stage (in no particular order) will be Blue Wild Angel from Hampton Bays, Europa from Sag Harbor, Jessie Haynes and the Aqua Girls from East Quogue and Tom Hood & The Trailmen of Eastport.

Hailing from farther afield are Folk Fiction, Jordan Hope, Steve Meaders, Seanamole, Frank Dimino, Stevenmark and Lisa Rose. Each band will play for 15 minutes before the next band immediately takes the stage.

Mr. Brzoza, who hails from East Quogue, will play with several bands. He will appear with The John Brzoza Band, which has multiple recordings, and the group Noisy Boy. Mr. Brzoza is also a member of Plan B, who will perform at 75 Main in Southampton on Saturday, November 1.

When Mr. Brzoza's not gigging with one the bands, he hosts open mic nights on Thursdays at Molly's Irish Pub in Brookhaven and at the Brickhouse Brewery in Patchogue on Tuesday nights. Many of the bands in the Halloween lineup have played at his open mic nights. Mr. Brzoza said the Musicians Masquerade wouldn't be possible if it weren't for many of the musicians pitching in to make the night possible.

In the end, the evening is a great opportunity for Long Island bands to perform on a historic stage in front of a large crowd of people who are interested in original music and being part of the live music scene.

"We are out there doing our music," Mr. Brzoza said. "We're trying to make an impact, trying to make a scene. This is one of those opportunities."

Mr. Brzoza has staged similar musical gatherings in the past. Two years ago, he organized Jambalaya at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall. He's also one of the co-hosts with Ms. Haynes of Original Voices at the Vail, which is held the third Thursday of every month. The Vail-Leavitt is a historic theater for rent run by a non-profit organization.

Musicians Masquerade will be held on Halloween at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall, Peconic Avenue, Riverhead. The doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$20 at the

door and \$15 in advance. Tickets can be purchased at East Enders Coffee House and the East End Arts Council in Riverhead, as well as at Vail-Leavitt. A 50/50 raffle

Publication: The East Hampton Press & The Southampton Press

Open mic keeps music scene rocking at Vail-Leavitt

Article & Photos By Pat Rogers

Sep 23, 2008

Fans of live music, take heart: original tunes can still be found on stage. Once a month, music lovers and musicians can hear what their peers are up to and even play a few songs of their own during "A Night of Original Voices at the Vail." It all happens at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall in Riverhead on the third Thursday of every month.

The format is similar to open mic nights in bars or coffeehouses: walk-in musicians can sign-up to perform when the doors open at 7 p.m. Groups are announced by the hosts, who also play a song or two or three. A featured guest takes the stage for 30 minutes, sandwiched between performances by walk-ins.

What differs about Original Voices is that only original music is welcome on the stage. Unlike many venues, there is no bar or food service, so audience attention is placed front and center on the musicians performing.

"This is more of an original music-friendly place," said Eva Adalai of East Moriches, a guitarist and singer/songwriter who performed last week. "There's no clinking of glasses or screams about football in the bar. People are here for the music."

Original Voices takes place in the black box theater on the first floor of the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall. The room is cozy and has space to seat 50 people. Microphones, a drum kit, electronic equipment, technical assistance and even sound checks are provided by the hosts. If a solo musician wants an instant back-up band, most likely one will materialize on the spot.

The effort is led by Original Voices founder Jessie Haynes, an East Quogue musician. The singer/songwriter/guitarist has led open mic nights in venues across Long Island. Her co-hosts are all musicians as well. They include Chris Bruschi of Hampton Bays, who is a Vail-Leavitt board member. Mr. Bruschi typically mans the theater during the event and makes sure the \$5 door donations and tips for the musicians get where they need to go.

John Brzoza handles the sound and is there to lend a hand when an extra guitarist is needed. Robb Patterson of Riverhead emcees the evening and Gregg Gennari records all the music and brings CDs to the next session, held the following month. Volunteers are always sought to help the event run more smoothly.

