



A Year A Month

*A monthly blog
from A and E*

IG BIO





Emily on her journey eating traditional local Laotian fare.

1.14.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 8



Emily on her journey reading on the boat in Halong Bay, Vietnam

E.S. 2009

You may know that it's been some time since we wrote our last Tumblr blog for "One Year a Month". It's good to set goals (ha), and while we couldn't quite manage to keep writing every month about the next consecutive year in our career, it feels great to dust off the memories now and get back to work on catching you up to speed. I must admit, I'm brushing through a few cobwebs as I reconnect with how to write a blog entry!

2009- it was a chock-full year, practically bursting at the seams with travels near, far and wide. Knowing we had a little break before Poseidon and the Bitter Bug was going to be released, and Amy would be touring solo, I planned a trip to Southeast Asia in January with Tristin and two of our very favorite friends and travelling buddies, an Aussie couple named Pauline and Dave. During the three-week trip, we went to Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Having always had a fascination with the people, culture, and the American war in Vietnam, I felt honored and excited to be able to go there. I was particularly looking forward to experiencing non-Western culture, as I had never been so far away before to a non-English speaking country. In truth, I was slightly nervous. Among our myriad experiences were a visit to the prison where the late Sen. John McCain was held during the war, a flight north to Hanoi to see Ho Chi Minh lying in state, and on a swelteringly hot day, a "tour" of some of the elaborate tunnel systems dug by North Vietnamese soldiers during the war. While we were there, we met many kind people, learned to cook traditional dishes from locals, roamed temples and back alleys, and were treated warmly by our hosts, but I felt a sense of sorrow and American guilt over that terrible war which never quite left me. I was, however, able to be amazed by and relish the awesome street food, the brilliant colors of all the items people carried on their scooters, things you would never imagine being loaded on to a scooter: trees, washing machines, stacked crates of food and beverages, celebratory items for Tet, and so on. It was terrifying crossing a major intersection in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City- a combination of complete "Zen flow" and desperate prayer that if you just kept walking through the sea of bikes and cars and scooters and people, you would make it to the other side alive!

While we were in Vietnam, we rented a boat and sailed on Halong Bay, where the rock outcroppings loom like mystical figures from a time long, long ago. We stopped to see a tiny village on the water with a one room schoolhouse and one dog on the docks. The water was very cold and stung my skin as we swam, but it was exhilarating, and I could not get over the vast beauty of Vietnam. I had only ever seen war footage of the Mekong river, so it's hard to explain the power of hopping on a tour boat down the river, stopping at a village along the way to buy goods from the locals, and ending up exploring a cave at the end of the boat trip.

There are too many memories of that trip to share here, but I have included a couple of pictures- one is of me and Tristin, reading Vietnamese-authored books on a boat in Halong Bay; the other is me eating a bug during a traditional Lao meal we had in Luang Prabang. That night I ate bug, fish gut, snake, frog, and bee larvae. These were local delicacies. My favorite were the plain noodles! It was a strange transition back to American life after that trip, but I felt I would one day return to Southeast Asia, and Amy and I had work to do!

So, why not play a Cayamo Cruise? Cruises are a slightly claustrophobic experience for me, but Cayamo and Olivia Cruises through the years have also been a ton of fun, particularly since we get to jam and sing with other musicians. During 2009, we spent a lot of time hanging out and singing with Brandi Carlile and the twins. Brandi, Amy and I would gather in one of the little ship cabins and rehearse songs, and when we did our IG set on the boat, most of the songs were sung with Brandi, singing harmonies and taking verses. Brandi can sing harmony perfectly with anyone, and she was like a harmonic glue with me and Amy. I spent those nights on the ship playing songs with my jaws aching from smiling so much because, really, what is better than singing songs with friends, and when the friend is Brandi, it's a whole other musical dimension. Along with the music, the deep, deep blue of the deep, deep sea is my favorite living color, and I spent a lot of my time looking over the ship balcony, down to the swirling blue below, marveling at what the natural world shares with us.

Out of nowhere came an opportunity to play our first show in Southeast Asia- a one-off in Singapore! Never before had we flown across the world to play one show! It was a fascinating place, this jam-packed city state. I remember that there were stores and stores and stores- so many shopping places I had never seen, and there were miles and miles of cutting-edge public transport trains. It was also an incredibly clean city. We had heard that chewing gum was against the law. Urban myth? Homosexuality (sodomy to be exact) is illegal in Singapore, an anti-gay law enacted by colonial England in the 1930's. We interviewed with a queer journalist while there- I felt it was extremely brave of him to speak so freely, but there is a strange mix of extremely stringent rules and citizen conduct laws, coupled with an international cosmopolitan mix of people, and thriving arts, that reminded me of a "don't ask don't tell" environment. Singapore is largely a conservative country. The struggle for LGBTQ freedom continues there.

From there, we went to Palm Springs, California to play the Dinah Shore weekend. Back in 2009, I was a women's golf FANATIC. My GF and I hung out with some women on the tour, and we went to Dinah Shore to follow the tournament as well play music. Here's the jewel of the crown- Lady Gaga was performing there as well! She would go on to become a stratospheric star (one of my very favorite artists), but in 2009 we shared the stage with her at Dinah Shore. I remember watching her from the side of the stage, even then with glitz and glimmer, and being captivated by her. There are some artists you see and you just know they will go on to bigger, broader audiences and fan followings. It's pretty fun to look back and remember when they played small venues and

how we were there to see them and take in their gift before they became household names. Small venues are so great, because the music is so close, all these energy

names. Small venues are so great, because the music is so close- all those energy molecules packed in so tightly and swirling around.

We spent the rest of that year touring much of the U.S. from the Northwest, to California, the Southwest, Mid-west, Southeast and on up to New Hampshire and the Northeast. We decided to hold food drives during those concerts. People could bring food goods in for people and food goods in for pets. We knew that many people were experiencing food insecurity because of the 2008 economic crisis, and we worked with the group Rock for a Remedy who completely organized the drive and had volunteers in each city to collect the food and money and to let people know which groups, foodbanks or animal shelters for example, in their communities would receive the contributions.

When we face a problem head on and share what we have, and we sometimes do that in the music arena, the result is a powerful sense of community, rather than isolation and personal struggle. I'm so thankful to groups like Rock for a Remedy that have the organizational infrastructure to make these kinds of community efforts achievable. Someone carries the box of food out of the venue and gets it into the hands of someone who is hungry. There are always so many "invisible" people behind the scenes doing the hard work of making the goal realized. It was true from the beginning and is still true that concerts that benefit people or animals or groups in need of assistance or amplification are the very best concert experiences Amy and I have. It is always our community of listeners who rises to the occasion and takes part!

In October we flew across the pond to tour the UK. Touring the UK is one of my favorite things to do as an IG. We were driven on a tour bus by the intrepid and always hilarious Johnny (the one of "Olympia Inn"). It's always creepy and exciting to have the bus drive onto the Ferry to get to Ireland. In the very old days, I would sleep on the bus while parked on the ferry-even though you're not supposed to do that. Though it was dark, and you could feel the motion of the sea, hear the mechanical drone of the ship's engines, and know that you were in a ship's underbelly, inside a bus, I always opted for more sleep. Getting off the bus and onto the upper part of the ship cut into my sleep. I have never done well without proper sleep (8 hours at least), so the hardest part of touring for me has always been body fatigue. Once I'm over the bad jet lag I always experience, I'm exhilarated to be touring in a country outside the U.S. On that tour, we had Carolyn Snell for the first time as our tour manager. We met her when she was TM-ing Brandi. We have her to thank for all of the awesome pics she took on this UK tour. We went on to become lifelong friends, and she introduced us to Thistle Farms in Nashville, a nonprofit social enterprise dedicated to helping women survivors recover and heal from prostitution, trafficking, and addiction. Often, we meet friends along our travels who introduce us to organizations who address the most critical needs of the people or animals they serve- a completely organic journey into all of the issues Amy and I have been involved with over the many years.

I got very sick on the UK tour. It feels awful to get sick on tour, an agonizing feeling not to be able to do my best during a show. Even though there is no blame for getting sick, I always feel like I'm letting Amy or the audience down. Carolyn and I still laugh

about me handing her my sweaty, gross stage shirt after a show when I was really sick

about me handing her my sweaty, gross stage shirt after a show when I was really sick. She said “ewwww”, took it, and held it as far away from her on the hanger as she could. I guess her honesty solidified our nascent friendship! The other thing about getting sick on tour is that you never want anyone else to get sick. So, when we had Clare Kenny and Carol Isaacs come over from London to play with us, I tried so hard to keep my distance from them- even though I love them both with all of my heart and so rarely get to see them.

I look back on that tour and all of the wonderfully crummy dressing rooms, lack of coffee, jacket potatoes from food stands, beautiful people, exuberant fans whose distinct accents you could hear as they sang the words, thrill of cultural change, and I think about being sick. That’s how bad it felt to me. Obviously, that is self-involved and way out of proportion, but there it is. I’ve learned to go a little easier on myself when I get sick now on tour, but it really sucks!

2009 was the year we released Poseidon and the Bitter Bug whose name came from our very funny and gifted producer, Mitchell Froom. He’s like, “jeez there’s a lot of bummer stuff here (I’m paraphrasing); you should call the album Poseidon and the Bitter Bug”. We did. We decided to make PATBB a double album- one-part full band arrangements, another part all acoustic arrangements. These songs leant themselves quite well to the stripped-down versions. Alison Brown joined us to play banjo and “banjola” on some of the acoustic versions. Her banjola solo on “I’ll Change” is one of my favorite musical pieces on all of our albums combined. There was something about the poignancy of that song out of personal pain, along with Alison’s sensibility, and the sound of that particular instrument that reached inside me and wouldn’t let go. I often ponder about why certain chords or instruments resonate uniquely to different people. For instance, I absolutely love the sound of a drum sidestick on the snare pattern.

I love the songs on Poseidon. “Fleet of Hope” was the first song I wrote after a terrible, debilitating bout of writer’s block. “Digging for Your Dream” was the first song of mine we recorded to a loop that ran through the entire song. “I’ll Change” is a ballad I never get tired of playing live (not all songs are like that). Amy wrote classics like “Second Time Around”, “Sugar Tongue” and “Driver Education” which she had also recorded as a solo song. One thing I loved about Mitchell Froom’s production is that no musical part is overdone, overplayed, or conflicts with other parts. Each part fits with and has its place in relation to the other parts. He is the king of simplicity and the perfect note, in my opinion. Besides that, he has a wonderful sense of humor and always kept things flowing in the studio- a sure and steady captain.

SO- the end of a decade and the precipice of a new one. Traveling was the key- new people, new experiences, new challenges, new activist mentors and groups to get involved with. Every stop along the way was an adventure and a chance to reflect on the bountiful life that music has given me.



Indigo Summer tour food drive 2009

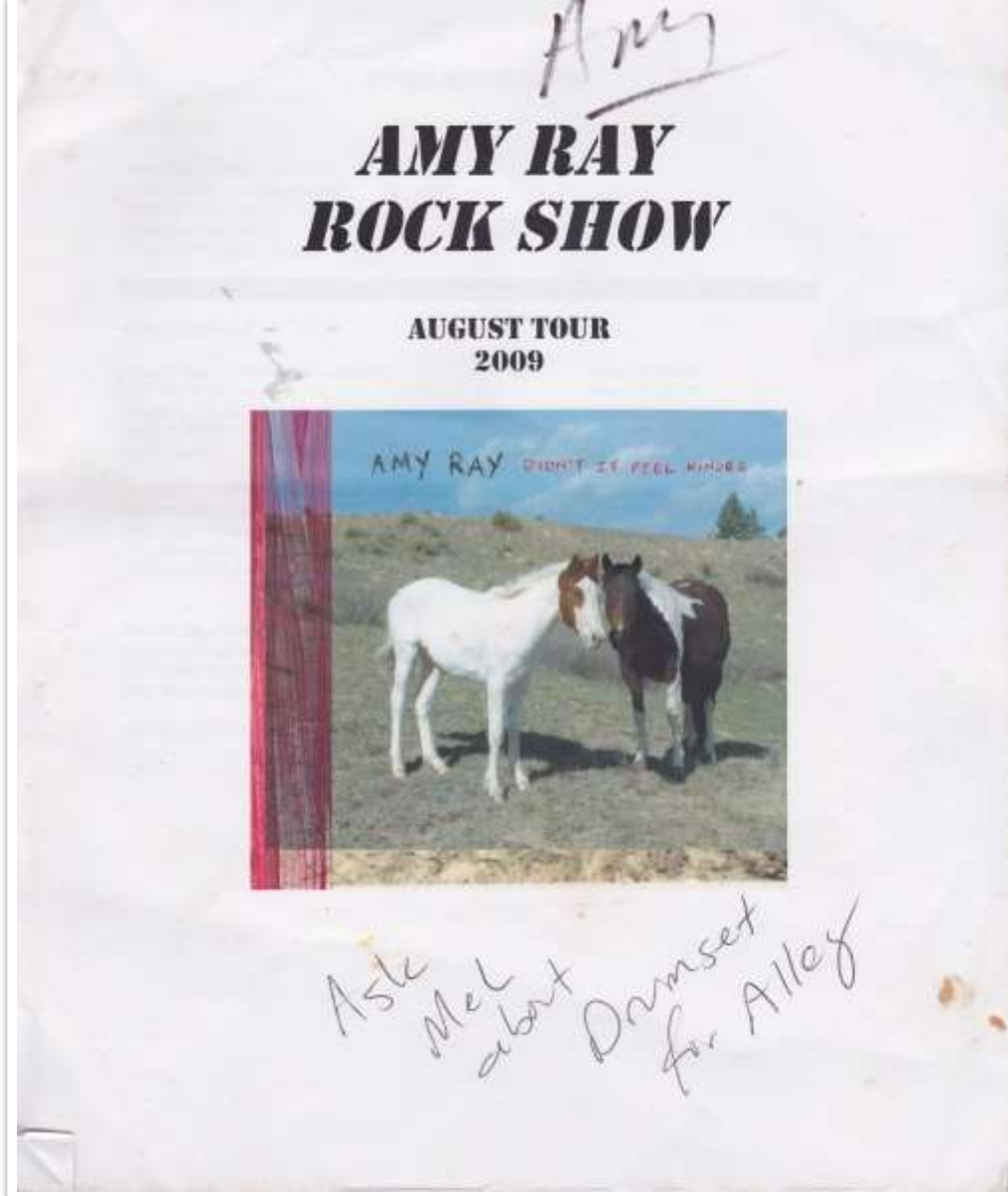
📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 8



Load-In Stubb's, Austin, TX 1.20.09

Brian, Julie and Amy

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 4



Amy Solo Tour Itinerary

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 6

A.R. 2009

2009 started in an auspicious way with the inauguration of our first black president, a visionary man and a new hope for so many people. It ended with the death of the legendary Vic Chestnut, a songwriter for the ages, a poet with an impossibly real voice that hit our guts with images and stories that could encompass the world of the mundane as magically as he could bring forth in graphic realism the cycle of life and death. With these bookends of hope and loss, my experience of 2009 has reverberated and stayed with me in a visceral way.

We left our deal with Hollywood records after only one release, having discovered that a record label talking about elevating your career, does not make it so. We were happy to leave, but also grateful for the connection we had formed with Mitchell Fromm as the producer of our Hollywood Records' release. *Despite Our Differences*. It was not

wasted time.

We decided to launch our own label IG Recordings, which allowed us to be flexible and move around through different production, distribution and promotion scenarios as they fit our needs. When we left the deal, we had the next album set up to record with Mitchell, and because he “didn’t care if we were on a label or not” we secured a loan and then proceeded as planned with practices and recording. Our label was launched in January, and our new release *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* hit the streets in March.

Before the Indigo release, I spent some solo time on the road, in between various Indigo runs, my rock band and I, loaded the trailer, piled into the van and worked to cover as much of the U.S. as we could. This was my last stint of touring for my rock and punk music. I had a special band, and the touring was unforgettable. Greg Griffith went out with us on Bass, after producing my last two solo records, *Lung of Love* and *Didn't it Feel Kinder*. I got to play with my punk rock mainstays, Kaia Wilson on electric guitar and vocals, and Melissa York on drums (The Butchies, Team Dresch), the very thread that had run through my solo music up to this point. They were super fun to tour with and always stellar on stage. Julie Wolf came in as a special guest on keys and vocals, and brought a big helping of musicality and glue to the band.

It was a gift to have her around for so many shows. My current producer, Brian Speiser was working for the Indigo Girls as our Front of House sound person, somehow, I talked him into coming out and doing a bit of solo touring. Our friend, Becky Bodonyi, who was the current activism guru for the Indigos, went out with us as well, and helped us run the shows and sell merch. We toured from the Southeast out to the West coast, Northwest and Southwest. Later in the year, we covered more ground, starting in the South again and touring through the Northeast and heading a bit West, ending in Tulsa, Oklahoma opening for Brandi Carlile at Cain’s Ballroom. The most memorable night was in Wellfleet, Ma at a little club called The Beachcomber, with Toshi Reagon, who played a riveting show that threw the bar crowd into motion. We had a blast trying to navigate and entertain a crowd that was a blend of beach partiers and stalwart supporters. As tough as it could be at times, to wrestle in club land, the challenge was good for me, and I always felt proud and fulfilled. By the end of our shows, the musicians in my bands are undeniable, we get everyone on our side for a moment in time. That night, the unpredictable coastal summer weather was turning out to be the big story, and we had to get away quick as a powerful storm was bearing down on the area and flooding out roads. As we drove, the towns were closing up and we were running out of gas, but right as we were on our last drop, we found an open station, filled up the tank, and then drove through the night to get some of band members to the airport in time for morning flights. There were moments when I actually could not see if we were even on a road. When we got through it all, it felt like those gigs that can be hard to navigate but worth the energy!

While a few months out of 2009 was spent in my solo world, the dominant force in my year was a whirlwind of diverse Indigo Girls activity. In February, we found ourselves fleeing on the Caribbean with a boat load of songwriters on the Cayamo Cruise. We felt

floating on the Caribbean with a boat load of songwriters on the Cayamo Cruise. We felt lucky to have the opportunity to be in a space with so many of our mentors as well as the “up and comers” who keep us inspired and energetic. It was also a chance to have our favorite kind of shows, ones centered around collaborations and musical guests. We got to share the stage with a myriad of people including David Ryan Harris, Brandi Carlile and her band, Mindy Smith, Kathleen Edwards, Vienna Teng, Danielle Howle and Shawn Mullins.

On March 16th, we played a gig that I will never forget., I don’t just mean the show but everything surrounding it as well. We got the opportunity to fly to Singapore and play a music event called The Mosaic Festival. To adjust to the time change, we arrived a few days early and had some time to look around. I had never been to an Asian country, so everything about this trip was new to me. Singapore has so many cultures in one place. Just walking around, you can hear a smorgasbord of languages spoken and eat food accordingly. I made myself get out of bed and fought my jetlag to go out exploring. I found myself amongst so many people, but everyone figured out how to have their own space. Singapore is so well organized, with an obvious history of global trade and commerce. You could feel the results of the famous trade winds that would trap sea vessels for days, providing a perfect opportunity to buy and sell goods. Brian Speiser and I had a completely hedonistic and mostly fried Vegetarian Indian meal in Little India that was superbly complex in its spices but existed in a very humble space with loads of people coming and going. It’s still one of my favorite meals I have ever had!

There were complexities to being queer in Singapore and playing a partially government funded arts festival. The journalists that interviewed us ranged in age and interest. Some wanted to talk about music and others wanted to talk clandestinely about being queer and activism. Being an out queer person in Singapore was a risk at the time and we had to be careful with what we said, and respect the need for discretion as we talked to young activists that we met. Singapore was a whole new audience for us, so we had no idea what to expect, but both the concert and the small live radio show we did were a total success.

After we flew home, we barely had time to recover from jet lag before we hit the South by Southwest music festival in Austin for a couple of events. The early days of SXSW had been a fixture in my life, with my indie label, Daemon Records, and my own solo records. Mostly though, I went to have a good 4 days of live music and Austin magic. Austin is still one of my favorite towns, with so many important memories attached to it. This was too short of a trip for me. The showcase we played for Vanguard Records, (our label’s distributor) was fun and kind of a crazy madhouse as is expected during SXSW. We made an appearance at Perez Hilton’s party; it was flattering to be asked, but I felt mostly out of place there. For me, the best discovery I had was hearing the punk rock band Detroit 7 from Japan for the first time. They were so incredible, and I have been listening to the CD I bought from them ever since, I even bought the T-shirt! We ended in March in NYC doing a small live radio show for WFUV (R.I.P. Rita Houston) at The Living Room.

In April we hit the road to tour on and on for the rest of the year. We were promoting *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* so it a full-on tour with a lot of radio promotional stops and interviews. The first event we jumped into was the Dinah Shore Weekend in Palm Springs. Whoa, what a scene, we tried to play a gig, but honestly, we were not cut out for it, not enough party songs for that crowd. But it was a learning experience and I did get to meet Lady Gaga, before things went bananas for her! On the other end of the gig spectrum, we did get to play at concert celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Progressive Magazine. Ani DiFranco headlined and she was perfect and carried the mantle brilliantly. Her show was rambunctious, thought provoking, and uplifting. I can never say enough about the way Ani has influenced me through her activism and music. Creativity, innovation, and a deep love for the better angels in this world have fueled her ambitions, which means the journey has been as important as the destination. And that is something I aspire to each and every day. She is a mentor as well as a friend, and has ended up being a person I have learned some of my most valuable lessons from.

We spent the Spring and Summer months raising awareness about food insecurity in America. It was post 2008 economic downturn, and a lot of people were going hungry. So, with the help of Rock for A Remedy, we teamed up with the United Food Bank and collected food and money to donate to local food banks in each of our concert communities. We also worked with the national Humane Society of the United States collected pet food for local animal shelters and rescue organizations in each of the cities we visited.

We had the blessing of some inspiring openers / collaborators during this tour season. On our way through Texas, Lloyd Maines and Terri Hendrix opened our shows, which made for good company and joyful shows. Lloyd sat in on guitar and dobro throughout the set, and gave us a musical boost. His sense of humor and humility made his brilliant music making warm and inviting. Lucy Wainwright Roche was on board, and not only sang some great harmonies in our set, but kept the crew and us happy and entertained with her stories and songs. When your crew likes the opener, it's a big deal because they hear so much music all the time-it takes something special to sing through that noise. One of my newer favorite song writers Gregory Alan Isakov did a few shows, this was right before his career took off and carried him into a new stratosphere. His records are gorgeous and lush, with masterful storytelling and singing. And speaking of someone who is now in another stratosphere, the incomparable Brandi Carlile and her band did a run of shows with us. She was totally ascendant and there was a buzz in the air, which was super exciting. And the best part of course was all the songs we sang together. I can still picture the sweat pouring out as we huddled to the mic together on a steaming hot night at the Big Top Chautauqua in Bayfield, Wisconsin. Our buddy, Matt Nathanson also played a handful of shows with us, and now that I look back on that, I think, "wow!" I mean he's just gets better and better. I know what a treasure it was to have him on some shows.

We covered a ton of territory with concerts throughout the Spring and Summer, and it was like a rolling variety show with so much stimulus and so many musical moments that stay with me, but there is one that gob smacks every time I think of it. Justin

Vernon (Bon Iver) came out and played solo, as our special guest for three shows in California! I often hear in my memory, his songs echoing through the outdoor venues in the soft California summer nights. Emily and I are huge Bon Iver fans and were quite amazed that he was into doing these gigs. Justin is one place where Emily and I meet musically and are completely in sync, he is a visionary hero and a tie that binds us. I know that's weird to say, with all the things we have to bind us, but having musical heroes in common is something that can sustain and inspire a friendship. They were transcendent experiences and made me fall even more in love with his music and his person.

The last tour we did for the year was in the U.K. and Ireland. It had loads of radio stops and interviews, but also some coveted days off. It's rare to get a full day off on a U.K. tour because you're always tempted to work the whole time to make the most of the trip, but I find having a day to explore can do wonders for song writing and perspective, and so, only enhances the shows. I spent a day in Newcastle wondering around the old Roman and Anglo-Saxon civilization sites, thinking about Hadrian's Wall, and then I wrote parts of "Happy in the Sorrow Key". In Dublin, I went out for the night with John Reynolds to see Damien Dempsey play his old stomping ground, the suburb of Donaghmede. It was a rough and tumble night, after which, I came back to my hotel and penned the words for "Damo". We had a fantastic bunch to travel with. The lovely Carolyn Snell tour managed and always kept calm and made every day and night full of fun. Our bus driver, Jonnie Lewis became an inspiration for the chorus of a song, called "Olympia Inn", which I had started writing on a solo tour. Of course, one of the most special things about touring over in the U.K. is that we often have the pleasure of Carol Isaacs joining us on accordion and keys for our London show, and sometimes other towns. If Clare Kenny is in town, she comes out and plays bass, and John Reynolds typically comes by for tea or we all have a big dinner together. These London musicians are some of most important musical and spiritual touchstones, and have been points on our compass for many years now! It was the perfect end to our 2009 tour season.

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 7





South by Southwest All Access pass 2009

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 6



IG's at Tripod, Dublin, Ireland

10.28.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 6



© carolyn snell

Amy on the ferry to Ireland

10.28.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 6





© carolyn snell

Emily in stairwell at O2 Academy, Birmingham, England

10.27.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 9



© carolyn snell

Indigos at O2 Academy, Birmingham, England

10.27.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 8





© carolyn snell

Amy and Brian making plans at dinner. London, England

10.24.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 6



© carolyn snell

Carol, Emily, Amy at Shepherd's Bush Empire, London, England

10.25.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 6



© carolyn snell

Indigos at Shepherd's Bush Empire

10.24.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 5



© carolyn snell

Our Tour Manager, friend, and photographer-Carolyn Snell

Dublin, Ireland

10.29.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 7



© carolyn snell

Soundcheck at The Sage, Gateshead, U.K.

10.21.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 5



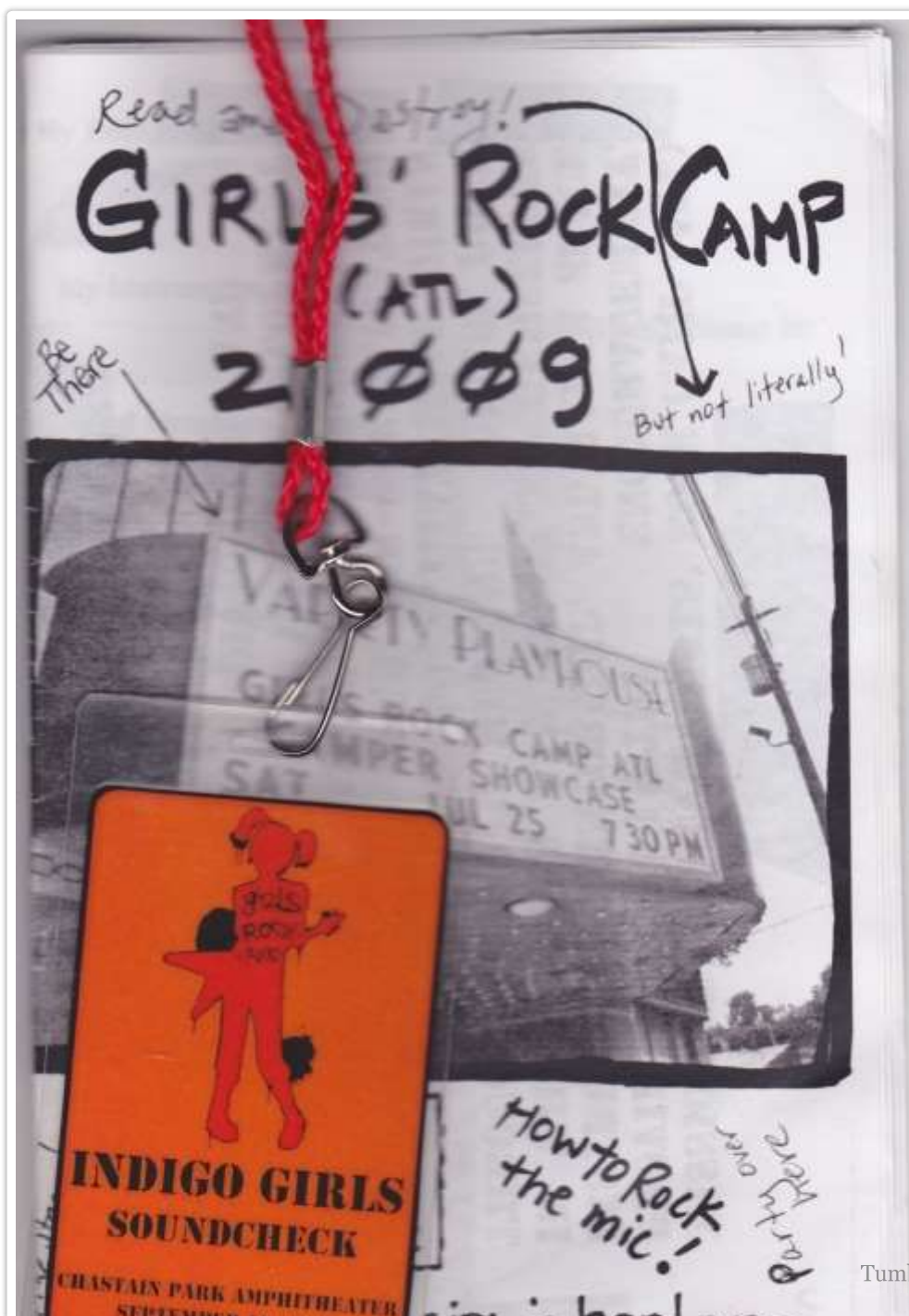


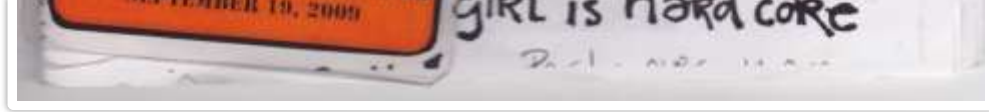
© carolyn snell

Indigos at O2 Academy, Bristol, England

10.18.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 5





Girls' Rock Camp (ATL) Soundcheck party at Indigo Girls show

Chastain Park, Atlanta, GA

9.19.09

📅 28 Apr 2021 ❤️ 5







IG's play for Honor the Earth

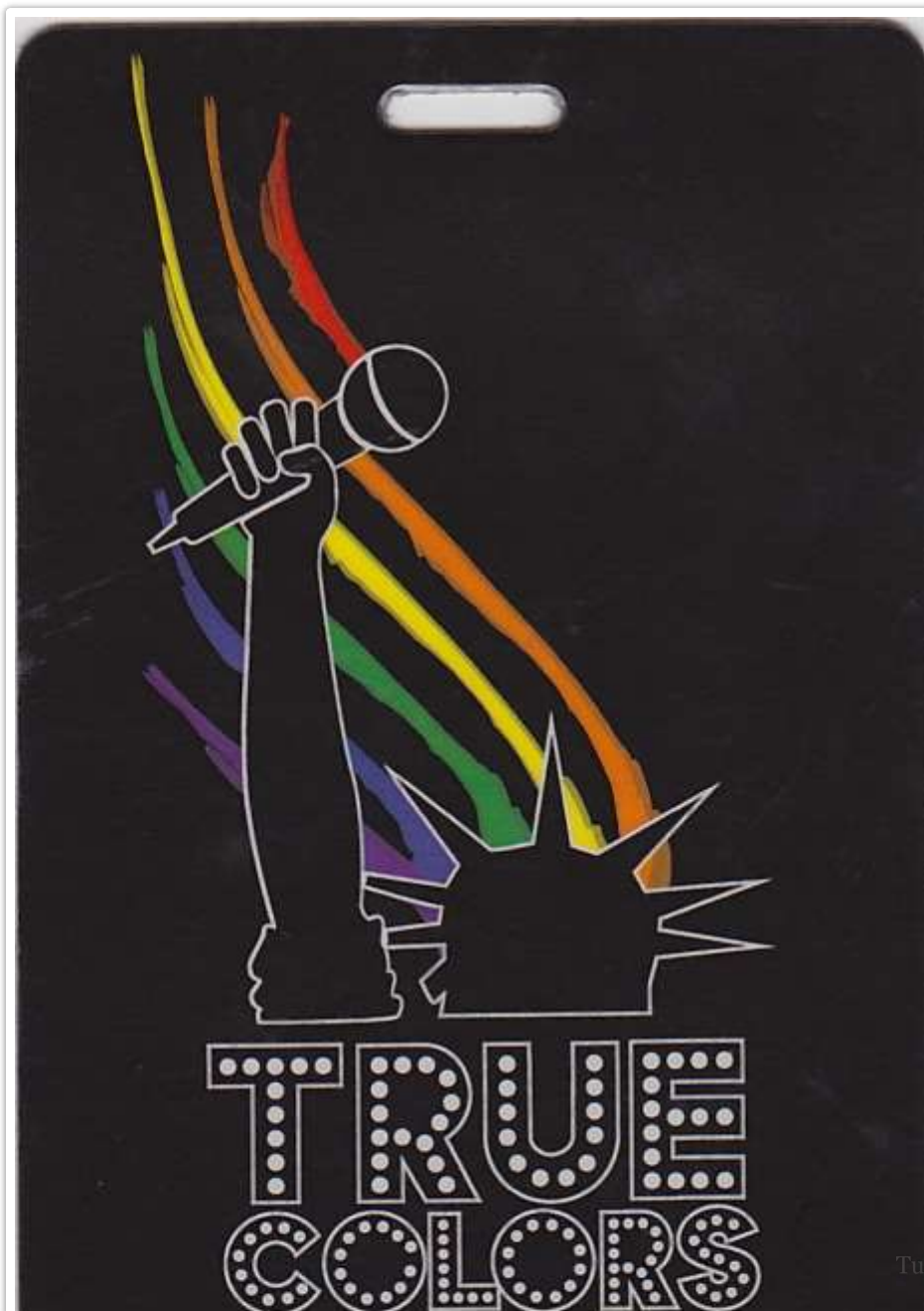
Mill Valley, CA 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 25





📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 8



ALL ACCESS

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 12



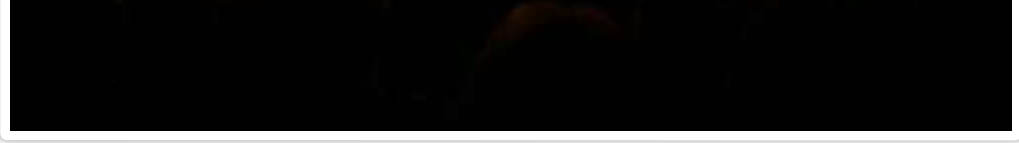
Melissa York. Greg Griffith. Kaia Wilson. Amy

Rehearsal to record *Didn't It Feel Kinder*

2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 16

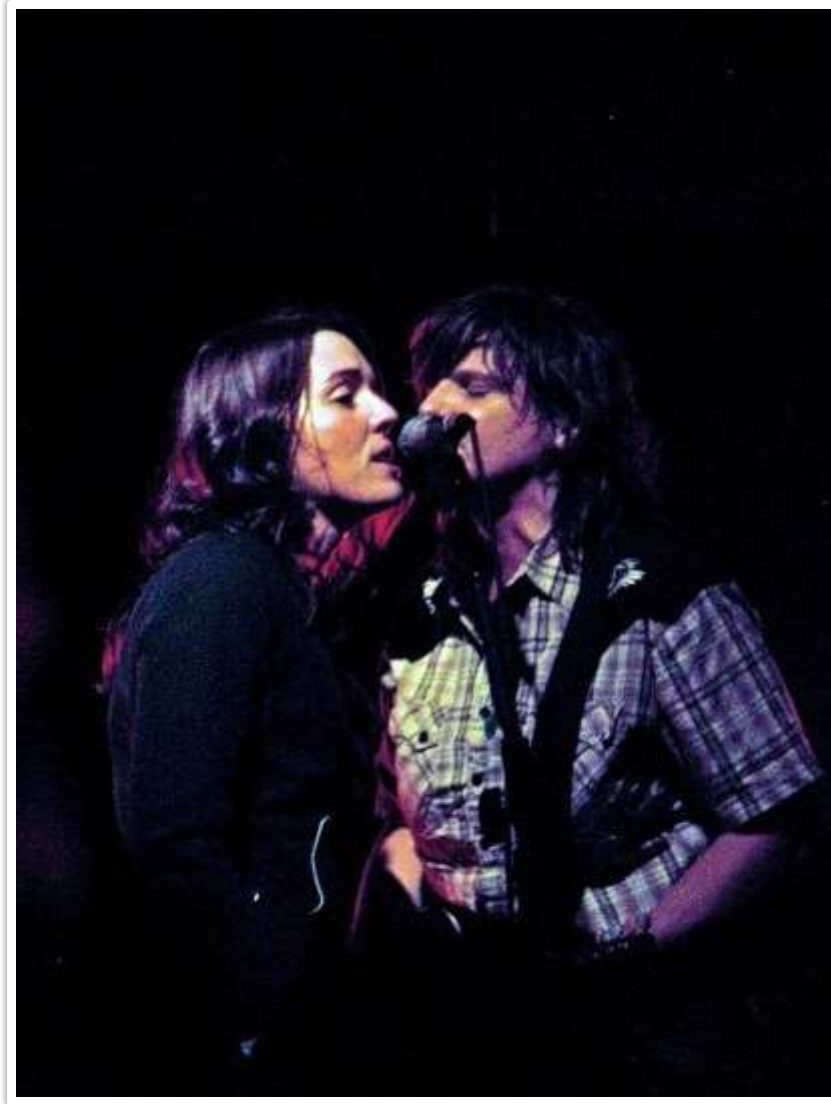




Kaia Wilson. Melissa York. Amy. Greg Griffith. Julie Wolf

DIFK Tour 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 15



Brandi Carlile.Amy

Johnny Rottentail 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 29





Melissa York. Kaia Wilson. Julie Wolf DIFK Tour 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 10

A.R. 2008

The drive from my home in North Georgia to Nashville is a good one, it winds through the mountains of northwest Georgia for a while, follows the national disgrace of the Trail of Tears briefly, and then hits the highway right before Chattanooga and Monteagle. There's a Starbucks in Manchester now, along with billboards for the Bonnaroo music festival which are interspersed among the historical markers for Civil War battlefield sites, but the Smoke House Lodge and Restaurant marking the top of the mountain is still there, and I've pulled over countless times to sort myself out in the old parking lots of fireworks stores that still manage to stand.

On the eve of Obama's last days in office, on MLK Day, I am driving this road, thinking about a lot of heavy stuff and also, more gleefully, remembering the solo tour I embarked upon in October 2008 that started with a breakdown outside of Dalton, GA and limped along until the converted shuttle bus we rented finally took its last guzzle and we abandoned it miles from our canceled gig in Ames, IA. Through the kindness of friends, we were met with a rental van in Des Moines, which I ended up buying with a loan and still drive to this day. We celebrated the election of our first African American President at a gig at The Mod Club in Toronto on November 4th, and then drove through the night to Burlington, VT, U.S.A. eating gas station junk food and laughing in euphoria. Heady days to be sure and quite a different feel from these days.

That year, 2008, was a year where hope and promise were palpable at every gig no matter the road troubles or occasional colds and flus. You could feel it on the streets and in the venues, all across America.

I recorded and released my 3rd solo studio record, *Didn't It Feel Kinder* , and Indigo

Girls recorded our first independent release since 1987, *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* . InTumblr theme by [Theme Anorak](#)

between our covered miles and miles, tossing one duo and trio (with Julie Wolf) showing

between, we covered miles and miles, touring as a duo and trio (with Julie Wolf); sharing the stage for months with Brandi Carlile and her band; joining up with Cyndi Lauper for her True Colors tour; and playing a very special gathering for Honor the Earth in Mill Valley, CA. I did two months of my own solo touring across the U.S., and celebrated my record release by playing a benefit performance with Brandi for Housing Works in NYC.

I recorded *Didn't It Feel Kinder* in the late winter at the beginning of 2008. This was my first solo venture with an “actual” producer. Greg Griffith was exacting and incredibly musical, just oozing with arrangement ideas, his brain in a constant flux with melodic and rhythmic structures. He was a challenge for me on every level but it was stuff I needed to tackle and learn about in order to grow, and I knew it, so even though I was tired of being so vulnerable, I stuck with it, because I knew it was all about my ego and turning back to my comfort zone would mean stagnation.

