

August 2008

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Next Workshop

Sept. 8

Sept. 1 is Labor Day

Borders Open Mic

Sept. 5

Phil Kennelty

becomes a Mother of
Pearl. *See page 2.*

Get Heard

New Open Mic on South Shore

By PEDRO PEREIRA

One of the best ways to test out new material in front of an audience or sharpen your performance skills is to play at an open mic. These days there seem to be plenty of them around Long Island, from the Queens county line all the way to wine country.

One of the newer open mics that has piqued my interest is on Monday nights in Lindenhurst. It takes place from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the Village Lanterne restaurant on Wellwood Avenue.

Run by Kenn Machin, who also hosts the open mic on Wednesdays at Cool Beanz in St. James, the Village Lanterne gig has been going for a couple of months and is gaining popularity.

Kenn has a large following, not only from the Cool Beanz gig but also from running open mics around Suffolk County for the last several years. Performers who have played at some of the other open mics he has hosted make up the crux of the artistic talent so far at the Village Lanterne gig, though folks who play around the South Shore also have started showing up.

The Village Lanterne has a great menu of German fare, though on Monday nights it is limited to the bar menu. The restaurant used to close on Mondays before the open mic, and should the gig start attracting a lot of people, it is possible that the full menu will be offered.

Perhaps more importantly for performers, the restaurant's owner is very supportive of the open mic and has expressed interest in hiring some of the performers for the occasional gig. So not only do you get to sharpen your skills as a performer at the Village Lanterne, you also may get a chance at a paying gig. Of course to get that, you must be at the top of your game when you play.

Ultimately, no matter the gig, no matter the size of the audience, always give it your best. If nothing else, a good performance is gratifying.

Writer's Choice: Tim Dillon's 'Everyone'

BY WALTER SARGENT

The Writer's Choice from the June workshop was "Everyone" by Tim Dillon.

I think it's ironic. "Everyone" has something for everyone -- lyrics, melody, mood and a message that was sincere without being overly serious. It had moments that were simply poetic - like a wish without an explanation. "Beautiful," wrote several members.

Runner-up "The Ones I Love" by Mike Wells was a very catchy piece with gorgeous harmonies. Members wrote, "Well crafted, well sung... great concept!"

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Phil Kennelty Becomes a 'Mother of Pearl'

ISS member Phil Kennelty has joined Mother of Pearl, a band of original classic rock. The band just dropped a CD, "The Rock 'n Roll Blues Train," for which it had a release party at the Looney Tunes in West Babylon on July 31. For future band gigs, check out their myspace site: www.myspace.com/tmop420.

Writer's Choice: Tim Dillon's 'Everyone'

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"Stars," by Pedro Pereira, evoked a spirited critique with its play between reality and fantasy language. Everyone agreed the chorus rocked, and the song took some interesting twists and turns.

"Marking Time," by Suzanne Ernst and David Kreutz, was anything but. It was a serenade, vaguely jazzy and lush. The song had echoing tones that never seemed to repeat, but instead moved in an arc. Lovely.

"Girl With A Gun," by Marguerite Brophy Cassel. This song really drew us in with a series of hooks. It was "first person, present tense" with a great breathless quality. It also was loaded with rich chordal movements that created a strong sense of drama.

"Puzzle" by Howard Pavane was very catchy, original and well-constructed. The chorus was very memorable without any repetition, which is a hard thing to do.

"Can't Keep A Padlock On My Heart" by Estelle Hendrich, was another one of the night's triumphs because of the discipline required to write a period piece, in this case, country western. Great lyrics and rhymes, as always.

"Attitude," by Andrew Kirschner, was a triumph on a couple of levels. Never a dull moment. Members wrote, "Edgy in a time warp kinda way."

ISS Open Mic

The next open mic at **Borders Cafe**, Route 25, Syosset, is Sept. 5. 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.

What's in Store

In coming weeks, CDs will drop from two ISS mainstays – Tornado Alley and Frank Gambino. Tornado Alley is the Americana band put together by ISS Director Sonny Speed, and it also includes ISS members Tim Huss and Vinny Crici. Frank Gambino will be releasing his second CD, which includes collaborations with various ISS members. Look for more details on these releases in upcoming newsletter issues.

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.