Volunteers may also help the open mic night to grow so the musicians might be able to use the main theater upstairs. This shared hope was echoed by nearly all the musicians interviewed last week. So was the hope that getting the word out will bring musicians out in droves. A typical evening features about 10 to 15 soloists or groups that want to play. When the crowd outgrows the 50-person room, a request can be placed to the board of the Vail-Leavitt to use the main theater.

"I hope that a lot of people spread the word about the scene there," said Ms. Adalai. "It would be a great experience for people starting out to play a big stage like those in the city. It would be amazing."

Mr. Patterson was optimistic that Original Voices will take off and that Riverhead is on the cusp of burgeoning musical scene. The open mic night began in March and has been held once a month ever since. Photos, feedback and future events are posted at www.myspace.com/orginialvoicesatthevail.

"There's really no reason why it can't grow," said Mr. Patterson. "There's no shortage of talent and there's a lot going on in Riverhead right now. The East End Arts Council has a new recording studio and they're trying to get things going. East Enders Coffee House has live music a few times a week. There's a little scene here in Riverhead."



Greg Gennari plays with his band, Celestial, during Original Voices at the Vail-Leavitt on September 18. PAT ROGERS

For now, there are plenty of accolades for the scene already playing out. Each month draws a new crop of musicians plus some returning ones. A broad range of music has been taking the black box stage. Among other acts, there has been an experimental jam set to a backdrop of projected surf images, an a cappella group, gospel singers and lots of singer-songwriters who appear solo or with a band.

Acoustic and electric are equally welcome. So are all ages. Performers range from the occasional teenager to those in their 20s right up to those in their 50s. New music by established performers is encouraged.

"No one is going to judge you here," Ms. Haynes said to the crowd that gathered last week. "You've got a supportive group of musicians who want to hear what you want to play. Use this place as a way to try out new material and take chances."

Some of the players did exactly that last Thursday, while others performed songs from upcoming releases. Some of the musicians took the stage solo for the first time in many years, because they are now playing with bands. Others don't play professionally but enjoy performing a song or two at this open mic night and others on Long Island.

In all cases, playing for an audience offered a welcome opportunity to hone their chops and experience the joy of playing their original music. Return performers have the chance to apply to be the featured act of the night. Last week featured John Brzoza & Friends. Next month puts Jeremy Sears center stage. November's headliner is Last Charge of the Light Horse. December has the fifth annual Toys for Tots benefit that brings a slew of talent together for a good cause.

Tom Hood and The Trailmen of Eastport took the stage as a walk-in last week but the band has been the featured act before. After performing, Mr. Hood passed around copies of his latest recording, "Riding Into Town." Musicians are encouraged to bring their cds along. Their website or myspace accounts are announced by the emcee so more of their music can be heard. All in all, Original Voices at the Vail is a special combination, Mr. Hood said.

"This is a venue totally devoted to music," he said. "After a few times, you have the chance to become the featured performer. It's a real showcase for musicians. Plus, people are here because they want to hear the music. There's really not another place like this on Long Island."

Separately, Ms. Adalai agreed. "There's really no place like this where original music is welcomed at open mics. At other open mics there's a lot of covers because that's what the audience likes to hear."

Original Voices at the Vail is held the third Thursday of every month at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall, 18 Peconic Avenue in Riverhead. Doors open and sign-up begins at 7 p.m. The evening runs through 10 p.m. For information, visit www.myspace.com/originalvoicesatthevail. Basic information can be found at www.vail-leavitt.org.



The people who help make Original Voices at the Vail work each month relax for a moment while performers claimed audience attention on September 18. Clockwise from top left are John Brzoza, Gregg Gennari, Robb Patterson and Jessie Haynes. PAT ROGERS

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Back Beat

Hot Music Scene Develops in Riverhead - Yes, Riverhead

By Tiffany Razzano

Nestled between the North and South Forks, on the Peconic Bay waterfront, downtown Riverhead is poised to become a new music and arts center for the East End.