I reunited with The Butchies- Kaia Wilson (guitar and vocals) and Melissa York (drums), and I brought in a guest band, Arizona, who I had just fallen in love with after a Daemon Records intern, Nick Campbell had given me their demo-it was his band! Tomi Martin from Three Five Human played some electric guitar and brought in a whole new sound. Brandi was well entrenched in my life, and came to sing harmonies on half the record. I found a different direction with this record, trying to infuse some soul and groove into the old punk sound. We worked in Asheville at Echo Mountain Studio, still one of my favorite studios, and at Greg’s home in Greensboro.

North Carolina was starting to figure prominently in my musical life. When we hit the road as a band, Julie Wolf came on board to play keys and sing. She elevated the band to a brand new height. The IG sound engineer, Brian Speiser came out on the road with us, we were determined to have the sound end of things really top notch. This record had a lot of tricky arrangements and a good mix made all the difference. Brian is the sound person you want on your side in a club tour, I think he repaired and rewired half of the venue’s we played. We would pull up to the club in the van and before we had even finished unloading, we would notice Brian buried in the sound board or speakers, attending to something he’d already noticed needed fixing.

The IG’s turned to Mitchell Froom again to make *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* . Mitchell was the perfect producer for us at this time. We were venturing into life as independent artists again and his supportive, highly creative, devil-may-care attitude was just what we needed. We could be free with him, but still felt the guidance of his musical vision and skills, and his sharp intellect. And although Mitchell’s personality was kind of the opposite of Greg Griffith, I felt like they had so many similarities in the way they approached arrangement and structure, that I was lucky to experience both sides of the same coin. It gave me so much insight into song writing to work with both of them, the experiences really informed each other; I felt hugely inspired as a writer and gained a lot of confidence, having gone through both records.

The title of *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* was a little bit tongue in cheek for me, because it kind of took to task our cynicism and any illusion that we had control over our lives and career, yet here we were, starting a new career as independent artists and on the

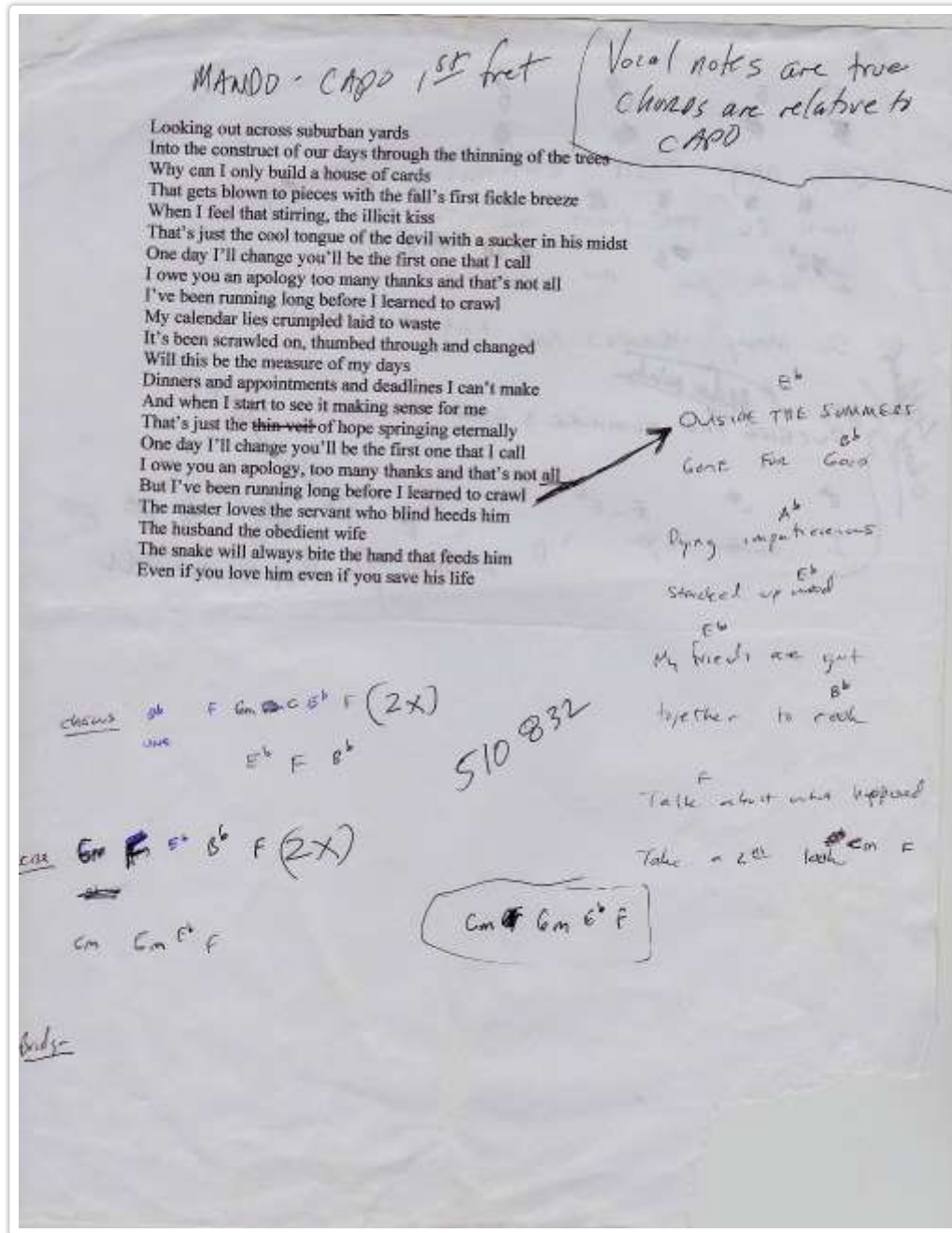
precipice of a monumental election that ushered in so many positive changes for us as citizens. Still, before we ventured into the record, before the year unfolded, we experienced a lot of hurdles and doubts that gave us pause; we just had to pick ourselves up and keep truckin. This record was freeing and fun to make. Matt Chamberlain, came back to play drums, with a twinkle in his eye. Clare Kenny made the trek over from the U.K., not a small feat in these days of expensive work visas and high security. Clare always played just the right thing, such a groove player. Mitchell agreed to be part of the band for this record. His command of keyboard sounds along with melody and chord structure gave the record a different edge. Alison Brown came on board with guitar and banjo, and we had special guest Missy Higgins on some harmonies. We were a tight unit. We recorded it fast, faster than we had ever worked, at one of our favorite haunts in Atlanta-the old Southern Tracks Studio. A lot of the tracking for the record was live, and there were a lot of memorable moments for me. We recorded the obscure song “True Romantic” in a few takes and the whole thing was one live unaltered take –very overwrought and kind of crazy. I love the way it turned out, but we never play the song, it was just one of those special moments for me. I wrote the song on a quiet dog walk in the woods and recorded it in a fury of sound and emotion. We re-recorded my song, “Driver Education” that had been on my solo record, *Prom* . Mitchell actually brought it to my attention that the IG’s could do a cool version of it; it was just a little 3-minute pop song and perfect for whimsical harmonies, fun for us. We did an acoustic version of the whole record. Stripped-down, we played every song as a duo (or trio with Alison) using only one or two microphones-completely live with no overdubs. I didn’t know if it would work, but it did and it made me feel more confident about playing the songs live. It was a good exercise because we did a lot of acoustic touring that year, really the majority of the year, so this set the touring year up well for us.

Our one big Honor the Earth benefit event for the year was a very special gathering in Mill Valley, CA where Winona spoke and we had a feast of local and Native foods, played music and talked about our goals for the upcoming years. At this point, we were focusing a lot on changing the energy economy to a more sustainable less destructive one. *“Ironically, while some Native Nations and their reservation communities have borne the brunt of destructive energy development that has reaped massive profits for some, they are the poorest in the country, with high unemployment rates and inadequate housing.”-Winona LaDuke* . As a Southerner, the tragic legacy of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the resulting Trail of Tears that left its mark on Georgia has always been with me, and compelled me to action and involvement in Native issues, to do my part in healing this incredible injustice. The South has an awful track record on racism with its history of genocide against Native peoples, its economy of slavery and dark history of lynch mobs and Jim Crow; there’s no way to turn a blind eye and not try to do something to remedy what is still a deep wound and ongoing sin in our region. By the end of my drive back home from Nashville I was listening to a PBS Newshour story about the new book, *Blood at the Root* by Patrick Phillips. This amazing and honest book deals with healing the long period of racial violence from antebellum times to the 1990’s in Forsyth County- a county that lies 20 miles from my front door. And while things have improved from the days of Georgia

Klan marches in the 1980's, hate crimes are on the rise again, and there are still so many stories that need to be told from these Southern counties, dark, unrelenting histories that have been buried and left unmarked. With every one that is uncovered, I am angered and saddened but also determined to stay and fight for the part of the South I love, a South that is generous, spiritual, humble and brave.

AR 11.16.17

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 18



“I’ll Change” Amy’s arrangement notes

Poseidon and the Bitter Bug 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 20

The Romantic (B^m) stop on 2?

drums in x3

D | D | G | F# | G | G | A | A |

~~D | D | F# | F# | G | G | G^m | G^m |~~

~~D | b | G | G | F# | F# | G | G^m |~~

~~D | D | F# | F# | G | G | G^m | G^m |~~

possible

D | D | G | F# | B^m | B^m | A | A |

drums

aug 2 beats?

D | D | F# | F# | G | G | G^m | G^m |

~~D | D | F# | F# | B^m | B^m | G | G |~~

~~D | D | F# | F# | G | G | G^m | G^m |~~

Vr

b | b | F# | F# | G | G | G^m | G^m |

point? → D

b | b | F# | F# | B^m | B^m | G^m | G^m |

drums of

in quest

D | D | F# | F# | G | G | G^m | G^m |

~~D | D | F# | F# | B^m | B^m | G | G |~~

lock into any chord
4 handed piano
organ no Leslie

David Boucher (engineer) and Mitchell Froom arrangement notes

Poseidon and the Bitter Bug 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 9

What are you like

x4

(D A/c# | E B/d#)

verse

D A/c# | E B/d# | D A/c# | E B/d# |

D A/c# | E B/d# | D A/c# | E B/d# |

Exs?

G | D | E sus | E | D | D | D |

(Sus to D^b) (B bass)

(A over top)

(A#) (A) (B) (C#)

every other one
E three beat
D# |

23

$F\# A^b \mid B \mid B^b \mid E \mid D^b \mid B \mid D^b$
 $\otimes E \mid D^b \mid B \mid D^b$

Bridge $D \mid A \mid D \mid A \mid B \mid B \mid E \mid E \mid D$
 $C\# \mid C\#$

$(: F\# A^b \mid B C\# :)$

KB up beat $F\# F\#$

(X) $A \mid A \mid A \mid B$
 $D \mid C\# \mid E$
 Clavinet - 123 4
 → electric F#diare
 dry start before Chorus - actuals

B Section -
 $F\# F\# D^b A^b$

David Boucher (engineer) and Mitchell Froom arrangement notes

Poseidon and the Bitter Bug 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 7

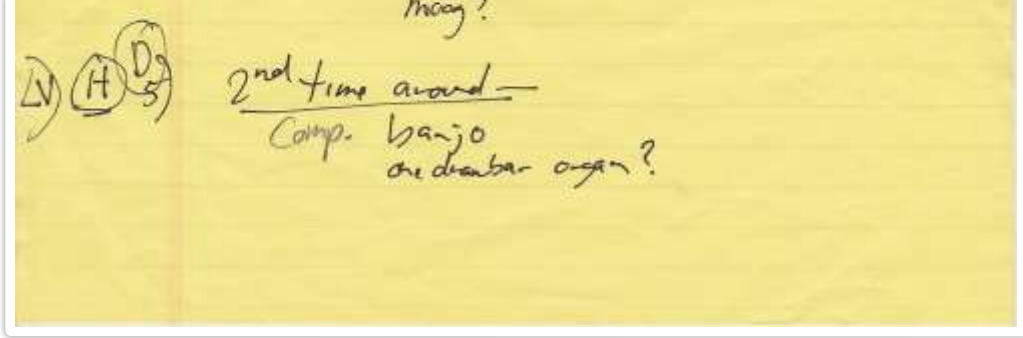
$1 2 \xrightarrow{slide} B_3$ $F\# \rightarrow E$
 $1 2 \xrightarrow{slide} B_3$ $F\# \rightarrow E$

(LV) (H) (D) 1 Fleet of Hope
 Amy - acc - high string on
 Emily high string - electric chords - low str?
 high - dark organ on ch $F\# C\#$ - low str?
 fifths + fourths
 Hammer chords on chords?

(LV) (H) (D) 2 Driver Education?
 Bridge KB - only after vocals done
 Moog? Hammond
 dist. vox organ like demo? record? wasser

(LV) (H) (D) 3 True Romantics all in room
 Emily - double acc. higher range
 tremolo guitar dist. - chords + arp.
 KB - high piano - upstg?
 organ - no Leslie
 Mellotron?

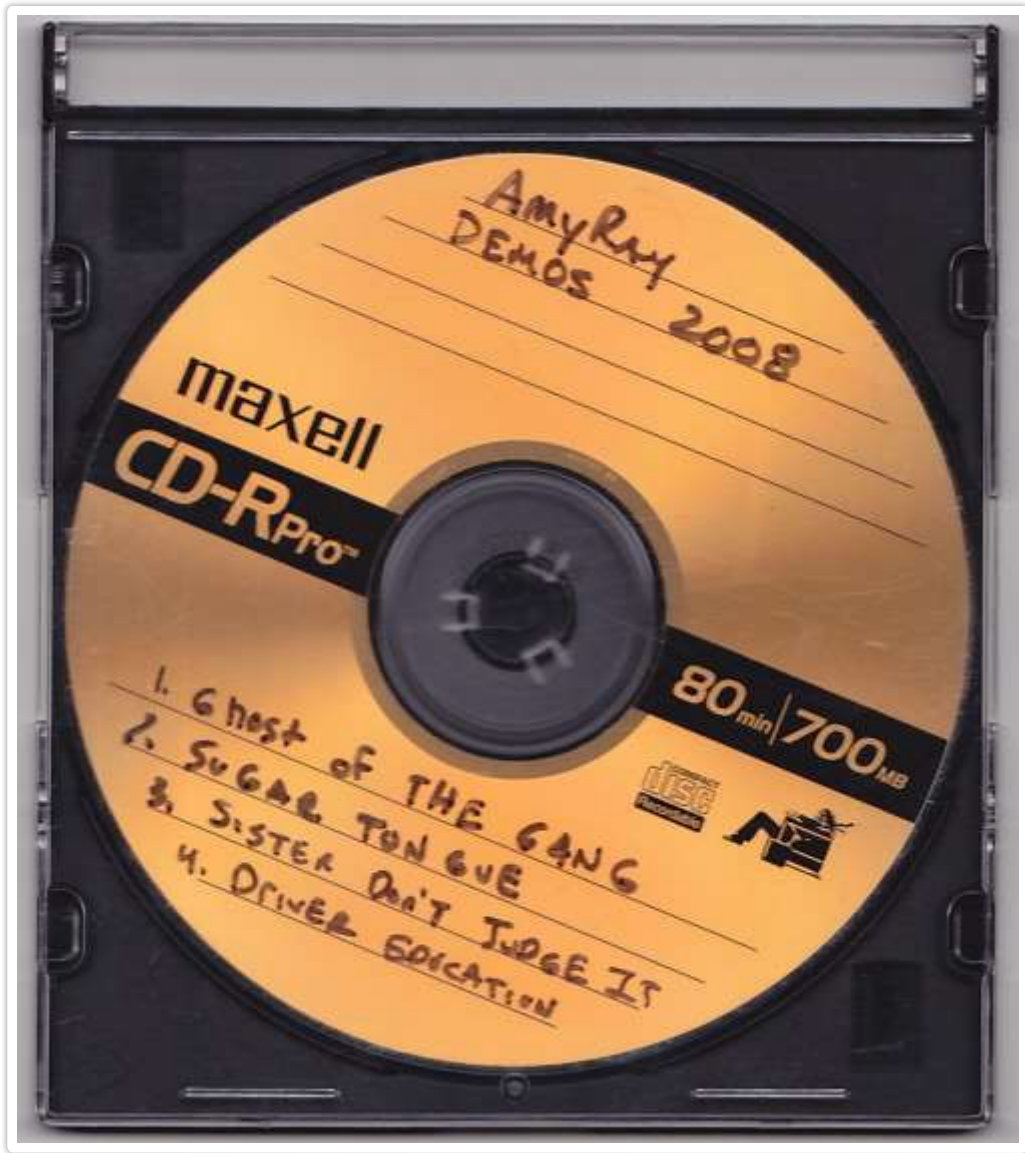
(H) (H) (D) 4 Digging for Your Dreams
 Amy's part check
 check wenti



David Boucher (engineer) and Mitchell Froom album notes

Poseidon and the Bitter Bug 2008

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 8



📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 13

Unexpected and numbing, I fell into a writer's block in 2008. It didn't matter how long I sat with a guitar or banjo or ukulele in my hands, I couldn't come up with any ideas that stuck. I've had writers block before, and writer's block is frightening, but eventually I would come out of it, feeling the sun burn through the fog. I thought I had come to the point in my life and career where I could have faith that the spring of inspiration would always begin to trickle again. You would think the political events of 2008 would be enough of a jolt into creative action, but I remained empty of the ability to write a song. In a nutshell, I feared I would never write again, which sounds dramatic, but that was the depth of my feeling. I decided to take a "writer's retreat". This was a first for me. My favorite peaceful place is at the beaches of the Florida Gulf, so Tristin and I packed up and went south.

I decided to read and just look around, look out at the sea and the sand and just write something down, anything! Thankfully, there was a man fishing, with two big fishing poles stuck in the sand, right down the beach in front of me. Like a tiny miracle, the simple act of observing and writing down opened up a metaphor: the looking out, the search for a catch, the one that got away, and so on. So, I started in with "The fisherman comes up, puts his two poles in the sand. He looks out at the sea just exactly like me, but I've got a book in my hand", and that paean to the sea became "Fleet of Hope" After that, the grip of writer's block loosened, and I wrote the bulk of my songs for *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* while I was at the beach. There was no mountain of songs. I was able to squeeze out five songs. The album ended up with 10 tracks, five of Amy's and those five of mine.

We wanted Mitchell Froom to produce this record, as we had loved working with him on *Despite our Differences*. Mitchell came up with the name of the album, a combination of lyrics from "Second Time Around" and "Fleet of Hope". I don't think he intended to actually name the album, as Mitchell has a wonderfully dry and acerbic sense of humor, and when he said "you should name it Poseidon and the Bitter Bug" he laughed, and Amy and I were like, "we LOVE that". So, that was it.

While we were planning the schedule for recording and getting the songs together, Hollywood Records dropped us. We weren't surprised, and we were happy to finally come full circle and be independent. We created our own label, IG Recordings, and carried on as if nothing had changed. Something *had* changed! We were fully autonomous again and hadn't been since 1987 when we released *Strange Fire*. It was liberating. Everything had changed so much in the music "business", and over the years we had developed all of the relationships we needed (publicist, radio, promoters, management, agent) to just carry on ourselves. Suddenly, we could pick our own release date, schedule our own artwork deadlines, spend the money absolutely prudently, and not have to think about pleasing anyone else but ourselves. The freedom and autonomy was incredible! I have to say that, knowing so many artist horror stories of record label abuse and lack of care, Indigo Girls emerged unscathed by many years of record label experience, and I am especially grateful to our Epic records people, and our first A and R guy, Roger "Snake" Klein. He helped shape our early days at Epic records.

Amy and I decided to record *Poseidon and the Bitter Bug* in two versions, one full band and one all acoustic. On the acoustic version, we added Amy's song "Salty South" as a bonus. We called in our favorite banjo player, Alison Brown, who played the banjola on "I'll Change". It is one of my favorite leads on any IG song ever. I was pleased that every full band version of a song could be translated into its original version. I often think about whether listeners like us acoustic or with a band, and I was glad we could release an album that offered both experiences. Mitchell also introduced us to Missy Higgins during recording; he had produced a recent album of hers. She ended up coming to the studio and singing vocals on "Digging for you Dream" and "True Romantic". Her voice is spooky and lovely, and she's a great gal. We ended up doing some shows with her stateside, where she blew audiences away.

Once the album was complete, we looked to 2009 for a release date. There were many memorable shows in 2008. We played Pridefest in Milwaukee to a torrential downpour which I will never forget! You cannot dampen the spirits of the queers! In fact, the torrent only seemed to heighten the joy and singing of those Pridefest revelers. I always feel a little guilty, as Amy and I play protected from the elements and the people in the audience soak to the bone!

Cyndi Lauper launched the True Colors Tour in 2007 to give back to the LGBT communities and gay fans who had given so much to her. We played three shows on the tour in 2008, with B-52s, Rosie O'Donnell, Kate Clinton, Regina Spektor and others. Part of the original purpose of the tour was to help enable passage of the Matthew Shepard Act which expanded the 1969 federal Hate Crimes Act to include crimes motivated by a person's gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. Obama signed the bill into law in 2009. This kind of activism through music is the heart and soul of what Amy and I love best. It was particularly important then, and always, to have straight allies to help us in the queer rights movement. Cyndi epitomized that kind of commitment, and the shows were full of joy and vibe.

I was invited by Sugarland (Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush) to join their Common Thread tour, which was an acoustic show I played solo with Sugarland and Amos Lee. We played 2 shows in Colorado and a show in Santa Fe, NM, singing harmonies on each other's songs and donating the proceeds to a group of our choice. I chose Honor the Earth. This was my first real exposure to Amos Lee, and I've been a lifelong fan ever since. Because I wasn't used to performing solo, I was quite nervous, but the Sugarland hospitality was so welcoming and the music so good, I lost myself in the experience. I've known Jennifer and Kristian so long, and they are as dedicated to social change and activism through music as any other artist I know, including ourselves. So, the camaraderie was deep.

Obviously, American eyes were on the 2008 presidential election. I was a fierce Hillary Clinton supporter, but as the campaign wore on I began to feel that wonderful comfort of being happy with either Obama or Clinton winning the nomination and, ultimately, the election. I have a tremendous amount of respect for John McCain, but Palin derailed the train for him, and the outcome of the election appeared sealed. I

remember the keynote address a young Senator Obama gave at the 2004 DNC, a speech which most likely sealed his destiny to become president. Every once in a while, a brilliant orator and person of deep heart and conscience arrives on the political scene. I was keenly aware that, in my lifetime, I was witnessing a powerful political shift spearheaded by a uniquely special man. The fact that America was going to elect an African American was a turning point in my life. Change is so slow! Then this election happened, and it renewed my faith that hope and work for change and progress wasn't just a futile pursuit or wishful thinking. The pendulum swings.

I think a lot about the personal and the “political” and how the two are intertwined, and how, for me, music helps me navigate and understand the world. 2008 began as a very difficult personal time for me, having experience a painful relationship breakup earlier and the beginning of a new one. Songs like “Fleet of Hope” are world weary with a speck of hope.

The culmination of a year of crushing writer's block and ultimate liberation from it; becoming an independent band again; the benefit concerts that helped me grow and continue to be part of a movement; the American election that changed the country and gave so many some hope. These were all a part of each other. In the midst of it all, I never know how I will absorb and reflect on it. Undoubtedly, the gestalt ends up in the songs.

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 13



Clare Kenny.Emily at Southern Tracks, Atlanta. 2008



Mitchell Froom. Clare Kenny. Amy at Southern Tracks. Atlanta 2008

Poseidon and the Bitter Bug

📅 23 Jan 2017 ❤️ 6



Josh. Emily. Amy. Brandi

Freeport, ME 2007



It's a Bowling party 2007

Denise (Web, CD art and T-shirt design).Emily. Brandi. Tim Hanseroth. Brian. Rick Stott (Bus driver)



Second Place to a ringer...

Bowling with Brandi and IG's

2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 6



Bowling 2007

Brandi. Brian. Sulli. Josh

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 3





Brandi and the Twins by Amy

2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 8



Amy at Australia Zoo, Brisbane

November 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 14



Dave Bellis (Monitors).Emily.Becky Bodonyi (activism).Brian Speiser (FOH)

Perth

November 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 4



Amy and the Pumpkins

Adelaide, Australia

October 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 11



Radio Sydney, Australia

November 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 9



The Big Feast, London, England

February 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 6



Carol Isaacs (Keys, Vocals, Accordion)

The Big Feast, London, England

February 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 6

Amy and I were called to New Orleans to participate in a gathering of musicians from around the U.S. whose purpose was to witness the still devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina and work together to bring back the musical and cultural Diaspora that happened in the wake of the brutal storm. We worked with Air Traffic Control and Future of Music Coalition (2 groups who integrated musicians and artists with activism) in direct support of Sweet Home New Orleans, a local New Orleans non-profit that helps storm-displaced musicians return home and provides them access to much needed resources. The experience was one of the most impactful I have known through all our years.

Sitting around a table together, most of us hadn't known or met each other before, but we were joined by our common purpose of helping to bring musicians back to New Orleans and brainstorming on how we could make best use of our various platforms to increase the effectiveness of our activism, individually and collectively.

The gathered artists were Jim James of My Morning Jacket, Matt Nathanson, Damien Kulash, Pamela Z and me and Amy, among others.

Like almost anything else, there is much to learn about how to orchestrate and employ works of activism, no matter what the social justice issue or benefit. This particular gathering was helpful in sharing ideas and inspiring us to know we had found a new community of musicians to support grass roots activism. Believe it or not, it hasn't always been easy to find other artists to join in on various issues.

We traveled by bus to the lower 9th ward to see some of the utter destruction of once tightly knit communities in New Orleans. I was particularly haunted by the water marks on the houses and buildings, and by the spray painted messages left there to identify if any people had died in the houses, or what was found or not found when rescue workers came through the neighborhoods. Even 2 years after the storm, there were houses upended with all of the belongings tossed together and abandoned. There were grass and weeds growing over small lots where houses once stood, coupled with the overwhelming feeling that this was where people had lived and worked and loved and lost and gathered stories, and then a diabolical storm came and blew them away. But it wasn't just the storm; as much as we learned on the trip, the levees were incapable of holding back a fierce hurricane, and people in power knew this before the storm ever hit. In desperation to leave any way they could, some people were turned back by armed authorities and even shot and killed.

I can remember watching the first home game of the New Orleans Saints televised, after Katrina, and how the networks were making a huge deal over the symbolic importance of the game, and I just thought, I doubt the people who were crammed into the terrifying holding pen of the storm-battered superdome felt the same enthusiasm for a football game. Symbolism has its limits when people have lost everything.

We were there to learn about what happens to communities of people, particularly people without economic means, who are forced into exile. Specifically, we wanted to

join in the efforts to help bring back the New Orleans musicians who had been forced out of the state with no real way of returning home. The reality was that the entire human musical chain that gave us the deep music of the region would be broken and that a generation of artists would be wiped away and, henceforth, generations to come. As a musician and a humanist, it was impossible not to feel the urgency and magnitude of the situation. And, truly, I thought about what it would feel like to be swept away from my home and my community, and I couldn't fully wrap my mind around it.

Thankfully, Sweet Home New Orleans was locally based and grass roots, and they knew the needs of the displaced musicians more than any FEMA agent ever could. Again, I felt grateful to have come into contact with a group so vital to a city I loved so deeply (I had spent my first 2 years of college in New Orleans at Tulane) and to be able to lend a hand in any small way possible. And I was reminded how music brings hope.

The benefit show at Tipitina's was awesome. The highlight of the event for me was hearing local greats, Bonerama, and Al "Carnival Time" Johnson blow us away and remind us of the rich and uniquely powerful music of New Orleans.

I have vivid memories of that trip; the stories of loss and hope I heard, the people I met, the lessons we learned, the images of destruction, and the sound of music weaving the whole thing together.

2007 was full of travel. We toured the UK in the bleak winter months, which was something I actually loved; cold and wet Britain on the outside, the warmth of fans and our Brit contingent of musicians whom we loved like family. We had a rousing night of food and conversation at John Reynolds's flat in London. I think Clare Kenny even made sushi that night, and we sat along a long table and relished each other's company. I love touring in other countries, and even England can feel exotic with its moody weather, jacket potatoes, prawn rose marie sandwiches, black cabs and double decker buses. Ever the hedonist, I was pleased to discover that proper coffee shops were starting to open up. Tea is the national drink, but coffee is what I wake up for!

I know that I have gushed in past blogs about how I love our English musician friends across the pond. Getting to play with Carol Isaacs and Clare Kenny and, sometimes John Reynolds, is indescribably stirring for me. Of course, they are supremely gifted musicians, but as much as that, they are like flames that burn in my heart and never go out; such integrity and delight. When I listen to our records they have played on, their friendship is captured and alive in the songs, and that's a very powerful thing.

Speaking of travels, we were lucky enough to get to Australia again and tour the country fairly comprehensively. I got to hold a koala and Amy got to pet a kangaroo, which is kind of touristy, maybe in the eyes of Aussies? But to me, it was AWESOME. Koalas really grab on to you like little monkeys and, as you might imagine, appear completely dozed. They are snuggly. Their claws are sharp. When you tour Australia you have to fly between shows because the distances between cities are so wide. It's completely different from touring in the U.S. where the bus goes place to place. SO, one

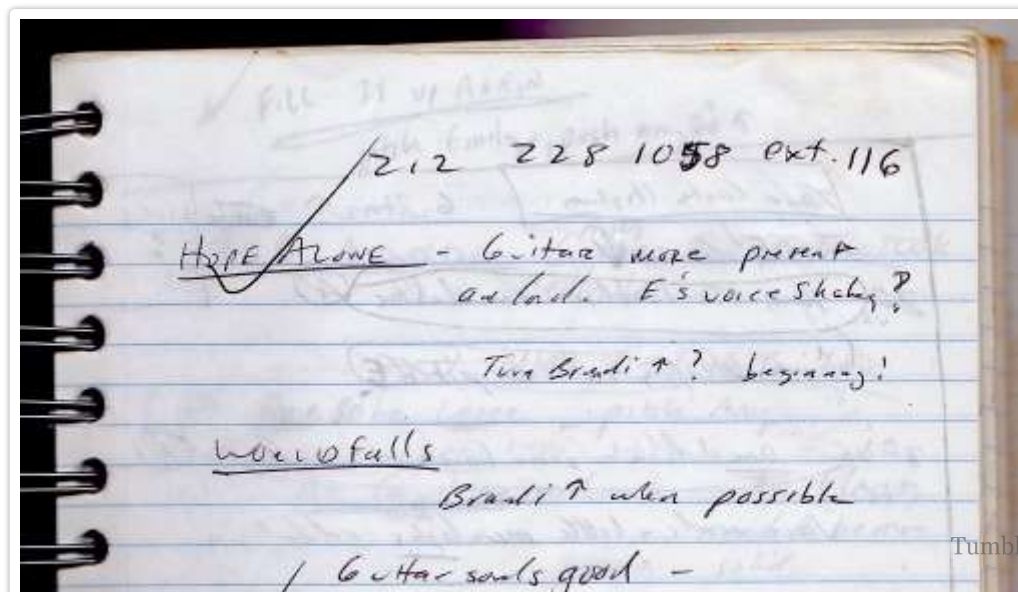
day I was holding a koala at a nature preserve, or I was walking by Sydney Harbor, looking across at the Opera House, and soon after gazing out at the Indian Ocean in Perth. Again, I took deep breaths of gratitude for the opportunity to travel so far and come across so many wonderful people, get to know Qantas airlines J.

I used to try to keep journals of my travels, and I have one from Australian travels, but I always look back on them and cringe at the feeble attempts and overwrought descriptions of my experiences. I will say that there is always something inspiring about leaving the U.S. and getting to experience different cultures, even English speaking ones. I like to be reminded of the vast diversity of peoples and places. And to turn on a television and watch a broadcast that tunes in to something else besides American interests.

Back in the States, we took another short Honor the Earth tour in the Southwest, where we worked in support of the Just Transition Coalition, a group comprised of Hopi and Navajo tribal members and other allies to get pollution credit profits from the closed Mohave Generating Station and use them to support sustainable energy production through solar and wind projects. I found this an extremely inspiring model, because the Hopi and Navajo tribes had passed measures to stop using the Black Mesa aquifer to feed dirty energy and water wasting production from the station and actually convert the loss of that industry into the creation of new, clean, and sustainable energy. This is the crux of energy justice work: that a community should not have to sacrifice the environment for an economy, and that a healthy local economy can be sustained through “green” energy production. These battles over precious resources, like water, continue, and fairly new and terribly dangerous energy production methods, like fracking, are at the forefront of energy justice battles that tribes and others continue to fight.

It was a heavy year and a meaningful year. On a personal note, I met and began a life path with my future wife. But in 2007, the prospect of same sex marriage in the U.S. was a distant dream. That story is yet to come in this blogworld.

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 17



WUDSANG

Can the guitar take up more room.
15 My guitar had enough or doesn't
have a space.
"Steam" - oops

Three Country - ~~Find another~~
1st line Guitars too ~~Room~~
2nd line ~~Europe~~ ~~write on pitch.~~ →

Let My Head Run - guitars need to be more
in your face -
E. Voice too loud
~~More at A/A?~~

Three Lines Program

Two E down ↓

2nd vs 1st "from the road in same direction" (A)

"cambulating in" to pitch (E)

3rd vs. "one down a game launch" - → (E) or (A)

voice needs a little ^{and} more highs added in

base line needs pitching

"head on my heart"
"hard"

TYPE ABOVE

Any Vocal ↑ a bit

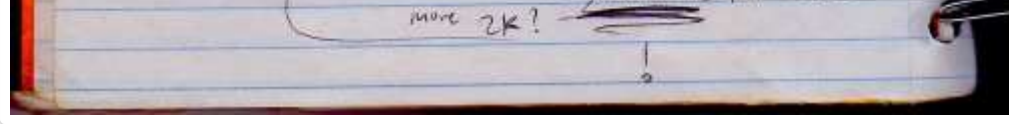
12 string to loud under
type more to fall right
before bridge

KID FISH

Any Voc. ↑ in 1st vs.
E ↓ in 2nd chorus

→ Led guitar in 3rd vs too loud

Trina (↑) in quiet 12 line
increase in volume



Notes for recording of the DVD *Live at The Roxy*

July 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 6



Mel and Greg at Amy's studio

Didn't It Feel Kinder sessions 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 4



Mel.Kaia.Greg at Bonus Room, Greensboro, NC

Didn't It Feel Kinder sessions 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 2



Earl Tulley. Amy. Eloise Brown. Lori Goodman. Emily

Honor the Earth benefit at Shiprock, NM

May 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 7

AR.2007

2007 was a stand out year for us on every level. I find myself saying this a lot about this phase of our career, but when it's all laid out in front of me, it feels like we reached a critical mass and a convergence of activist and musical relationships that threw us into all sorts of amazing situations. *Despite Our Differences* had been out since September of 2006 and we had already covered a lot of ground with a full band, so we hit the road as a duo for most of 2007. But even as a duo, we toured with so many great bands that we were not alone on stage very often at all! Our old friends from Atlanta, the incomparable Three5Human and our new musical ally, Brandi Carlile traded out as opening bands and also played with us, so we had the best of both worlds, being able to play stripped down arrangements as well as full on harmony and rock versions of our songs. One night in

Atlanta we even got to have Brandi AND Three5Human both join us for a live DVD recording of a show at The Roxy. It was an unforgettable night for me, with the powerhouse vocals of Trina and Brandi, Tomi Martin on electric guitar, and the rest of Three5 helping us bring the rock to songs like “Trouble” and “Tether,” plus having third part harmonies on obscure songs like “Hope Alone” and “World Falls.”

Touring with Brandi and the Hanseroth twins brought new life to us. We did a lot of shows together and got to the point where we knew a dozen or so songs, and we could throw just about any new song their way and they could learn it. Tim and Phil Hanseroth brought a very special musicality to the mix with the ability to put harmonies on anything as well as play bass and guitar. The cellist for Brandi’s band, Josh Neumann was really generous with his time as well, and sat in on a bunch of songs. His rich tone and musical accuracy created a new feel and extra dimension on the songs he played on. Brandi knew better than anyone how to weave her voice in and out of our existing harmonies. We had a plethora of songs on our records that we had recorded extra vocal parts for, and Brandi could nail these parts. Brandi’s voice was riveting and she was ascending in her career and the energy of that was palpable at the shows. It can’t be overstated how much she brought to our career at a time when I think musically we needed a challenge and something to shake us up and inspire us.

We got to play the Austin City Limits Music Festival, a total coup for us. This was the kind of festival that we were usually passed over for, so I felt very lucky to be on the bill. It was in its first years of existence and the vibe was totally idealistic and not cynical at all. Everyone who came felt lucky and was happy to be there. The city of Austin is such a fantastic place, and holds a lot of significance for us as activists and musicians, so this made it extra special. We were only there for one night but I did get to hear two amazing bands, Muse and Arcade Fire. The crowds were huge and the bigger bands had full-on production, which made you feel like the only thing happening in the world was the rock show that surrounded you. I was completely transported and felt like the kid in Big Star’s song, “Thirteen.” It was a great relief from the ills of the world, but of course you can’t live in that moment forever. There were wars going on in every corner of the world, the VA Tech shooting had happened, Native communities were still fighting for their environmental and culture justice, queers were in the midst of major battles with an ever fomenting right-wing, and New Orleans was still trying to recover from the disaster of Hurricane Katrina.

We did a handful of Honor the Earth shows that were really effective and sort of helped us work out a new model for Honor shows. We realized that we didn’t have the numbers at shows that we had once had, so we needed to figure out a way to fund raise, create press events and raise awareness without doing long expensive tours. So, we tried the approach of doing a couple of focused shows in one region that would highlight a specific issue, pouring all our energy into press and awareness for that issue. In Shiprock, NM we supported Navajo community members and environmentalists in their struggle against a polluting coal-fired powered plant at Desert Rock. In Flagstaff, we

supported the Just Transition Coalition who was working towards a shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy and promoting economic and job growth through this

facts to renewable energy and promoting economic and job growth through this transition. It made a lot of sense to support good energy projects that could replace bad ones, plus it helped with one of the missions of Honor the Earth- to build bridges between Native and non-Native communities. We got to support this mission when we teamed up with The Montana Human Rights Network to play their annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration at the University Theater in Missoula. The focus of the event was on Native peoples in the state and emphasized the message that cultural and environmental preservation is a human right. It was a perfect fit for us and we used the trip as an opportunity to have an intimate reception to raise money and get more folks engaged in Honor the Earth.

In Uncasville, Connecticut, the Mohegan Tribe hosted us for five splendid nights at the cabaret theater at their Mohegan Sun Casino; it was one of the best gigs we have ever played, with incredible hospitality and a super intimate setting that allowed us to thoroughly explore our catalogue of songs. I think this was one of our first years of starting to play Native casinos, something we had shied away from because playing the casinos had always felt too much like “retiring to Vegas.” But the Indian casinos really do have a different vibe and most of them have an attention to environmental sustainability that is impressive, plus a firm belief in using the profits to nurture their communities.

Still supporting *Despite Our Differences* , the year was bracketed by stints in the U.K. and Ireland in February, and an Australian tour in November. This was definitely the most extensive Australian tour we had done, with plenty of TV and radio to go around. We made the best of our free time over there too, we did a lot of sightseeing and probably the most group outings we had done in a while-the Australia Zoo in Brisbane, the beaches and the Fremantle Prison in Perth, the incredible Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, and a show at the Spiegel tent in Melbourne! We had a tight knit crew and everything just seemed to line up for us to be positive and engaged.

The beginning of the year over in the U.K. was also really special. We had the honor of being interviewed on the Janice Long show on BBC 2. There is something about going to the BBC that feels very magical, like you’ve hit a certain mark in your career. We visited Abbey Road to perform for the UPop@Abbey Road Sessions. We geeked out about being at Abbey Road and did what every tourist does, taking a bunch of pictures of ourselves lined up crossing the road just like the Beatles. We had a get together with our Irish and Brit friends hosted by John Reynolds at his London home and recording studio, where we had once worked on *Come On Now Social* . We had a big feast and a ton of fun.

In the solo realm, I released a very lo-fi live record called *Amy Ray and the Volunteers-Live from Knoxville*. We had recorded a show back in 2005 at Blue Cats in Knoxville, TN with 4 tracks to a computer. We would have had more tracks, but the equipment failed us at the last minute. For this reason, it’s really “live”-no fixes and barely any separation. I held onto the tracks and mixed it when I had a break. The guy that I mixed the record with, Josh Monroy was working with Ludacris at the time and so he did us a favor, and let us mix at his studio, Ludaplex, A-T-L Yeah! I got started on another studio record,

Didn't It Feel Kinder. This time I went back to work with Kaia Wilson and Melissa York and brought in a new producer, Greg Griffith for the project. Greg and Mel had grown up on the NYC punk scene and had played in a couple bands together, she suggested that we give him a shot. It was a fortuitous suggestion because Greg was not only a great bass and guitar player, but also an interesting and evolved producer; he upped my game a lot and taught me so much about production and songwriting. We worked at a bunch of places on the record-my house, Tree Studio in Atlanta, Echo Mountain in Asheville, NC and in Greensboro, NC at Greg's studio. It was a long process that carried over into the next year, but worth the time with very special guests like the band Arizona, guitarist Tomi Martin from Three5Human, and Brandi Carlile singing on a bunch of tracks.

