

June 2008

www.islandsongwriters.org



Next Workshop

August 4

No meeting in July

Borders Open Mic

June 6

Pedro Pereira

at Cool Beanz June 6

On the Web

Garageband.com a worthy site

By HANK STONE

One of my favorite sites is Garageband.com. I have been directed to many sites where fellow musicians have uploaded their tracks and then ask you to "vote for us" to give them a boost in the ratings. Well, young rock bands who can get their entire school to vote, or several people with time on their hands voting repeatedly, will jump to the top of the "charts" regardless of the merits of the song or the performance.

Garageband prevents this with its system of anonymous reviews. When you choose to review a track, all you can select is the genre. A pair of songs play, and you don't know the names of the songs, the artists, or even where they are from. You have to listen for at least 90 seconds, and write at least 15 words in a review. Then the reviews are judged, also anonymously.

The system is set up to encourage critical listening and fair reviewing. Good reviewers are rewarded with contest entries. After listening to 30 songs, you earn a credit to upload one of your own tracks, or you can pay a few dollars if you don't want to spend time and effort reviewing.

Liz Longley, who recently played Acoustic Long Island at Deepwells, has done very well on Garageband, garnering many "Track Of The Day" awards, and she was voted the No. 1 all-time female vocalist in the site's acoustic category in May of 2006.

Each of your songs has its own page, which you can customize with artwork, lyrics, etc. All its reviews are there, too. Part of the excitement is watching your song move up the charts. Or not! But you also get valuable feedback from other serious writers and players. During the recording of my first CD, I uploaded tracks for review, and we made quite a few changes, some suggested by reviewers.

There are similar sites, such as broadjam.com, but I am not as familiar with them. If you have had experience, good or bad, with other sites, let me know at birdarise@yahoo.com and I will share it with the members of ISS.

Writer's Choice: Sargent's 'Son of Mankind'

BY WALTER SARGENT

"Son of Mankind," the Writer's Choice winner for May, is an appeal to humanity that steps beyond national, religious or social identities with a simple, but powerful, refrain. ISS members connected with it lyrically and melodically saying, "beautiful lyric... beautiful melody... nice universality." The song, which I wrote, won by a narrow margin, with a three-way tie for second.

In the order they were presented, here are the runners-up with member comments: "Adam's Blues" (Hank Stone): "Musically engaging... I want a recording!"

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We're on the Web!

See us at

www.islandsongwriters.org

Pedro Pereira's 'Lay Down Your Sword' on Neil Young Web Site

ISS Newsletter Editor Pedro Pereira's song "Lay Down Your Sword" reached 79 out of 2,633 songs on Neil Young's Living with War site, www.neilyoung.com/lwwtoday. The song tells the tale of a very committed soldier whose views are turned upside down when he realizes he has been lied to by his leaders. It is track 10 on Pedro's "Last Man on the Planet" CD, available at iTunes and cdbaby.com/cd/pedropereira.

Writer's Choice: Walter Sargent's 'Son of Mankind'

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"Side Effects" (Lois Morton): "Wonderful, clever, and fun."

"My Friend Jim Kincaid" (Mark Hussey): "Great Irish song... really strong material"

Other comments:

"Path to Our House" (Sue Cohen): "Lovely, unpretentious melody... I got a real sense of nostalgia;"

"December Blues" (Jim Baron): "This is a great showcase for a strong rock singer"

"Great voice;" "Lemonade" (Josh Solomon): "Song has solid pop sensibilities;"

"Wanna Trade?" (Chris Kollmeier): "Performance was top-notch;" "Everyone Needs"

(Suzanne Ernst): "Beautiful music and singing," "novel concept."

The ISS welcomes all styles and levels of accomplishments. The monthly workshop is an opportunity to stretch musically and take a risk in a supportive environment.

ISS Open Mic

The next open mic at **Borders Cafe**, Route 25, Syosset, is June 6. This gig is monthly, on the first Friday of the month, hosted by Vinny Crici. Signup is at 7:30 p.m and the music starts at 8 p.m.

Who Played What

Here is a list of the performers and songs from last month's ISS workshop:

Hank Stone: Adam's Blues; Suzanne Ernst: Everyone Needs; Lois Morton: Side Effects; Walt Sargent: Son of Mankind; Sue Cohen: Path to Our House; Josh Solomon: Lemonade; Mark Hussey: My Friend Jack Kincaid; Jim Baron: December Blues; Chris Kollmeier - Wanna Trade?

Monthly Workshop

Test out your songs in front of a crowd by playing them for fellow musicians who will provide constructive feedback with the goal of helping you improve as a songwriter. The ISS workshop takes place the first Monday of every month, except if it falls on a holiday, at Five Towns College, off Burrs Lane in Dix Hills. Run by ISS Director Sonny Speed, the workshop starts at 7:30 p.m. Bring a guitar if you wish to perform your song live, or you may bring a recording on CD or tape. A piano is available for those who write their songs at the keys. Be sure to bring 25 copies of your lyric sheets so the other workshop attendees can follow along while listening to your song. It is much easier to provide constructive criticism when people can read the lyrics. The ISS workshop is at the center of the organization's mission to help songwriters perfect their craft. Many performers on Long Island got their start at ISS.

General Information

For general information about ISS or how to join the organization, contact ISS Director Sonny Speed at mcspeed@optonline.net or 631- 462-3300. To submit items for publication in the newsletter, contact Pedro Pereira at pedropereira@verizon.net. Visit our web site at www.islandsongwriters.org.