Sure, there are a number of empty storefronts - including the abandoned 900-seat Suffolk Theatre - giving the area a semi-rundown vibe, but there are clear signs of a burgeoning original music scene that's struggling to grow. Eastenders Coffee House schedules an original music act - covering all genres, from blues to indie folk - every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. And though they recently cancelled their weekly open mic night, owner Diane Reeve has hinted that it might come back in the fall.

Across the street from Eastenders is the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall, an intimate and historic 220-seat theater, which also has a smaller, black box theater - the home of the new open mic series, "Original Voices at the Vail." It's held the third Thursday of every month and includes a different featured performer each time. "We're really looking to create a scene," said Jessie Haynes, a singer-songwriter and one of the organizers of the series. "We're not cliquy. This isn't a club house." She said they're always looking for new musicians - of all genres - to join the open mic. Though it just began five months ago, the series usually attracts between 30 and 35 musicians and listeners from east of Patchogue, predominantly coming from the two forks.

The waterfront is also home of the annual Riverhead Blues Festival, and the East End Arts Council, though it focuses mainly on visual arts, holds occasional music programs, including a weekly outdoor drumming class, and the Mosaic Street Painting Festival, which melds together all of the arts and features performances by local musicians.

Riverhead was an artistic powerhouse as little as 10 to 15 years ago. In fact, at a point, Town legislation maintained that the apartments above the shops that lined Main Street were for artists and musicians only. This legislation was altered about eight years ago, when the artistic population began to dwindle, said Vincent Tria, who sits on Vail's Board of Directors.

Reeve thinks the main reason for the lack of a cohesive arts scene in recent years is because of the development of the Tanger Outlet Center and other big box stores along County Road 58, which forced the mom and pop shops in downtown Riverhead to shut down because they couldn't compete. In order for there to be a vibrant music and arts scene, most of the storefronts need to be occupied. "There's a tremendous, tremendous amount of potential," Reeve said. "I've been waiting for Riverhead to come to life and I think it will in its own time. There's a whole lot of potential here."

"I really feel like it's going to happen. It has that artsy in the making kind of vibe," Haynes added.

And a lot of things are scheduled that will transform Riverhead - Riverhead Resorts will be built on the old Grumman site, Atlantis Marine World is planning a

hotel of its own and, next week, a local developer will raze a dilapidated building on Peconic Avenue to make way for brand new shops and a restaurant facing the waterfront. The Town also recently took over control of the Suffolk Theatre - which Tria, Haynes and Reeve think could become a Stephen Talkhouse for the area.

These changes could bring in the foot traffic needed to transform the downtown from merely a handful of single destination attractions into a destination unto itself, much like Port Jefferson or Greenport Village. "Riverhead will eventually become a tourist attraction," Tria said. "In not too many years, we'll be able to offer people a lot."

And when this happens, the local music scene will be in a place where it has everything it needs to grow.

For more information about what's going on at the Vail or Eastenders, go to vail-leavitt.org and eastenderscoffeehouse.com.

If you're a band or musician interested in being featured in our new music column, email tiffany@danspapers.com

The Ritchie Blackmore Convention

Saturday 23rd October 2004, The Limelight Club, Crewe, England

A Report by Mike Garrett

The Venue Described

The first-ever Ritchie Blackmore Convention (celebrating 40 years of a musical legend) was held in The Limelight Club (Crewe, England). Situated in the county of Cheshire, the venue Website www.crewe-limelight.co.uk describes the club as having: "...three floors, the Annex Bar and the brand new Music Cafe, wonderfully friendly atmosphere. From humble beginnings (with mainly tribute bands) the club is now one of the North's top venues".