Over all the year felt pretty social and we both surrounded ourselves with community and heard a lot of good music. Besides ACL Music Festival, Indigo Girls also went to Las Vegas and did a Cyndi Lauper True Colors' show. The line-up was pretty incredible with The Dresden Dolls, Margaret Cho, The Gossip, Erasure, and Debbie Harry. At the Santa Fe "Power to the Peaceful Festival" I got to hear Richie Havens play "Freedom." The Ellen DeGeneres Show welcomed us to the show to play "Little Perennials," which turned out to be very special with a killer band put together by our producer Mitchell Froom, who also joined in on keys. We celebrated the legacy of environmentalist, Rachel Carson with an event in Pittsburgh. And we marched for peace with a colorful hodge-podge of really cool activist and political leaders in Kennebunkport, ME near the Bush Family's summer estate.

The most powerful experience of the year was our post-Katrina trip to New Orleans. We attended an activist/artist retreat organized by Air Traffic Control and The Future of Music Coalition. A diverse group of artist gathered for two days in New Orleans to learn about the hurricane, the faulty levees and the government's failed response, the efforts to rebuild and what we can do to help. The weekend culminated with a benefit concert for Sweet Home New Orleans, a coalition of non-profit organizations whose mission was to help find affordable housing and provide rental assistance for musicians, Mardi Gras performers and other traditional New Orleans performers. The money specifically went to help musicians displaced by hurricane Katrina and the flood from the faulty levees. We were surrounded by an incredible array of artists that ran the gamut, including, Ok Go's Damian Kulash, My Morning Jacket's Jim James, Mike Relm, Pamela Z, Death Cab For Cutie's Nick Harmer, and Matt Nathanson. After two days of touring around New Orleans and attending workshops, we got together and played a benefit show at Tipitina's where we were also joined by Bonerama (an amazing Trombone Band), and the legendary Al "Carnival Time" Johnson.

The days leading up to the show, were intense and you could feel the group of artists shedding their egos and opening up to the overwhelming pain of seeing the destruction wrought by this disaster even these years later. There was a willingness to just be human and work together to put on a great show and try to offer something up to this compelling community of survivors, workers, artists, activist and community builders. I kept a running diary of my feelings and thoughts as we listened to folks speak about faulty levees and broken pumps, lost lives, homes, neighborhoods and cultures. When I

read through it now, I am transported to how gut-wrenching it felt to tour the worst hit parts of New Orleans and even almost two years after the flood to still see and feel the devastation in such a palpable way. I will forever see those big spray painted circular X's on the sides of homes- messages for the weary workers-how many people are in the attic, how many dead, any pets found, and other codes that must be imprinted into the permanent language centers of the folks in New Orleans.

These traditions of place and family-they are the fabric of the disenfranchised, the voices that need to be heard. The struggles of New Orleans are not so different from the struggles of communities of across this nation. The Navajos fighting coal mining, the Goshutes fighting nuclear waste, the African-American neighborhoods fighting toxic waste and bad water, the Mexican farm workers displacing themselves against every instinct to make a living and survive. Families spread out and split up, or sacrificing health and culture, offering themselves up to the Diaspora of America just to survive. These issues spur us on to keep making music and singing truth to power. I find that even in the face of all the pain, music is healing, celebratory, and it's fun, something we need more of these days.

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 13





📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 11



Musicians Bringing Music Home retreat

Emily at Tipitina's

May 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 6





Musicians Bringing Music Home retreat

New Orleans.May 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 4



Emily

New Orleans.May 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 4





New Orleans 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 3



New Orleans. May 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 3

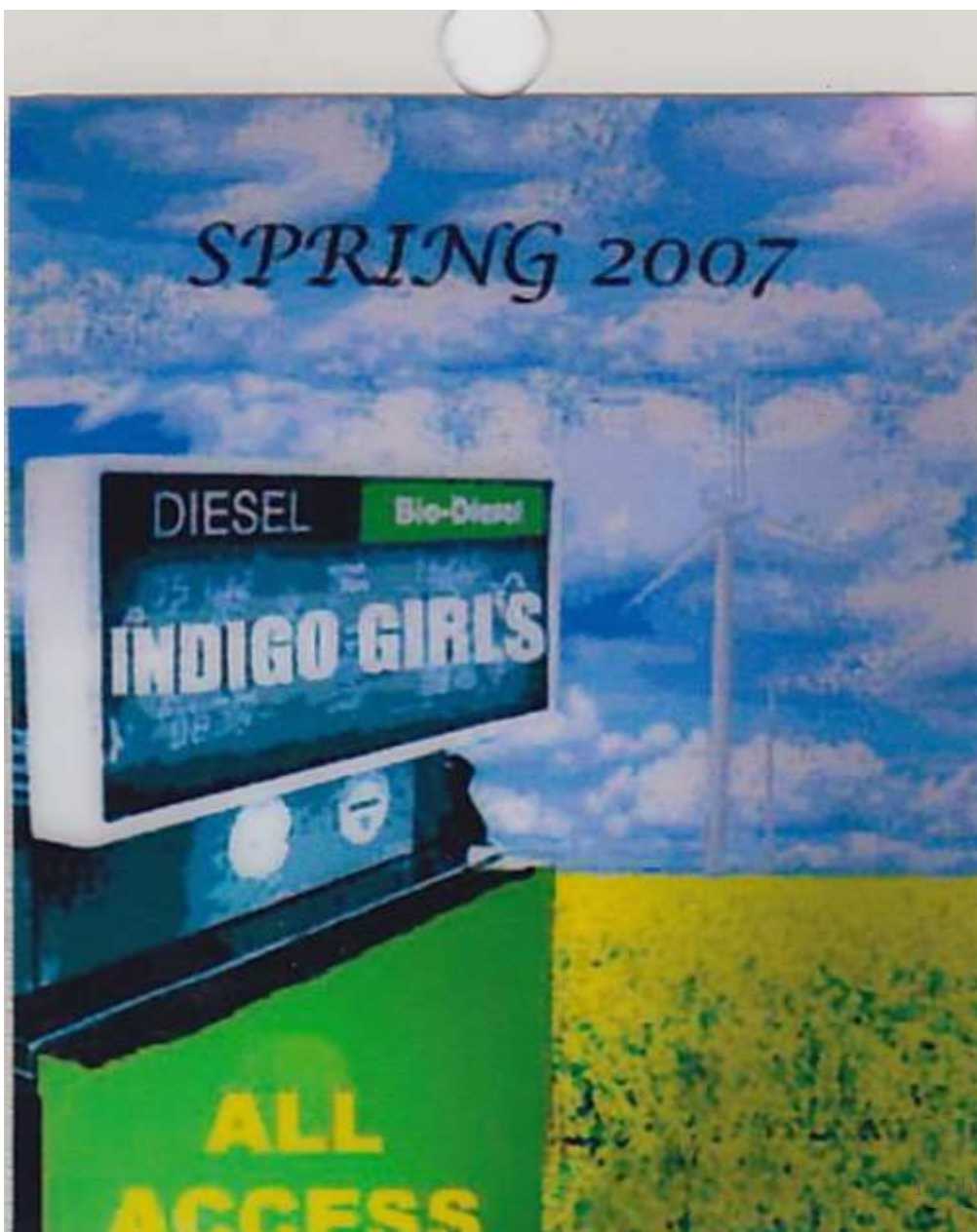




New Orleans.May 2007

📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 3







📅 13 Aug 2016 ❤️ 6





May Day March LA, CA 2006

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 30

The first single from the Hollywood Records' debut album *Despite Our Differences*

LITTLE PERENNIALS
Adds at Triple A Radio on July 31

Digital Single Download - iTunes Only & DRM32 - available on July 13, 2006
CD Single Ships July 18

Performing at the *R&R Triple A Summit* on August 4th
"The Cocktail Party"

7/7	San Diego, CA	Humphrey's Concert/Bar
7/9	Salt Lake City, UT	Red Butte Garden Amph
7/10	Boulder, CO	Chautauqua Auditorium
7/13	Apple Valley, MN	Music in the Zoo: Outdoor
7/14	Highlands Park, IL	Ravinia Festival
7/15	Detroit, MI	Max Fisher Music Center
7/19	Vienna, VA	Wolf Trap Elena Center
7/20	Luxwell, MA	Boarding House
7/21	Hyannis, MA	Cape Cod Melody Tent
7/23	Hampton Bch, NH	Hampton Bch Casino
7/24-25	Uncasville, CT	CabaretTheater
8/6	Newport, RI	Newport Folk Festival

Despite Our Differences in-stores September 19th, 2006
Produced by Mitchell Froom
Recorded & Mixed by David Baucher - Mastered by Bob Ludwig

Radio Promo flyer for *Despite Our Differences* release.2006



Si Abrams. Monitor Engineer

IG Tours 2006

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 9

AR.2006

There are so many details of the Indigo years that have slipped my mind; I find myself going to our own web archives and the fabulous lifeblood.net website to figure out what we were doing at any given time. I always thought of myself as a documenter but things do get lost along the way. My calendars disappear from my computer and I forget to write things down in the rush of traveling. Most of the things I experience feel so compelling, they all seem like they will stay forever imprinted in my mind, but alas they don't.

So, I got sidetracked while trying to write this blog and found myself ruminating on John Trudell, Marcheline Bertrand, Angelina Jolie and Joni Mitchell-what a crowd. Because at some point in the 2000's, when I was in the LA area working, I had a meeting with Marcheline about the projects she and her daughter Angelina, were supporting and/ or collaborating on with the transformative Native activist and poet, John Trudell. Marcheline and John have both passed away now, but they left legacies of inventive and important work in the world. Daemon released John's record, "Bone Days" in 2002. John toured with the Indigo Girls and taught us an immeasurable amount about resiliency, poetry, activism and the universe. Marcheline's relationship with Trudell was a small point of connection for us and I was always looking for ways to expand and improve my activism.

So, on my way into my meeting with Marcheline at the Daily Grill in Brentwood, there was Joni Mitchell just sitting there with a stack of books and a writing implement. The only thing I remember is that I told her I was a big fan and then after we talked a bit, as I started to walk away, she said, “Hey, what do you think about all this war stuff?” I don’t remember anything more of what was said, but it was a sensation I will never forget, even if I can’t even remember if it was 2006 or before or beyond. You just never know who you’re gonna come across and no matter how many times these types of crazy experiences pop up, they never get old.

We got signed to Hollywood Records in LA in 2006, after finishing out our contract with Epic. They were satisfied to see us go and we all felt like that record deal had run its course. A label that huge, was just not gonna work for a band like us anymore. It is worth noting that Sony, Epic’s parent label, started a “gay” label called “Music With a Twist” that same year—it’s just one of those weird ironies of life. After the Epic deal ended, I was excited for a new chapter and thought maybe we’d end up on our own label again or on some kind of cool indie label, like Subpop. But a label like that just wasn’t interested in us, and any other offers we got felt like less than what we could do on our own. Hollywood Records stood out because they were owned by Disney and had vast resources but was still a small label with a cool roster that included Polyphonic Spree and Los Lobos. While I really wanted to be independent, I also thought maybe it would do us good to have access to the film and television world, and maybe we’d land some movie soundtracks or at least more television sync licenses. Hollywood talked a lot about how they would help us achieve that goal, but now we know that was pretty unrealistic.

The best thing that the Hollywood deal gave us was a relationship with producer Mitchell Froom. Mitchell was someone we had been interested in working with for a long time, and with the connections we made through the Hollywood deal, it finally happened. We were fans of all his work, so it was very validating for us. Everything Mitchell taught me about melodies, chords and song structure has stuck with me and been invaluable to my writing. His passion for music and his own musicality made working with him a totally educational and energizing experience. We worked in his small perfectly appointed studio out behind his house in Santa Monica, CA. It felt so right to be in this kind of home environment instead of a big corporate studio. His recording engineer David Boucher was the perfect mix of talent, patience, and work ethic. We also had our first experience with the drummer Matt Chamberlain. Matt is impossibly brilliant, so groovy, so quick, flawless and easy to play with. The only drawback was that we HAD to have our shit together right away, because his first couple of drum takes were the ones to keep. I like to get my vocals live, so it kicked my butt to have to get it right in the first few takes. But this is one of those things that made this record so important to me as a learning experience.

With a few exceptions, my songs on this record aren’t my best, but the experience and production make it a record that resonates for me, the whole process really had to happen for me to move forward. The great thing about Mitchell was that he just wanted to make music that sounded good, and he worked with my songs to make what I brought in the best it could be. Now of course I wish I had given him better material to work with

on this project, but as I listen to the record I can find so many things that I love about it. Matt, Mitchell, and David were all so amazing to meet and work with, and with Carol Isaacs (keys and accordion) and Clare Kenny (bass) playing the tunes, it made it a very musical and transcendent experience. We also had Pink come in and blow our minds with guest vocals on “Rock and Roll Heaven’s Gate”, and Brandi Carlile gave us a gorgeous set of harmonies for Emily’s song “Last Tears”.

This was an emotional record and while I am not sure what Emily’s take on the record is, I feel like we named it aptly, *Despite our Differences*, as a testament to our survival even though we were in such different spaces, dealing with our own personal demons and trying to write them out of ourselves. Songs like “Money Made You Mean” and “Rock and Roll Heavens Gate” were comments on the greed and absurdity of the music industry. “Little Perennials” was about my own disillusionment and mental confusion, the more time I spent in the music business and on the road. I felt pretty cynical and I was getting permanently homesick, and finding it hard to hold onto to my family, friends and lovers. “Three County Highway” was an attempt at a love song and to make the promises I wanted to keep. “Dirt and Dead Ends” and “They Won’t Have Me” came directly from the rural community I live in and love with all my heart. Despite the reality of the political divide in my region, I couldn’t see myself living anywhere else; it’s done me good to learn to live and love through all the differences. With this record, I was trying to reconcile a lot of “inside” things, but at the time, the backdrop of real world conflicts and suffering made some of the songs I wrote feel banal, so it was hard to get behind my songwriting and give it my all. I couldn’t write about the big things in the world but had to write about what I knew at the time, which was much smaller. Of course, the trick of good song writing is to be invested and know that the craft is important enough to write the best song you can, no matter what it’s about; and to know that there’s nothing like a great pop song! Even though, I couldn’t always write about the activism and world issues I thought were important, I still had many opportunities to fuel that fire. While we were in Santa Monica working on our record, I walked in a huge May Day march for immigrant rights. The march ran down Wilshire Avenue with tens of thousands of people participating. Across the nation immigrants refused to go to work or school in what was dubbed “A Day Without Immigrants.” Major demonstrations were held in dozens of cities across the country, and it was totally incredible to be part of that historic day.

Before all this happened, earlier in the year, a movie called *Wordplay* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. We had indeed gotten an opportunity to be in the movies, but it wasn’t about our music, instead it was about our devotion to the New York Times crossword puzzle. The Sunday puzzle was always the most fun for us, but we did a lot of the weekdays puzzles too, on and off the road. Somehow word of our addiction to the puzzle got around to the filmmakers of *Wordplay*, a movie that was all about Will Shortz, the New York Times crossword editor. Producer Christine O’Malley and Director Patrick Creadon really gave us a whole new dimension when they put us in their movie.

It was a super fun interview and very flattering to be in a distinguished crowd of accomplished crossworders!

We did a bunch of touring both before and right after recording, as a duo and with Julie Wolf, playing keys and accordion, and singing. She became a frequent guest on stage, with a knack for improvisation and spontaneity. She could always jump right in, playing and singing with vigor and accuracy—a gift that was also reflected in her approach to relationships, which helped our friendship deepen over the years. The Atlanta rock band, Three Five Human was also on stage with us a lot, and when we toured together, we always had a mini set with them—Trina Mead wailing on vocals, and Tomi Martin, so magical and agile on his electric guitar. Our friend, Bitch who performs with a provocative blend of poetry, music and prophetic rants came out and did some shows, bringing a challenging, important set to our audience. I always loved hearing her and having time to visit and scheme about our plans for life. In 2006, I was also introduced to the gently infectious music of The Weepies, it was an honor to have them open for us. A scrappy band out of Asheville, called Arizona played with us a bit. They were brilliant, with a blend of Led Zeppelin, Grateful Dead and Magnetic Fields. One of the members, Nick, had interned at Daemon Records and when he gave me his demo, I was taken aback with delight. Our opening slots were really diverse this year and it was fun to always have someone good to listen to before we went on for our set.

August brought us a couple of our favorite festivals. I played a punk set at Homo A Go Go in Olympia, WA with my solo band. And the Indigos got to play Newport Folk Festival that year. Newport Folk Festival is still one of the best weekends to just hang around and listen to music, and it's also a festival we haven't played in years, I really miss it! In late September we released *Despite Our Differences* and had a super festive release party in Atlanta at the heroically independent record store, Criminal Records. We hit the road for a fall/winter tour with Carol, Clare and Matt. It was another dream band and a luxury to be able to play the songs in their fullest dimension for a couple months.

Activism was still a dominating factor in our lives and for me, one of the most memorable shows of our career was the first day of September 2006, right in Decatur GA at Eddie's Attic, a benefit for GNESA—Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault. Black queer feminist poet and playwright, Cara Page stunned the room with her intrepid journey into slavery, eugenics, genocide, sexism, homophobia and cultural memory. The intelligently rebellious, spoken word artist Katz, from Athens Boys Choir, made a couple of appearances during the set, AND this is where and when I heard Brandi Carlile perform live for the first time. While Brandi was in Atlanta to record vocals for our record, she came over to Eddie's and played the benefit show with us. To move from Cara reading her poetry to Brandi singing, Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" was a moment that contained so much for me. Cara, who is now the executive director of the Audre Lorde Center, introduced me to a vast world of history and activism that I had only skimmed the surface of before, and Brandi became one of our most enduring musical allies with a rare talent that really reenergized our career.

“Sometimes when it rains, it's not that simple, when the sky has reasons to cry.” -

John Trudell 1946-2015

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 19



Carol Isaacs. Clare Kenny

Despite Our Differences session, Santa Monica, CA 2006

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 6





Clare Kenny. Mitchell Froom. David Boucher. Matt Chamberlain. Carol Isaacs. Emily

Despite Our Differences session, Santa Monica, CA 2006

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 6



Matt Chamberlain. Carol Isaacs. Emily. Mitchell Froom

Despite Our Differences session, Santa Monica, CA 2006

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 8

ES.2006

Writing the songs that would become part of 2006's *Despite Our Differences* was an unusually emotional journey, as I was going through an upheaval of personal change that even I couldn't understand. They are songs that are packed with sadness, regret,

hopefulness for the survival of love, and a weariness (“Lay My Head Down”) that rocked me. Even now, when I hear a song from this album, I don’t just *hear* the song; I feel all of the emotions that lived in that season of change. I recall specific things, such as seeing a car on fire, by the side of the highway, as I drove back to Atlanta from Nashville and was immediately smacked with the impact of metaphor for two lives colliding in love (“All the Way”). I recall the pain of relentless pining (“Last Tears”) and the house party I went to where I just stood against a wall, overwhelmed by what felt like utter futility in all human social interaction! I guess that sounds dramatic, but that’s how it was for me then. I did things like drank way too much red wine and sat in my car with a friend, listening to Colin Hay’s “I Just Don’t Think I’ll Ever Get Over You” again and again and again. That’s still one of my very favorite songs to this day. The songs from *Despite Our Differences* are my most personal collection.

We had known Mitchell Froom’s work as a producer and admired him greatly. He also just happened to be married to my dear friend, Vonda Shepard, whom I had known and worked with for years. When Mitchell and we decided to work together in his home studio in L.A., I was very excited about the entire situation. His engineer was the fabulous David Boucher, and we brought in our favorites, Clare Kenny and Carol Isaacs but also brought in Matt Chamberlain on drums, a master of drums! We used pedal steel for the first time (“Last Tears”), played by Greg Leisz. Remarkably, we were joined by guest vocalists Brandi Carlile (“Last Tears”) and Pink (“Rock n Roll Heaven’s Gate”).

Pink was living in L.A. She had recently asked us to record “Dear Mr. President” with her in Atlanta. The song, co-written and produced by Billy Mann, was a very powerful statement about a simple conversation with the U.S. president and how he felt about some of the terrible things going on in our world. Amy and I felt simpatico with this song. When we knew we would be in L.A. to make the record, we reached out to Pink to sing on a song, and she graciously accepted. She slayed it. Her voice is so powerful that she had to stand several feet off the microphone. She also learned the song quickly, and her pitch was perfect. In short, she’s a badass. After we tracked, we ended up sitting out with her, Mitchell, Vonda and the gang in the courtyard backyard of the studio and talked about politics and social issues. I also had several fun outings with her and friends at what became my favorite bar in the world, Santa Monica’s “Chez Jay”. We would sit in the rental car, in the parking lot, and blast rough demos of the songs we were recording. I remember telling her how much I loved her voice and wished I could do some of the things she could do vocally and musically, and she said, and I’m paraphrasing, that she wished she could phrase a word like “gunslingers” the way I did (“Pendulum Swinger”). I have to say, it feels good to get a compliment from someone as talented as she is. She is PINK, after all.

While we made the record, I lived in apartment in Santa Monica. Santa Monica is a bit of a dreamland for me. It was a short walk across the parking lot to the beach, where I made playlists and went running almost every day. I remember a lot of songs from that playlist: “The Birds of St Marks” (Jackson Browne), “Bad Day” (Daniel Powter),

“Wisemen” (James Blunt), “Won’t You Come Again” (Susie Suh), and “Renegade” (Eminem and Jav-Z) Running out by the Pacific most days, past the ferris wheel the

beach bungalows, the coffee shops, the tourists, and the surfers, I immersed myself in the music and soaked up the sun. There was a café down Ocean Avenue where a lot of weight lifters ate, and I always ordered a protein breakfast of ground turkey and eggs, which I slathered with hot sauce. I loved the solitude of those mornings, or making coffee in my apartment in the morning, or opening the doors to my tiny balcony and looking out onto a world that was temporarily mine. I became a regular at restaurants; Chez Jay's (David Boucher introduced me to that place!) and had a couple of fantastic dinners with Vonda at her favorite Italian restaurants. Mitchell liked to break for the day, very late afternoon, and we would gather in his kitchen and recap the days; sometimes Vonda would prepare a beautiful meal, or we would just hang out and chat and then the evenings were mine. I like the feeling of not being a local but not being a visitor, that somewhere in-between state that I experienced while we made the record.

Mitchell Froom is an excellent producer. I learned a lot from him, specifically how each part that goes into a song has its own place. Whereas in the past we might have put musical parts on top of other parts, Mitchell showed us a way to carve out space for each voicing. Simplicity was optimal. I worked on electric guitar parts on "Run" and the slide solo in "Three County Highway", and it was a challenge to hold back the "busy-ness" of the way I often played. Mitchell taught me a great deal about appreciating space, melody, and simplicity in the performance and production of a song. He also had a slew of amazing amps and vintage keyboards and would now and then pop over to a keyboard and play the perfect simple textural addition to a song. His studio was very small, just a few isolation spaces and the board, with three chairs. At first, working in a smaller space (small compared to big studios we had used prior to this record) was an adjustment for me. I mistakenly assumed that we couldn't create the same big, pure professional sound that we'd been able to achieve before, but I couldn't have been more wrong. Big space doesn't always equate with big sound. Mitchell and David had been such a strong team for so long that they knew how to get every sound they wanted, and I realized that you don't need fancy overhead. You need good mics, good amps, good pre-amps, and a team that knows what it can do in the space that they occupy. In the end, I really enjoyed the homey vibe of working at Mitchell's studio. Being able to step out of the studio and into a backyard courtyard with so much of the beautiful exotic flora of Southern California, amongst the company of friends and family was a peaceful relaxing experience; ironic considering the personal turmoil that my songs spoke to.

Considering the songs, I think about how I wrote "Fly Away" on piano but couldn't really play it well enough on record, so Carol Isaacs made it beautiful. I loved writing "I Believe In Love" on a ukulele I got from my only trip to Hawaii years earlier. Amy didn't play guitar on that song on the record, but she later came up with a guitar part so that we could play it live together, something we still do to this day. Even that is a learning experience; just because it wasn't a part on the record doesn't mean it can't be created later and played live. I also think that "Last Tears" was perhaps my most purely "country" song, made even more pure by Brandi's harmonies and Greg's pedal steel. I

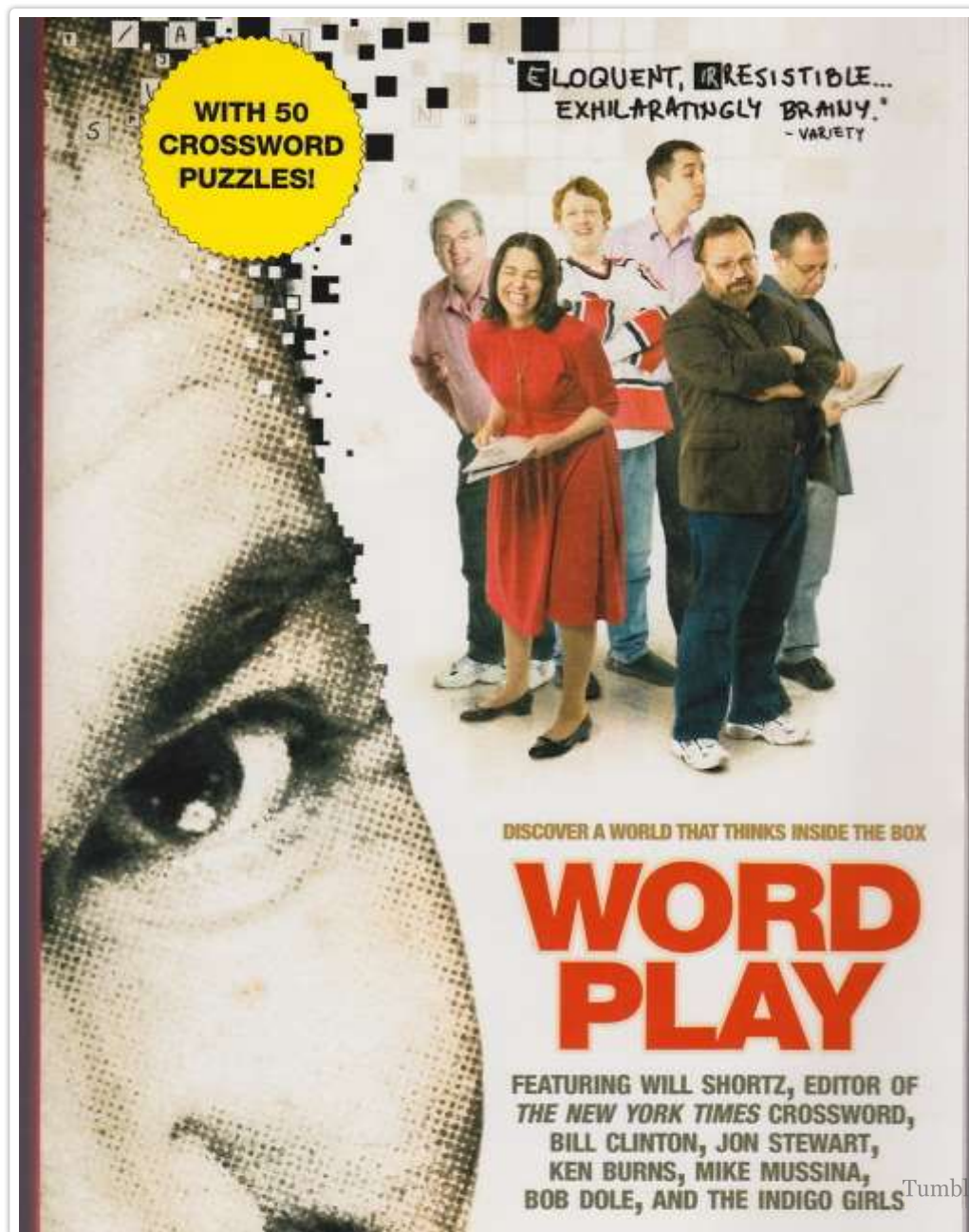
honestly thought about pitching that song to a country artist before I decided that I loved it enough to keep it for us

We did our first photo shoot with Jeremy Cowart for *Despite*. Usually, I detest photo shoots. Jeremy is now one of the most well-known rock-n-roll photographers. We have used him ever since. He made me and Amy feel relaxed, and he took shots in cool locations. When I look at the photography from the album package, and the press shots and promo pieces, I think it's our best. For our extremely short-lived contract with Hollywood records, I feel proud that we delivered a very good record with an excellent package design and photography. Just as hearing those songs takes me right back, seeing the pictures does the same.

Ah, Southern California! Don't know what it is about that place that sucks me in!

It was a magical couple of months, with a supremely talented producer, where I learned, laughed, drank wine, suffered and basked in emotion, met fantastic new people and hung out with old friends, and turned in a good day's work. Maybe my best yet.

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 18



THE OFFICIAL COMPANION BOOK • BY THE CREATORS OF
THE HIT DOCUMENTARY • FOREWORD BY WILL SHORTZ

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 8

“Irresistible.”


1/23/06

September 12, 2006

Dear Amy —

We are so happy you were a part of

(Thanks.)

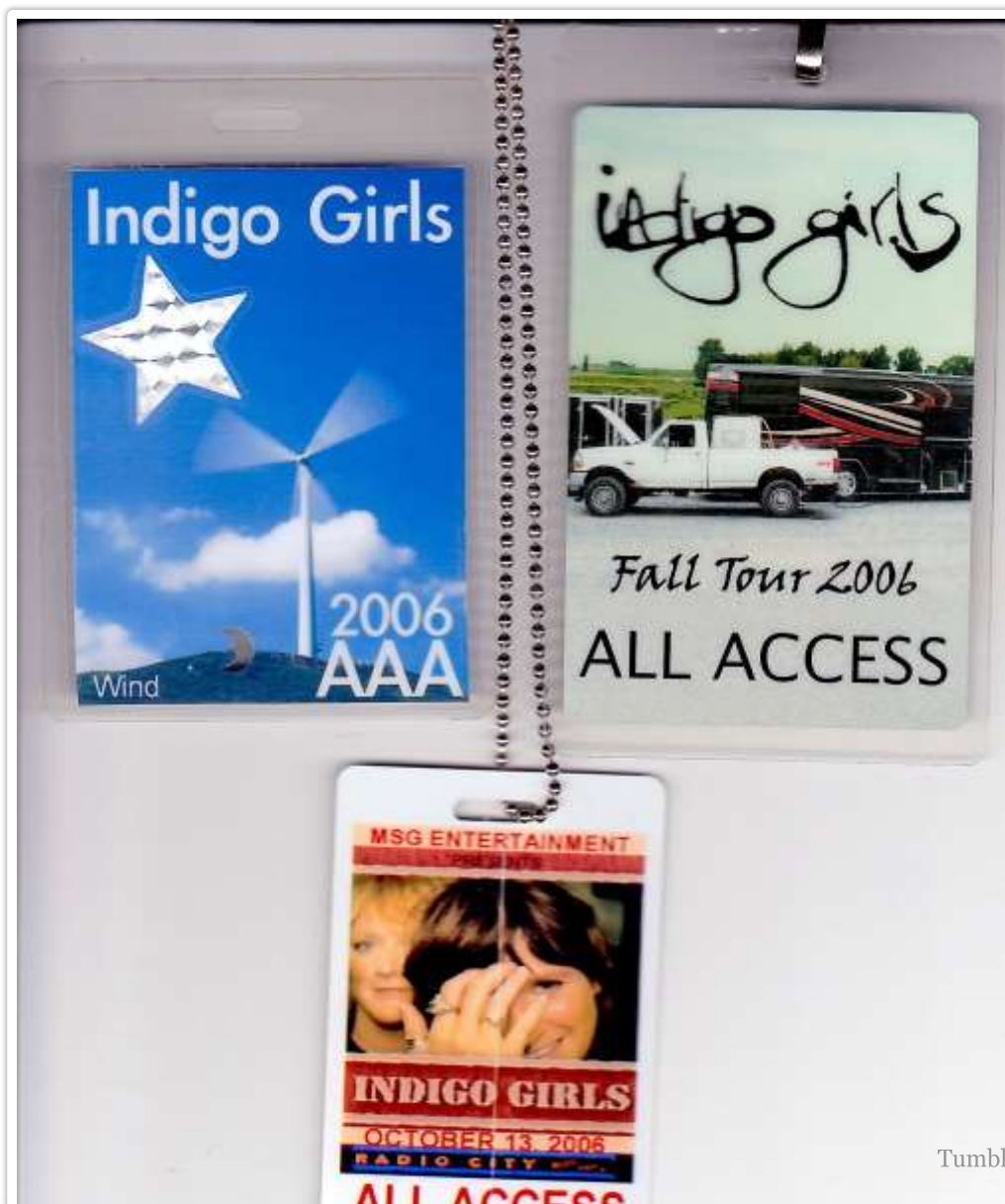
“WORDPLAY”. I’ve been listening to you
since 1989 and it WAS A TOTAL THRILL
to work with you. Best Wishes Always.
CHARISME SIMONE + PATRICK CREADON

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 6



Tara Jane O'Neil and Will Lochamy. Amy Ray set for Homo A GoGo.2006

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 5





Tour Laminates 2006

📅 22 Apr 2016 ❤️ 12



Emily and Ferron at Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. 2005

📅 28 Jan 2016 ❤️ 24





Pink and Billy Mann at Tree Sound Studio, Atlanta, GA 2005

Recording Indigo Girls' vocals for "Dear Mr. President".

📅 28 Jan 2016 ❤️ 22



Emily and Pink at Tree Sound Studio, Atlanta, GA 2005

Recording vocals for "Dear Mr. President".

📅 28 Jan 2016 ❤️ 27





IG's and Martina Navratilova on Olivia Cruise ship.2005

📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 38



photo by Chewy

📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 35

ES.2005

In 2005, my dad, Don Saliers, and I had our first collaborative book published. “A Song to Sing a Life to Live” was the culmination of many hours of conversation, ruminating on the relationship between music and spirituality. More specifically, Dad and I talked and talked together about the way in which music had shaped our own journeys as we sought to understand God and meaning.

When we were first approached about writing a book together, which would be published by a mostly theological press, I was scared. I almost said no. As a queer person, I knew how much some organized religion had wounded, scarred, and even killed the spiritual life of many other queers. I knew all about Christian fundamentalists who called us sinners and cast us out, beat us up and even killed us. I knew that much of homophobia and oppression against gays was rooted in Christian or other orthodox belief. Religion was a bad word for many, and as an activist and gay person, I questioned my association with any kind of “religion” as it related to putting my thoughts out in public. I had always kept my faith private, even though my spiritual experience growing up was one of openness and questioning, certainly not dogmatic or oppressive or judgmental. And, I loved and respected my father who had spent his whole adult life as an ordained Methodist minister and professor of theology seeking ways to explain God’s mercy and grace. He is a man who understands complexity. After I expressed my fears with Dad, who completely understood them, I just took a leap of faith and said yes and thought, “let’s just see where this goes.”

One of the things we talked about together was how music was separated into categories of secular and sacred. We believed that the labeling of “secular” was limiting. We explored and expressed the deep humanity of Amy’s and my nights of playing Little Five Points Pub in Atlanta. I would call it, in religious terms, the Church of the Motley Crew. There were so many different freaks and characters and glorious human beings who co-mingled at Little Five Points Pub. Punks and avant-gardes, blues musicians, rockers, and folk musicians joined each other on stage. Lesbians had a place to hang out together in public. It was the “mixest” of mixed crowds! It was music that joined us, melded us in our commonality, even as we celebrated our diversity. That was spiritual! Our spirits were lifted through music, and there were many people in those crowds who felt broken, troubled, and ostracized outside the doors of Little Five.

Dad talked about the influence of jazz in his love of improvisation. He brought his improv to church, where he often played interludes between hymn verses, or made-up vocal harmonies or worked to integrate and weave themes or imagery throughout the

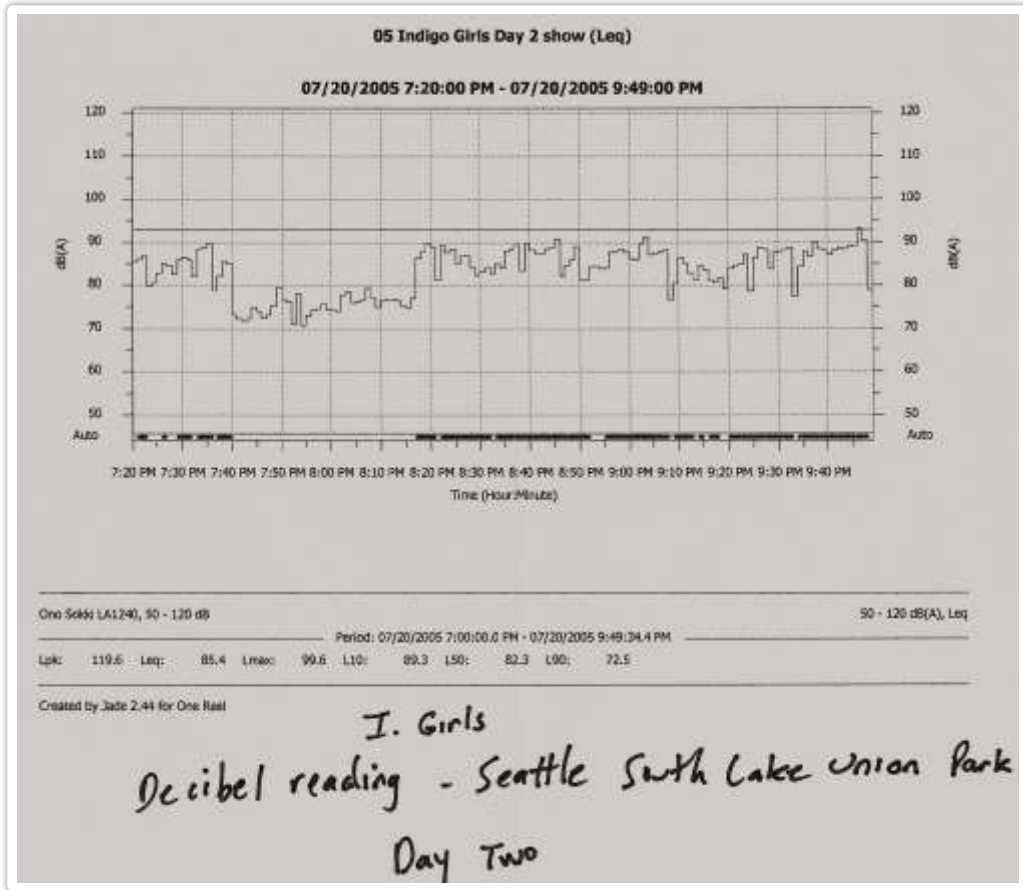
worship service. All from jazz, “secular.” We learned a lot about labeling, how demeaning and limiting it can be when applied to music. We explored how a genre of music can reflect a community’s unique experience of life and how vitriolic opposition to certain genres is a reflection of racism or generalization.

I honestly don’t care what anyone else believes or doesn’t believe. But I know that music is undeniably central in our human search for meaning and belonging and getting in touch with mysteries.

After the book was published, Dad and I began to do public performances, exploring the themes in the book. As an example, I would sing a sacred piece that Dad had written, perhaps a line from a psalm put to music, and Dad would become an “Indigo Boy” and sing some of Amy’s parts or completely revise the feel and piano part of “Power of Two”. We had a set list of Dad songs and Emily songs and hymns and classics, such as “Wayfarin’ Stranger”. Dad played Duke Ellington’s “Come Sunday” and we even had a little Latin thrown in with “Dona Nobis Pacem” played to simple guitar chords. The experience of writing the book with Dad deepened my understanding of the role music plays in church and the role it plays outside of church and how intertwined those two realities are. The fact that an older intellectual, studied professor might be open to the spiritual power of contemporary urban rap made me love my dad even more.

