

February 2009

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### Next Workshop

March 2 at Five  
Towns College

### Borders Open Mic

The next show is  
Friday, Feb. 6.

### ISS at Folk Society

ISS members Tim  
Dillon, Dave Bailey,  
Frank Gambino,  
Vincent Crici, Jim  
Baron and Lois  
Morton will play  
March 21 at the Folk  
Music Society of  
Huntington's Hard  
Luck Café at the  
Congregational  
Church of Huntington,  
30 Washington Drive,  
Centerport.

# Born to Rock

## New Study Says Babies Born with Rhythm

BY PEDRO PEREIRA

In the November 2007 issue of ISS Newsletter, I argued that music is inside all of us and that humans have been conditioned over centuries to believe that only some people have the ability sing or play an instrument. Now comes a study indicating that newborn babies have the ability to recognize a beat.

More specifically, the study published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences ([www.pnas.org](http://www.pnas.org)) found that the brains of 2- to 3-day-old babies recognize when a rhythmic drum sequence lacks its initial beat, known as the downbeat.

The ability to follow a beat is called beat induction, which is something our most closely related primate relatives – chimpanzees and bonobos – cannot do. Beat induction, therefore, is believed to be a uniquely human trait as well as a building block of music.

"We hear music, we clap along. Music becomes faster or slower, and we can dance to it," said Henkjan Honing, head of the University of Amsterdam's Music Cognition Group and lead author of the study, as quoted in a Jan. 26 Wired.com story. Researchers attached an electroencephalogram, which measures brain activity, to 14 babies, then played a rock drum pattern.

Immediately after each beat, the babies' brain activity increased. After several repetitions, the researchers dropped the bass from every fourth beat, at which point the babies' brains showed a momentary disturbance, which Wired reported is what happens to adults when expected stimuli fail to occur.

OK, so may we can't all sing, but we're sure born with the beat.

## Writer's Choice: Sid Cherry's 'Angelia'

BY WALTER SARGENT

About "Angelia," members wrote "a wonderful drifting melody and lyrics. Beautiful. Haunting. Gorgeous. Loneliness. Escape." True enough. "Angelia" has strong lyrics and melodies, but we heard plenty of well-crafted songs at last month's ISS workshop. I think it was the concept was particularly well suited to the (song) form. It drew the wonderful lyrics in like fish in a net.

Picture a man more at home in his solitude than with others, particularly significant others. He's on a sailboat named "Angelia," for reasons we don't really need to know. What is important is that he prefers it, at least for the moment. "Angelia" walks the line between aloneness and loneliness, avoiding any temptation to go

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## Writer's Choice: 'Angelia'

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one way or the other. Is the man giving up on romantic love, or just taking a break? Is it for good reasons, or not? Who knows? As a still life, a snapshot, it just works.

It's one thing to win when attendance is light, but this workshop was very well attended. Songwriters were in fine form and the competition didn't give an inch. There were plenty of votes to go around. Just for the record, more than a few went to "The Solstice is Nigh" by Hank Stone and Tim Dillon's "The Special Part of Me."

Here are some comments from members on the songs from last month:

The Special Part of Me (Tim Dillon): "Great melody and delivery. Don't change a thing." "Heartfelt;"

The Solstice Is Nigh (Hank Stone): "Great melody. Wonderful structure ... story"

Everyday (Bruce Kanin): "Very clever concept." "Great ending"

Wonder In the Wind (Jim Baron): "Passionate... catchy"

I Know Enough To Know I Don't Want To Know Anymore (Jim Evans): Winner of the ISS Title of the Month Award.

Loving (Ken Krumenacker): "Very good hooks." "Original concept."

My My My (Frank Gambino): "I hear a songwriter who has found his voice"

Roselle (John Finerty): "Very strong groove and verse."

Their Second Nature (Suzanne Ernst): "Excellent words and music." "Original subject."

I Still Love You (Andrew Kirshner) - "Very moving ballad"

So You Want To Be A Hero? (Mike Svezia): Winner of the ISS Fourth Level of Fantasy of the Month Bittersweet Achievement Award

## ISS Open Mi6

The next open mic at **Borders Cafe**, Route 25, Syosset, is Feb. 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:

Frank Gambino: My My My; Hank Stone: The Solstice Is Nigh; Andrew Kirshner: I Still Love You; Estelle Henrich: It's a Beautiful Song; John Savino: A Beautiful Site; Tim Dillon: The Special Part of Me; Jim Baron: Wonder In the Wind; Sid Cherry: Angelia; Mike Svezia: So You Want To Be A Hero?; Bruce Kanin: Everyday; Suzanne Ernst: Their Second Nature; Ken Krumenacker: Loving; Vince Gangi: Jonni; Sal Weeks: Crush; John Finerty: Roselle; Jim Evans: I Know Enough To Know I Don't Want To Know Anymore

## 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](mailto:mcspeed@optonline.net) or 631- 462-3300. To submit items for publication in the newsletter, contact Pedro Pereira at [pedropereira@verizon.net](mailto:pedropereira@verizon.net). Visit our web site at [www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org).