When viewed from the outside, the club appears as a rather old, austere brick building. The arch windows at the front (and the overall appearance of the building) lead one to think that maybe the building was originally some form of Church? (Following a follow-up discussion with the Limelight Club management, I can confirm that the building was indeed a former Methodist Church that was closed in the late 60's or earlier 70's. It was then used as Snooker Hall in the 80's to 90's. The current Limelight Club management then took it over as a derelict ex-snooker club in early 1994 & managed to open November 30th 1994. Thanks for the information Ray!)



After going up the entranceway steps and entering the club, my friends and I found our selves in a large bar area, with a pool table and a TV screen. Initially, it was a little confusing where the main musical activity of the venue was to be staged. The secret was to go into what looked like a "corner alcove" in the bar area and there a door could be found that one went through and descended down the stairs to the lower level (which may have been a former large basement or crypt area?)

At the immediate bottom of the stairs, were the toilets plus a small basement café area that served food for most of the day. One could continue up the corridor from the café; this went up, via a few steps, to another bar area (effectively bringing the visitor back up to street level). Alternatively, instead of going along the corridor, one could simply stand at the bottom of the stairs and choose to go either into the café or go through the right-hand door into the main room where the convention was being held.

This larger room had a stage dominating one end of the room (the end nearest to the entrance door just described). Facing the stage was a wooden floor area that was in turn flanked by raised areas. Both raised areas had a wooden banister running around them, with tables and chairs on the raised areas. Behind the wooden floor area (which had tables and chairs on part of it, the half furthest away from the stage), was a bar area, raised to just a slightly higher level area, than the two other raised flanking areas just described. In regards to the two "back corners" of the room, one had tables and chairs in it, the other had a doorway which led to the upper part of the corridor (mentioned earlier). The walls of this large event room were covered in posters, advertising bands.

The Afternoon Events - A Personal Perspective (1pm - 5.30pm)

For the purpose of the afternoon event, a large (16 feet across) video screen was temporarily suspended at the front of the stage. This was to facilitate the reviewing of rare Blackmore-related film footage.

Whilst the films were being reviewed, a number of trade stalls were attracting interest. Jerry Bloom's MBTP stall was in one of the back corners of the room; CDs on the table with tee shirts and posters hung on the wall behind it. A special thank you must go to Shelley and Joy (with matching red tee shirts and bleached blonde-hair!) who worked hard on the stall for a lot of the day! On each of the two raised spectator-areas, there could be found another stall. One was a DVD stall; the other stall was selling vinyl albums. Some were rarities but apart from the foreign-language album covers, I had everything else!

In terms of fans trying to get to the stalls, it tended to appear to be a little bit cramped-in, in regards to space. There were about 150 fans in attendance during the daytime (but this number increased to 200 during the evening). A little bit of patience in waiting for one's turn was thus required but ultimately, everyone still had enough time to see and buy whatever they wanted. The slight limitation in available space was obviously dictated by Jerry's need (as convention organiser) to get everything fitted into the one room; a necessity that no one can begrudge him for. They should offer him and his organisation team (Neil, Alan etc) much praise instead!

There was also originally intended to be two competitions. No one entered the "Ritchie Blackmore Air Guitar Impression" competition (what a shame!) but the caption competition had many entries. The picture showed Candice squeezing Ritchie's cheeks. The winning caption



read: "Are you turning purple yet?"

During the afternoon, there was also a break in the activities already outlined so that a "Questions and Answer session", could be chaired by Rob Fodder, who had been Ritchie's Personal Assistant on tour for a number of years. The start of this session unfortunately (from my point of view) coincided with my friends and I having meals upstairs, as I intended "to go into amateur journalist mode" after that. Thus I missed some of Rob's contributions but I did manage to hear a couple of the more important questions. One was concerning Ritchie throwing water over an on-stage cameraman, at Birmingham NEC in 1993 (and I myself was present in the audience at that gig!). Rob's reply echoes what he has previously written in MBTP magazine. Essentially, Ritchie had not agreed to the on-stage camera and even though he had been promised it would not be there, each time he tried to go on stage, he found that it still had not been removed. This was why he arrived on stage late, very upset and threw the water at the cameraman. Rob emphasised that the water was aimed at the cameraman only and was not intended to hit any band member on stage, even though it might have done by accident. Rob mentioned that Ritchie ran behind the back of the stage and got the cameraman with another bucket of water just before Black Night started!