Among other IG journeys that year was our trip with Ani DiFranco to Washington, D.C. to discuss nuclear power issues with legislators and staff people. Native American activists we had been working with through Honor the Earth accompanied us. Or, I should say, we accompanied them! There’s a big difference between standing on Skull Valley Goshute land in Utah, scraggly weeds blowing in the wind, and pointing to the place where there is a proposed nuclear dump in the midst of a few homes and a small tribe of people, and sitting at a long table with a group of people in suits trying to describe the situation. Still, I believe it is important to lobby in D.C. and, as an artist, to stand in solidarity with Indian peoples whose lives and culture and history are poisoned by big energy interests. I have always found Ani to be inspiring, as she has stuck to her values and politics no matter what. It was great to join her on this trip. Solidarity is important in any justice movement. The environmental justice battles that so many Indian peoples have to fight are fierce and ongoing. Amy and I take part by singing and hopefully galvanizing support through music, by joining with other like- minded activists, and by going to D.C. to show human faces behind the issues.

We played many shows in 2005, but not as many as in other years, as Amy focused on her solo work, I had performances with Dad. During the shows we played, we had the great privilege of working with the band Three Five Human. Powerful, powerful band with the combination of Tomi’s world-class guitar playing (he was later to be a musical director for Justin Bieber!) and Trina’s vocals. Their version of “Tether” with us is my favorite version ever. I watched every show they played from the side of the stage and felt a comradery with them in all our interactions. They are deeply ingrained in my memory of the best IG opening bands.



Twin Cities Biodiesel Co-op
4051 Wentworth Ave Suite 1
Minneapolis, MN
55409
612 845 9876

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
09/12/05	159

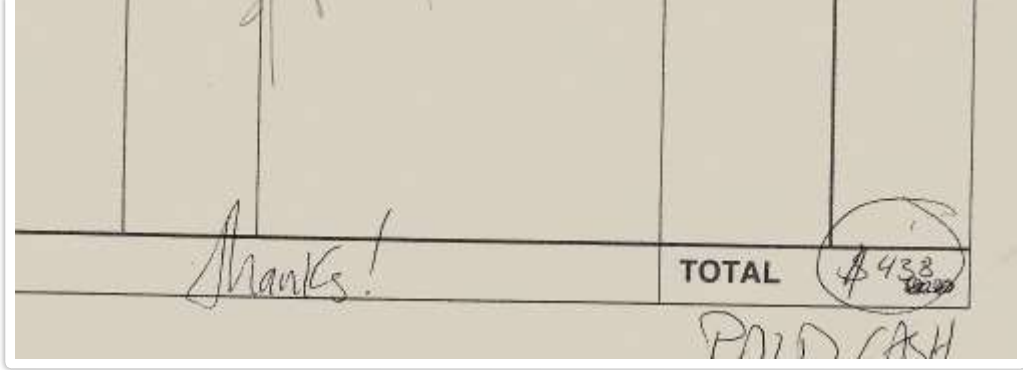
BILL TO:
Indigo Girls

SHIP TO:
Indigo Girls
State Theatre
805 Hennepin Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403

P.O. NUMBER	TERMS	REP	SHIP	VIA	F.O.B.	PROJECT
	Due on receipt	KC	09/12/05	Delivery		

QUANTITY	ITEM CODE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE EACH	AMOUNT
160	B100	Biodiesel 100% (B100)	2.80	448.00
1	Delivery	Fuel Delivery - Founding Member	30.00	30.00
1	Music	Musician Discount	-40.00	-40.00
		MN Sales Tax	6.50%	0.00

Amy



📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 9



2005.Three Five Human and IG's, Chicago

📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 19

AR.2005

Back at the end of 2005, I wrote a wrap-up for the year on Indigo Girls' web site, a rare moment of focus on our on-line world. It took a while for us to get up to speed and really start doing enough content and digital documentation, and we are still old dogs learning new tricks these days. But I think this one is pretty thorough and detailed, so here's the link.

http://www.indigogirls.com/?page_id=1323

My perspective has probably changed a bit. After all these years a few things really stand out about this year and still carry on into the present. The impact of Hurricane

Tumblr theme by Theme Anorak

Katrina and its aftermath were more far reaching and devastating than we knew. Even years after its landfall, it still seems to be unfolding in many ways. A region and culture, population and landscape forever changed. I look at the month of August on my calendar now and see we were in the midst of 2 day Honor the Earth board meeting, talking about energy development, native youth initiatives, sacred sites protection, military toxins, and sustainable agriculture when the news started coming in from New Orleans and surrounding areas. The news was fragmented and abstract, and very disturbing, almost apocalyptic feeling. Quite literally only a days drive from where we were, yet seemingly completely cut off from the rest of the Nation and desperate for help, there were so many ways in which our infrastructure failed the whole region. I made my way home, via NYC, and a week later, we were on the bus for a tour. I remember our bus driver Rick Stott who had just seen some parts of the Highway 10 corridor, described the horrors of what he saw and heard from other truck drivers. Earlier in the month, Emily and I had joined Pink at Tree Sound Studios in Atlanta to record her song, "Dear Mr. President". The lyrics in the song are even more relevant in the context of Katrina and the Bush administration's failure to engage or even show appropriate emotional connection to the Gulf Region's communities. Recording this song with Pink is one of the highlights of our career. Billy Mann and Pink were golden; consummate professionals, I learned so much from watching her sing and just talking to her about her process.

How do you sleep while the rest of us cry?

How do you dream when a mother has no chance to say goodbye?

How do you walk with your head held high?

Can you even look me in the eye

And tell me why?

-From "Dear Mr. President" by Pink and Billy Mann

An activism highlight of my year was our trip down to Chiapas, Mexico at the end of May, with a small delegation of artist and activists from Indigenous communities and the U.S. This was my 3rd trip to Chiapas and very different from my other two. The first time I went to Chiapas, I visited a few different Zapatista centers of resistance and spent a lot of time learning about different movements to fight Neo-liberal globalization. The 2nd trip I made was to one of the main communities of the Zapatista resistance, La Realidad. There was a big group of us for this trip including Emily, a bunch of other musicians and artist, Indigenous activists, and Cecilia Rodriguez as the Zapatista's representative. We stayed in La Realidad for a few days and really just immersed ourselves in that community to learn about their resistance and culture. Different Zapatista leaders were made available to us on this trip, and we got to interview them and learn about the movement from their perspective as leaders. It was also a harrowing trip, with an intimidating military presence both surrounding and flying over the community. It was unnerving but it was daily life for these Indigenous communities and I was humbled to see them going about their lives as a form of resistance to the government forces. The U.S. Government was supplying many of the military resources, so it was even more

disturbing to me. On my third trip, we were a small group of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous women activists on a fact finding mission to check out the good work being done in Chiapas, to make connections, and find inspiration for our own activist work. We settled in San Cristobal for 5 days and made small trips to visit groups doing community work in the region. We heard lectures at The Center for Economic and Political Research for Community Action (CIEPAC); spent a day at CIESAS (Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Anthropologia Social del Sureste)- a center for research and advanced studies in social anthropology where we talked with a very diverse group of anthropologists, midwives, Mayan doctors, videographers, feminists, coffee growers, and agro-economists; and we heard from women at OMIECH, an organization of indigenous doctors of the state of Chiapas; and visited the Centro Derechos de la Mujer (Center for Women's Rights). We also got to visit Oventic, one of the Zapatistas' "caracoles" (this is the name given to the centers of resistance, a name which means snail or conch shell) where I had spent time on my first trip to Chiapas in 1996. It was quite amazing to see that this little outpost had grown into a village with schools, a medical clinic, art co-ops, snack bars, and a governing / operations center. We got a meeting with the Junta de Buen Gobierno (JBG), which basically means "good government." We went into a small room with wooden benches; there were about 15 of us. There were 3 Zapatista representatives, one woman and two men. Winona LaDuke introduced our group and gave them some gifts of wild rice and a poster from one of her campaigns. She talked about her indigenous community of White Earth, and some of the other native folks we had with us, then she introduced the rest of us and explained that we were activists working in the U.S. with some common goals especially around autonomy for indigenous communities and environmental concerns that affect public health. The Zapatistas welcomed us and asked Winona a few questions, then we all exchanged questions. We talked about a wide variety of things ranging from coffee growing to women's issues. I wrote about this trip in detail on the IG site, in the link I mentioned earlier. There would be no way to over emphasize the impact these exchanges with the Zapatistas have had on my life and my being.

On the U.S. politics side of things, Emily and I did make a couple of trips to Capitol Hill, D.C. The first trip was to advocate the U.S. Congress to pass the Low Power FM Bill and the 2nd trip was to encourage congress people to vote against a proposed energy bill, which would give more huge subsidies and incentives to the Nuclear Industry. One of the most memorable meetings on the first trip was with with Senator McCain (R-Ariz) to discuss LPFM and thank him for being one of the authors of the new bill. This meeting also really informed our next visit to D.C. to fight the new energy bill because Sen. McCain took us aside while talking about radio, to talk about his interest in promoting Nuclear power. We listened to him, but had to respectfully disagree. He had a bunch of beautiful black and white portraits of Native Americans hanging in his office, but we knew he had a long and complicated relationship with Native issues, and this was another one of those instances. Many of the negative impacts of the proposed Energy Bill would fall on the backs of Native communities, especially in the Southwest. The ever-inspiring and intrepid, Ani DiFranco went on this Energy Bill trip with us, and as

importantly so did a bunch of well informed Native and non-Native enviro-activist. It was a pretty impressive contingent and the idea was to get the congress people to hear straight from activists and people living in affected communities. So we leveraged meetings and played some songs to usher in good feelings and break down some barriers.

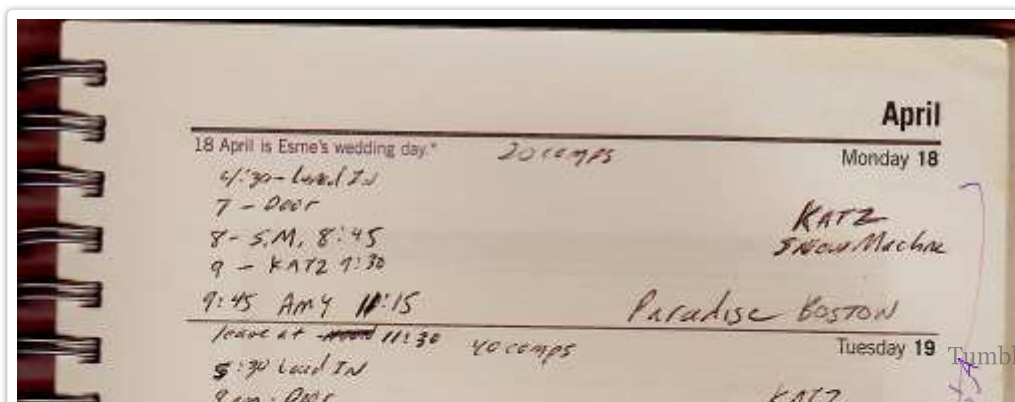
As far as music, 2005 was rich and diverse. Indigo Girls released a collection of obscure songs called *Rarities* and it was true to its name. We combed through some old demos and board tapes, and also picked some of our favorite underplayed songs from compilations we had participated in. I actually love this collection because it shows the other side of us a bit. We did a cover of “Clampdown” for a tribute record to The Clash and another favorite of mine was a cover of a song by one of the South’s most beloved songwriters, “Free of Hope” by Vic Chestnut. These two covers stand out for me in their weirdness and soft punk leanings. We covered the song “It Won’t Take Long,” by one of our most important mentors, Ferron. The song originally appeared on *The Spirit of ’73* -a really cool compilation to benefit Rock for Choice.

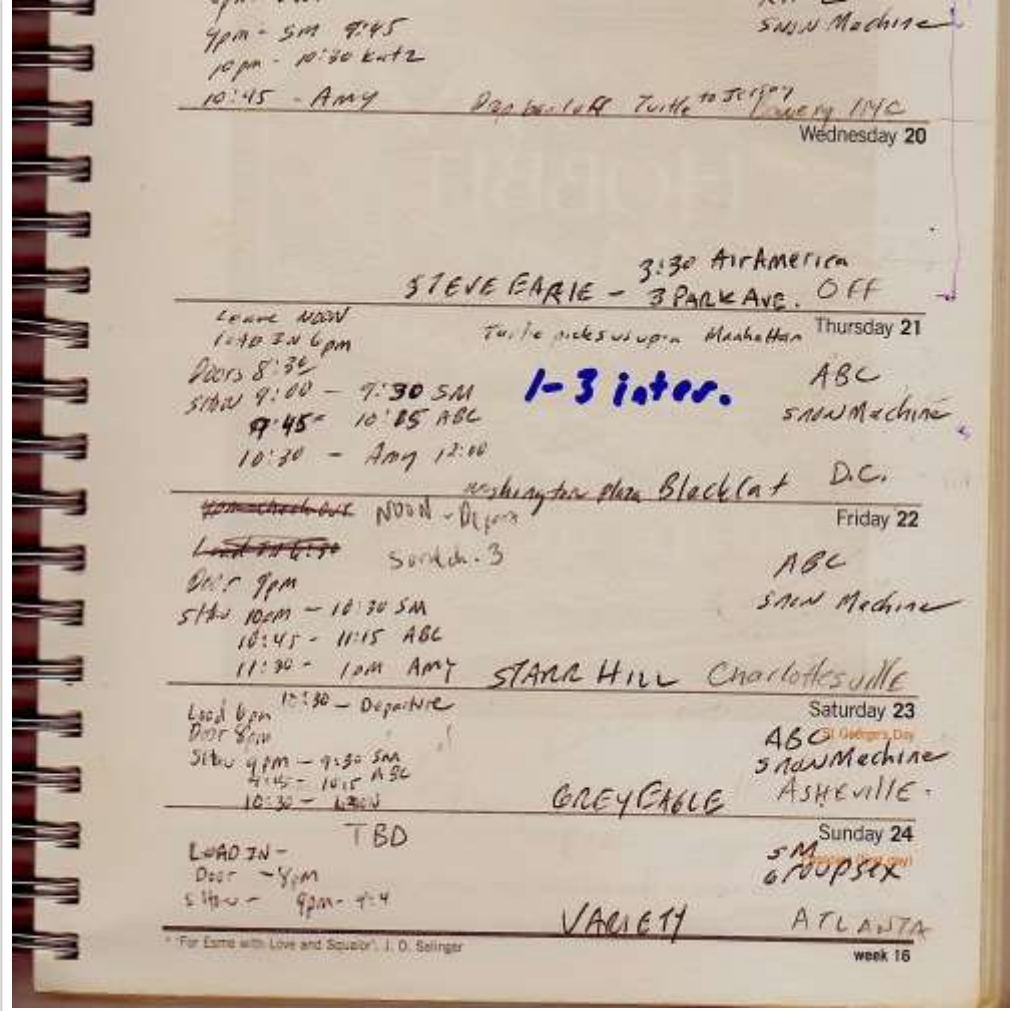
We contributed a song to a soundtrack for the *Desperate Housewives* television show. We drove up to Nashville and recorded a cover of “Mrs. Robinson.” Peter Collins and David Leonard tracked and mixed this with us. I always love working with Peter and David, and I thought this was a fun arrangement. As far as Paul Simon songs we have recorded, my favorite is still the version of “Homeward Bound” we did with Alison Brown for her 2005 release, *Stolen Moments*. We just shared a set this past year (2015) with Alison and her band at the Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival. Alison is hands-down one of my favorite artist to share tunes with; she is a gem! Oh and another band we love to play with toured with us a lot in 2005, Three Five Human. They rocked it, just a killer rock band and when we toured with them as openers, we always got to play our rock songs with them as our backing band. The song “Tether”, was the best it’s ever been with Trina Mead singing vocals and Tomi Martin playing electric guitar. With Three Five Human, we could also do justice to one of favorite covers, “Midnight Train to Georgia”.

In 2005, I released my second solo record, *Prom*, a collection of pop punk tunes that really delved into coming of age and gender identity. Now, I can see clearly the place I was writing from; I was really working out my own gender issues and reliving formative high school days. I love the songwriting and the playing on this record, but I did struggle with the mix and ultimately over-mixed it and pushed the vocals too far up. You always think you can save things in mastering; this one was impossible so I just live with the mix the way it is. However I feel about the mix now has no bearing on the musicality of the project; the players on this recording were really special. I brought rhythm section Jody Bleyle (Hazel, Team Dresch) on bass and Kate Schellenbach (Luscious Jackson, Beastie Boys, Lunachicks) on drums to Atlanta to record about half the record at Tree Sound Studio. From the band 1945, I had Hunter Manasco, Will Lochamy, and Katharine McElroy as the other core band; we recorded together at Hunter and Katharine’s studio in Birmingham. Those days in B’Ham are still some of my most treasured times. Out West in Eaglerock, CA, the unconquerable Donna Dresch (Team

Dresch, Screaming Trees, Dinosaur Jr.) sat in on a song with Kate and Jody; it was an experience I'll never forget for its frenetic energy. It was challenging to put together a touring band that could encompass all the different players on the record, but I just decided to jump right in with who was willing and able. Will played drums for the whole tour that year, and the bass playing was switched off between Tara Jane O'Neil and Jody Bleye. A friend of Will's, Les Nuby, who was a drummer from the Birmingham, AL band, Verbena, was around and helped out a lot when we recorded tracks in Birmingham with 1945, and the thing is, he is a jack of all trades, so we convinced him to step in on guitar for the tours. I think I scared Les at first whenever I would walk over towards him on stage and laugh or whoop with joy or something to try and loosen him up; he was covering a million new parts and pretty hyper-focused. But also, I know I was kind of exacting, maybe too exacting for the kind of music we were playing...live and learn. Will Lochamy was a champ of a drummer and the best guy to hang out with. Tara Jane O'Neil stepped in when Jody couldn't tour any longer and TJO was such a treasure to find-killer musician and with lots of great road stories and always willing to go the extra mile for a good gig. We tried to go all out on the tour and play some clubs that were out of our norm- like The Bottleneck in Lawrence, KS or The Maintenance Shop in Ames, Iowa. We also played our old stomping grounds like Slim's in SF and The 40 Watt in Athens. We covered a lot of miles all across the country, playing to anywhere from 15 to 1000 people, half the tour was in the Spring and the other half was later on in the Fall. The tour was hard, but totally rewarding, and we ended up calling the band, "The Volunteers" because it felt like such a labor of love. I'd say one of my favorite moments was being on the by-gone liberal talk-radio station Air America on a show hosted by Steve Earle. What a wild ride, he did most of the talking and I just kind of sat there, mouth agog because he is such a fascinating, brilliant man. He has a mind like a steel trap and could spout off facts about the most obscure world events. It was the most informative interview I have ever done. We ended the *Prom* touring season with a show at Blue Cats in Knoxville, TN and even though there were only a handful of people there, we recorded the show to release as a live record. I then headed out to San Diego to play an Indigo Girls show for the Olivia Cruise. That show was a blast as usual and we got to hang out with a lot of fun women. Martina Navratilova was briefly on the boat. Martina had recently signed an endorsement deal with Olivia, which I thought was pretty cool, especially when she was quoted as saying, "This is the first deal I've gotten because I am gay, hallelujah".

📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 18





Amy's calendar, April, 2005

📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 12



Amy Ray and The Volunteers, tour 2005, The Bottleneck, Lawrence, KS

photo by Bitch

📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 16



Poster Insert for Amy Ray's 2005 solo release, *Prom*

📅 18 Jan 2016 ❤️ 24



Tomi Martin and Trina Meade from Three5Human.Emily.Clare



Emily. Brady. Carol. Clare

2004 *All That We Let In* tour

A-2/184
Vox/NEWMAN67#1

Come On Home

Dark clouds are coming in like an army
 Soon the sky will open up and disarm me
 You will go just like you've done before
 One sad soldier off to war
 With your own enemies

~~The dishes stacked, the table cleared~~ *E F G#*
 It's always like the scene of the last supper here
 You speak so cryptically, but that's not news to me *F# E F D D*
 The food will carry you and I've got work to do *A A A A A A A*

Chorus
 Come on home the team you're hitched to has a mind of its own *F# F# F# D D D A A A B A*
 It's just the forces of your past you've fought before
 Come back ~~here~~ and shut the door *C# C# D A B A F#*
 I'm stacking sandbags gainst the river of your trouble

There is fire and there is lust *MMM* *C# C# C# C# B B A A A A A*
 Some would trade it all for someone they could trust *C# C# C# A A F# F# F# F# E D*
 There's a bag of silver for a box of nails
 So simple, the betrayal *D F D A A F# B A A F# A*
 Though it's known to change the world and what's to come

Chorus
 There's the given and the expected *A B C# D A A B B*
 Count my blessings while I eye what I've neglected *B D D C#*
 Is this for better or for worse *F# C# D O D C# B B B C# F#*
 You're all jammed up and the dam's about to burst

I hear the owl in the night
 And realize that some things never are made right *F# E D*
 By some will we string together here *string together*
 Days to months and months to years *melodic*
 But what if everything we have adds up to nothing *D D D D C# B A D O D C# D*

2004 encore performance of “Shed Your Skin” with the Atlanta Ballet.

Photos by Robb Cohen

📅 17 Oct 2015 ❤️ 27

E.S. 2004

2004 was chock full of IG activity with widely diverse events. We released *All That We Let In* in February and played shows in every month of the entire year. We went from way North to way South, East, West, Midwest, Southwest, and on. We weathered the lashing of the 2004 presidential election and continued to work for energy justice on Native lands. We participated in unique creative endeavors (*Shed Your Skin* , redux) played the storied stage of Radio City Music Hall (twice!!!) and appeared on the Charlie Rose show (a thrill and honor).

I love *All The We Let In* , and getting to tour with Brady, Clare, and Carol and play all those songs was sweet. The songs reflected the disturbances of the time, particularly the U.S. invasion of Iraq, in “Tether” and the title song. I was depressed by the war and Bush’s administration and I felt anxiety about the upcoming presidential election. I tried to make sense of the big and the small, the events of now and the huge, sweeping hand of history in “All That We Let In” (“One day those toughies will be withered up and spent, the fathers, sons the holy warriors, and our president...”).

I still think that “Come on Home” is one of my best songs, or I should say, one of the very few that I almost feel “proud” of because I was able to capture just what I wanted to say. Obviously the song is rife with war imagery, suffering, and betrayal.

But my personal arc bends more towards hope and resurrection than complete despair. “Free in You” was inspired by a great visit and writing session in Nashville with my friend, Annie Roboff, and “Rise Up” was all positive vibe. Joan Osborne SLAYED her vocals on that one (“move your body to the music and rise up!”). Incidentally, I played the lead on “Rise Up” with Amy’s high-strung guitar and, although we rarely played the song live that year and never do now, it is my favorite lead of mine.

We were invited back to perform “Shed Your Skin” with the Atlanta Ballet. This was a joyful reunion, as we got Blair Cunningham back on drums, and hooked back up with Margo Sappington, creative director John McFall, and the fabulous dancers. I had been so terrified in the 2001 production, but a few years later I was relaxed and excited to do it again. It was an honor to have the Atlanta Ballet present the production again, because it’s incredible to have it happen ONCE, but to do it twice is extremely flattering. The Fox Theatre in Atlanta is a spectacular venue. It’s hard to describe the thrill of performing there after having ridden by it countless times in a car as kid, staring up at the bright marquee, dreaming about what it would feel like to be inside.

While I'm mentioning dreams come true, I should say that appearing on Charlie Rose was pretty mind-blowing. Amy and I had grown up watching his interviews and had tremendous respect for his intelligent and thought-provoking sessions with a myriad of people. Seeing Charlie in person is surreal. I actually felt quite relaxed for the interview. While I was expecting an intense and deep-digging interview about socio-political issues, it wasn't really that. In my out-of-body experience, I remember it going by quickly and barely brushing the surface of things, and feeling disappointed that we hadn't been able to discuss things like gender politics, or nuclear waste dumping on Indian lands, or the meaning of art. Alas! Regardless, it was Charlie Rose, and it was thoughtful and well paced; more of a 'getting to know the Indigo Girls a little' type thing.

We did other TV that year, including a brutally early CBS Saturday Morning, The View, The Today Show, Last Call with Carson Daly, and Conan O'Brien. I liked doing TV. Typically, there was no safety net. The studios were always freezing, which kind of added to the nervous excitement. If our manager, Russell, wasn't with us, we always called him immediately after TV performances to see how everything went. Back in those days, late night TV could actually bump up your record sales, and all TV was an enviable avenue of promotion. Part of the fun of national TV was also getting to see or meet the other guests on the show. Steve Irwin was a guest on the Conan episode we played in 2004.

Memphis has always had huge allure for me: Sun records, Memphis blues, BBQ, Beale Street, the Peabody Hotel and the ducks in the lobby, WC Handy. Joni Mitchell wrote about it in "Furry Sings the Blues". We don't often get to Memphis, but that year we played the Beale Street music festival which included artists Chaka Khan, Buddy Guy, Foo Fighters, Steve Miller Band, Joss Stone, and lots more. It was hot and muggy and steamy and the music lifted out of the steam and swirled around with the entire Memphis mystique. I had a chance to visit one of my favorite old-time stores in the country, Schwab's on Beale Street. A few months later we returned to Memphis and the historic New Daisy Theatre as part of the "Vote Damnit" tour spearheaded by Ani DiFranco. Amy and I have always had great respect for Ani, her politics and her art. I was and am still a bit star-struck or awe-struck by her in some way. Being part of the "Vote Damnit" tour with one of my artist/politico mentors completely fired me up and just reinforced what I already believed was the critical importance of having a voice by casting a vote. That event was one more example of what I take away personally; probably more than I even give away by performing there. Additionally, I think Ani's "32 Flavors" is one of the best songs ever written. No Lie.

By 2004, mainstream commercial radio was drying up for us and we were further solidifying our relationship with AAA stations like WFUV in New York, XRT in Chicago, KBCO in Boulder, CO, and WXPB in Philly. These are some of the stations that kept us connected to real, substantive radio. They played our music and we developed a camaraderie with them and their listeners. The stations were instrumental in helping us promote *All That We Let In*. One of the reasons why we have lasted so long is that we have been able to just be who we are without needing radio hits or chasing musical trends. I

feel deeply indebted to the numerous AAA stations that came on board from the beginning and let us play our music and be who we are without BS interviews and

offensive morning drive programs which we tried to endure in the early days of promotion and ended up refusing to be a part of eventually. I also tip my hat to the countless small, non-commercial community and NPR stations that invited us in and had us play or talk about our latest Honor the Earth endeavor, or anything at all. I love radio. I miss the good old days of diverse radio before stations got gobbled up en masse when the U.S. government deregulated radio in 1996. If it weren't for NPR and public broadcasting, I might despair. I love visiting a station and being able to have a conversation with the DJ, no sound bites, and playing a couple songs live with Amy, performance warts and all.

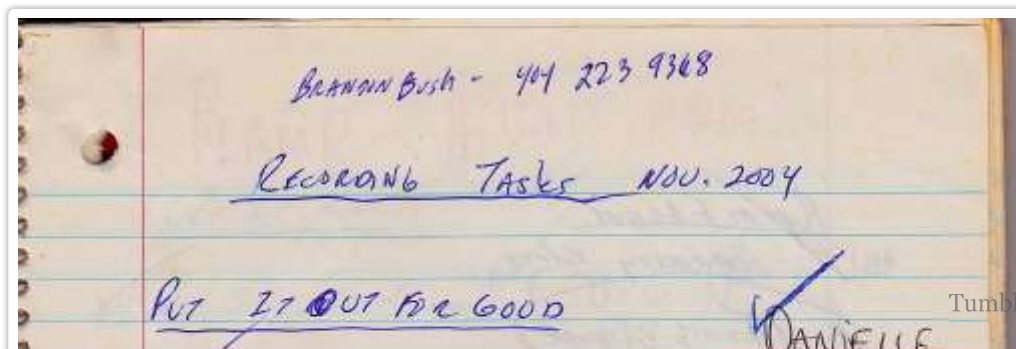
Music literally kept my spirits alive in 2004. I had high hopes that Kerry could be elected and turn the hawkish tide of the Bush administration. It was devastating to think that a group with the ironic name of Swift Boat Veterans for Truth could actually promote lies that would derail Kerry's run for president. On the night that Bush was re-elected, I drank a lot of bourbon and got myself very depressed over the state of the nation and the sickness of war. The next morning, it was back to work. I believe in the personal being political. So, it was time to shake off the election hangover and plan the next benefit, write the next song, learn from the next mentor, keep hope alive through music, civic participation, and appreciating the little things in life that bring joy.

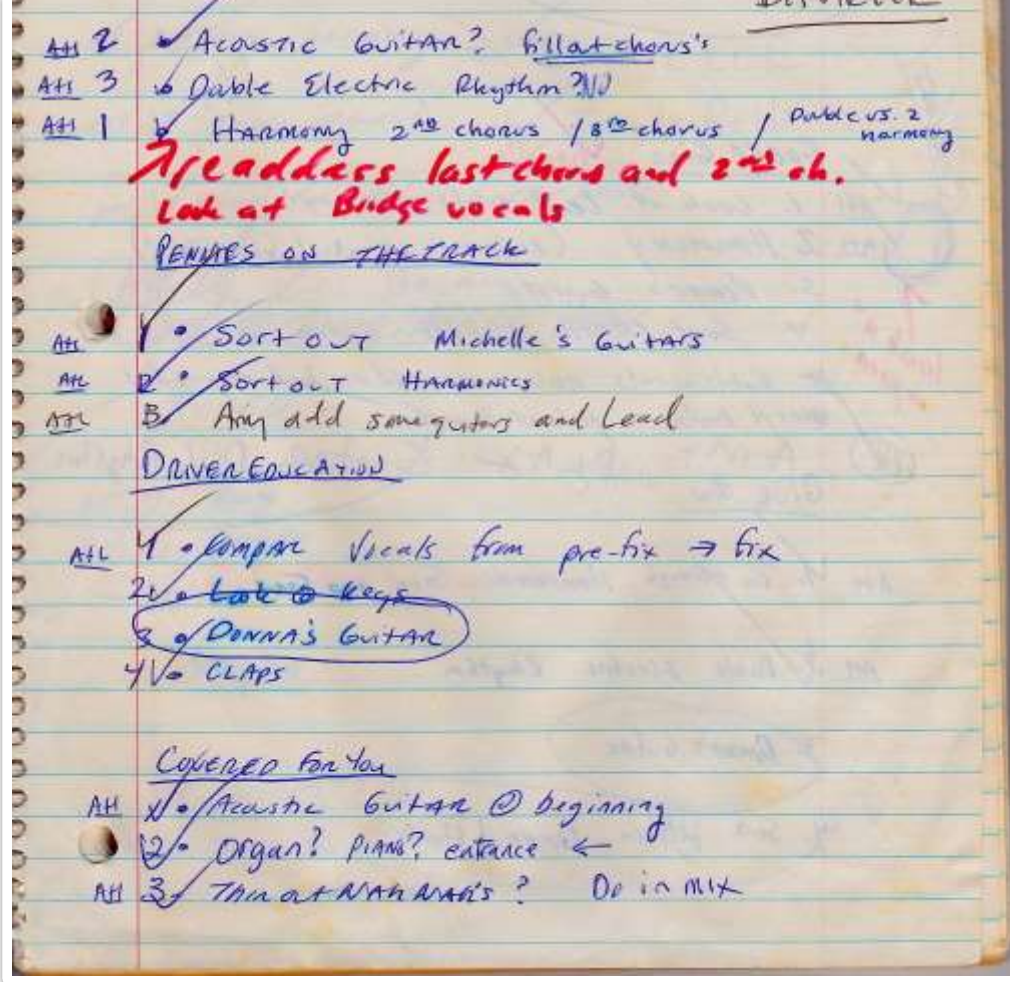
📅 17 Oct 2015 ❤️ 22



Pro Life Kids.D.C. March for Women's Lives. April 2004

📅 17 Oct 2015 ❤️ 2





Studio notes from Amy Ray's *Prom.2004*

📅 17 Oct 2015 ❤️ 14



SOA Watch Vigil and Protest, Ft. Benning, GA 2004

Stacey Singer. Marli Carver. Amy. Dana Powell

AR.2004

February 2004 ushered in the release of *All That We Let In*. In many ways, I considered this a follow up to the record *Become You*. Once again, we worked at Tree Studio in Atlanta with Peter Collins and the band that had become a natural extension of our creative impulses. I loved most of the writing on this record, much of which has stayed with me for live shows. There are a couple arrangements I would do differently now, namely “Dairy Queen”, which I think took a while to find itself and playing the song live cemented it for me as more of a rollicking Americana tune than the sort of rockabilly vibe we went for. But the songs “Tether” and “Heartache for Everyone” really hit their mark, and I still love when we can play these songs as a full band and mirror the album production. The song “Cordova” was a testament to my evolution as an activist discovering my perspectives and baggage as a middle class white person.

We jumped right into touring after our record was released and had a varied Spring of radio promotion, TV shows, a good mixture of theater and club shows, and a good dose of activism. We got to be on Charlie Rose, A&E, the Today Show and CBS This Morning! I remember our drummer, Brady Blade stayed out all night before the CBS show and was still up partying when our “break of day” call time came. We searched high and low for him, and when he rolled in late we were so pissed because he almost missed it completely. Now it’s pretty funny, and of course Brady has such an infectious energy that all he had to do was smile and laugh and all was forgiven! Television was a really big part of our career back then compared to these days; we rarely get the same opportunities, it makes me realize how lucky we were.

In the midst of all the concerts and record promo, we returned to Atlanta to do an encore performance of the “Shed Your Skin” show with the Atlanta Ballet. The first run of shows in 2001 was so successful and fun that we came back and did 4 evening performances and 2 matinees. It took us a while to get the players all together again but it was worth the wait and just as compelling to me as the first time, with the added bonus of not being so nervous that I could barely feel the experience. The show was opened with two incredible performances by the ballet-the classic George Balanchine “Allegro Brillante”, set to Tchaikovsky’s concerto no. 3, and a modern dance, David Parson’s “Caught”, which featured a solo dancer working with strobe lights to emulate flight as the light caught him midair during his leaps. Watching these dance performances became a favorite part of my night.

And for something completely different, we headed down to Key West, FL for a couple of super intimate shows on the all-women Olivia Cruise ship hitting a few raucous Florida shows on the way down. Florida shows were like the exact opposite of the Atlanta Ballet, especially the club Freebird Live in Jacksonville, FL where we dodged the beer bottles and good-natured fun of drunken revelers. Olivia Cruise shows were special events for us, but this one really stood out. On this particular cruise, we had planned to

play while the boat was in port and then go back to land to continue our tour. Our guitarist, Sulli, was having so much fun after our show that she missed the call to disembark, and the boat left the dock with her still on board. She had to be lowered overboard in a harness, and put into a little dinghy boat that took her back to shore, and all in front of a cheering crowd. For us, it was hilarious, but from the look on her face when she talked about going over-board in the harness, it wasn't as fun in the moment.

At the end of April, we played at the huge March for Women's Lives on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. It was an awesome and formative event for me as an activist. It helped me to see so many allies in one place, with a refreshing and impressive display of diversity in age, race and gender. The selection of speakers emphasized the importance of the feminist movement nurturing an agenda that included the concerns and issues around class, race and sexuality. I remember feeling like the feminist movement was starting to wake up and make great strides to recognize that abortion was only one issue among many that need to be addressed. There were so many great speakers and performers, each with a different perspective. Gloria Steinem, in true form gave props to the youth of our movement. Deloris Huerto, co-founder of the United Mineworkers, social activist, labor leader and organizer, spoke about women's rights from a Latina / Chicana perspective. I was really struck by the people who showed up to protest the march, especially the young kids holding a mixture of hateful pro-life and anti-gay signs. I wrote the song, "Let it Ring" in response to these protestors, and their fear-mongering message of intolerance and bigotry, which was being sold as Christianity.

We toured all through the summer with our band, kicking off the tour in NYC with two television appearances—"Last Call with Carson Daly" and "Late Night with Conan O'Brien". We played a lot of our favorite venues from the East to the West. There were a couple of stand-outs for me. We had two shows at The Pier in Seattle, and this was the last season the Summer Nights concert series was held at this beloved location. You had the Puget Sound on one side, with the sunsets, big ships, small boats and ferries, and the sights and sounds of downtown Seattle on the other side. At our shows and probably other ones, there was often a parade of protestors, with anti-gay and anti-choice signs - very similar to the ones that showed up at The March for Women's Lives in D.C. Though there was so much going on around the venue, it felt very intimate and unto itself-it was a magical place. Our last stop on the West Coast was in Olympia, WA for the Homo A Go Go art and music festival. It was an amazing event, where artists from the queer community came together every other year in Olympia, Wa. to play music, perform spoken word, show films, display art, attend workshops, and encourage radical activism. The billing for the weekend of shows included **Team Dresch** and **The Gossip**, two visionary bands that had a big influence on my solo music. Money raised by the festival went to the Olympia based Gender Variance Healthcare Project. While this event was too short-lived it was so important to the greater queer community, especially with its emphasis on transgender advocacy. I remember listening to all the bands and spoken word, thinking how much better radio would be, if it wasn't so trans/homophobic. It felt super special to play for the Homo A Go Go audience and the organizers were some of the best we've worked with. We ended our set by raffling off a

chance to sing “Closer To Fine” with us to raise money for the GVHP.

We managed to pack a lot of activism into the year, which was incidently also the year of the Democratic National Convention where I first heard the voice of Barak Obama. It gave me a lot of hope to hear him, and I still feel that way about him. Al Sharpton’s speech also got me fired up. He was telling it like it is and truly inspiring to me. But then CNN came on afterwards and made a big deal about him going over his time limit; you know Al’s just not tame enough for our racist society and they had to take him down. But I loved when they interviewed Donna Brazil and she pointed out that it was one of the best speeches of the convention and Mr. Sharpton’s career. With the election looming there were a lot of events to raise awareness about different issues. We participated in a Labor Day Rally with Jesse Jackson and Willie Nelson to support the United Mine Workers and the AFL-CIO; we played a string of dates with Ani DiFranco’s Vote Dammit tour; and we played at the Georgians Against Discrimination rally in Atlanta. This was the year that Georgia voted in a constitutional amendment denying any sort of equality to same-sex couples. I wasn’t surprised but I was still dissappointed at the landslide 76 percent approval of the ammendment-it was clear from the mapping of votes that even in neighborhoods where people purported to be progressive, in the privacy of their voting station, they didn’t ahere to their publically expressed values of acceptance. Of course, now Georgia and all the other states that had these ammendments are legally compelled to honor same-sex unions and marriages-a victory for human rights!

After the Indigos finished up our touring for the year, I hooked up with some folks from Daemon Records and went down to Fort Benning in Columbus, GA for the annual S.O.A. Vigil and Protest. The event is held to honor and remember the victims of U.S. military policy and intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a mission to close the School of the Americas that trains Latin American soldiers at Fort Benning, as well as stop the militarization of the United States. Daemon Records also held a showcase at our favorite Atlanta venue, The Echo Lounge. We held these events to support the bands on the label but also to nurture the music and activist communities in the region. I played with my pals from the band **1945** backing me up. I was in the final stages of making my second solo rock/punk record *Prom* , so we played a bunch of new songs. It was a great way to end the year and look towards the new one.

📅 17 Oct 2015 ❤️ 19





📅 17 Oct 2015 ❤️ 3





📅 17 Oct 2015 ❤️ 19



Indigo Girls March 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			M			1 12pm - Interview with Ann Powers, Oprah Studio
2	3 E-PRACTICE 10:00 AM	4 Early 3pm - Practice	5 1pm DAEMON 5pm - Practice	6 Early to Nashville	7 Early home from Nashville 11:30 with call	8
9	10	11 E-PRACTICE 1pm - 5p	12 DAEMON 11:00 AM	13 DAEMON	14	15 Women Song Oprah Moon
16	17	18 NOON E-PRACTICE 11:00 AM	19 AMY - Queen event at Queen's Place in Michigan CMT POWER Nashville	20	21 DAEMON PRACTICE @	22 3pm SUNDAY Lyrics for Live Benefit with Susan Harrel, Edan Mac, Darlene Live ATLANTA
23 COLUMBIA COURTESY	24 DAEMON	25	26 [info.] with 2nd	27 Rehearse	28 AMY / Nathan The Grey Eagle ASHEVILLE, NC	29 Amy & Cris perform with Group See at the CAPS ATLANTA
30	31	DURHAM	PUSHAM	DURHAM		

#Sun 30th E-word → OCT 17/18 FAMILY
to
NEXT PAGE

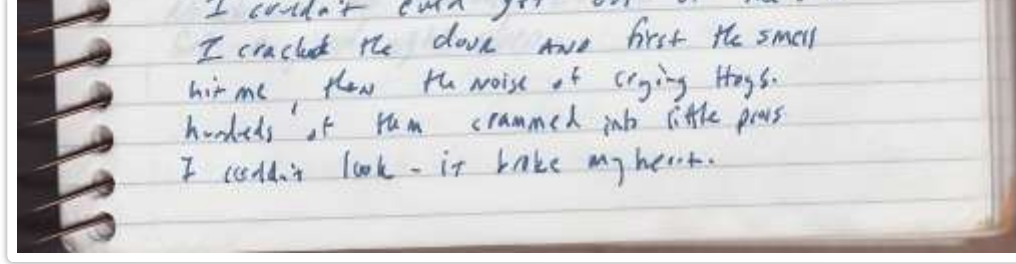
Pine Ridge
Community Cell Phones from Ken
Upton visited her.