Another question was in regards to Joe Lynn Turner in Deep Purple. Rob outlined a well-known story, in which Ritchie supported Joe but the other members wanted Ian Gillan back in the band. Rob's additional comments went something on the lines of the following: "Joe Lynn Turner understood the immense pressure there was to re-instate Ian Gillan. He was thus quite willing to stand aside".

I would also like to thank Richard Gillitt who emailed me this additional comment regarding Rob Fodder's talk. "Too many stories to mention but one about Ritchie and Thomas (from the Geyers) 'discussing' 'Smoke on the Water' at great length; ending with the guitarist admitting that, it may not be the most complicated of riffs but it's made me a lot of money' (or words to that effect); stuck in the memory. Many of the stories centred around the explosive rivalry between a certain guitarist and vocalist!"

Jessie Haynes – Cowgirls, Castles and Rainbow Eyes - An Interview and Review

Though I have been a fan of Blackmore's Night since the outset of the project, I have never actually seen them in concert with Jessie Haynes (except for the Live in Germany video). On that video, Jessie comes across as a very friendly and sincere person; loving the music that she helps to create and play; and valuing the friendships that she makes with her fellow musicians.

When it was announced that Jessie Haynes & Cowgirl Ecstasy would play at The Ritchie Blackmore convention (23rd October 2004), other fans and myself, realised that here was a chance to make up for those earlier missed opportunities and also catch up with what her latest musical project.

The band took to the stage at 5.30pm and consisted of Jessie Haynes (vocals & guitars), Trina Michne (guitars), Alex Sarkis (drums) and Susan Collins (bass). The song set list was: Prophecy, A Girl, Another Match, I Don't Wanna Know, Dracula, I Know, Arizona, Selling Roses, Castles & Dreams, Temple of the King and Rainbow Eyes.

Perhaps not surprisingly (considering Jessie's former musical influences), Cowgirl Ecstasy present a very gentle acoustic style of music; creating a very relaxed atmosphere amongst its audience. Four tracks (Prophecy, A Girl, Arizona and Selling Roses) appeared on the "Jessie Haynes & Cowgirl Ecstasy – Limited Edition Compilation" CD that was being sold on Jerry Bloom's MBTP stall.

After playing her own material, Jessie then performed a version of Castles & Dreams that some members of the audience gently sang along to. The song Temple of the King featured Jessie playing electric guitar. Finally, dedicated to Neil Davies (MBTP), the song Rainbow Eyes was performed; it was obviously under rehearsed but Neil Davies appeared "moved" all the same and it was certainly appreciated as an unexpected surprise.

In between songs, Jessie entertained the audience with a few anecdotes. She thanked Rob Fodder for the loan of guitars to Trina and herself (as it was too expensive to bring their own from the U.S.A. due to the high charges made by American Airlines!)

Jessie recounted how Trina, Susan and herself had been in an all-girl band when she first met Ritchie, Candice & co. Jessie was then in Blackmore's Night during the "Shadow of the Moon" and "Under a Violet Moon" tours. She told the audience that during the early Blackmore's Night rehearsals, each song was played in many different ways in order to work out which was the best and then recorded at the end of same day.

Since the end of the "Under A Violet Moon" tour, Jessie has stayed in contact with Candice but the two never had time to get together until recently when Ritchie & Candice invited Jessie to a down town pub in New York. Ritchie had several tables put together, so that everyone could sit around them as one large group. Guitars were then produced and much singing and drinking then ensued!

When Jessie's Convention performance came to an end, quite a few fans (myself included) went to the front of the stage to get autographs from each band member and also to be photographed stood next to Jessie. The rest of the band members were also overwhelmed by their sudden rise in popularity! Some fans that had not bought Jessie's CD before the performance, hastily rushed to buy a copy from the MBTP stall, in order to get Jessie to sign it



before she disappeared.

A little later, I was privileged to be able to interview Jessie for about half an hour (albeit hastily improvised in the Limelight Club's downstairs café!) I asked if Jessie's band were playing any more dates in the UK. The answer was "No"; they had flown over especially to perform at the Convention (as a special favour to Jerry Bloom) and were due to fly back to the U.S.A. the next day.

I explained to Jessie that I was researching with a view to writing an article on Blackmore's Night stage scenery and costumes. We thus talked about costumes from Jessie's perspective.

Jessie said that she liked to dress as a gypsy. She preferred very bright colours, with very flowing skirts. I mentioned the white top she sometimes wore on the Live in Germany video. She explained that her grandmother made that particular garment for her. Jessie also had other medieval blouses, in white, green or black.



Jessie explained that Candice had bought several dresses at Renaissance Fairs. Apparently, these can be of a one-size-fits-all type. By purchasing a black bodice (from the Gothic clothing store "Hot Topic" in New York), Jessie was able to "pull-in" the excess material, either on her own dress or on one that she might be borrowing from Candice. Jessie also pointed out that she and Candice had often temporarily swapped various items of costume for the purpose of film shots.

Another source of costume supply that Jessie had used was Medieval Mayhem, as she regarded some of their clothes as "beautiful". Jessie had also made a few costume items herself or in the case of some dresses, had modified them from off-the-rack items to give them "jagged edges" to resemble a Witch's Dress look.

A particular favourite item that Jessie mentioned was a red and black necklace that also had a half moon and bat on it. This was a special gift from Candice; presented during the band's

very first tour. Jessie also added: "I've seen them give gifts to lots of new members... they are very generous that way!" I asked Jessie about her choice of medieval shoes. She explained that though she had worn footwear, a lot of the time, she had preferred to perform barefoot! In contrast, Candice had a large selection of tall suede boots, in different colours. (That was in 1998; Candice's wardrobe has expanded considerably since then!)

Jessie said that she still wore her medieval costumes, usually when attending a Blackmore's Night concert as a member of the audience. She summarized her time with Blackmore's Night as "The best of both worlds; pretending you are medieval but still having electricity and bathrooms".

A Final Thank You

I would like to thank the band members of all the bands featured, who kindly gave me information regarding their music and their contributions to the Ritchie Blackmore Convention. I would also like to acknowledge the support given to me by Jerry Bloom, Richard Gillitt, Rob Fodder and Ray (at the Limelight Club!)

Mike Garrett

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Ritchie Blackmore Convention **A report by Kevin Dixon**

Crewe is not the most attractive of North English towns; however the Limelight Club enjoys the reputation as one of the top rock venues in England. The first ever Ritchie Blackmore convention was held there on Saturday 22nd October 2004.

The day was divided into two separate sets, with the afternoon devoted to rare videos, question and answers sessions and the first UK appearance of former Blackmore's Night member Jessie Haynes. The evening set being set aside to accommodate two of the best Blackmore covers bands namely Burn and Rainbow Rising.

More Black Than Purple editor Jerry Bloom was master of ceremonies for the event. Following a rare showing of Blackmore's Night in Sofia 1998, we had his introduction to the event, making us all feel very welcome indeed. The afternoon session was a lot fuller than I had expected, and we were soon enjoying Rainbow from Castle Donington.



Of course the inevitable technical gremlins appeared, but were dealt with quickly in good humour, and the show carried on. The organisers had certainly provided enough for us to watch, and if that was not enough we soon had a question and answer session with Rob Fodder. Rob was of course Ritchie's personal assistant for many years, through Deep Purple, Rainbow and Blackmore's Night. His answers were very informative and often very amusing.