We want to see the Rosebud Buffalo herd. Picked up by pickup trucks with the Rangers and drove out into the pasture. The Rosebud Herd is beautiful with Pines, streams, and scrubby pastures. The herd is small about 160.

LEONARDO ZSTAR
MYRNA drove us to the Frontier CAFE we ate with a whole crew of folks from the community. Some of them work on the wind project. Some of them are ~~opposed~~ to the opposite working.

Ken Hing FARM. Plus Bob Gough and Pat Spears from the ICOMP. It was a smoky dinner cafe.

MYRNA didn't really want to go see the hog farm. And I know why.



Amy's Diary

2003 Honor the Earth Tour

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 10

ES.2003

In August of 2003, I saw stars in the sky from a Manhattan street. It was the first, and probably the last time to see that. We had just finished performing in Central Park, after a massive blackout that shut the city, but not the show, down. We played on, thanks to a generator, and the crowd peacefully exited the truncated show in an orderly fashion, rising to the crisis as only New Yorkers can. Because the lights were out, our tour bus shown like some strange alien beast, and I looked out the bus windows at what appeared to be a post-Armageddon scene of ghost walkers in the dark. I felt uncomfortable in our illuminated privilege. Later, we were to hear stories of people stuck in elevators and restaurants handing out loads of food to anyone anywhere before it spoiled from lack of refrigeration. When the blackout first happened, I have to admit I feared another catastrophic event, as 9/11 was fresh in all of our hearts and minds. As it turned out, the blackout was simply spooky, and memorable in a year of memorable events.

Ironically, given the grid issues, we had spent time earlier in the year on our 5th Honor the Earth tour, this one focusing on supporting wind power in Indian Country and working to get green energy on the grid. We toured the vast lands of Pine Ridge where the community looked to power its 100,000-watt KILI radio station with a newly constructed wind turbine. We toured in support of Rosebud's efforts to implement wind power on their reservation, and we played shows across the plains as Winona LaDuke encouraged audiences and lawmakers alike to embrace the viability of wind power. Additionally, we worked on helping a small tribe, the Skull Valley Goshutes, in Utah as they faced proposed high-level toxic waste dumping on their land. Honor the Earth tours target specific issues and communities that are affected by those issues, but they also call us to make global connections. Our overconsumption of resources on our own lands is directly linked to the wars we fight in other lands. This became evident as George Bush waged war in the Middle East, a strategic point for resources and an opportunity to feed the military-industrial complex beast. These connections and experiences have deepened our lives and informed our songs over the years.

Benefit. Neil Young puts on a show every year to benefit the Bridge School, an innovative place of alternative means of learning for children with severe speech and physical disabilities. We shared the stage with Willie Nelson, Incubus, CSNY, Neil Young and Pearl Jam, among others. It was an incredible honor to be invited to perform and, as fans of so many of these artists, the experience was intense and inspiring. I think because we always worked so hard to engage other artists to join us in supporting Honor the Earth and other causes, it was tremendously gratifying to be amongst so many artists who were willing to donate their time and talent to such a worthy cause. The energy at a benefit concert always far surpasses that of just any other show, no matter how spectacular. On a very basic level, it felt good to be included. It felt like we were with like-minded musicians. And it certainly felt like music is always more than music; it can galvanize the spirit and make real change happen.

Back home in Atlanta, Amy and I were inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame. It was a rather conservative setting, sort of a pseudo-black tie affair with everyone seated at round tables in a ballroom. I definitely felt like a fish out of water as we went up to accept our award, and I talked about the hope that one day Georgia would embrace everyone with love and equality (definitely thinking Gay marriage before Gay marriage was an issue, or even thinking Gay people in general). I felt very GAY, standing up there, and it's funny to think how far we have come since then, or maybe I should say how far I have come in feeling comfortable in my own skin. Kenny Rogers was also inducted that year. The greatest thing was thinking about so many greats who had come before us, people like Otis Redding, Gladys Knight, Isaac Hayes, Greg Allman, and on and on. If you ever get the chance to read the list of people who have been inducted, I think you will find it impressive. It made me proud to be from Georgia and reminded me how thoroughly soaked in music our southern state is. Despite the strange (to me) environment of the award ceremony, the honor was deep and humbling and appreciated.

We stayed on track to release a new CD in 2004 by beginning work on All That We Let In in Atlanta at Tree Sound Studios. The title track was initially inspired by learning about the death of a woman I had only recently met during an Honor the Earth gathering. Only a few months earlier, she and I had been sitting together talking. She had her pilot's license and was telling me about flights in a little plane through dark skies lit with stars and lights far below. I was enchanted by her life and her flights. Soon after she was killed by a drunk driver who crossed the middle line and ran into her head-on. Hence, the lines, "we've lost friends and loved ones much too young; with so much promise and work to be done; when all that guards us is a single center line; and the brutal crossing over when it's time". It was also a song about Bush and the Middle East war ("one days those toughies will be withered up and bent; the fathers, sons, holy warriors, and our president..."). It was a song of lament and a look at the beauty of both vast and simple things.

I wrote one of my favorite songs on the record, "Come On Home." Very rarely do I write a song that fulfills what I feel is its promise in terms of words and images locking in with the music. But "Come on Home" resonated with me completely and still does now. The song on the record has my favorite bass part of all time by Clare Kenny. I remember

driving home from the studio and blasting the rough mix of that song, over and over. When I listen now, I am transported back in time. It was a year of great darkness and light.

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 16



Amy and Sammy Blackbear, Skull Valley Goshute Reservation, Utah

2003 Honor the Earth Tour

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 11



Winona LaDuke.Dana Powell.Amy on the bus

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 10



On Pine Ridge with Winona LaDuke, Lori Pourier, and some of the White Plume family

2003 Honor the Earth Tour

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 10



Pine Ridge, SD



Amy and Emily at KILI Radio, Pine Ridge, SD

2003 Honor the Earth Tour



AR.2003

It's worth noting that I met my life partner and the mother of my child in 2003 on a short solo run down South with punk band, The Butchies. Carrie was along for the ride, filming a documentary on gender identity. We played 3 shows, and I asked her out the day after our January 18th show at the 40 Watt Club in Athens. First, I had to discern that her best friend was NOT her girlfriend and then I had to wait until a February birthday bowling party for Butchies' drummer Melissa York in Durham, and that's when and where we had our first "date." The rest is a long and winding road that has led us to being a little family with the most magical child ever!

You know how it is with new love, I was insanely inspired but struggled to stay focused throughout the year. Still, this was one of those years when we had so much going on and no shortage of attention grabbing projects. We had a busy schedule and were also getting our writing together to record a new IG record. This was a special tour season because we spent the whole time touring as a duo, something we hadn't done in a while. We usually bounced back and forth between band and duo, but this year was different, we just went out there as a duo and reacquainted ourselves with the intimate and spontaneous nature of playing stripped down. Being with a band is so motivating to me, but being in duo form takes a ton of stamina and I really have to be on my toes, so it was a good kick in the butt. Along the way, we took time to write and practice and take in all the things we were experiencing that year.

At the beginning of the year, we had crazy winter weather and actually had to postpone a show in February because of a snowstorm. We always said February was our favorite time to tour because no one else was doing it...and for good reason. We also had to cancel a few shows because of Laryngitis-sometimes it just felt impossible to stay healthy out on the road. But the best thing about that winter was a show we had at Oberlin College on Feb 15th, which happened to be the day of an internationally coordinated protest against the Iraq War. I went and bought a big, wool, hippie coat at the local army-navy store so I could stand outside with the protestors for a bit. I met one of our future political gurus, Becky Bodonyi, at that protest. After getting schooled by her about the Patriot Act, I got her email said we'd be writing to her in the future and indeed we did, she worked for us for years after she got out of school.

We did a full-on Honor the Earth tour in April after spending the winter doing duo IG shows, solo shows and benefits. In an effort to bridge the gap between college students and the Native communities that often exist very close to them, this Honor tour focused on college campuses, and combined speaking, Q&A, and performance to bring to light current issues related to Native environmental activism. The tour was produced by

The Splinter Agency and took a lot of organizing ideas from their college speaking tours, which we had participated in. The tour highlighted unsustainable energy projects and their impact on the environment and culture as well as the fossil fuel industry's connection to the impending Iraq War. We challenged that devastation by amplifying both the vision and the reality of sustainable alternative energy and cultural projects across Native America. Our tour took us from the Midwest, to the Northwest, and on down to the Southwest. We confronted nuclear issues in Minnesota; celebrated wind energy and community radio at Rosebud and Pine Ridge in South Dakota; learned about nuclear contamination in Idaho and Eastern Washington state; we saw huge hydro-dams on the Columbia River and learned of their impact on the Salmon population, along with the Colville and Yakima Tribes' Salmon restoration projects; and went to the Four Corner's region to witness the impact of water scarcity issues, coal fired power plants, uranium mining and nuclear waste proposals.

We met activists from Indian Country that were doing incredible work, and fighting for their tribe's very existence. And although the tour was super intense, we also had a lot of laughs and good ol' adventures! Not but a few days into our trip, one of our traveling companions, who was 3 or 4 at the time, hid the only key to our tour bus, so we were held up for a day in the middle of South Dakota, coaxing the little guy to tell us where "the Grinch" had hidden the key. After we got the bus sorted out, we continued on our way and visited a Hemp Farm that the federal government was trying to close down, did an interview at KILI radio, and saw the contrast between a polluting hog farm and a sustainable bison herd-a lot of action in South Dakota! In Nevada, we met the Shoshone activist sisters, Carrie and Mary Dann who were well into their 70's and 80's, and fighting the BLM for the right to graze their cattle on their ancestral lands. In Utah we paid a visit to Sammy Blackbear, who was leading the grassroots fight against Nuclear Waste storage on the Skull Valley Goshute Reservation-a tiny community that is nestled in the midst of an array of hazardous situations, including Dugway Proving Grounds, where the federal government stores nerve agents and operates a weapons testing and training range for air to surface, surface to air, and air to air weapons; the Intermountain (coal fired) Power Plant; and the Tooele Army Depot, the site of one of the world's largest nerve gas incinerators and weapons testing and storage facilities. So, this tiny little community with only one road in and out, and no infrastructure to speak of, surrounded by explosive and toxic activities was a proposed site to store hazardous nuclear waste. Learning about these kind of issues and the people we met who are willing to stand up and fight for what's right, made our music career mean even more to us-it gave us drive and purpose. I am so glad now that I kept a diary from this tour because now I can look back and see how my initial perceptions and see how they have developed over the years, as well as how the issues have evolved. We are still in the bad energy paradigm, but a lot of these tribes won their battles and a lot of good things came to fruition with wind energy, salmon restoration, sustainable farming, and alternative media. Some of the college activists we ran across on this tour have kept us abreast of their work and it's pretty inspiring to see where they have ended up. And while we did hear dissent on some college campuses, for every college protestor at our shows, there were 10 college activists fighting for something bigger than themselves.

By late spring/early summer we were off the road for a while to write and record our new studio album—*All That We Let In*. I holed up for a week at Duke Towers in Durham to put the finishing touches on a few songs for the record. My girlfriend was living in Durham and so were The Butchies, it was a little epicenter of creativity for me. I had never gone on a “writer’s retreat,” but it proved fruitful and I went back to Georgia with all my songs ready to go for the studio. Emily and I had done some arranging before my retreat but quite a few of our songs were arranged during preproduction or in the studio, a very different pattern for us. Peter Collins came down to Atlanta and we worked at combing through the songs and figuring out what was going to work for the record. We had, what seems like now, a very long time in the studio to make this record; we worked part of June through the end of July right up until we hit the road again.

In August we played a run of outdoor and summer shed dates. Most notable was our Central Park show in NYC on August 14th where we played on the same night as the huge blackout that covered the Northeast, and extended into the Midwest and Canada. Everyone was spooked and talking about the possibility of foul play in the shadow of 9-11. Amazingly enough, there was a generator, full and ready to rumble, and we made the decision to streamline our power use, skip the stage lights, start the show early, play a shorter set, and then get everyone safely out of the park before nightfall. It was incredible! Our crowd was already there, arriving early to get good seats, so we made the announcement and everyone cooperated; it was such a memorable and moving night. When the show ended the audience just quietly filed out of the park and figured out how to get home. Just the fact that our audience chose to stay for the show was something I’ll never forget. When we were all loaded up, we got on the bus, dropped by our hotels and headed out of the city. We had been staying at The Hudson hotel and we had to go in and walk up the stairs to get our bags. I was on a high floor, so it took a while, but it was so cool because everyone was being generous and helpful, and there were little fake candles in the stairwell to guide us. The city was so quiet in some ways but also so alive with folks out in the streets and restaurants grilling out their food and serving it before it went bad. Driving out of the city was a magical experience with the power out for miles and miles. This night really reminded me of my own massive consumption of power and fossil fuels, especially as a touring musician. It was definitely something I took note of in the context of our work with Honor the Earth.

In the fall of 2003 we were inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame. Kenny Rogers was also there that night, so we got to meet him and see him play. I didn’t even realize how cool it all was until after the night was over, because as often happens, I was very nervous and just trying to maintain my composure. I went back and looked at the video from that night and it made me feel really lucky to have been there and have our career recognized. We don’t go in for awards that much, but getting one from our home state felt really special. After that we played a sweet little run of West Coast shows, including one of my favorite festivals of all time. We got to play Neil Young’s Bridge School benefit at the Shoreline Amphitheater again!! The line up was spectacular as usual —Incubus, CSNY, Pearl Jam, Willie Nelson, Wilco, and more. Seeing Willie and

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 13



Peter Collins.Carol Isaacs.Emily at Tree Studio, Atlanta

2003. *All that We Let In*

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 9



Amy and Brady Blade at Tree Studio, Atlanta

2003. *All That We Let In*

📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 12



📅 19 Aug 2015 ❤️ 8





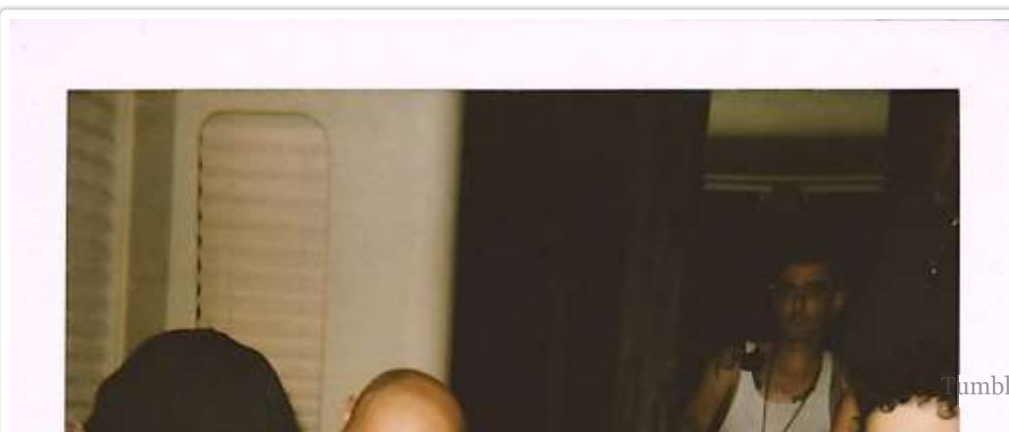
Carol.Emily.Clare and The New York Times Crossword.2002

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 15



TV in Belgium.2002

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 18





Sarah and Gert Bettens of K's Choice. Brendan Hoffman. Carol Isaacs. 2002

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 8



Signing CDs in Holland. 2002

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 10

Become You was a beautifully intimate album to tour because we recorded it with our musical mates (Brady, Clare, Carol), and our home team (Peter Collins back at producer helm, Glenn Matullo engineering, and Michelle Malone guest vocal ling). There wasn't a lot on the record that was missing in the live shows, and that was a satisfying feeling. I had an incredibly deep love for our band individually and collectively; they had become lifelong friends. Playing music that I cherish with a group of people onstage that helped bring it to fruition creates an environment of love. I spent a good deal of 2002 floating in love with the band, on and offstage. I know this now, especially, because when I listen to songs from this era they make me feel emotional, and they bring me back to Carol, and Clare, and Brady just as much as they bring me back to the content of the lyrics.

I was born with wanderlust, and a year like 2002 kept me engaged in the absolute privilege and passion of travel. I'm pretty sure it's the only year we played London three times! The third time was in a chapel, and we created a sort of literary/musical crossover event with the critically acclaimed and fabulous author, Sarah Waters. During the course of the evening Sarah read from some of her books, Amy and I read excerpts from different poetic and literary works, and we sang songs that related to the written and read words. It was a small and intimate venue and a wonderful forum for creating a different kind of "show." Of course, I was in awe of Sarah Waters, and Amy and I were pretty blown away by the fact that she agreed to take part, as it was a bit out of her element.

We went back to Germany. Strangely, I had the best Thai meal I'd ever had at a restaurant in Koln on a day off, and I finally learned to call the city "Koln" instead of "Cologne." I spent some time wandering the red light district of Hamburg (during the day), and went running in Berlin. Berlin is a stunning city, a city with a forest in it! There were red lines marking the place where the great dividing wall between East and West once stood. In addition to Berlin and the other mentioned cities, we played a radio show in Bremen. My mom read "The Bremen Town Musicians" to my sisters and me when we were very young. The story of the old, clever animals that joined together in a journey of survival toward Bremen was fresh in my mind all those years later, and I was truly delighted that I would actually be going to the place that lived so largely in the tale of my childhood. It was magical.

Other travels across the sea included a trip to Copenhagen ("oh wonderful, wonderful Copenhagen..."), the Netherlands, and many cities across the UK. We had strong and fruitful relationships with the European and British record company reps, particularly in the Netherlands, and while we had a small following in Europe, it was dedicated. The only place that was a complete bust for us was France, and we had one of if not the most miserable gigs of our lives opening for Randy Travis in Paris. French cowboys. Amy lost her voice and the crowd didn't like us one bit. I even attempted to speak some French over the mic, but to no avail. I can't remember being back to France since then. It's hard to predict where the language barrier or cultural sensibility will not

line up in a foreign country, but there was no doubt about France. Still, it hasn't kept me from vacationing there, believing that Paris is one of the greatest cities in the world, and celebrating my French heritage.

Back in the States, we did a really cool small club tour to introduce the new album, *Become You*. The club played the entire album over the sound system, and then Amy and I played a live show. It was a blast because we were excited about the new album, the clubs were packed, people got a chance to hear it in its entirety, and then we got a chance to play new songs live. By that time, we were playing pretty large venues regularly, like 2 nights at Wolf Trap and 2 nights at Radio City Music Hall, but promoting the album through the club tour brought us back to our roots as a bar band. The energy felt exactly like it did the night we played a release party at the Little Five Points Pub in Atlanta for 1987's *Strange Fire*. While playing large venues is exciting, there is nothing quite like being jammed up in a small club, sweating it all out together.

Back in those days, I did a lot of crossword puzzles with Carol and Clare, backstage and on the bus. Unfortunately for Amy, I played a lot of loud music on the bus and danced late into the nights. Amy and I passed through fifteen years as a professional band together and kept looking ahead.

Sometimes I get asked what my favorite song I've ever written is. I seem to always come back to "She's Saving Me," a song to my little sister Carrie, and a song to women in my life who held me up; a song to a kind God, not a vengeful God. Along our travels, and in the studio, and all around, the spirit of love that existed moved me in our musical world. *Become You* is special to me, for the music and the memories.

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 18



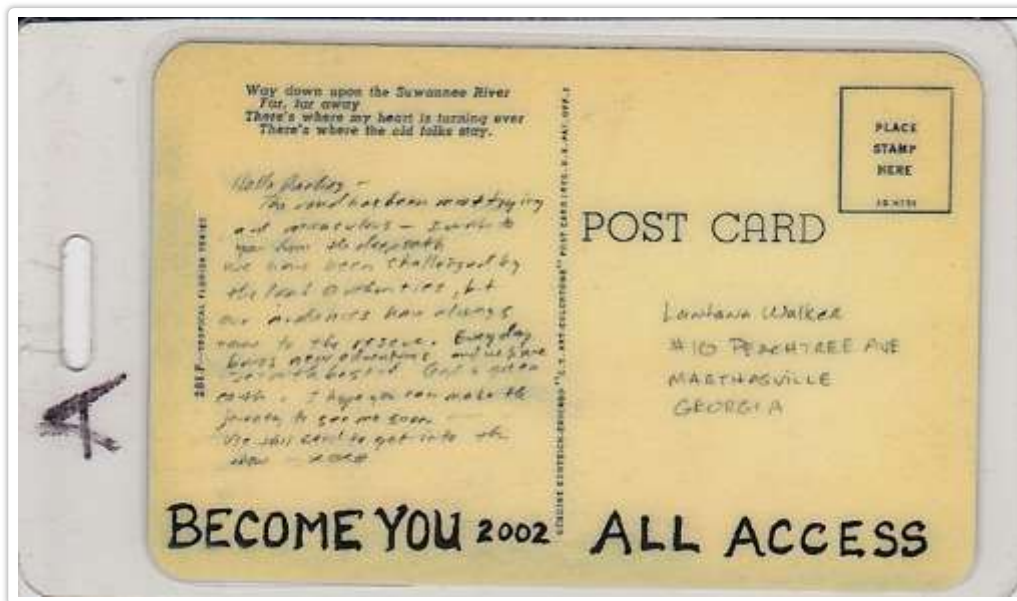
Emily.Amy.Stacey Singer at School of The Americas vigil, Ft. Benning, Columbus, GA.2002

Indigos March 2002

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					Paradise Boston, MA	
					<i>Go back to NY</i>	
University of Buffalo Buffalo, NY	Ottawa Congress Center Ottawa, Canada Elana Martin acoustic live opener	Liz's Palace Toronto, Canada	OFF	OFF	3/4 p.m. SYDNEY	OFF
OFF				NYC	ATLANTA	
	A.O.L. CHAT	CD Release Party Echo Lounge Atlanta, GA	FLY TO NYC + Night	CHARLIE ROSE 11:45 / 6PM Oxygen - Afternoon	→ THE VIEW → CBS - This Morning Done Right - 80 PLAYLIST	MC PARTY
NYC	Youngstown Symphony Chorus Youngstown, OH	The Memo Chicago, IL	OFF (RADIO) MISSISSAUGA	Mississippi, MN 1 st AVENUE	MADISON, WI OCTAGON (PHOTOS)	OFF
Mountain State Charleston, WV W/ Brian Dinkell & Danielle Hinkle 11:00	HOME → OFF UNTIL April 8 th	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF

① ② ③

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 6



Back of handmade laminate for *Become You* tour.2002

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 8





RADIO PROMOTION - The Mountain
SEATTLE

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 16



Amy and Kaia, The Butchies rehearsing for Ladyfest.2002



Amy at Winter Park Festival.2002

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 22

AR.2002

As far as our career, 2002 was a really stable year. We had a great crew and we toured consistently through the whole year, playing about 150 shows and doing a ton of promotion. We were still on Epic Records and we had a sharp team of music people working our new record and all the pieces seem to fall into their proper places. *Become*

You was a really fun record to promote and is still one of my favorite Indigo records. I

loved the songs, the production and the general aesthetic of the whole campaign. Our

band was a tight; we were close knit personally and musically-Carol Isaacs played

accordion and keys, Clare Kenney played bass, and Brady Blade played drums. Carol and Clare also filled in harmonies, which was an added bonus since we always had extra vocal parts on the records that we wanted to have covered. For the first part of the year, we had to leave our band behind to do some promo gigs at small clubs. I will always love a club tour, even if we're just tooling around as an acoustic duo, there is a sweaty, rock energy that comes into play.

We started at the end of January with a few gigs in the UK, this was really the year for going overseas. I'm not sure what got into us, but we flew over to the UK and/or Europe three different times during the year. We had a lot of ambition that year for touring and were pretty fancy free with energy to spare, so I think we just went for it. During the first batch of UK shows, Clare and Carol actually sat in on couple of them in London and Manchester. One of the great things about having an English band was getting to meet up over there. We loved playing together and were on the same page about the joys of music making. We hopped back over to the US and did a really fun duo promo tour of clubs. I still remember this tour pretty well, because we hit some of my favorite spots- Slim's in SF, Aladdin Theater in Portland and Bowery Ballroom in NYC! Triple A Radio was still figuring heavily into our career and some of the best stations for this format were still thriving and supporting us. We had a good combination of radio airplay, indie retail support and press, as well as some of the mainstream stuff.

It was such a different world then, free and /or promotional music downloading was just starting in earnest and the conversations about Napster and download services were heating up. We worked with MSN and AOL, and they were the biggies then, how quickly things change! In the beginning of the year, I went to a big conference in DC, hosted by The Future of Music Coalition, a non-profit group formed to help independent musicians navigate the turbulent waters of new technologies, intellectual property law, and public policy. The conference was innovative and educational, and helped to kick start my interest in educating myself about the new music environment. It was all so daunting and hard to keep up with but hearing speakers that could distill the science and legalese down to lay person's terms as well as hearing creative ideas from punk icon Ian MacKaye of Fugazi, helped me feel like I could dive in a bit and survive the new digital terrain. My label, Daemon Records was trying to get on board with the digital world and groups like FMC really helped with this, as well as just inspiring more community based activism and coalition building. Daemon participated in Atlanta's Ladyfest with a big show at the Echo Lounge; the line-up included some of our best Daemon bands. Special guests, The Butchies headlined and played a raucous punk set, then backed me up for some songs from *Stag* . Ladyfest was popping up in different towns and still had a very grassroots approach to its promotion and mission, but also was using the Internet to organize and build coalitions between scenes in different towns. A lot of us had taken cues early on from the Zapatistas with their emphasis on using the power of the Internet to organize, as well as nurturing the visceral and organic nature of physical community space. For me, the activist side of the Internet and Indie media was a more compelling entry point into the new digital universe; the potential of self-promotion was just not as motivating.

I found some of the most radical new activist digital media being organized from some

old dilapidated apartments that were taken over once a year for the School of the America's protest at Fort Benning in Columbus, GA. Indigo Girls and Daemon participated off and on over the years in this incredible yearly vigil dedicated to closing down the WHINSEC school that trains Latin American military in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare, military intelligence and interrogation tactics. We were protesting the increased militarization of Latin America supported by the U.S. that was and is contributing to destabilization of governments, abuses of human rights, and thousands of disappeared people. At the 2002 vigil, I was especially struck by all the indie media's strategies, which included recorded interviews for internet radio and websites, and live streaming of the event, ultimately reaching more people than ever before.

Our activism as usual was woven into our touring season and became part of the tapestry of our year and our music, giving us even more energy to travel, play shows, promote the records, and gather more resources for our goals. This was a rich and interesting tour season with shows all over the US as well as Germany, Denmark, Netherlands, Scotland and the UK. The highlight of the overseas travel was a show at Union Chapel in London with Sarah Waters, a brilliant novelist that we adored. It was an experimental show that included us playing some songs interspersed with Sarah reading from her books as well as all of us sharing readings that we found had inspired our writing- Virginia Woolf's writings, a transcript from a KKK trial, Frank Stanford's poetry, etc. I think some of it worked really well, and some of it might have been a bit esoteric, but the end result for me was a show that was super creative and pure fun and inspiration. Sharing the space with such a brilliant writer was so inspiring. Another awesome aspect of traveling overseas was all the people we worked with in the different countries. The record label folks were cut from a different cloth in each country we visited, and so we experienced all the different styles of promotion and working in the music business. The press was often very provocative and never shied away from asking the hard questions. This made for very interesting and challenging interviews. One of my favorite US shows in 2002 was a festival in Winter Park, Colorado where we shared the stage with The B-52's, and Kate and Sara Lee joined us for rendition of "Midnight Train to Georgia." We also visited east Greenwich High School outside of Providence to participate in a diversity forum. The students participated in a conversation about some of our lyrics as well as a reading of a speech given by Dennis Shepard about the brutal 1998 murder of his son, Matthew in Laramie, WY. Although we had come a long way from getting banned in 1994 from playing some high schools in the South to an invitation to visit a high school to talk about being gay, the kids that we talked to at East Greenwich High were not naïve, they were aware that we had a long way to go.

"Matt officially died at 12:53 a.m. on Monday, October 12, 1998, in a hospital in Fort Collins, Colorado. He actually died on the outskirts of Laramie tied to a fence that Wednesday before, when you beat him. You, Mr. McKinney, with your friend Mr. Henderson, killed my son. By the end of the beating, his body was just trying to survive. You left him out there by himself, but he wasn't alone. There were his lifelong friends with him—friends that he had grown up with. You're probably wondering who these friends were. First, he had the beautiful

sky with the same stars and moon that we used to look at through a telescope. Then, he had the daylight and the sun to shine on him one more time—one more cool, wonderful autumn day in Wyoming. His last day alive in Wyoming. His last day alive in the state that he always proudly called home. And through it all he was breathing in for the last time the smell of Wyoming sagebrush and the scent of pine trees from the snowy range. He heard the wind—the ever-present Wyoming wind—for the last time.”

- from Dennis Shepard's statement to the court, 11/4/99

📅 8 Jul 2015 ❤️ 14



Become You

Tree Studio, Atlanta 2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 25





Clare, Brady, Emily, Carol

“Bitterroot” *Become You* 2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 19





Clare and Emily

Become You 2001

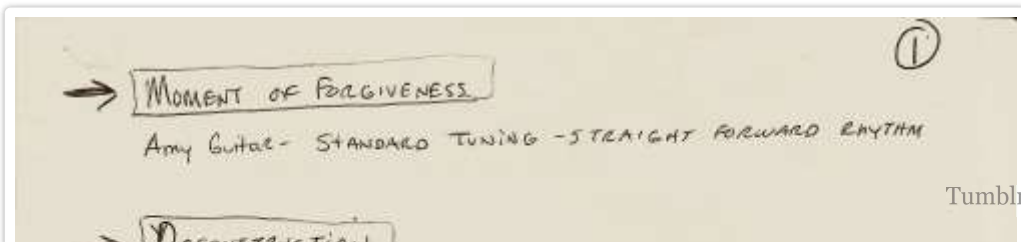
📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 21



Clare and Brady

Become You 2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 13



→ DECONSTRUCTION

Amy Guitar - 7th fret, STANDARD TUNING

• ENTRIES ON 'AS WE SAT STUCK'... picking lightly

1 vs B section

- Em - D/F# - G (no kb) - - hammer on and off
- Em - D/F# - G (no kb) - ← only hammer off

2 vs A

- D D (lift off A) Em⁷ A
- REPEAT
- [B section same as above]

CHORUS [D A G A G D G A D]

TRANSITION [STAY ON D pick these notes against piano
D - E - F# - F# - F# - E - D]

3 vs A [REPEAT AS ABOVE]
B [REPEAT AS ABOVE]

4 vs 5 try starts to CRASH... lift off this then go here

A

REPEAT

B [SAME AS ABOVE]

→ BITTER ROOT - Amy did not play on this, but you can play rhythm in the key of E ELVIS STYLE (5)

→ OUR DELIVERANCE - Amy plays Barzakei tuned STANDARD also can be played on STANDARD MANDOLIN

CHORD FOR VERSE 1

(A)

(2X)

(B)

CHORUS C needs

- Picked on 2 strings

- repeat picking on C then - C - D - G

* Amy enters on Verse 1 B section

Indigo Girls Rehearsal DAT Tape 9

ID #	Time	Song	Description
1	0:41	"Saving Me"	Chorus before bridge
2	4:05	"	w/o bass in bridge
3	23:36	"Become You"	1 st take
4	26:24	"	2 nd take
5	28:22	"	" "
6	31:36	"	" "
7	36:00	"	" w/ guitars out in 2 nd verse
8	37:15	"	" w/ Emily in on 2 nd verse, harmony
9	42:05	"	3 rd verse drums out
10	43:30	"	Full take w/ new ideas, good tempo
11	49:12	"	Full speed
12	50:12	"	Trying guitars and bass
13	1:02:53	"	Slow version
14	1:03:40	"	Checking chords B4 chorus
15	1:07:24	"	Verse of B section
16	1:09:42	"	B section w/ Claire doing Emily's part
17	1:14:00	"	New guitar chords
18	1:15:07	"	" " w/ click
19	1:20:58	"	" "
20	1:25:35	"	" "
21	1:27:16	"	" "
22	1:34:50	"	Bass out B4 3 rd V & drums out chorus 1
23	1:39:12	"	Brady's groove in instrumental
24	1:42:12	"	Instrumental, Carrol playing accordion
25	1:43:11	"	2 nd chorus new instrumental
26	1:45:31	"	Accordion in instrumental
27	1:48:59	"	Chorus w/ accordion as intro
28	1:49:27	"	" " vox in right away, Peter liked
29	1:55:45	"	Full take w/ intro and click
30	1:59:45	"	Instrumental, bass drum groove
31	2:00:52	"	" " bass & drum keep going

Become You Studio Notes 2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 22

ES. 2001

It actually feels strange to talk about anything else except the attacks of September 11th.

But the truth is that life went on for us musically even after so much stopped and then

changed for so many in the wake of 9/11. I can clearly remember that we were scheduled

to rehearse for our soon to be new record, *Become You* on September 12, and we were trying to decide whether or not we should carry on with practice, because everyone was in shock and deep mourning, and it felt as if the entire country had come unglued, or at least unmoored. After careful thought, we decided to go ahead with rehearsal as a means of getting back to life and rededicating ourselves to our musical purpose; to say that such horrific events could not keep us from forging on; to maybe find some hope in music where there seemed to be none everywhere else we looked. I felt such shock and numbness and outrage and sadness and fear that music was probably the only thing in that particular time to bring any healing of spirit whatsoever; that, and working to aid and support solidarity with the people of New York.

These are a few of the things that I remember about 9/11/2001. Someone told me to turn on the TV, that a plane had crashed into a twin tower in New York. When I turned on the TV, I saw the second plane crash into the other building and my first thought was, 'there is something wrong with flight control, air traffic control systems have failed and planes are randomly crashing into things'. My sister lived in New York and we couldn't reach her on the phone. Although I felt in my heart that she was ok, I knew there were many people who maybe felt the same thing about their loved ones but they weren't ok. I remember the relief at finding out she was fine, even though she was close to the World Trade Center when the attacks happened.

I remember the eerie emptiness of a sky with no planes. I remember the sick feeling that nothing would ever be the same but I didn't know how. I thought of the people on Flight 93 who overtook their hijackers, knowing they would die. In the aftermath of the attacks, I remember images of the flyers posted everywhere with faces of people who were missing. I couldn't get the images of heroic rescue workers, caked in white dust, and the reports of firemen and emergency workers who died trying to save people. I was horrified at the content of talk radio. Most of all, I felt the deepest love for the city and people of New York.

As I recollect these things, I feel immersed in the incomprehensible magnitude of 9/11 and the myriad emotions these memories bring up. Still, as I say, Amy and I went back to music and carried on, but my heart was shadowed.

In October, we performed with the Atlanta Ballet and orchestra, in a joint production entitled "Shed Your Skin." The creative director of the Atlanta Ballet, John McFall hired Margo Sappington to take songs from our repertoire and choreograph them for the dancers. While they danced, we played live on stage with our band: Clare Kenny on bass, Carol Isaacs, and Blair Cunningham on drums. This was the most unusual and challenging performance of our career up to that point, because the music had to be exactly in time and to count so that the dancers could perform their routines. Talk about pressure!! I was honestly filled with anxiety and stage fright during these performances. Not to mention that the performances took place in the glorious Fox Theatre in Atlanta in front of a home crowd. Pulling these performances off felt like a great accomplishment, as there were many hours of rehearsal and staging and note taking and, ultimately, execution. Not only was Blair a world -class drummer (Paul McCartney), but

also he was also as steady as a metronome. I always felt I could count on him every move and count, and we did! Margo was fantastic to work with; so creative and full of energy and excited about the cross pollination of folk/rock music and ballet dancing. The dancers were absolutely lovely, completely shifting my general misconception of dancers as aloof and serious. Maybe some are, but this company was warm and friendly and excited for us all to be working together. The experience gave me a new found appreciation for how incredibly hard dancers work. During the performances, it was tempting to watch them dance; they were so great, with such energy and grace, and dancing to our music!!! But I could only watch out of the corner of my eye, as I was focusing intensely on performing as perfectly as possible. I would say that the shows were sort of an out-of-body experience and also a growing experience in focus and belief that vastly different genres of art could cross-pollinate beautifully with the right direction (Margo) and energy.

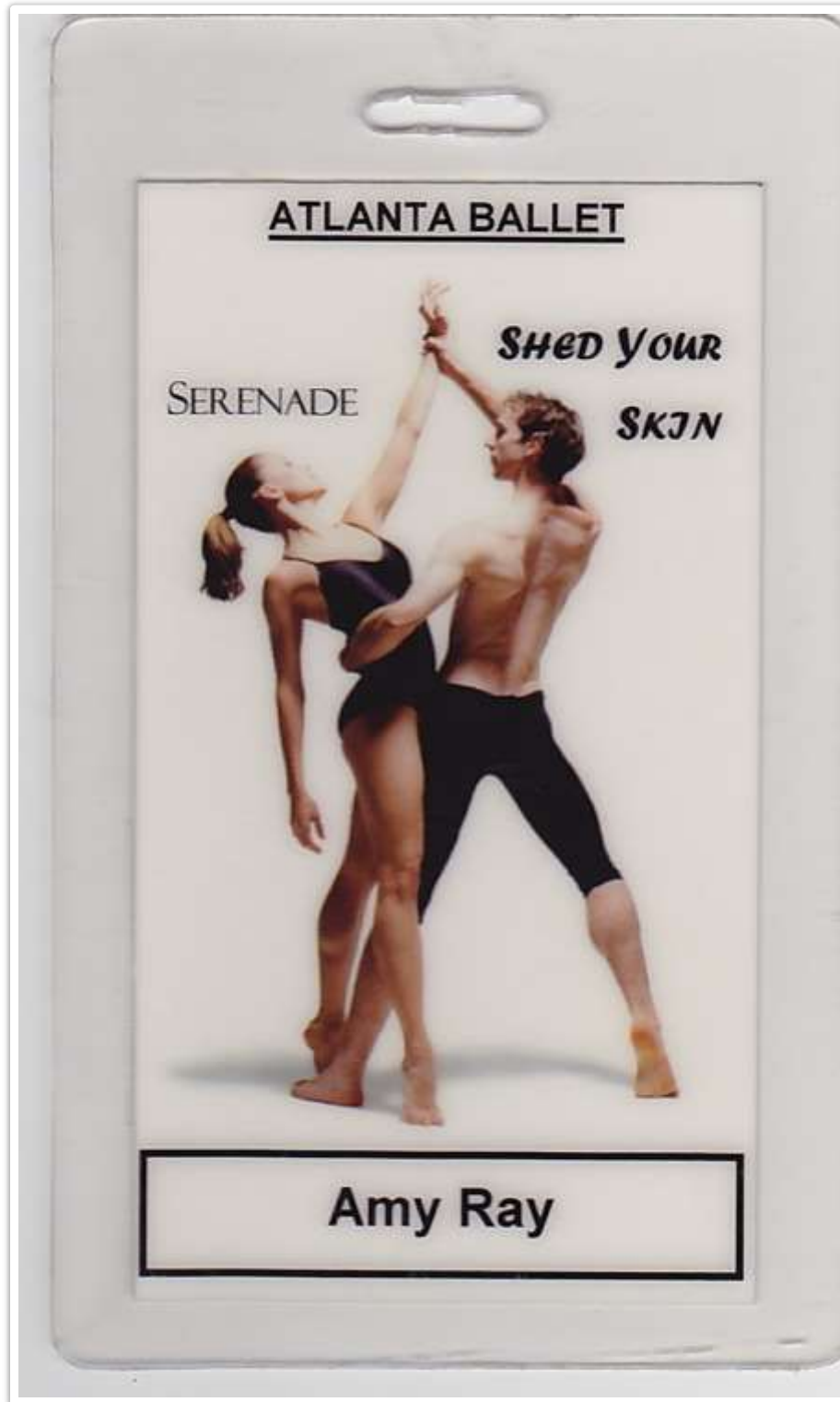
That fall, we began work on *Become You* . After the layered musical elements of *Come On Now Social* , *Become You* was a return to a more simple, stripped down approach of production. We brought Peter Collins back in to produce, and we cut tracks in a smaller room at Tree Studios, Atlanta. It was a nice shift to keep the focus simple and record like a band playing. There weren't a lot of overdubs. We also had our old friend, Michele Malone, join us on harmony vocals, and her voice just melded with my and Amy's voice on songs like "Moment of Forgiveness" and "Hope Alone." "Hope Alone" was special to me because it was the first co-write of mine I had ever put on an IG record, and I wrote it with my dear friend, Annie Roboff. I met Annie when she, Beth Nielsen Chapman, and Bonnie Raitt came to Cuba on the same trip that Amy and I took. We didn't get to hang much in Cuba, but we professed our mutual admiration for each other's songwriting and made a promise to get together while back in the states and write together. So, later on I drove to Nashville where Annie lived, and I brought the musical beginnings of what would become "Hope Alone." Annie basically wrote the chorus music and melody and one thing I learned from her was that you could extend a note over as many beats as you wanted without having to fill in a word for every beat. This was a bit of a revelation to me, as I was so used to filling up space with words, as if I needed to use more words to get everything said in a song. So, at the beginning of the chorus, when I sing the word "you" over three notes, it's a new thing for me. I love co-writing with a consummate pro like Annie (she co-wrote "This Kiss" for Faith Hill) because I always learn something that may inform my individual writing.

My songs on *Become You* are highly emotional and intense, as I wove in and out of life's passions and pitfalls at that time. My ever-present theme of unrequited love was there in "Collecting You" and "Hope Alone," "Our Deliverance" started as a love song and ended up being an anti-war song. "Deconstruction" was written after I first noticed and began to watch a family of foxes that took up space in my wooded yard, and I felt the wonder, mystery and portents that wild birds and animals always represented. "You've Got to Show" was an experiment with more complicated chords and progressions than I typically used, and it has the only sax solo we ever put on an IG studio record. To this day, "She's Saving Me" remains my most personal song, as it talks about my sister's

death and the power of a woman's friendship and a loving God.

2001 was a year of catastrophe and a year of coming together.

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 21



Laminate "Shed Your Skin" Atlanta Ballet 2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 15

SONG NOTES

LEAST COMPLICATED

- When finished with "Na - Na" vocals - unplug and move to band riser

SHED YOUR SKIN

- As is

CARAMIA

- Blair gives 3 beats on a cue from the pit
- 5 Repeats of outro (as we counted onstage last night)

SCOOTER BOYS

- New ending (as on the CD) - perfect last night

GHOST

- At least 2 times through the opening guitar melody before vocal
- Play the outro 4 times (as you did last night)

EVERYTHING IN ITS OWN TIME

- Play intro 3 times - 1st time alone, 2nd and 3rd with violin
- Ending as was rehearsed last night (2 times with "ooh" outro)

TOUCH ME FALL

- Additional Orchestral Section
- Amy 4 bars of hard guitar
- Short gap
- Double Tom Tom solo
- 5 times through guitar interlude before melody begins (perfect last night)
- additional ending "touch me fall" (as on CD)

Atlanta Ballet "Shed Your Skin" Song Notes

2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 12





Emily and Margo

Atlanta Ballet “Shed Your Skin” 2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 13



IG Band and Cast of Atlanta Ballet “Shed Your Skin”

2001

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 14

AR.2001

In 2001 I was finally ready to take a leap of faith and release my first solo record on my indie label Daemon Records. Daemon had released and promoted over 30 records by other artists and I loved being able to work with so many of my favorite bands. At this point, many of the Daemon artists and other musicians I met through the label and indie scene started to really influence my song writing. My first solo effort, *Stag* was born out of my fandom for the great bands of the Southeastern indie music scene. Danielle Howle, 1945, and The Rock*A*Teens were bands that I considered to be groundbreaking and seminal in the lineage of great writers and musicians of my region and time. I had written songs with these artists in mind with the hopes of eventually getting to collaborate with them. The Butchies, a North Carolina punk band were on the top of my list too, and while they weren't signed to Daemon, they were a band I had always wanted

to work with. They had toured off and on with the IG's and in the midst of this we had started jamming on new music. I had about half a records worth of material that was inspired both stylistically and thematically by The Butchies. To round out this incredible list of dream collaborators, I revisited the Suffragette Session's Tour, where I had discovered a musical kinship with Kate Schellenbach and Josephine Wiggs. By some miracle, we ended up adding Joan Jett to the equation and recording a punk song I wrote called "Hey Castrator." I can't recall how we all managed to get in the same room, but wow, what an incredible feeling to play with that trio of rockers. It took a while for me to make *Stag*, traveling around to capture the bands in between IG dates. I started in Athens, GA recording "Black Heart Today" with The Rock*A*Teens at David Barbe's studio; traveled back and forth to Durham, NC to play with The Butchies; spent a couple of days in NYC with Kate, Jo and Joan; worked in Atlanta with Danielle Howle; mixed most of the record back in Athens and then went to Birmingham to record and mix "Late Bloom" with 1945. It was a totally new way to make a record for me but I loved it.

Stag came out in March and I spent a couple months touring with The Butchies. They would open the show, then change clothes and play as my band. This is still one of the best experiences of my life. We toured across the U.S. and I was so happy to be playing sweaty rock clubs and driving myself around the country, it was just what I needed to rekindle my creativity and refresh my spirit! I returned to the IG camp for July, when Emily and I went out as an acoustic duo and played a great run of West Coast shows and then a handful of dates in the Northeast. We were preparing to hit the studio in the fall and record *Become You*. It helped to play some of the songs out in front of people and get solid as a duo before recording. I went back out with The Butchies in August and played a short run including a killer date at Michigan Womyn's Festival, a show in Madison with Le Tigre, a First Avenue show in Minneapolis, Ladyfest in Chicago, and ending with a Daemon Showcase at the incredible, but now defunct, Atlanta club The Echo Lounge.

I was so pleased with the last few years of making music. Between *Stag* and *Come on Now Social*, I felt like I fed my rock and roll muses. I definitely became obsessed with the idea that the next IG record should be an acoustic, harmony driven record to harken back to our roots. I'm not sure what Emily's vision was at the time, but reuniting with our producer Peter Collins felt like the perfect vehicle for this. He came on board at first as an advisor and friend, I can't totally recall what the distinction was, but it became pretty obvious that this record was a record he could put his stamp on. When we let him, Peter could incorporate and weave together Emily's and mine's disparate musical styles in a way that made sense and brought out our strengths. Making a solo record had forced me to focus more on my writing and I became more disciplined about the process; in doing that, I experimented with trying to coax my writing in a specific direction and learn more about the craft. So for this record I had a real intention of writing songs that would lend themselves to our harmony as well as our current core group of collaborators, which included Brady Blade, Clare Kenny and Carol Isaacs.

production felt fresh and new to me, and Emily's writing was super intimate and soaring in its melody and structure. It was also a record where I learned a great deal on a personal level, some important lessons about creativity and partnership. My time with The Butchies was pretty heady, there was quite a bit of much deserved hype about their band and it contributed to the critical acclaim of *Stag* and a very successful tour. My confidence level rose from making a solo record, touring on it and running my own show for a while. But some of it caught up to me and played itself out when we made *Become You*. I can remember much discussion over a really gorgeous and beautifully written song that Emily co-wrote with the super gifted Nashville songwriter, Annie Roboff. I was hung up on the song being very pop and not our usual style, whatever that was supposed to mean. I didn't know if it had a place on this record. But I realized later I was being too controlling about what our style should be and what this record should encompass. The whole point of making music for us had always been the freedom of it and not having boundaries around what we do, but with this record I became too obsessed and over confident in the idea of sticking to my idea of what it meant to make an "organic, cool and rootsy" record. I had started thinking that pop music was not cool and got carried away with my own judgments. Well, I learned from that experience for sure as I ventured over the years into working on the art of songwriting and discovering what it meant to craft a good pop song. I'm glad Peter was there to keep me grounded and fight for a well-produced record that incorporated both Americana and Pop styles.

In the midst of making *Become You* and on the heels of the surreal tragedy of 9-11, we got involved in what is still a transformative creative experience for us, when we were asked by the visionary director of the Atlanta Ballet, John McFall to collaborate on a project with choreographer Margo Sappington. The project called *Shed Your Skin* was a stunning visual treat; with 7 IG songs choreographed for the dancers of the Atlanta Ballet. The ballet's orchestra played live in the pit and we played with a full band on stage right while the dancers moved in stunning physical interpretations to the songs. For me, tunes such as "Touch Me Fall" and "Caramia" will forever be associated with this incredible project. It was a challenge to play while the dancing was happening, because we had to stay strictly within the meter and the arrangement. We brought in drummer, Blair Cunningham to be our bandleader because of his natural metronomic sensibility. The performance was a huge critical success, and also got the stamp of approval from friends and family who came back night-after-night to see the show. The dancers and choreography were so exciting it was hard to focus on playing. I found myself losing my place during practice because I was so amazed at the physical prowess and grace of the dancers. Margot Sappington was gracious and indulged our greenness in this venture, guiding us along the way in what it takes to pull this kind of thing off. The project opened many doors for us and offered us a glimpse into the world of collaborating with the classical arts. Hearing our songs arranged with an orchestra stayed in our minds for years and led to our most recent endeavor of playing with symphony orchestras across the country.

Req # 111 - 000 375 6511
As of 10/1/01

INDIGO GIRLS October 2001

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	OFF	Tracking A Room	Tracking A Room	Tracking A Room (1/2 day of work) <i>To Honor the Earth festival</i>	Tracking A Room	Tracking A Room
OFF	Overdubs Studio 11 <i>EMILY OFF / AMY CAN WORK</i>	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11 <i>AMY OFF / EMILY CAN WORK</i>
Rehearsal for Adiana Ballet Band + visit to Tree House Studio/The Cure	Overdubs Studio 11 <i>Additional Band rehearsal (11:00) @ Tree House Studio/The Cure</i>	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11	Fox Theatre Performance	Fox Theatre Performance	Fox Theatre Matinee & Evening Performance
Fox Theatre Matinee & Evening Performance	OFF	Overdubs Studio 11 <i>AMY WORK NO PETER</i>	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11 <i>AMY WORK NO PETER</i>	OFF
OFF	OFF Overdubs Studio 11 <i>Early works</i>	Overdubs Studio 11	Overdubs Studio 11			

📅 21 May 2015 ♥ 8



Amy First Day with The Butchies

Stag 2001

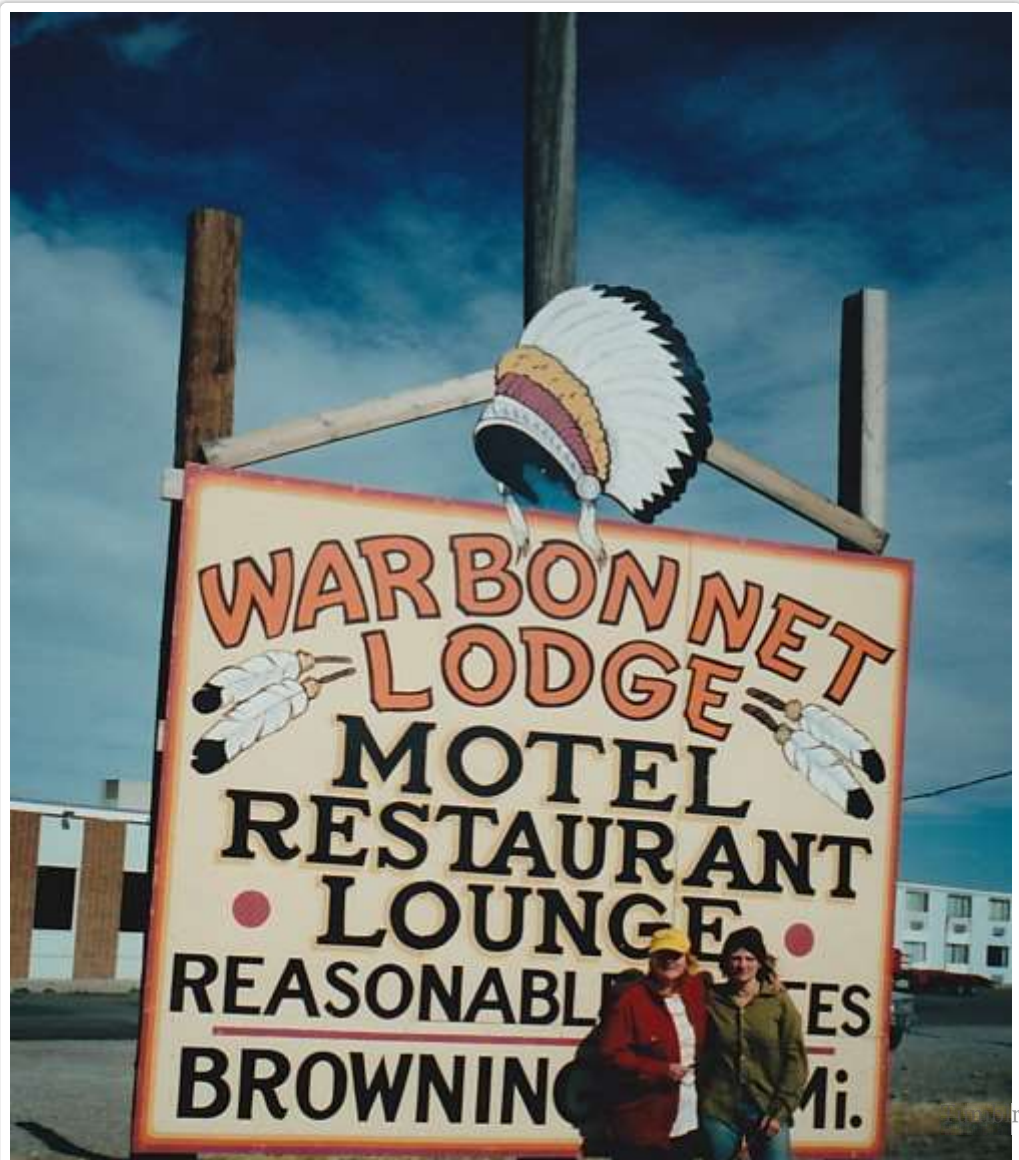
📅 21 May 2015 ♥ 21



“Hey Castrator” 2001 Stag

Josephine, Kate, Amy, Joan

📅 21 May 2015 ❤️ 19





IG's at the Warbonnet Lodge, Browning, MT

Honor the Earth 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 22

ES.2000

I started 2000 by huddling close with my besties in Key West, wondering whether or not the computers were all going to shut down and the world might fall into chaos and end. Thankfully, it was not to be! The sun came up and the world kept spinning, and we kind of laughed sheepishly that we would even buy into that apocalyptic bunk, and the computers worked and I went home from vacation to embark upon another year of Indigo Girl activities.

In February, we were in Chicago playing a couple of shows and slated to head directly to Australia after the Windy City visit. While in Chicago, Amy began to feel sick and experience abdominal pain. I could tell she was feeling really bad, but she just toughed her way through things until the show when she was practically green and couldn't stand up. I was terribly worried about her and knew that it had to be much worse than it even appeared because Amy is a tough, nose-to-the-grindstone kind of woman. But a burst cyst and bad appendix is a trip to the hospital, and off she went to Northwestern to undergo emergency surgery. I think about the timing of good fortune and how we weren't on a 20-hour flight to Sydney when Amy needed surgery!

Northwestern is a fantastic hospital, and she had world-class doctors taking care of her. Personally, I was relieved beyond description that she was going to be taken care of and that she was going to be better. I visited her in the hospital before heading back home to Atlanta. Plain and simple, when something happens to Amy, something happens to me. We are always so steadfastly committed to shows. I remember being grateful that, while it may have been disappointing for our Australian fans, we knew when it was time to stop and heal. Seems strange to say that, maybe, but it reinforced for me that our essential well-being comes first, which harkened back to the early days when we decided not to tour for more than 3 1/2 week stretches in order to stay balanced and well. That is a boundary that holds true to this day, and I believe it is an integral part of our longevity.

In mid April, we were on The Queen Latifah show. Bigger than the thrill of national TV was the thrill of actually meeting the Queen. I had been a huge fan of hers since her

TV was a fun of actually meeting the Queen. I had seen a huge fan of hers since her first record was released; she was one of those artists whose new releases I awaited with great anticipation. My sister and I used to wear “Nature of a Sista” out, singing in the car together, knowing every word on the album. Amy and I performed “Go” acoustically on the show, and the Queen was every bit as hospitable and awesome as I might have hoped. I got two tee shirts from the show and brought one home to one of my friends, also a die-hard fan.

Later in April, Amy and I went to D.C. to sing at the National Mall for Earth Day. We sang “Hammer and a Nail” which had become a sort of go-to take action song. Playing at the Nation’s capitol has always been deeply symbolic and inspiring. Despite the myriad complexities and problems with the U.S. government and its history, I can truly say that being able to gather in D.C. to protest or to celebrate any number of great issues is a privilege.

Our in-depth environmental work has primarily been through the efforts of Honor the Earth, the organization we started with Winona LaDuke after having met her at our first big Earth Day performance at Foxboro stadium, back in 1991. Meeting Winona changed the way we viewed environmental activism. We could no longer see the “picture” of environmentalism, except through that of an indigenous peoples’ lens. In my understanding, this is because “environmentalism” is not a concept for most Native Americans. Traditional indigenous peoples have an integral relationship with the earth, a spiritual respect for its bounty and sustenance, and a profoundly deep commitment to protect the earth for generations to come. For me, supporting these ways of being in relationship with the earth is not a ‘co-opting’ of a romanticized version of “Indian Ways.” Rather, the work, sprung from a paradigm of interconnectedness, is practical, respectful, and applicable to all environmental issues.

In 2000, Amy and I embarked on a lengthy Honor the Earth Tour, focusing primarily on protecting the buffalo population in Montana and working on nuclear waste dumping in Nevada and Utah. Preparing for an HTE tour of this nature is rigorous. Under the guidance of Winona LaDuke and other Indian community leaders, we targeted issues that were urgent, and we put together a plan that included writing to politicians with action cards collected at the shows, press conferences, visits to communities, like the Skull Valley Goshutes who were fighting nuclear waste dumping, concerts and community gatherings for cultural exchange and dialogue. Before we embarked, our social issues liaison extraordinaire, Faye Brown, put together a notebook of talking points, history, strategy and an in-depth look at all of the issues that were being covered by the tour. Amy and I act as a bridge between Indian and non-Indian communities, as the issues focused on are relevant to all of us, even though Indian communities bear the brunt of the environmental destruction and the desecration of their sacred sites is uniquely devastating to them.

While we have seen great victories along the way, the apparent abandonment of nuclear waste dumping at Yucca Mountain and in Skull Valley, most of the problems continue to rear their ugly heads as corporations continue to find ways to mine, dump, pollute, and elect anti-environment politicians. Still, what I have always found inspiring

penate, as a direct anti-environment politician? Still, what I have always found inspiring through the work of HTE are the members of small communities who become scientific experts, or who stand in front of mining machinery, or go to Washington to protest or remain absolutely faithful to the protection of Mother Earth.

Along the way, as audience members sign the action cards, we sing songs, people cook local specialties and Winona and community leaders speak about the issues, we have a lot of stories to tell and a lot of laughs. I especially remember, while staying overnight at the Warbonnet, Winona's 2-year son somehow losing the only key to the tour bus we had, and we questioned him and scratched our heads over the daunting dilemma of how to find that key! I don't remember it being particularly funny at the time because we had places to go and things to do (!), but it sure is funny now. I also remember things like the mythic status of fry bread and the stirring welcome and prayer songs of the different drum groups.

2000 was a year to honor the earth, as our month long tour was bookended, first by Earth Day in D.C. and last by an appearance at Centennial Park in Atlanta with Michele Malone to benefit Earth Challenge.

Oh, yeah, one more thing about this year...can you imagine how it feels to have Jackson Browne on your tour bus, joining in on Honor the Earth, staying up all night and talking politics and social issues and then, near the dawn of a new day, just happening to pass by a corner in Winslow, Arizona?

It's a fine sight to see.

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 25



Carol.Clare.Emily

Summer 2000



IG's Earth Day, D.C. 2000

Photo by Keri Pickett

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 44



Happy Birthday Emily

Clare.Blair.Carol.Matt

Summer 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 10



IG's and Michael Franti

Summer 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 21

NORTHWESTERN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Chicago, Illinois 60611

PATIENT DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

ADMISSION DATE: 2/26/00 DISCHARGE DATE: 2/28/00

RAY AMY F 035
I 000101884585
DR MURAYAMA, KENR
000041522210 WD

SELF CARE	PATIENT CAN PERFORM THE FOLLOWING:		INDEPENDENT WITH:		N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	IV <input type="checkbox"/>	INSTRUCTIONS
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
EATING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
DRESSING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
BATHING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
COOKING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
SHOPPING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
PHONE USE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TRAVEL ABILITY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TREATMENTS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

MEDICATIONS / SUPPLIES	TO BE TAKEN AT HOME				LAST DOSE RECEIVED
	NAME	DOSAGE/ROUTE	HOW OFTEN	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS	
	Jicodin	1-2 tabs	4-6 hours	as needed for pain	
	Motrin	400mg	6 hours	as needed	
Do NOT TAKE BOTH JICODIN AND MOTRIN IN THE SAME TIME PERIOD BECAUSE OF RISK FOR ULCER					

RAY AMY F 035
I 000101884585
DR MURAYAMA, KENR
000041522210 WD

ACTIVITY LEVEL	RESTRICTIONS AS FOLLOWS:		SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS	PHONE #
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
STAIR CLIMBING: # _____ WKS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO RESTRICTIONS		
LIFTING _____ POUNDS X _____ WKS	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPECIAL DIET		
AUTOMOBILE DRIVING X _____ WKS	<input type="checkbox"/>	HOME TESTING:		
OTHER _____	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE	<input type="checkbox"/>			

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS: Report to physician any increased pain, redness, swelling, and discharge from the incisions or dressings.
Heat 101.5°

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT:			
APPTS.	Follow up with Dr. Meryem - office # (312) 695-8918		
ACCOMPANIED BY:	AT TIME	TRANSPORTATION:	UNDERSTAND THE DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS
<i>D. Schaff</i>	1200		PATIENT SIGNATURE
M.D. SIGNATURE	DATE	R.N. SIGNATURE	DATE
	2/28/00	<i>[Signature]</i>	2/28/00
413187 (10/96)		PATIENT COPY	

Amy's discharge from Northwestern Hospital

2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 12

AR.2000

Chicago took me in

Dug under my skin

And changed the course of every whim

Don't walk so lightly

Don't hold on so tightly

Don't rush to the knife

I've paid all of my bills

Had my hospital thrills

Some sick part of me

Never wants to heal

I landed back home

Put on funeral clothes

I kept wishing I was all dressed up

With nowhere to go

Yeah, I thought it was neat

wheel chairs out in the street

A needle every day

For a week

Now I don't walk so lightly

And I don't hold on so tightly

Between 1998 and 2002, there were a lot of significant losses for us, friends, mentors, family-all of them intense and most of them unexpected. I felt like I was going to one funeral after another, and grieving every moment of my day. I wrote the song "Devotion" after this period, talking about the need to move on and learn to live life and embrace the impermanence, and of course I am still learning that lesson with each new loss and each day I let mortality eat at me. When we released *Retrospective* in 2000, we recorded and added two new songs to the collection of hits, early recordings and bootlegs-"Devotion" and another one of my favorite songs that Emily had written called "Leaving." *Retrospective* came out towards the end of 2000, and was a great bridge to the next year and some closure for that era of our career. That year started in the wake of 1999's intensity, I ended up in the hospital in Chicago after barely making it through a radio promo gig at House of Blues. I went to the emergency room twice and the second time they got me in right away and moments later, I was laid out on great drugs with an appendectomy on the way. I spent a couple days at the hospital dealing with medical complications and then another two at the Omni Hotel, getting my strength back to fly home. This surgery ushered in years of dealing with health stuff that thankfully is now cleared up. But most importantly while I was in the hospital, my precious grandmother Ozilline died very unexpectedly and so I went home and straight to the funeral. We had to cancel our Australian tour and it took us quite a while to get back over there, so that was really unfortunate. I jotted down the lyrics above but never could finish the song. Even though it was a very bad start, the year quickly took a turn for the better and became a year of special shows and continued evolution along our activist and musical paths. I don't make it a practice to read about myself, but I ran across a quote I really love while looking through my archives. It was an article about our optimism in the face of some of the losses we had suffered the previous year. We hadn't talked about it much so I was surprised to even see it referenced. Kelly Hogan said, "They're so nice you don't think they could survive in the wilds, but they're rocking now, shocking and rocking." Of course what is ironic for me, is that I'd say the same thing about Hogan. But I think that holding onto our naiveté and optimism was important to fuel our career and still is.

After the canceled Australian tour, we launched into an acoustic duo tour for the spring. We were in the practice of splitting up the year between full band and acoustic shows, it challenged us and we had to learn over and over how to hold the stage without a full band helping out. We used the extra mobility of playing as a duo to continue our political activities. We played a couple of shows for the political Spitfire Tour; made an appearance in D.C. during a week of demonstrations against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, played a pro-choice event, and a huge Earth Day rally. We canceled an IG show and a Daemon Records showcase in South Carolina to support the NAACP boycott of South Carolina, which had been started to protest the flying of the Confederate battle flag on the grounds of the State Capital. As we ramped up our activism, we did start seeing some backlash. When we played a show at Duke University

in North Carolina we were given a rather mixed welcome when some students complained that the Indigo Girls did not appeal to them or to a large segment of the student body. In spite of some dissatisfied co-eds, the show went great and plenty of students were supportive, but we did feel the sting. There was just a subtle conservative undertow starting to pull a bit and I remember that it seemed that any ground that Lilith Fair gained for women in the music business had started to erode with the growing corporate and monolithic radio and media environments. But the beauty of playing with Emily is that we always seemed to support each other, and as a result were able to transcend any uncertainty or vulnerability. We forged ahead and played a bunch of great clubs, small theaters, a high school in NYC and more colleges for the spring, and in keeping with our mission to just be what we wanted to be, we ended our run in Florida with punk icons, The Butchies opening the shows. They had come into my life and basically rearranged my whole perspective about music, gender and sexuality. We loved having a punk band open our shows and our audience loved this band in particular. I started jamming with them and during these jams decided it was time to make a solo record! I took a short break from the IG's to go on the road with my indie label for the Daemon Records' 10th Anniversary Tour. A cross section of bands from the label played 6 shows in the South; I sat in and did some of the material I had been writing for a future solo endeavor.

For the summer, we hooked back up with a full band. Matt Brubeck joined us on cello, he was extremely accomplished and I would say more in the tradition of Jane Scarpantoni in his improvisational leanings. He was a gift to play with and a really tremendous and gentle man to be around. Blair Cunningham (drums), Carol Isaacs (keys), and Clare Kenny (bass) stayed on board, making this an incredibly strong band. We did a run of the big outdoor summer sheds and it was a really nice summer. I think the most remarkable thing about the summer shows was the other bands we played with! Michael Franti and Spearhead was a highlight for me. They were a great band to watch and Franti was right in line with us politically, so we found an ally in him. A very young upstart blues guitarist, Shannon Curfman blew us away with her playing and presence. And some of our long time favorites- Kelly Hogan, Danielle Howle, Rose Polenzani, Mrs Fun and Michelle Malone- came along for shows as well. The best part of touring for me was still all the other music I got to hear!

In 2000, we did one of our most extensive "Honor the Earth" tours joined by more musical guests than ever, highlighting a plethora of issues and covering 9 states in the western United States. Bonnie Raitt was a stalwart Honor the Earth supporter and her presence helped encourage some of the most integral artists to join this tour, namely Jackson Browne and David Crosby. We also had Shawn Mullins, Joan Baez, Vonda Shepard, Dar Williams and Edwin McCain come on board for some shows. The Native blues band Indigenous played most of the tour with us. They were ascending and gathering a large following of blues loyalists. The young front man, Mato Nanji was really something to behold, with a soulful and agile grasp of blues guitar and lyrics that told the story of reservation culture –the promise and the hardships. The band's powerful set quickly became a highlight of the tour. Many of the shows were festival style shows

packed full of numerous artists and speakers. It felt like we had really gotten a grip on how to do this kind of tour successfully and bring enough artist and press to the table to gain some attention and leverage for the issues. We collected signed action cards from the audience members on various issues we were working on and volunteers helped us organize them and get them into the mail. We played shows in Indian Country and often the bordering towns. Our hope was to build a bridge between Native and Non-Native communities, focusing on bringing Native enviro and cultural issues to light. Along with the environmental devastation plaguing so many Native lands, we also focused on all the positive solutions and creative developments happening in Indian Country. In Montana, we focused on the fight against Coal Bed Methane development in the Northern Cheyenne community and the buffalo slaughter in Yellowstone, but we also learned about the sustainable community work in Blackfeet -wind energy, recycling programs, Native banking, and a school focused on native language restoration. We participated in an exciting “Get Out the Native Vote” campaign that was hugely successful. In the Southwest, we looked at the devastation wrought by Uranium mining and nuclear waste dumping. We met the incredible activists that were in the midst of this fight for the life and health of their lands and peoples. We had a special visit to the Zuni pueblo and played a small show at their community center with Jackson, he was absolutely brilliant and I couldn’t believe I got to hear him playing in such an intimate space. I will never forget that day of hiking around Zuni with Jim Enote learning all about their history and the struggle to maintain their culture, then hearing Jackson play a solo version of “Rock Me on the Water” in a tiny room. Jackson was also on the bus with us for some long drives and I kept him up all night asking him questions about his activism and all the mind boggling experiences he had had in so many places. He had so much enthusiasm and was willing to indulge us with his stories; he even indulged us by posing in front of his “Take It Easy” statue in Winslow, AZ. We were definitely a handful, what a patient man! The last show on this tour was in the Menominee community (Wisconsin). It was a big show with lots of Native and Non-Native artists. The purpose was to support the regional enviro work on local mining issues but just as importantly to celebrate the life of our friend and mentor Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa who in 1999 had been kidnapped and killed by the FARC in Colombia, SA while doing work with the Indigenous Uw’a community. She was from Menominee and had been a founding member of the Indigenous Women’s Network, which was seed group for Honor the Earth. There would be no way to over state her importance to the world of indigenous activism and the mission of Honor the Earth. Her spirit was large and infectious, her work was brilliant and resolute, and she could always bring laughter to the hardest of situations! All of the women of IWN (Indigenous Women’s Network) were an energizing force for Emily and me as we carried on with our music and our activism, which at this point were permanently interwoven for better or worse.

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 24





David Crosby and Emily

Honor the Earth 2000

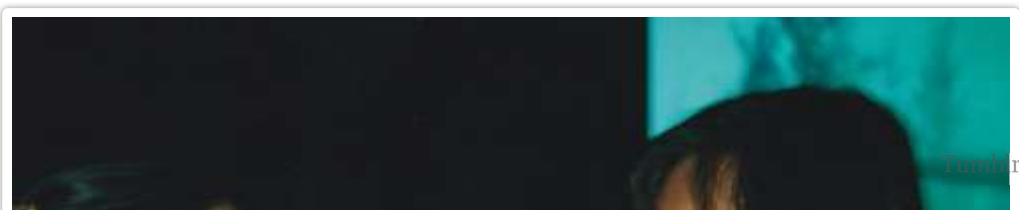
📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 13



IG's with The Voice of the Navajo Nation. 660 KTNN-AM

Window Rock, AZ, Honor the Earth 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 17





Winona LaDuke and Jackson Browne

Honor the Earth 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 11





Jackson indulges Indigo Girls

Honor the Earth 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 15



Emily, Shannon Martin, Dana Powell and Carol Isaacs organizing action cards

Honor the Earth 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 7





IG's and Jackson Browne with Jim Enote at Zuni Pueblo

Honor the Earth 2000

📅 18 Apr 2015 ❤️ 11



Fidel.Amy

Havana 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 19



Clare

Come On Now Social

London 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 9



Carol.John.Caroline

Come On Now Social

London 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 8



Emily.Clare.Tim.John

Come On Now Social

London 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 12



Caroline.Carol.Natacha.John.Tim

“Faye Tucker”

London 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 7

ES.1999

Sometimes I am asked, “what is your favorite IG record” and I almost feel guilty answering that question because each album is a complete labor of love, and a unique expression of songs and the musicians who played or sang on them with us.

But, I always come back to *Come on Now Social* . What began as inauspicious (we began work with producer Malcolm Burn but weren’t able to forge a creative meeting of minds, and so we parted ways) proved to be providential as we dug in deep with our new English band (also known as Ghostland), headed from famed Atlanta studio Southern Tracks across the pond to John Reynolds’ home studio in London, and crossed paths along the way with a brilliant cast of characters. One of the things I love about *Social* is the mix of songs, ranging from a moody ballad like “Andy” to the fierceness of “Faye Tucker” to the pure pop of “Peace Tonight” and the outright rock and roll of “Go.” And, while there is a

variety of styles and genres represented on the album, none of it ever felt inauthentic going down. The material challenged us and expanded our sound and, I think, showed people that we were more than simply an acoustic folk duo. There was the roots/Americana element of “Ozilline” and “Gone Again” and my foray into writing harder edged songs with “Trouble” and “Cold Beer and Remote Control.”

I think about the list of guest artists on *Come on Now Social* and I am still amazed. I never ever would have imagined that we would sing with Rick Danko and play with Garth Hudson. Sheryl Crow sang on “Gone Again” and “Cold Beer,” not in person, but long distance by overdubbing her parts. MeShell Ndegeocello wrote and played the bass and classic intro to “Compromise” and the funk pop bass on “We Are Together.”

Joan Osborne sang on four songs and completely changed the vocal tenor of “Trouble,” “Go” and “We are Together.” Natacha Atlas, who was a friend of John and some of the other band members, transformed “Faye Tucker” with her Arabic prayer-song. We worked with Brady Blade for the first time on *Social* after having seen him play with Jewel on Lilith Fair. We immortalized Amy’s grandma on the intro to the song written about her, “Ozilline.”

It was the core band, however, that felt like coming home for me and Amy, we were so simpatico musically and socially. We turned to John Reynolds to produce the rest of the record and he played drums on a bunch of songs as well as producing. The musicians were stellar: Clare on bass, Carol on keys and accordion, John on drums, Caroline on cello. John was able to craft an 808 into “Soon Be to Nothing”; I was SO HAPPY, being a sucker then and now for a good beat. I remember Brady played the original drums to “Trouble” in Atlanta at Southern Tracks, and for some technical reason, which escapes me now, we were unable to use his tracks. But I loved the drum part so much that I had John play it EXACTLY as Brady had. There aren’t many guys who would have the patience and lack of ego to do that, especially the producer! John set a very laid back stage, and since we recorded much of the record in his home, it was relaxed. We all ate dinner together, and laughed and talked and drank good wine and just had the best time. And to this day, the band remain lifelong friends. If we have a tour de force album in our catalogue, I would say it is *Come On Now Social* .

Like the years before, there were many events that were life changing for me, and our trip to Cuba is one of the most important and inspiring things that has ever happened, personally and professionally. We were officially invited to go there as a sort of cultural exchange envoy. Among the group of musicians chosen to go were Gladys Knight, Peter Frampton, Burt Bacharach, Pete Buck from R.E.M., Bonnie Raitt and other esteemed folks. The idea behind the trip was to join up with Cuban musicians, form songwriting collaborations, and perform together for Cuban people and dignitaries. I can’t even go on before telling you that we went to the palace and met Fidel. We stood in a line, and Fidel Castro met and shook hands with every single one of us. It was a tremendous and humbling honor. I felt I was in the presence of a great and powerful man.

While in Cuba we stayed at the Hotel Nacional, which felt like it had ghosts from the era when rich American businessmen stayed there. Outside the hotel, time was frozen in the 50's, as ancient massive American cars were the taxis for loads of Cubans squished in to them. The public weren't allowed or supposed to ride in the nicer yellow taxis. In a head shaking twist, Amy and I drew each others' names at the random musician drawing lottery, which meant that we ended up in the same group together, paired with two Cuban band mates, one a polished, virtuoso musician whose family was well known in Cuba and who traveled to the U.S. to play, and the other a young, sexy, sort of rebel rocker with attitude who was awesome. We became fast friends with him and his wife, and they invited us over for dinner to their place. During dinner, the gas power went out, as it often did at random times for most Cubans, and after they had prepared what little they had for us, we were unable to cook and eat it.

I remember that Cuba was exploding with art and music; that on any corner you could hear the most complex, soul stirring music you might have ever heard. I remember the bright colors of Havana and buildings everywhere that were crumbling. It was very smoggy and exotic. The people were poor but they were educated and engaging and gave us guests everything they had to offer. There were no billboards or advertisements or any of the capitalist trappings we Americans are so used to being surrounded by. The culture oozed music and sport. Amy and I were fortunate to be invited to a gathering in an area where the people used to hide in order to practice their religion. They invited us to sing and clap along and, as hard as I tried, I absolutely could not follow the complex rhythms. Everybody from the exchange also got to go to a baseball game, which I thought was really cool. We made friends, and wrote music together, and played a show of all the newly written collaborations. I met my friend, Annie Roboff, on that trip. I also remember being teased by Woody Harrelson on the airplane ride over, as I was scared to death of flying, and it wasn't the smoothest flight I'd ever been on.

The whole experience was an incredible honor and insight into a culture that had been so hidden from Americans because of the Cuban revolution and the ensuing embargo and propaganda. It is my hope that those curtains will be lifted and Americans can come to know the people and culture of that brilliant, soulful island, only 90 miles from our southern border.

Changing course here, I have to say that 1999 gave us the honor of playing for Jimmy Carter's 75th birthday celebration in Plains, GA. I still have a picture taped to my filing cabinet at home of me and Amy and Jimmy and Rosalyn, all gathered and smiling at the celebration. Jimmy Carter was, is, and always will be a hero to me for his intelligence, compassion, and insight into conflict, peacemaking gifts, and vision for a world where disease is eradicated and women have an equal place at the table of peace. And the same goes for Rosalyn. It was a proud night for Georgia. Years and years after his presidency, through the work of the Carter Center, he and Rosalyn continue to change the world, one disease and conflict at a time. Getting to be in their presence and to sing for them for his 75th birthday is an overwhelming honor; still almost impossible to believe it actually happened.



Garth Hudson.Emily.Amy

“Gone Again”

Woodstock 1999



Emily.Amy

Havana 1999, photo by Peter Buck



Jennifer.Liveen.Elizabeth.Luis.Giacomo.Emily

Havana 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 11



Amy.Emily

Havana 1999

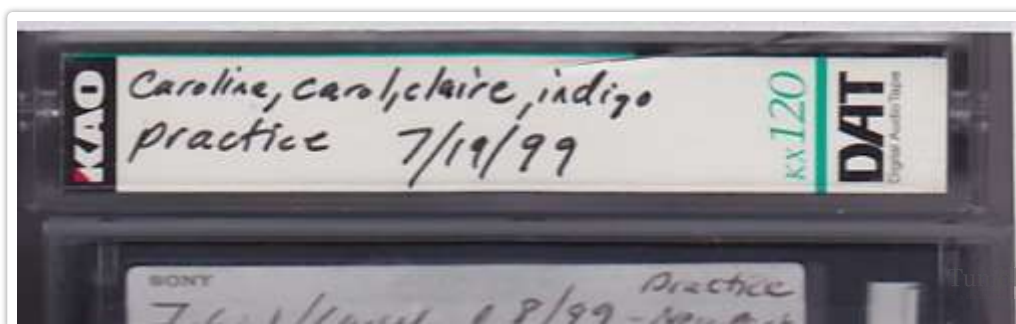
📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 30

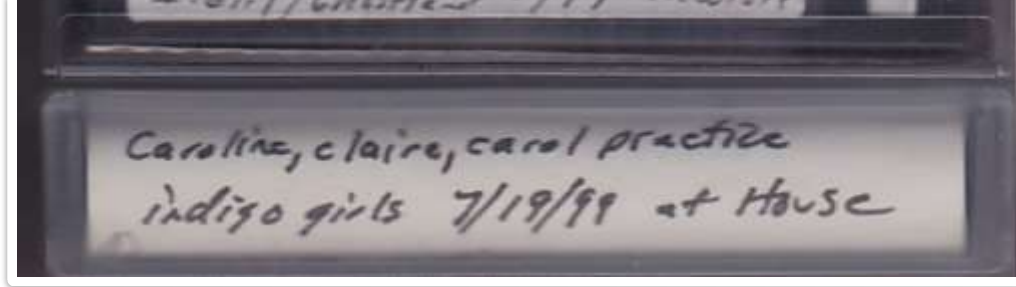


Emily in Havana

1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 16





📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 11

AR.1999

The 1999 release, *Come On Now Social* still stands as one of my favorite IG records. We started the record at Southern Tracks Studio –an Atlanta studio packed with vintage gear and old analog tapes baking in a convection oven in the back room. Malcolm Burn initially took the producer’s seat; his artistic genius was undeniable and he was a compellingly creative dark horse in many ways, but the time just wasn’t right for us to work together. We had a shaky beginning full of conflict and switched gears pretty quickly in a fortuitous move that took us to England to work with producer / drummer John Reynolds and the rest of the Sinéad O’Connor crew, who we had met during the 1998 Lilith Fair tour. The bulk of the record was recorded in John’s studio, which was in a residential London neighborhood. We bounced over to Woodstock for one amazing session at Jerry Marotta’s studio and finished up back at Southern Tracks.