Following a short break to allow a sound check, Jerry announced the arrival on stage of the first band of the day. Jessie Haynes and Cowgirl Ecstasy.

Jessie Haynes & Cowgirl Ecstasy

Prophecy, A Girl, Another Match, I Don't Wanna Know, Dracula, I Know, Arizona, Selling Roses, Castles & Dreams, Temple of the King, Rainbow Eyes.

It was really good to see Jessie and her band make such an effort for the convention. They played a selection of their own material and some Blackmore related covers. Their own material was generously appreciated by the afternoon crowd. Despite the late set up and technical gremlins, the band played really well. The cover of Castles and Dreams was great, highlighting Jessie's vocal purity, despite her sore throat. Temple of the King allowed Jessie a chance to play lead electric guitar. Sadly the cover of Rainbow Eyes was not so good, with Jessie having to sing in a key lower than she seemed comfortable with. I guess this might be why Blackmore's Night has never done the song. Overall the band went down really well. They were certainly pleasant company over the weekend, and gave their time to anyone and everyone without any complaints.

Burn

Stormbringer, Strange Kind of Woman, Woman from Tokyo, When a Blind Man Cries, Burn, Mistreated, Long Train Running (incorporating Child in Time & Knocking at Your Back Door as brief instrumental sequences), Space Trucking, Black Night, Highway Star and Smoke on the Water (of course!)

Three piece band, and at times the lack of Keyboards showed. The set started really well, with a great version of Stormbringer. The guitarist really captured Ritchie's technique, and despite playing songs from different eras, he also retained the tone suitable for each song. I was really impressed by the band. They worked really hard and the enthusiasm helped them to overcome the sometimes weak sound. The cover of the Doobie Brothers song was really clever, and the interpolating was really well done. Knocking at your Back Door was probably the highlight of the set for me. They closed with a well received version of Smoke. Thoroughly enjoyable set from the band, one that I really enjoyed and that seemed to go down well with the crowd.

Rainbow Rising

Kill the King, Miss Mistreated, 16th Century Greensleeves, Do You Close Your Eyes, Catch The Rainbow, Still I'm Sad, Man on the Silver Mountain, Since You Been Gone, I Surrender, All Night Long, Black Night, Stargazer. Encores: Difficult to Cure, Long Live Rock n' Roll & Smoke on the Water.



Well the guitarist certainly looked like Ritchie, had all the right moves and gestures, but the sound wasn't quite right all the time. Certain songs worked really well, other did not. The rest of the band was certainly working hard, and the crowd really enjoyed them. However I did not enjoy them as much as I had Burn. To me they seemed to try too hard during some numbers, and at times they looked like a band who had rehearsed all the spontaneity out of their obvious ability to play the music. It lacked that edge of uncertainty which you get with Ritchie live. However despite my doubts about the band, it has to be said they played what they played well. Catch the Rainbow was very good indeed, and the long version of Man on the Silver Mountain, including the Blues and Starstruck, was fun. The guitar demolition and amp explosion was fun to watch, but to me a bit pointless. The amusing version of Smoke resplendent with the Convention organisers onstage certainly gave the convention a really wonderful end. The sight of Jerry waving the broken guitar was hilarious.

So was it all worthwhile, well it was certainly well organized and the venue was well suited to the conventions needs. Everyone seemed to have a great time. The only downside for me was trying to find a taxi after the event, getting one and having to let it go as Mr. Fodder did

his good Samaritan routine and helped out a lady in distress. We then had a long 20-minute walk back, just making it in time for the bar.

My thanks to Jerry, Alan and all at MBTP, Jessie Haynes and band, Rob and Anihoa, Richard for coming all that way for three hours, Richard and Splodge, Costas and his wife and finally Callum for the company on the road.

Kevin Dixon

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