We kept a lot of what we recorded with Malcolm, as he had done some interesting tracking, and what we had was just too precious to lose. My first experience of drummer Brady Blade was one thing I didn’t want to lose from the original Southern Tracks sessions. He played the live drums for the song, Ozilline-which I had written to honor my maternal grandmother. I had wanted to play with Brady ever since seeing him play with Emmylou Harris and Steve Earle. Brady was a punker at heart; he could find a funky groove that had edge as well. We hit it off instantly and for me he became a musical touchstone, touring with us periodically and appearing on most of our records since. Malcolm and IG’s also did some work at Southern Tracks on Emily’s songs, “Andy” and “Trouble.” For these early tracks, John Reynolds built on what we had done in our first Atlanta sessions, and then we started fresh with the other songs.

Recording in London took us out of our normal environs and really affected our creative process. We felt a lot of freedom around production and John was so adventurous and easy to work with. We really trusted him too; he had such a cool sensibility and was able to work with both of us equally, with no bias towards either of our styles-this is pretty rare in a producer for us. He had experience with singer-songwriters, world music, traditional music, rock, funk, reggae-you name it; he had embraced it all and knew what to offer up to our songs to make them resonate.

Sometimes they needed loud raucous energy and sometimes they needed a quiet sexy

contemplative groove.

John Reynolds (drums), Clare Kenney (bass), Carol Isaacs (accordion and keys) and Caroline Dale (cello) formed the core of our band in London. The studio's geography helped us become a family quite quickly. We were crowded into small spaces to record, ate dinner together in John's kitchen and hung out in his living space when not working. We hadn't worked in a residential studio since our early days and it felt really good to be in this kind of communal environment. I remember the dinners we ate, seated around a big wooden table, especially the night that Clare prepared homemade sushi for everyone. Clare was a profound bass player, with such a serious and sexy approach to the songs. Her cooking had the same meticulous yet beautiful and fluid style. Sometimes John cooked too, he was a great chef actually, and specialized in big pots of peasant style food with ethnic leanings. Even though John was in charge, we always felt the group mind was in action. He had so much respect for the musicians he worked with, all ideas were given credence and he let people do their thing. Nothing scared him. He wasn't afraid of caustic rock, so songs like "Go," "Faye Tucker" and "Compromise" held their weight with him. On the song "Go," I really got to cut lose and turn my amp way up, so loud that the neighbor lady got mad, as it echoed through the stairway hall where we placed it for added reverb. "Faye Tucker" was a song about the death penalty and redemption, so John asked the vocalist Natacha Atlas to come in and sing some Arabic call to prayer style melodies over the jig at the end. She was powerful and her voice was keening and sad, but so melodic and infectious. Caroline Dale and Carol Isaacs came up with the jig to play on "Faye Tucker," that along with the Irish / world music groove and the Arabic call to prayer placed the song firmly in a world of dancing angels and devils whirling around each other on the gallows floor-it was pretty deep. I know the word "deep" is often overused, but what these musicians on *Come on Now Social* were playing was best described as truly deep. All the songs they played on transformed them into something "other-worldly" that we could never achieve on our own.

We went back down to earth with Jerry Marotta, tracking "Gone Again" at his home studio in Woodstock, NY. We played the song with Jerry on drums, and Garth Hudson and Rick Danko from The Band on accordion and bass. Garth and Rick also joined us on Ozilline-Garth playing his very unique keyboard style (tracked with Malcolm in Atlanta) and Danko giving us a great vocal counter melody on the chorus (tracked at Jerrsville). We were lucky to play with this trio. Jerry was hands-down one of the grooviest and rootsiest drummers that has ever laid tracks for us. Rick and Garth were of course permanent figures in my music encyclopedia. Jerrsville was super relaxing and "Gone Again" took on the Woodstock vibe, which was exactly what I wanted.

We returned to Southern Tracks with John and some of the London folks to finish up songs and put down some new ones. It was great to get back into this vintage old school studio and have a different perspective on some of the work we'd done. It really brought the project full circle too. I asked Kate Schellenbach, who IG's had teamed up with on the Suffragette Sessions Tour, and Meshell Ndegeocello, who we met at Lilith to be the rhythm section on the song "Compromise," and they slayed it. Meshell's tough bass line and Kate's punk riffs were perfect. Caroline Dale put on some cello parts, which

not only served to put some symphony into the song but also helped it fit into the whole landscape of record. We learned a lot on this record about how to use a host of diverse players and have them cross-pollinate a bit so the project as a whole would feel like one big tapestry.

After we finished the record, we went on tour for the rest of the year and played about 100 shows. Our Spring was filled with various benefits and collaborations. The most interesting and exciting for me was our visit to Havana, Cuba with the “Music Bridges Over Troubled Waters” event. We traveled to Havana with a bunch of musicians from the States for a cultural exchange program with Cuban musicians and songwriters. This was the first time I’d been to Cuba; it was a very special opportunity since the embargo made it really hard to get over there. We met and played with local Havana musicians and formed little bands and songwriting teams to come up with something for the big show at the end. We made the best of our short time and explored the city and every bit of the culture we could drink in. Aside from the Cuban band Bolsa Negra that we partnered with, we also met a local rocker, Luis who took us under his wing and asked us to jam with him in his government funded rehearsal space. Then Luis and his wife, Elizabeth had us over for dinner, using their coveted food ration tickets to serve us food! Elizabeth was a doctor and Luis was a full time musician; they had a ton of insight and different perspectives on Cuban life. Everyone was pretty careful with what they said, but we still got a good feel for the place.

My good friend (label owner / producer / recording engineer / actor) Giacomo, who I had met in Chiapas, came over to Cuba to hang with us and lend his studio engineering skills to help record some of the artists, including Burt Bacharach! Giacomo often showed up at just the right time and made everything fun and adventurous... he also had a serious side, having grown up in Guatemala in the 80’s, he had been exposed to some pretty bad violence with guerilla warfare and paramilitary fighting. His perspective on Cuba and Castro was very informed by his own experiences in the midst of revolution, so it was good to share this space with him and understand another point of view. We were taken to meet Castro and it was such a powerful experience that I started crying. It wasn’t that I agreed with everything Castro stood for, in fact being Queer was pretty complicated in that society, it was that Castro was symbolic the way Che was—there symbolic of the fight for “The People,” standing up to greed and hierarchy. I knew it was a simplistic view of socialism and communism but the ideal parts of it still stood for something to me. I kept a journal of our trip and posted it on our website.

http://www.indigogirls.com/activism_cuba.html

When summer hit, we hooked up with Lilith Fair and brought the London gang over from the studio to play this tour —a pretty amazing turn of events for us to be playing with the very band that had us dumbstruck the summer before when they played with Sinead O’Connor. John, Clare, Carol and Caroline all came out and played the Lilith shows and we got to bring out some of our new music with this killer band. The Dixie Chicks were in their heyday and we got a kick out of seeing them perform “Goodbye Earl” every night; it was a huge hit with everyone! We hung out with K’s Choice and had

good jams with them on stage. A highlight for me was playing on the same stage as The Pretenders and getting to meet Chrissie Hynde!

After Lilith Fair, we had to let John Reynolds and Caroline Dale return to their other music endeavors, and we found ourselves playing with another awesome drummer, Blair Cunningham. Blair was Memphis born but lived in the England and played with the likes of Paul McCartney, Haircut 100, Echo and the Bunnymen, etc....a lot of cool Brit bands. We were immediately taken with him and he fit right in with our two other Brits-Carol and Clare. Not to mention the fact that we filled Caroline Dale's cello seat with another accomplished and very musical player from the UK as well. We were a bus full of dry British wit at this point and it was a total blast. *Come On Now Social* came out in late September and we toured like crazy, playing a lot of special events and venues: the Bumbershoot Festival in Seattle; Jimmy Carter's birthday bash in Americus; the Beacon Theater in NYC for 3 nights; The Backyard in Austin; two special shows at The Tabernacle in Atlanta; and on and on, the tour dates were as good as it gets. And in the midst of all this, we got to be on a tribute record for The Clash with our version of "Clampdown!"

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 22



IG's.Dixie Chicks

Lilith Fair 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 51





Emily. K's Choice

Lilith Fair 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 21

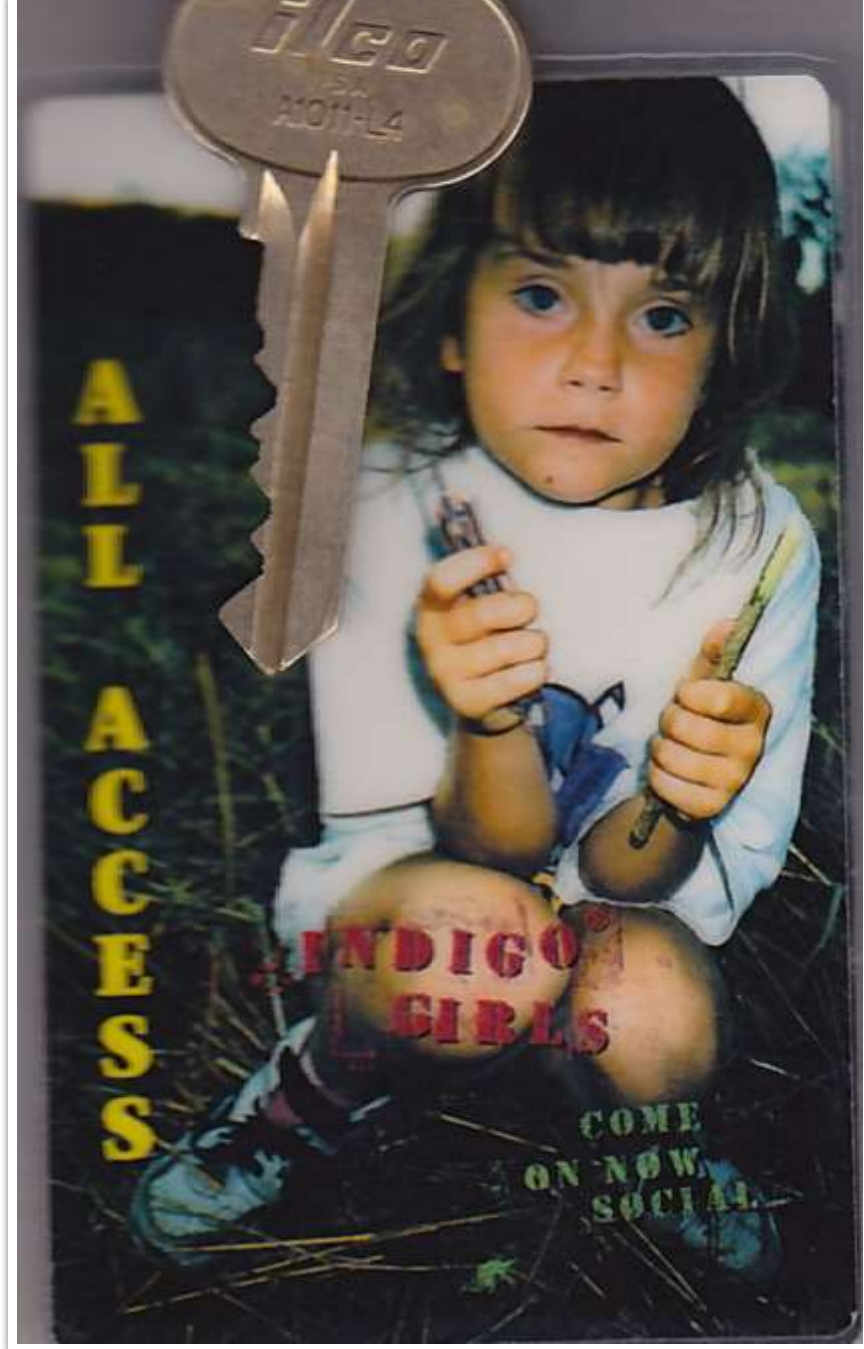


Emily.Clare

NYTimes Crossword 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 12





📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 23





Clare.Blair.Caroline.Carol

Halloween 1999

📅 4 Mar 2015 ❤️ 9



IG guitar tech Sulli in drag for Halloween



Sarah, Bonnie, Emily, Sinead

Lillith Fair 1998



Emily, Me' shell, Joan

Lillith Fair 1998



Amy, Sinead, Carol, Caroline, John, Sarah, Jane, Clare

Lilith Fair 1998

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 40

ES.1998

In 1998, Lilith Fair continued, and Amy and I were invited back to play a slew of shows. I was giddy about Lilith Fair; it energized me, both as a performer and a sheer fan of music. When we weren't practicing with other artists, like Sinead O'Connor, Joan Baez, Me' shell Ndegeocello, Bonnie Raitt, and Sarah McLachlan, I was either standing by the side of the stage or, better yet, out in the crowd, watching the performances. I keenly remember Missy Elliot's performance at Jones Beach, and she wore a big black puffy outfit that was badass. I was a huge missy Elliot fan and was pumped to have R and B presence among the singer songwriters and rockers who played Lilith Shows. I was also a devoted Sheryl Crow fan and loved seeing her live; her band was always incredibly tight and powerful. When it came to acts, however, there was one who captured both Amy and me fully, and that was Sinead O'Connor and her band.

Both Amy and I loved Sinead, so it was a thrill enough to get to see her live several times, but her band was also unbelievable. John Reynolds on drums, Justin Adams on guitar, Carol Isaacs on accordion and keys, Caroline Dale on cello, Clare Kenny on bass... I sat in the audience mesmerized by Sinead's voice and charisma and the grooving, world-infused passion of her band. My mind was particularly blown by the song "Fire on Babylon," which kicked off with a horn sample into a hypnotic bass and drum groove.

The band were sexy and sure and, coupled with Sinead's voice, ethereal.

Fortunately, Amy started to get to know them backstage, playing cards. She would talk about what great people they were, and how fun they were to hang out with. So to make a very long story short, we eventually respectfully poached most of the members: John, Clare, Caroline, and Carol, with Sinead's blessing, of course! We all became fast friends, John ended up producing *Come on Now Social* for us, and Clare and Carol toured and played on our records for subsequent years. Personally and professionally, they deepened my life. Maybe because they came from 'over the pond' and were an eclectic bunch influenced by all kinds of music, including classical, or maybe because they were just exquisite human beings, who knows? But it started because we were fans of Sinead, and then we got invited to Lilith, and then we met the band, and then we became friends, and there you go. Do you know the warm feeling you get when someone's name is mentioned who has a deep spot in your heart? That's how I feel about them, and I always will. So music has brought the gift of friendship, over and over again.

On the subject of friends and eclectic bunches of people, Amy and I conceived of and launched the 'Suffragette Sessions Tour' in 1998. The idea was to invite a group of women from all different musical genres and lifestyles, get on a bus together, get on a stage together and play some of each others' music, and experience a true socialist experiment in touring. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The stage was crammed with ten women playing 22 songs a night together in different configurations. We played "Power of Two" as a kind of rock/pop song with me on electric guitar, and we bumped up the tempo and added keys and upright bass. We also sang a song of Lourdes Perez' in Spanish, and I got to play classical guitar and sing with Jane Siberry on one of my favorite songs of all time, "Love is Everything." Thalia Zedek brought the punk, Jean Smith the avant-garde, Kate Schellenbach the groove, Gail Ann Dorsey the soul, and on and on. What was really cool was that these women all agreed to do the tour, because it hadn't been done before and not many knew the others really well and riding on a cramped bus with a bunch of strangers might prove a recipe for disaster. We practiced a lot, and while the shows brought the individual gifts of the women to light, the real thrill was the excitement and magic that happened when we played together. The only thing possibly missing was that Ann Wilson of Heart ALMOST went on the tour, and that would have been a force to behold!!

Additionally, that year, Amy and I hosted a local benefit for the Zapatistas, a movement from Chiapas, Mexico that strove to maintain indigenous control of land and resources and fought against globalization and militarization by the Mexican army.

We held the benefit at Eddie's Attic, the small club that had been a mainstay of ours for so long, and to me it was a powerful connection between hometown arts and international humanistic concerns. So many of the complicated issues we face as peoples are tied to each other. I am always grateful to learn about the struggles of others and apply the lessons to my daily life so that the personal becomes the political. Along our path, Amy and I have been most fortunate to have fans who appreciate the same concerns and feel inspired and uplifted by music during dark and confusing times.

1998 saw the events surrounding our “high school tour.” Amy and I wanted to do a small tour of high schools in the South; go in and play some songs for the students and do sort of a “career day” where they could ask questions and we could talk about music. There were four shows slated, and the first one happened in Franklin, Tenn. and went really well and was super fun for me and Amy and, apparently, everyone else as well. After that show, we got a call from our manager telling us that the next show had been cancelled by the school, citing the fact that we used the word “fucking” in “Shame on You.” It quickly became apparent that profanity, which we had no intention of using in the school performances, was not the reason for the cancellation, and all of the remaining high school shows were subsequently cancelled by the schools. The real reason behind the cancellations became immediately clear: Amy and I were lesbians.

I was crushed. My feelings were hurt. I felt angry and deflated by the power of that oppression. There was a whirlwind of conversation between our manager and the schools, but they held their ground firmly, and didn’t tell the truth about why they were cancelling shows.

But rather than dwell on the disappointment, we decided to take action, by playing an all-ages show at the Barley and Hops club in Knoxville and offering free tickets to students at our show in Columbia, S.C. While we were setting things up to provide shows for the kids, a remarkable thing happened. The students at Irmo and Farragut high schools planned and carried out their own protests about the high school cancellations. Some of them were suspended and missed graduation. Even the ACLU became involved to protect their rights. In the truest sense of the word, the activism of those students was AWESOME. They spoke truth to power, they inspired Amy and me, they brought issues of injustice towards gays to the light, and they exercised their rights as citizens. I can tell you that the personal hurt and disappointment in the school authorities and society dissipated in the wake of these students’ courage and vision. And whenever we play Amy’s song “Go,” I think of those students as we sing:

“Did they tell you it was set in stone, that you’d end up alone, use your years to psyche you out, you’re too old to care, you’re too young to count. ..Raise your hands high, don’t take a seat, don’t stand aside...”

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 45





Emily, Graham, Nanci, Gloria, Shawn, Amy

Voters for Choice Benefit, Dallas 1998

Photo by Jennifer Warburg

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 27



Nanci, Amy, Emily

Voters for Choice Benefit, Dallas 1998

Photo by Jennifer Warburg

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 21

AR.1998

For me, 1998 was about activism, empowerment and collaboration. Our year started out pretty normal with shows up and down the West Coast, a little break and then off to

Even during these times of a full tour schedule, I am struck by how consistent we had become at taking breaks and making sure we got home enough. I think it is one of the things that has preserved the IG's for so long.

After our jet lag from Australia cleared, we started on a tour of college dates, benefits, and what was to be a short tour of high school gyms to sing a few songs, talk about tour career and take questions from students. The shows in college towns were always our favorites, because we felt so much energy and activism from the students. And for me, I didn't feel that far removed from my college years at that point so I felt some kind of kinship on the college campuses. One of the highlights was at Mississippi State in Starkville. It rained like the dickens and we holed up and canceled the first night, and played the second. I wrote the song "Starkville" in my motel room while getting constant knocks on the door from some late night revelers. I was in a lonely but redeemed place, pining over a lost chance with love in Australia, but feeling pretty happy to be on my own. I also got to go to a couple of colleges on my own and focus specifically on activism with the Spitfire Tour. These events featured different artist and activist who talked about a topic of their choice and performed their art if they wanted to. There was a time for Q and A, and sometimes students were able to bring up topics that they were concerned about. I thought it was pretty special and really encouraged students to be engaged. I got to share nights with the likes of Michael Franti, Winona LaDuke, Ralph Nadar, and Krist Novoselic. I talked about queer issues in South Carolina and had Tracey Conaty from NGLTF join me, and in Gainesville, FL., I asked Cecilia Rodriguez to come and talk about the Zapatista movement with me.

Our "High school Tour" proved to be a galvanizing moment for us as queers. Because there was still an epidemic of budget cutting for the arts in schools, we wanted to contribute somehow to supporting the arts and illustrating how important it was to keep the space and support for creative endeavors in the schools. So we planned a short little run of five high school events in the South. We footed the bill ourselves and brought a small set up of lights and sound so we could illustrate a concert setting and really give the students a good idea of all the elements that go into this career. It was planned to be an "arts career day" type of event, no politics and no activism beyond the support of the arts. Our first event was at a school in Loganville, GA—a semi-rural suburb between Athens and Atlanta. It seemed to be going off without a hitch, but when we played "Shame on you," I mindlessly kept the lyric, "I keep fucking up," in the song and it was a mistake. I am against censorship but this is one time I just wasn't thinking and plowed through. In hindsight, I could have easily changed the lyric if I had thought about it. But this was the initial excuse (a bit of a red herring I think) for things to start snowballing as cancelations for the other shows we were supposed to play rolled in. The issue that took over was our homosexuality, it blew up and when some of the less tolerant parents and community members became aware that these two dykes were coming to town to teach their kids about art, it was all over! Our shows slated for Germantown and Knoxville, TN and Irmo, SC got canceled. In the wave of the cancelations a lot of kids and adults mobilized to protest on our behalf —both against censorship and homophobia. Students

at Irmo High School, Columbia, SC and Farragut High School, Knoxville, TN both staged walk outs at their school, and many students were suspended. The South Carolina chapter of the ACLU stepped in on behalf of some of the suspended students at Irmo High School. It was pretty brave for kids to do this in 1998 in the South. In response to this activism, we scheduled after school all-ages shows in Knoxville and Columbia, and the students got in free. While it was a bummer that the shows got canceled, it was pretty amazing how quickly things became politicized and the whole experience became a “teachable moment” for all of us. I’ve gotten messages recently from students who were part of the protests and graduated from Farragut or Irmo High Schools in which they cite this experience as a galvanizing moment for them and a time when they opened their eyes wide and woke up to what they believe. We really appreciated how open and willing some of the kids and adults were when it came time to speak out. I think “The Arts” becomes a convenient thing to cut from K-12 school budgets because along with art comes freedom of expression and all varieties of threatening ideas and visions. Art does not always have to about controversy, it can be about anything you feel or see or are compelled by, and still the act itself can be revolutionary.

In June and July, we jumped back on the Lilith Fair tour, covering both West and East Coast dates. The roster of Lilith bands was incredible and we felt really comfortable after having done the last one so we dove right in, collaborating with whoever was into it, we even invited friends who weren’t playing on the bill to drop in and play with us. I loved the unlikely combinations that happened during the jams-like Me’Shell Ndegeocello and Joan Baez playing together with us, or Bonnie Raitt and Sinead O’Connor sitting in on the same song. Sinead’s band was off the hook and one of the best moments of the show. When her band hit the stage, everything just melted away, the show and stage became theirs-everyone at the venue was riveted. The whole backstage seemed to stop everything they were doing, and move over to the side of the stage to watch her show. I’ve never experienced anything like it. We fell in love with Sinead and her band, and it was the beginning of a whole new musical life for us, and friendships we still hold dear. We hung out after the shows while the crew was loading out, and had big card games and listened to music. It was a constant party with those guys. Just a lot of laughs and total musicality. Some of Sinead’s band members joined us for our next record, *Come on Now Social*, produced by her drummer and collaborator John Reynolds. We toured that record with John on drums, and Caroline Dale on Cello, Clare Kenny on bass and Carol Isaacs playing keys and accordion. And then for more years after that still, Claire and Carol continued to record and tour with us. They changed our musical approach and gave us back something that was raw and honest. It is still one of the most important moments in our musical growth.

IG’s did a lot of benefits throughout the year and had a bunch of artist come and join our efforts. We played a controversial show in Dallas, TX with Shawn Colvin, Nancy Griffith and Graham Nash for Gloria Steinem’s pro-choice group Voters for Choice. There was a short-lived, interesting campaign against Virginia Slims cigarettes for targeting women and for the tobacco company’s “manipulation of music to promote smoking.” We played a show called Virginia Slam! in NYC on behalf of the cause. Our

support of the Zapatistas spilled over into a couple of benefits-one in Austin with Steve Earle and Shawn Colvin, and one in Decatur with Gerard McHugh and Big Fish Ensemble. And then in what I consider a related show, we were invited to raise funds for the Farm Labor Organizing Committee in Atlanta, I was proud to be asked to play that show.

After experiencing Lilith Fair, the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival and the Riot Grrrl movement, we wanted to organize an all-women rock show and take it on the road. The idea was to create something as egalitarian as we could make it. We'd all throw in a few songs to learn, get together for a day's rehearsal and hit the road in a tour bus-equal pay, thrifty hotels, rock clubs and a women bus driver to boot! Originally I wanted to call the tour The Rolling ThunderPussy Review, but it didn't sit well with some folks so we decided on The Suffragette Sessions Tour. We had a list of people we wanted to invite, made rounds of phone calls for a few weeks and found our gang. Out of a wish list of about 50 people, we ended up with 8 artists that wanted to be involved. Gail Ann Dorsey, Lisa Germano, Lourdes Perez, Kate Schellenbach, Jane Siberry, Josephine Wiggs, Thalia Zedek, and Jean Smith all agreed to come on board. It was a perfect clash of styles and attitudes for this project. It was a short tour, but it made a big impact on me to be on stage and live communally with all these artist that were important influences for me. Every night was a roller coaster ride of getting our sound check together, getting our set list sorted out, making sure we were all on stage at the right time, dealing with rowdy rock club crowds, and all the personalities and genres of performing. We had to put egos aside and not be scared to be vulnerable, and just contribute what would make each other's songs play the best. Jane Siberry was stunning and a universe unto herself; Thalia was the humble punk-rock hero we all wanted to be; Gail Ann Dorsey was just totally self possessed and slayed us all with her voice; Lisa Germano was uncompromising, but also willing to be wacky; Lourdes Perez was a new friend for me —a gorgeous Puerto Rican singer-songster willing to put herself out there in this motley gang; Jean Smith was pure bad-ass and demanded that we be willing to cut lose and get raw; Kate and Josephine were the backbone of the band in attitude and musicianship, they were the most open and willing to work to make each song great, and both of them became fast friends for me. There was a lot of emotion on the tour and so much music in such a raw and sometimes chaotic way that it was the polar opposite from Lillith Fair, but I wouldn't have wanted one without the other. The whole year was liberating and truly what I needed to stay alive- to go through so many different doors and come out with even more passion for what we were doing.

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 31





Zapatista Benefit, Decatur 1998

Photo by Jennifer Warburg

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 25



Amy, Cecilia, Emily

Zapatista Benefit, Decatur 1998

Photo by Jennifer Warburg

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 18





Emily and Jane

SST Tour 1998

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 18

DETROIT, MI 8/24 SUFFRAGETTE SESSIONS

SONG	AMY	EMILY	GAIL	LISA	LOURDES	KATE	JANE	ILAN	JOSEPHINE	THALIA
1 BEGINNING OF TIME	95	VOX	BASS VOX			DRM	1/25/98 ELECTRIC GUITAR			tambo
2 ROLL THE DICE	A1 VOX	E/VOX	VOX TAMBO	mandolin	Congas	DRM	w/keys		elec	drum guit.
3 CIMARRON	A2 VOX	N/VOX	BASS 5	violin	Bombó	DRM	key			elec. guitar → down 1/2 str.
4 REPALLE				violin			♯			clar.
5 TANGO	A1 VOX	E/VOX	DRUM	violin	Contra 2		w/accordion		upright	elec. guitar → normal tuning
6 CHASE	385	Piano	BASS 4		Contra 2	DRM	percussion		upright	clar.
7 SISTER	A2 SINGING	B		?			key			elec. guitar
8 POLICE OF TWO	A1 VOX	elec	BASS 4	mandolin	Congas	DRM	w/keys			elec. guitar
9 WOOD FLOORS	385 VOX	VOX	BASS 5	PIANO			key		upright	
10 PULLIN A CLOUD	385 VOX	E/VOX	BASS 5		Congas	DRM	w/keys		shaker	
11 LOVE IS EVERYTHING	M VOX	E/VOX	BASS 5	PIANO VOX	Congas	DRM	1/25/98			clar.
12 UNDER THE SKIN	385 VOX	E/VOX	TAMBO		Congas	DRM	w/keys		elec.	elec. guitar
13 PALE LIGHT			piano	BASS 4		DRM	sample guitar			elec.
14 ROSE" spruigment							♯			
15 ZIGGY	A1 VOX	elec/vox	VOX TAMBO	mandolin		DRM	accordion		elec	elec. guitar
16 SEEM TO BE NOTHING		E/VOX	VOX BASS	occasional	Guitar	DRM	w/keys			clar.
17 VESTIGIOS	M VOX	E/VOX		violin	Guitar		w/keys		upright	elec. guitar
18 (NO CAMP) (spoken)							♯			
19 GO GO GO	A1/VOX	elec/vox	BASS 4	violin	Bombó	DRM	w/keys		elec	elec. guitar
* 20 RADIO	VOX	VOX	DRUMS	PIANO VOX	Harp	perc.	accordion		elec	elec. guitar
* 21 FINALE JAM	VOX	?			Wah	DRM	?		?	elec. guitar
* 22 GEORGIA	385/VOX	E/VOX	VOX	perc.	Tambourine	DRM	vx		elec.	tambo





Thalia, Amy, Emily, Gail, Jane, Josephine, Kate

SST Tour 1998

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Feb 2015 ❤️ 15

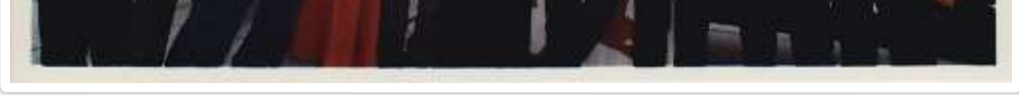


Jackson, Emily, Bonnie backstage at Honor the Earth Show 1997

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 37





No Nukes!

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 19



Amy.Jackson.Winona.Emily in D.C.

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 29



I look back at our 1997 schedule and I can hardly believe how busy we were and how much ground we covered: a college tour, a summer amphitheatre tour, Honor the Earth tour, 2 legs of a *Shaming of the Sun* tour, and our first Lilith Fair tour! Each tour was completely different in nature from the others. I've never been bored of touring because we mixed up the show formats from the very beginning and, most importantly, we included Honor the Earth and other benefits for grass roots organizations, experiences that educated us, broadened our lives, inspired us personally and sustained our souls.

We toured colleges regularly in the 1990's, a privilege that I appreciated because schools brought the shows and students could go for free. There was an exciting mixture of college kids who knew the music and those who were just checking out the free show on campus. I considered it an exciting challenge for us to win them over. There was always an energy at college shows; a lot of them took place in gyms where everyone stood up and the vibe was awesome. College radio stations were still alive and well and an important and interesting part of our career landscape, and we did a lot of radio station interviews on campuses with students in small rooms crammed with LPs. We also did interviews with college papers. It was refreshing to speak with young journalists or d.j.'s who weren't jaded or had interesting questions, or just expressed a real indie sensibility. I also loved getting a chance to visit various campuses, as my dad was a professor, and I always felt at home in a school environment. Playing various colleges brought us to towns we might not have toured otherwise.

Playing amphitheatres was completely different from college shows. When someone asks whether I like large or small venues, I can never pick my preference. I love the intimacy of a small venue, but I also love the excitement of large crowds, the effect of large groups of people singing together, and the warm weather all-around amazing good feeling of amphitheatre shows. There are simply some amphitheatres and arenas that have a mystery and magic about them. I think of Madison Square Garden, the Greek theatre in the Bay Area, the inimitable Pine Knob in Michigan, Wolf Trap in Vienna, VA, and, of course, Red Rocks in Colorado. In 1997 we played with Patti Smith at Red Rocks. I was in awe! A wicked storm had come in; the skies were fiercely dark, the winds were blowing, the tents were flapping; rain poured. It was straight out of King Lear! Patti Smith sang, and put her foot up on her monitor, her mic cable like a black snake, and spit. Spit!! It was one of the most mesmerizing nights of our career. Her power and magnetism were palpable. Backstage she was soft-spoken and extremely nice and endured our idol worship. Fantastic!

The 1997 Honor the Earth tour focused on multiple issues affecting Indian Communities, such as PCB contamination of Mohawk lands and water, paper company pollution harming the Penobscots, endangerment of the buffalo in Montana and the U.S. government's criminal proposal to transport high level nuclear waste across the country

(dubbed 'mobile Chernobyl') and dumping it at Yucca Mountain in Nevada on Indian land or possibly on the land of the Skull Valley Goshutes in Utah. The Nuclear Issue had been a longstanding one and original comrades of the No Nukes movement, like Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, and Graham Nash joined us on the 1997 HTE tour. These were some of my songwriting and activist heroes, and after all these years as the issues still loomed dangerously, they continued to dedicate themselves to eradicating nuclear power and waste. During the tour, I remember standing on the side of the stage and listening to Bonnie's glorious voice, still unparalleled. I also remember Amy and Jackson talking deep into the night on our bus about politics and social justice and then the bus pulling over in Winslow, Arizona and all of us taking a picture together on the corner by a statue of Jackson.

When asked about some of the highlights of our career, I always think of Lilith Fair. 1997 was the first Lilith Fair tour. Amy and I were fortunate to be on all of the four Lilith Fair tours. There were many things that were remarkable about Lilith; it was the first "all women" festival tour (not including the male musicians!); it destroyed industry fallacies (as in "women" can't sell tickets on the same bill and shouldn't be played in numbers on radio stations), it raised millions of dollars for local charities focused on women's issues, and it gave a lot of artists, Amy and me included, exposure to a wider audience than our own. For me, it was mind-boggling fun. It had a rhythm, from loading in to loading out each day and night, like a 24-hour circus. Amy and I enjoyed asking other women to join us in our set and soon enough so many were joining so many others during their sets until it became a real communal musical experience. I got to stand by the side of the stage and watch women artists I loved, like Me 'shell Ndgeocello, Sheryl Crow, Sinéad O'Connor, Angélique Kidjo, and Liz Phair, to name a very few. It was a traveling show of great intention, social conscience, and musical diversity. The nights were beautiful in the open-air venues, and I remember the crowds singing softly to Sarah's songs as the days came to an end and our astounding good fortune and blessings continued.

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 31





Show run for the concert in Qualla Boundary, Cherokee, NC

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 17



Press conference at Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation.

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 18

The truth is my memory is slipping or maybe these middle years were just so full that I can't remember everything we did. I find myself surfing the net looking for clues to vague memories and pictures that I can't quite place; thumbing through journals and finding stuff I should have written about, a month too late...

In 1997, we found ourselves in Chiapas, Mexico in the middle of a rainforest with the some of the most beautiful people I have ever encountered. The Zapatistas were in the thick of it, fighting for indigenous autonomy and basic human rights. They had set up villages, which were scattered throughout the Lacandon Jungle of Chiapas. The Mayan peoples had started a resistance through a society where equality and dignity were the rule of the land and political organizing was done from the bottom up. They were fighting neoliberalism, big corporate rule, the effects of NAFTA, and the Mexican Government's unwillingness to recognize their political autonomy and their tried and true ways of living. It was quite inspiring to be amongst the women, men and children of this resistance. Honor the Earth was supporting the Zapatistas in any way we could. The

Zapatistas were very discerning about any outside help, so we trod carefully and listened more than we spoke. I had been down to Chiapas the previous year (something I left out of my 1996 blog) when Winona LaDuke and I attended an international conference hosted by the Zapatistas in Chiapas on the effects of economic globalization. This trip blew my mind; I saw and experienced things that were totally outside of my comfort zone and taught me the true meaning of sacrifice and activism. I could never have the courage these communities had. All I could do was try to support, honor and learn from them. I returned with the IG's in a delegation of Native and non-Native folks from the U.S. led by Zapatista representative, Cecilia Rodriguez. Our aim was to learn more, stand in solidarity with their movement and create some cultural exchange in the midst of this incredible land that was so peaceful in spite of being constantly intimidated and surrounded by both paramilitary groups and the Mexican Military, which the U.S. A. was partially funding. Emily and I both wrote about our trip when we got home.

http://indigogirls.com/activism_chiapas.html

We did another regional Honor the Earth tour, this time covering environmental and cultural preservation issues along the east coast from Maine with the Penobscot nation on down to Florida with the Traditional Seminole Nation. We met people from the St. Regis Mohawk community of Akwesasne, New York; ventured into our own neck of the woods to visit the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation in western North Carolina; and worked in D.C., Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Georgia on Nuclear Issues. Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt came through with support for Honor the Earth, and met up with us in D.C. to revive the No Nukes theme and to bring attention to the problems of Nuclear Waste. The tour was packed full with small community shows, press conferences, big concerts and even some politicking with newspaper editorial boards and congressional types. The tour built on our support for Native enviro work in other regions and tied together indigenous issues across the Americas.

This was a year of playing some of my all time favorite venues. We got to play Red Rocks in Colorado (with Patti Smith!); both Greek Theaters-Berkeley and LA; The Backyard in Austin; the Fabulous Fox Theater in Atlanta; and The Pier in Seattle. I knew these were rare days even then, so I enjoyed every moment of the shows. We continued taking our friends out with us to open the shows-Ulali, Billy Tipton Memorial Saxophone Quartet, Michelle Malone, David Wilcox, Danielle Howle, and The Rock*A*Teens. We had a great crew including Lisa "Sulli" Sullivan, who was digging in as our guitar tech and fast becoming one of the best in the business. Jerry and Sara were our rhythm section, and we had a gifted sideman Josh Segal playing numerous instruments.

The year 1997 will also be forever marked in our hearts and minds as the first year we were invited to be part of Lilith Fair. What a defining moment for us. We met so many people, both in the crews and the bands, and played in front of crowds that we could have never drawn on our own. It was so fortunate to be asked and to be part of it for 3 years running. Emily and I made it our mission to recruit as many people to jam as we could. I guess we felt like it'd be crazy not to collaborate when we were amongst so many other musicians traveling together and sharing the stage. At first we met some

resistance, and I think being queer was not too cool at the time, I honestly think there was some fear inside some musicians that the association with us would be damaging....but there were some that jumped right in - Sarah M, Jewel, Sheryl Crow- to name a few. We could feel the walls coming down over the next few years and made so many fast friends through music and the opening up it brought. The best part of the night for me was watching everyone else play; we got to see a big concert every night and had 3 stages to choose from, so I was a happy camper. The standout set for me was Emmylou Harris's show. I was astounded at the power of her band. *Wrecking Ball* had come out in 1995 and her band played a lot from that brilliant record, and I was just blown away. Sarah McLachlan; Nettwerk Music Group's Dan Fraser and Terry McBride; and New York talent agent Marty Diamond created this amazing festival and in general helped to usher in a great model for festivals of all types. They also showed that women fronted bands could share the same bill and have a great draw; there was a place for more than one woman on stage, and promoters began to change their ways a bit. There were still things lacking for me. One of the main struggles for Lilith when it started was trying to bring in more diversity in music and race, especially to the main stage. They did answer to this constructive criticism and admitted that it was something to try and solve. I think they really worked on it as the years ensued, but there were so many complexities that it was hard to achieve the kind of diversity that is organic and not forced. It was really interesting to watch things unfold and see how race and sexuality played out through this festival. Music breaks down barriers for sure, but the festival world is also a microcosm of all the divides that still stand. Women fronted all of the Lilith Fair bands, and while it was intentional, active and quite a feat, it was telling that there were still many more men, both on stage and off. It was a start but we could see that if this festival was such a radical idea to the mainstream, we had a long way to go.

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 24

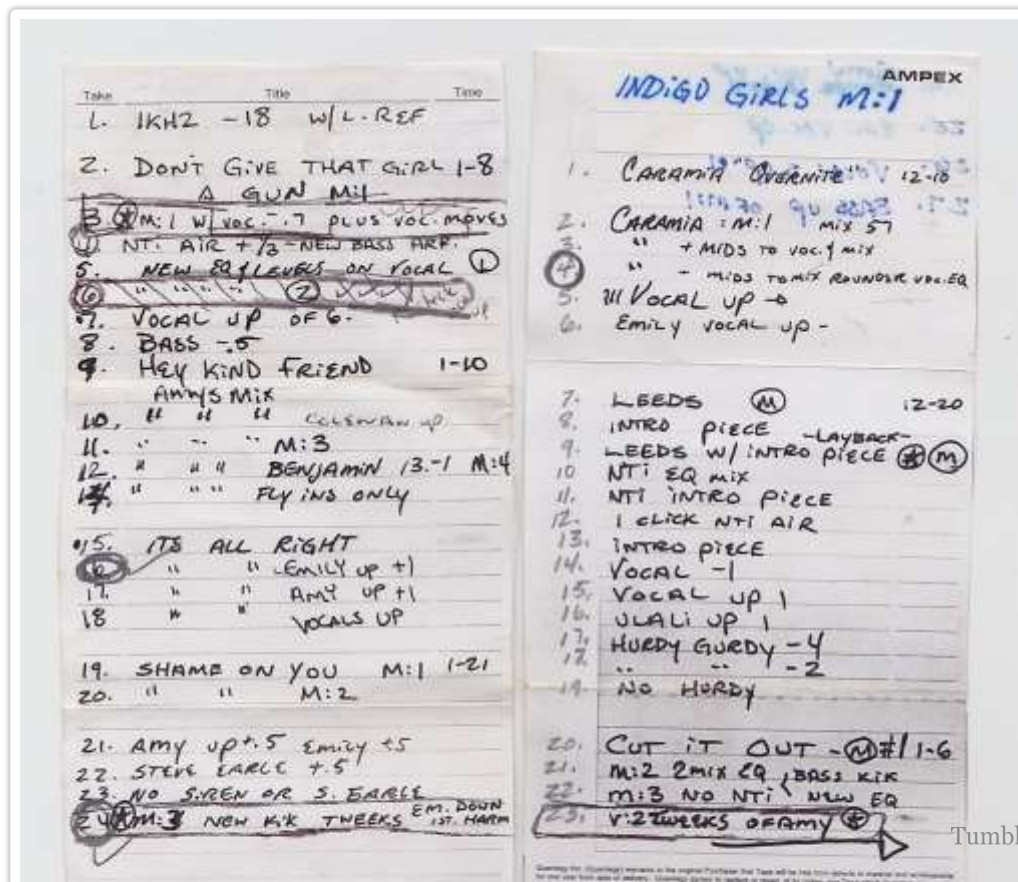


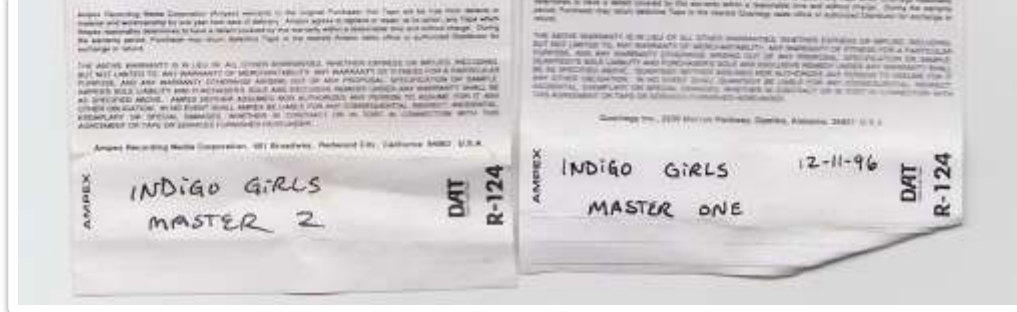


Amy.Josh.Jewel.Sarah.Emily practicing for Lilith.

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 4 Jan 2015 ❤️ 29





AR.1996

Most of our days in 1996 were spent working on *Shaming of the Sun*, which was released the next year in 1997. We were coming off of a big year, diving into a new record and not totally sure of our direction, but we knew that we wanted to veer off of our beaten path a bit and incorporate some of the new players and people we had met. You can tell that we didn't know where to land by the liner notes on the record. At the beginning of the project, we worked a bit with Peter Collins, who was really responsible for the pop potential of "Get Out the Map" and "Shame on You," but as I recall we wanted to take this project and run a bit, and so we ended up co-producing the record with David Leonard, who had engineered and mixed with us before. He wanted an adventure as well, so we headed into the project with a lot of big ideas, but probably not enough focus at first. We ended up in three different studios (in Nashville, Atlanta, and Austin), which wasn't a bad thing, but it did feel a bit like we were floundering. We used reels and reels of big fat analog tape, which sounded amazing but were really indulgent and costly. Back then you had to send around the big reels of tape to whatever studio you were working at and make copies of them for safety. And most of all you had to keep track of what was on each tape and which tapes held your master performances. So there was a pretty good paper trail for this record. I think the recordings sound amazing because of David (and all the tape we used), and in the end, the record came out with a solid group of songs that I consider vital to our development, and some experiments that really worked, but there were a few of my songs that I probably could have left off. I was post break up from a 7-year relationship, newly formed in my spirit from Honor the Earth, and well into a career whose largeness took me by surprise, so this record reflected a lot of the transitions of that time.

Our crazy ride with the rock opera Jesus Christ Superstar in 1995 had a big impact on me. One of the bands from that era who still have a hold on me today was Smoke-a salvation army style, jazz, punk folk outfit from the Cabbagetown neighborhood of Atlanta led by the poet and gravel-voiced singer Benjamin and consummate musician Bill Taft on Cornet and Banjo. They were part of a poignant scene that included The Rock*A*Teens, Kelly Hogan, Big Fish Ensemble and a network of poets and performance artists that made a lasting mark on all the southeastern bands from that time. I had written a song called "Hey Kind Friend" inspired by a few peaceful days of traveling with Ani DiFranco in the Northwest, and I asked some of the members of Smoke to play the song with me. They had such a particular sound that mirrored the ragamuffin experience and stillness of that brief stint on the road. We recorded the song in Austin and I

remember that Benjamin, who was prone to drug-induced euphoria and wandering the world ended up on the streets of Austin and got arrested for something like vagrancy.

The rest of the band helped us figure out what happened, we got him out of jail and I picked him up on the street corner by the Austin jail. I loved Benjamin, and his genius as a poet and revealer of humanity was addictive. The whole band was addictive and I was a huge fan and would do anything for them, but I usually felt like some kind of nerdy high school kid hanging on their every word and song. No matter how successful you get as an artist, there are always other artists that make you giddy and off kilter!

Another musician that I was a huge fan of was Steve Earle. I had met him sometime in the past two years and he was becoming an important mentor to me. His offerings about songwriting and the music business were invaluable. I asked Steve to come play harmonica and sing on “Shame on You” because his advice about writing had helped me to get that song out, his words and actions about human rights had inspired me too, so a song about immigration woes felt like a good fit. There is nothing like collaborating on music in the studio with someone you admire, it is intoxicating and nerve wracking at that same time-so much energy and trying not to seem like an uber fan, while trying to get your song right, yikes!

One of the best things about Honor the Earth and its benefit tours was being introduced to a bunch of incredible Native artist that we had never been exposed to. We had the great fortune of meeting the singing trio Ulali in Wisconsin on our very first run of Honor the Earth dates. Their tight and wacky harmonies sounded like a cross pollination of Native, African, and Southern soul, there was really nothing quite like them. When I wrote “Shed Your Skin,” I knew they could bring the groove and organic depth to that song. Their voices were true instruments, often not even sounding like vocals, but something otherworldly instead. Tom Morello (Rage Against the Machine) ended up doing a remix of the song too, so double the groove and rock!

Shaming of the Sun took a while to make and we had to pull back a bit from the big gigs to give our touring a break, which meant we had a shorter touring season and got to mix it up a lot. We played some cool festivals, did a tour of rock clubs, and played a few Honor the Earth benefits. I can’t find a lot of my photos from 1996 for some reason (hopefully they are hiding in a box somewhere), and one show that I can’t find photos of but can picture in my mind’s eye is the New Orleans Jazzfest. It was a huge deal for us and we were on cloud nine to be playing it. I felt especially cool because Emily had gone to Tulane and had some real New Orleans experience. And musically speaking, the variety and level of musicianship at that particular festival was unbeatable.

A gig at Roseland Ballroom highlighted our club tour, where Joan Jett sat in with us and we played “Crimson and Clover.” Michelle Malone was with us for that show as well. What a moment! Another fan moment for me that year was meeting Joan Armatrading at Newport Folk Festival. She was such a beacon of light for Emily and I when we were starting out, so meeting her just made me very happy and very shy!

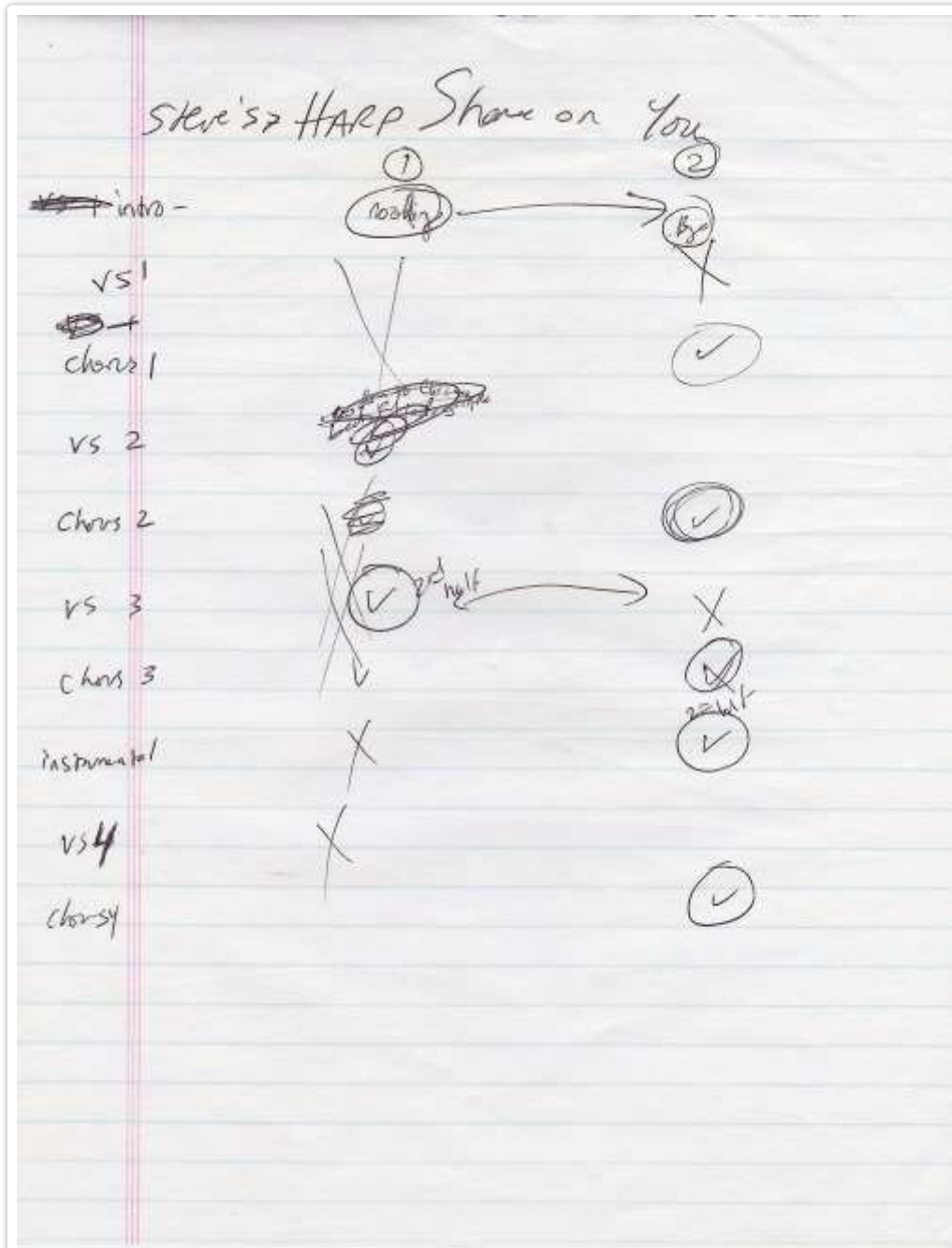
In 1996, we created a new model for ourselves, to raise money for Honor the Earth. We had done the big tours but needed to try some single shows for the years that we

could not do whole tours. So we organized events in three cities-NYC, Minneapolis, and Malibu- brought in a promoter, asked some big musicians to join our efforts, had compelling speakers, and invited potential donors and press to come as special guests. Among the musicians were Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt, who both gave us their time and energy for years to come. Nothing could compare to the big tours but all three events were very successful and had their own personalities.

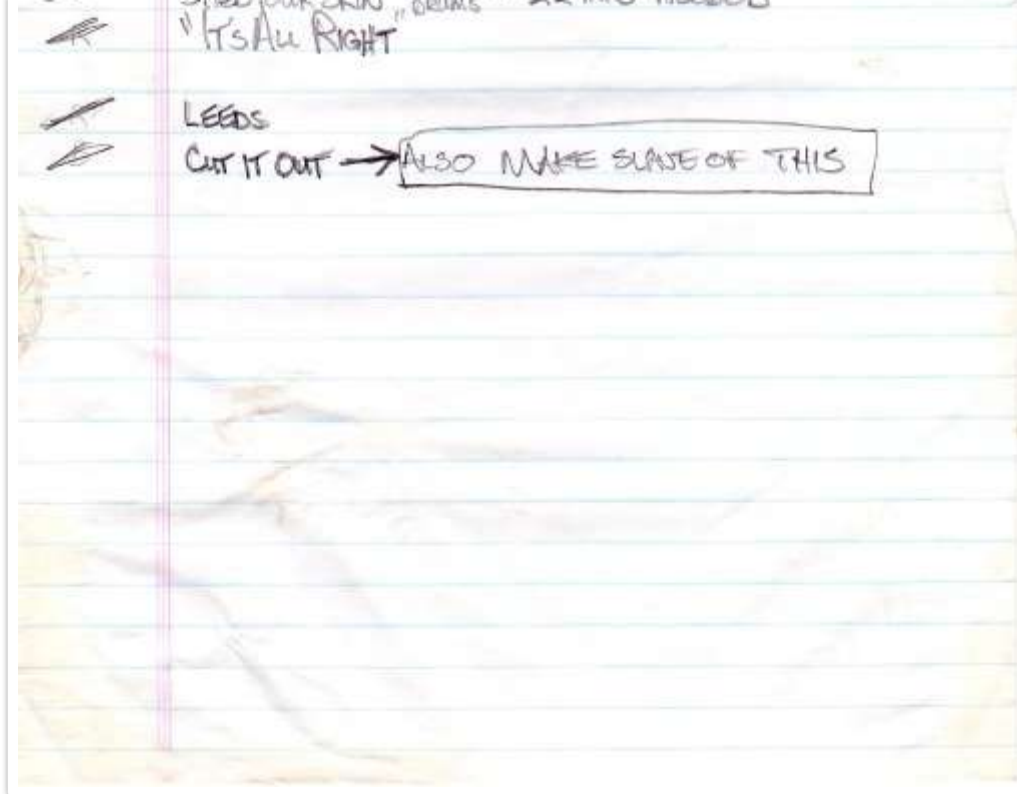
For something completely different, I started a fledgling solo band with Michael Lorant and Sheila Doyle called Flunkie. We were pretty punk rock in the folksiest of ways and I played some instruments I had no idea how to play, like a snare drum...but it was seriously fun and we had some memorable gigs including one at Eddie's Attic that year. We tried out some of the songs that I had written for *Shaming of the Sun*, we played a New Mongrels song or two, and we did some choice renditions of Michael and Sheila songs. It was the first time I had branched out to play with other people in a totally new format, and it was very good for me. Emily had a side project called Hash; they played a gig at The Point that year. We both felt the need to break away a bit and gather some new influences and energy. I think one of the crucial practices that has kept our duo together and fruitful is having our own projects outside of the IG's; somehow our survival instincts kicked in that year and we knew what we needed to do to keep it fresh-make a more experimental record, play rock clubs and solo gigs, and stoke the fires of Honor the Earth!

📅 2 Dec 2014 ❤️ 28





- 32 TRK - TRKS NEEDED TO MAKE SAFETIES
- ~~SHAME ON YOU~~ 24 W/ DRUM SUBMIX (PLUS 5 MORE TRKS TO INCLUDE STEVE'S EARLIER WORK TRKS)
 - ~~EVERYTHING IN ITS...~~ 9 TRKS NEEDED
 - ~~BURN ALL THE LETTERS~~ 20 TRKS NEEDED W/ DRUM SUBMIX
 - ~~GET OUT THE MAT~~ 24 TRKS NEEDED W/ DRUM SUBMIX + EARLIER WORK TRKS
 - ~~CARAMIA~~ 11 TRKS NEEDED W/ DRUM SUBMIX
 - ~~DON'T GIVE THAT GIRL...~~ 23 TRKS NEEDED TO COPY ALL TRKS (ONLY 2 TRKS NEW)
 - ~~WINTHROP~~ - 23 TRKS TO COPY ALL (ART BASS COMP IS ASSEMBLED)
 - ~~HEY KIND FRIEND~~ - 20 TRKS NEEDED W/ DRUM SUBMIX
 - ~~SCOOTER BOYS~~ - 22 TRKS TO COPY ALL
 - ~~SHED YOUR SKIN~~ NASH. DRUMS. - 19 TRKS TO COPY ALL
 - ~~SHED YOUR SKIN~~ AUSTIN - 22 TRKS NEEDED



ES.1996

In 1996, we started recording *Shaming of the Sun* and ended up working on it in Nashville (Woodland Studios), Atlanta (Southern Tracks), and Austin (Hit Shack, Arlyn studios). We were in a period of growth, change and experimentation. Although we'd had great success and experience with Scott Litt and Peter Collins as producers, Amy and I decided to co-produce *Shaming* with David Leonard who had engineered *Swamp Ophelia*. Taking on the role of co-producers was indicative of our desire to stretch.

I wanted to play more electric guitar and then, as now, I wanted to break out of my natural instinct to write a ballad or a mid-tempo pop song. One of the many great things about working with Amy is that she has an innate ability to ROCK, and I got to live my desire to play rock music through some of her songs. She continued in that rock vein on *Shaming* with songs like "Cut it Out," which was blistering and raw, and "Scooter Boys," a fierce commentary on colonialism. I got to play electric guitar on both. Even though "It's Alright" is musically sunny in nature, I was writing about hatred in the world, and it was a song of self-empowerment ("I know I'm small in a way, but I know I'm strong"). I played slide electric guitar on the track to give it all the bite I could muster. When we played the song live, I used a Hamer Duotone guitar that switched back and forth from acoustic to electric. I could play the body of the song in acoustic mode and switch to electric mode for the slide solo; picked that trick up from Michelle Malone!

"Cara Mia" was a big departure for me stylistically. I wrote it on electric guitar, and parts of the lyrics were based on a dream Sara Lee had and told me about (losing shoes and bridges to cross over). While it doesn't have the rock tempo (it's more like a dirge, really), the electric guitar part provided a conduit for a mass of lyrical angst. I also wanted strings on the song and asked Sara Lee to write and arrange a string part with a tip of the hat to Paul Buckmaster, whose strings I had freaked out over on Elton John's

Madman Across the Water. I thought that Sara accomplished that perfectly with the string parts she wrote on “Cara Mia,” and it showed her musicality and aptitude, as she wasn’t in the habit writing full string arrangements.

There were other new musical avenues for me that came to life on *Shaming*. I wrote my first song on banjo, “Get Out the Map.” I wrote it in the same living room as I had previously written “Galileo.” I was learning that picking up a different instrument brought a completely different song. I never would have written “Get Out the Map” on guitar, and I never would have written “Cara Mia” on acoustic guitar. I found the chords to “Leeds” on a piano. The experience from that dark trip to England had been literally brooding in me for a couple of years, but when I stumbled on those chords, they found their way out. And that was the first song I wrote on piano. I don’t even remember the chords now. I’m not a piano player. But it was a huge step in expanding musically to pick up a new instrument and write with it, even if I didn’t play it well and certainly not properly. Around this time, Amy and I were broadening our sound palette with harmonica, mandolin, banjo, piano, dulcimer, and more than ever, electric guitar. I also remember when Amy chose a hip-hop loop to run through “Shed Your Skin,” an absolutely new twist and turn for Amy’s music. “Leeds” is and may always be the only song we ever played a Hurdy Gurdy on.

We had met the group Ulali (Jennifer Kreisberg, Soni Moreno, and Pura Fe Crescioni) through Honor the Earth activism, and what they brought to *Shaming of the Sun* is more than I can attempt to describe. They shook “Shed Your Skin,” made “Leeds” completely haunting, and brought all of the life to “Burn All the Letters.” Amy and I loved and love them as fierce Native activists and strong women. There are moments during making a record when I can’t believe my good fortune that an artist has joined us. And then there is Ulali!!!! They possess me to crank the volume full blast whenever their parts come up.

A little note on “Burn all the Letters;” it was the only song I’ve ever written while in the studio making a record. I was in the booth, and we were working on something else, and I came up with the guitar chords and Jerry Marotta started playing to it. And then I just loved it immediately. Part of the song lyrics became about private papers being published for public consumption, and the other part became about the U.S. government spying on and infiltrating communities during the American Indian Movement. It felt freeing to actually accept a song that hadn’t been written with the intention of going on the record. And to this day, it is one of my favorite songs because of the way it came to life, because of Dave Edwards’ stand-up bass part with Jerry’s drums, and because Ulali took it to a soul-stirring place for me.

I think back to when Amy and I started, especially with making the first Epic release, and how firmly we clung to our acoustic and sparsely produced arrangements. We wanted to present our music as we had been making it, like an acoustic duo bar band. By the time we reached 1996, we were fully immersed in various instruments and production. In time, we would circle back to a simpler approach. But at that time, spreading my wings by trying different writing approaches with different instruments

was liberating and exciting. And, as always, Amy and I were on our separate paths together.

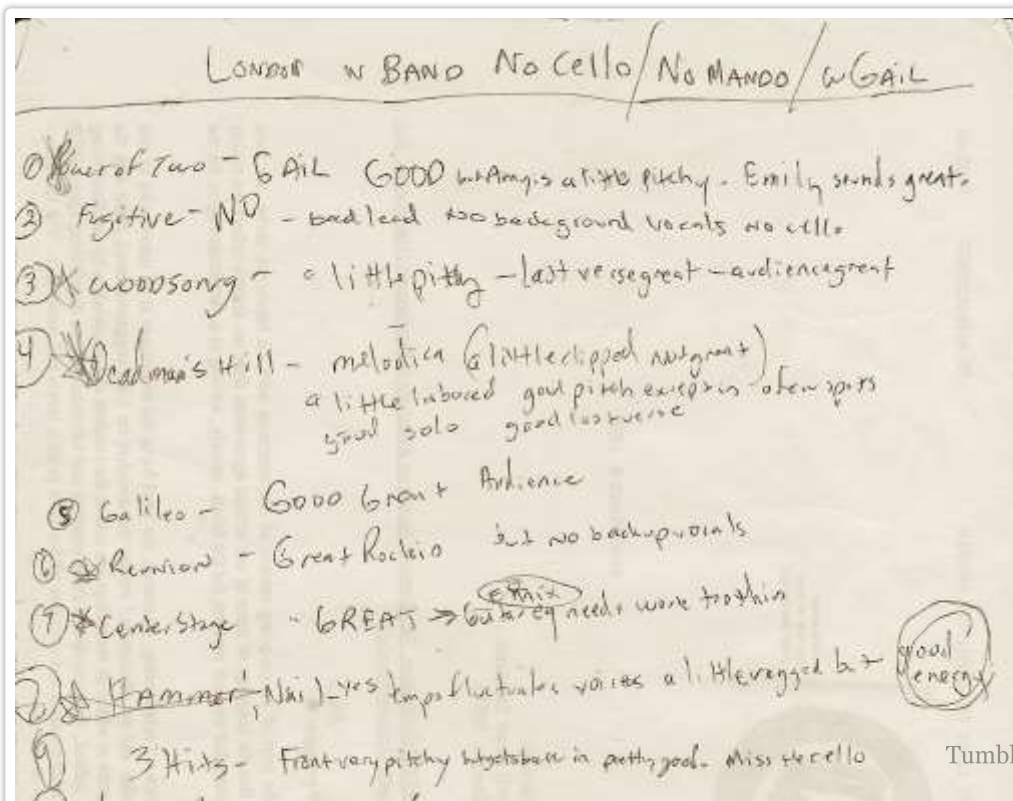
📅 2 Dec 2014 ❤️ 25



Michelle Malone, Joan Jett, Emily, Amy at Roseland Ballroom, NYC, 1996.

Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 2 Dec 2014 ❤️ 34



10) *Cousin Kenny* - SAT/GOOD versität A.S. was better.
 11) *This Train* - font not strong new style but great at the time
 12) *Less Complicated* - pitchy - but great *mix*
 13) *Ghost* - pretty good
 14) *Chicken man* - song not so great **NO**
 15) *Mystery* - w/ Gail guitar a little out (not so great) Gail is great
 16) *Kiofers* - OK not great
 17) *Language* - Really good
 18) *Midnight train* - mix? Gail up voices better -
 19) *Touch me* - mix? Great but i keep putting my mind.
 20) *Close* - NO

Notes for 1200 Curfews 1995

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 22



KERI TICKETT © 1995

Emily, Winona, Waseyabin, Amy

Photo by Keri Pickett 1995

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 31

AR.1995

The IG's had some really full years during the 90's, brimming with varied projects and musical endeavors, but the year 1995 takes the cake for variety and legacy! So many of the things we were privileged to be involved in carried on for years after their initial start and left a beautiful wake of memories, also laying the groundwork for what was to come.

Emily and I had met the Native activist, Winona LaDuke in 1991 at an Earth Day event at Foxboro Stadium outside of Boston. That meeting was fortuitous and after that we snowballed into a life of more activism and inspiration than we knew could exist for us. In 1995, Honor the Earth, the organization that we established with Winona and several Native activist groups, was well on its way with a powerful board of Native leaders from all corners of Indian Land, and a creative vision of how to build bridges between Native and Non-Native communities, while leveraging political and financial support for Native led organizations that were doing effective and precedent setting environmental and cultural preservation work both inside and outside of Indian Country. We had tested the waters with a short 3-day run of shows in the Midwest to benefit Honor, but this year marked the first big tour starting in the Midwest continuing to the Northwest, on down through the Southwest and West Coast, jumping up to Alaska and then culminating in a big show in Portland, Oregon. We married shows in Indian Country with concerts in border towns to bring the communities together, and raise money and awareness around issues ranging from the fight against Crandon Mining in the Midwest to the Exxon Valdez oil spill settlement in Alaska to Uranium mining in the Southwest and Nuclear waste disposal on Native lands to sacred site preservation in the Sweet Grass Hills and Mt. Shasta, and on and on. We had big book binders chock full of information that covered the Western U.S. and it was just the tip of the iceberg of what Native communities were dealing with in North America. We played at the Wounded Knee High School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and another high school in Cordova, AK, where we also toured the Prince William Sound and learned about the devastation of the Exxon Valdez oil spill and how best to make reparations to the human and wildlife communities in the region. We spent some time in Winona's White Earth community in Minnesota, learning about how they were restoring their land-base and harvesting wild rice and maple syrup. The White Earth Land Recovery Project is still growing and evolving and has become a significant example of Indian self-determination and an amazing model of environmentalism coupled with marketing and growth. This tour rattled me and changed me for good, I would never be the same person after the

history I learned, the people I met, the environmental and human devastation I saw first hand, the ceremonies I was welcomed into, and the incredible activism and grassroots organizing I witnessed. This was really my “click” moment that determined my future. Every bit of activism I do now, in everything from queer rights to immigration issues, is based on a model I learned in Indian Country. The wonder and awe I felt about this experience is beyond measure.

One of the songs we learned while venturing into Native activism was “Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee”-a tour de force by Buffy Sainte-Marie that takes on some of the wrongs perpetrated against Indian Country throughout the history of America. After witnessing these issues first hand the song was a powerful anthem that we could pour every bit of our energy into. We had been recording a lot of our shows while on tour, and this song was one that we captured for our live release, *1200 Curfews*. We filmed a music video for it in the old warehouse and manufacturing district in Northwest Atlanta. Epic Records footed the bill. I loved how we were starting to use our major label resources to expose some of the most brutal and repressive history of America. It seemed like the least we could do now that we were reaping the benefits of a corporate world that had been established on the backs of so many. This conflict would continue to be a rub for me, but obviously I was enjoying the spoils with the rest of America, and needed to recognize the complexities of the Indigo Girls having a major label deal.

The record *1200 Curfews* was a lot of hours in the making. It documented the live shows during this era, the musicians we played with, the venues we loved and the audiences that never failed to show up and sing with us. Separately, Emily and I listened to countless live board tapes and multi-track recordings, picking what resonated with each of us, and then comparing notes. David Leonard took on the monumental task of mixing this project, drawn from so many different sources, and gave it a musical thread that we still feel represents what our musical leanings were at the time.

There was just so much music going on for us, it was really exciting. We still had a tight knit community in the Atlanta music scene-a scene that was in the midst of a poignant moment in time, with so many artists of its artists impacting the region. I had established an independent record label, Daemon Records back in 1990 to promote music and activism in our community. Every year, the label saw incredible releases by bands that were my unsung heroes. I was first and foremost a fan and saw an opportunity to stay connected to DIY philosophy while putting out some music that I loved. A couple of the records that came out in January of that year were collaborative projects that showed the richness of the Atlanta folk, rock and punk scenes.

The New Mongrels was a loose confederacy of musicians that had a common love of the songs by Atlanta actor/ singer-songwriter, Haynes Brooke. A bunch of us met while we were at Emory University and stayed connected after we graduated. Haynes ended up putting together a few records over the years where we all took turns singing and accompanying him on his songs. *Not Dead (Yet)* was the first of these releases. Emily and I each had a role in the Mongrels, but for me, the most notable artists of The New Mongrels’ were Gerard McHugh and Michael Lorant. These two had been kicking

around together in and out of projects for quite a while. Gerard was the songwriter in Atlanta that we all looked to for inspiration and Michael was a masterful musician in all facets.

Along with The New Mongrels and his band Big Fish Ensemble, Michael took on the massive creative endeavor of gathering a wide array of Atlanta musicians to record a version of the rock opera-*Jesus Christ Superstar*. Michael had grown up with the recording as a musical centerpiece in his life. Eventually, what started as musings with friends on who would play which part and wouldn't it be fun to put the "rock" back into JCS, turned into a record release and multiple live performances in 3 different towns (Atlanta, Austin, Seattle). There were well over 80 musicians involved in the recording with Rob Gal and Michael at the helm. Michael had been shot and seriously wounded in a mugging incident in Atlanta, and he wanted to do something constructive in response, so we decided that all the profits from the record would go towards the efforts to end the epidemic of gun violence in our country. The cast of JCS included a long list of Atlanta artists that had really made their mark on our scene-Kelly Hogan, Benjamin Smoke, Gerard McHugh, Trina Mead, Tomi Martin, Dew, Big Fish Ensemble, Five-Eight, Uncle Green and so many more. Emily played Mary, I played Jesus, Gerard played Pilate and Michael played Judas. For me, it was the most challenging singing role yet, and I really had to work to get the songs under my belt. Michael was amazing as Judas and he could tackle the melody and content with confidence and grit. Gerard had just the right amount of angst and wackiness to play Pilate. Emily, of course sang the classic song "I Don't Know How to Love Him" with total grace, and her impressive acting skills came in handy during the live performances. I can safely say I am not and never will be an actor so the acting part of the live show was a stretch for me, but I didn't care because the shows were a hoot. We barely had time to rehearse and I am sure the stage managers felt like they were herding cats, but I think the audience had a blast. For one of the shows we got to perform in Seattle at The Pier, one of my favorite venues of all time. I was sick and losing my voice, downing steroids just to stay afloat, but I got to make the "Jesus entrance" on a lift / crane truck and ride through the audience with one of those wireless head mics, singing "What's the Buzz," and that was an experience I will never live down or forget!

Another venture into acting for the IG's was the movie, *Boys on the Side*. I think we filmed our part in 1994, but the movie and soundtrack were released in 1995. They used Emily's song "Power of Two" on the soundtrack. We didn't really have to act, we just had to perform the song "Joking" as the house band at a bar, and then in another scene, stand in a roomful of people and lean against a wall. It was a sad scene, so we had to look sad, which is hard to do when you're geeking out about being in a movie with Whoopi Goldberg, Drew Barrymore and Mary-Louise Parker! We filmed our parts in Tucson, Arizona and it was cool to be on a film set for the first time. Everyone treated us super well and we got to watch other scenes being filmed at our leisure. I had one big debacle when I dropped my guitar while riding on the elevator at the hotel in Tucson with only its soft case to protect it. My guitar suffered a big fracture in the bridge of the guitar, but the generous and golden Whoopi Goldberg got wind of it and saved the day. She bought

and presented me with another guitar exactly like it-a 1947 Martin O-18. Wow, I treasure that guitar.

Emily and I also experienced a full plate of touring that year, in the U.S. and abroad. One of our best tours that year was in Australia and New Zealand. The 1995 tour down under is still my favorite tour that we've done over there. We allowed extra time to go on hikes, visit nature preserves and rainforest, and had a chance to experience the country beyond the cities and shows. In New Zealand, we were hosted by some Maori folks and learned about their history. They showed us one of their famous war dances and let us visit their community center. After spending time in the U.S. on Native issues, we were especially interested in what was going on in Australia and New Zealand in regards to the indigenous communities. It was quite striking to see many of the same battles over resources and human rights halfway across the world, especially the devastation of Uranium mining, processing and waste disposal, which unfortunately connects all the lands and indigenous peoples around the globe. Touring, music and activism were marching hand in hand for me, now more than ever.

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 30



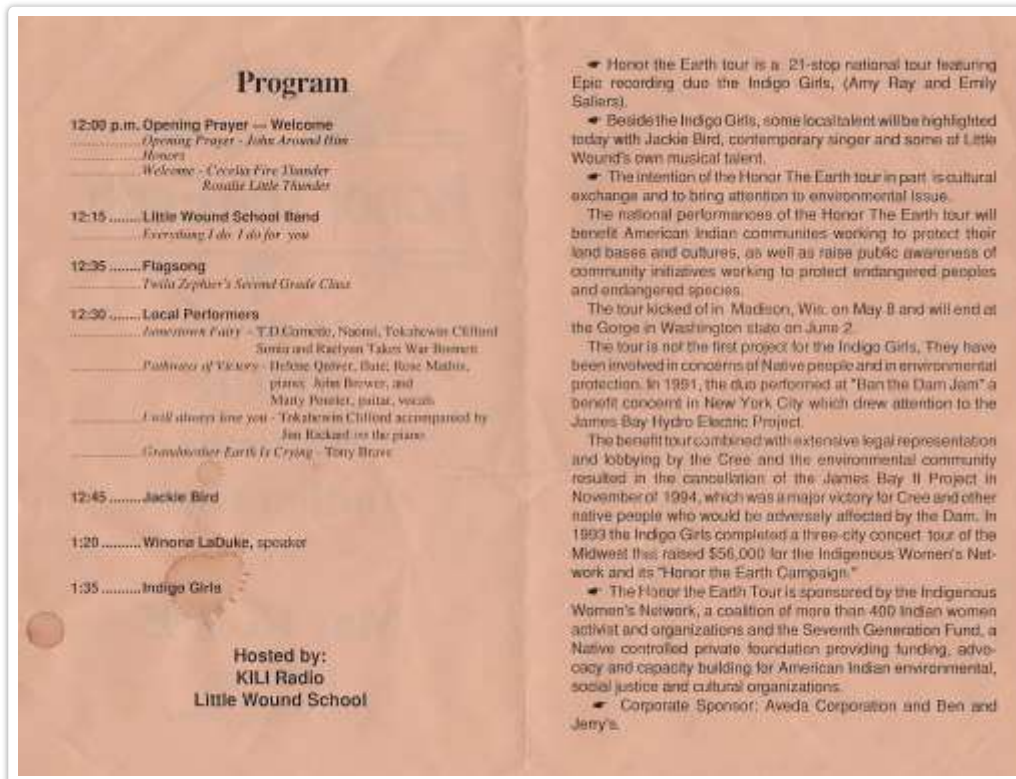
On the set of the video for “Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee”

Atlanta, GA 1995

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 31



📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 19



Program for IG Honor the Earth concert at Wounded Knee High School

Pine Ridge, SD 1995

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 16

ES.1995

1995 was chock full of travel across the world, our first musical together, and a journey across Indian Country for Honor the Earth that would change our lives and inspire our activism.

We headed to Australia in February to tour behind *Swamp Ophelia*. The flight to Sydney was endlessly long, as I still had an intense fear of flying, and we first had to get to LAX to get to Sydney; a double whammy. We had allowed ourselves a day of travel recovery before launching in to album promotion and then performance. My jet lag in

Australia was pretty wicked, as the days are turned upside down and the weather was hot. One of the first things I did was make my way to Sydney Harbour to run through the

not. One of the first things I did was make my way to Sydney Harbour to run through the botanical gardens and around the path by the Harbour. The Sydney Opera House was in full view; far more dramatic than any postcard I had seen of it. The run made my jet lag feel better, and later I enjoyed a seafood dinner by the water with oysters and a strange new found delicacy: mud bugs.

After finishing promotion in Sydney (our show would take place at the end of the tour), we flew west to Perth to kick off the tour shows. In a moment of free time, I went to the sea, feeling overwhelmed with the awesome experience of looking out at the Indian Ocean, and I filled a small bottle with sand to take home across the world.

I loved touring in Australia. As in any country, each city is different from the others, and I enjoyed the warmth of the sun and the people, and the crazy opportunity to pet a kangaroo and hold a koala bear. I also read a lot about all of the poisonous spiders and snakes and jellyfish and sea creatures, as I have a fascination with those things and Australia is full of them. The only thing lacking in the tour experience was having to fly everywhere and not getting to spend more time in New Zealand, as one day in Auckland just wasn't enough!

Another highlight of 1995 was getting to play a part in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The adaptation was the brainchild of musician and friend, Michael Lorant. Amy was cast as Jesus, and I was Mary. The rest of the cast were a bunch of our musician friends from Atlanta; a motley crew that Michael put together. We did two live shows and recorded an album, which Amy released on her label, Daemon Records. We first performed the show live in Austin, Texas. If you can imagine a chunk of a city's musician community all crammed together and waiting in the wings, and feeling like high schoolers in the annual musical, that was what it was like. And for me, personally, I got to hold a mic and sing one of the GREAT songs in "I Don't Know How to Love Him" to Amy-Jesus! Singing in a dramatic role with no self-accompaniment was completely different from playing an IG show. It brought me back to my high school musical days and sort of lit a fire within me to return to that kind of performance one day. MAYBE. Another great part of being part of JCS was getting to know new friends, like Tomi and Trina from what would later be known as 3/5 Human, a band we toured and recorded with, years after.

The 1995 Honor the Earth Tour was a profound experience. It was the culmination of much organizing effort on the part of our management, agent, promoters, and Native community activists across the U.S. The Indigenous Women's Network worked with us (Honor the Earth) to focus on critical issues and support the tour as it set out to target three components of HTE's Endangered Peoples, Endangered Species Campaign: the defense of homelands and ecosystems, the protection of sacred sites, and the building of sustainable communities.

The tour had 21 stops, many of them first time visits to Indian Reservations for us. These were the highlight of the tour for me because we were playing in reservation school venues, having shared meals with indigenous foods, meeting the people within the communities who were directly affected by the issues we were covering. For every reservation show/gathering, there were tribal musicians or activists who took the stage,

and there were lots of kids present, and our band played with the bare minimum of gear but sounded amazing. We made new friends.

In some places, like Fargo, N.D., we played public shows and acted as sort of a bridge between Indian and non-Indian communities. There were endless issues at hand, and each stop or show or visit on the tour targeted those issues. We went to Prince William Sound in Cordova, Alaska, site of the catastrophic Exxon Valdez oil spill that was still devastating ecosystems six years later. We were there to join the Eyak community in fighting clear cutting, deforestation, and endangerment of the wild salmon population. To this day, the land and water and natural surroundings of the Sound and the Cordova area are some of the most beautiful and stunning scapes I have ever seen.

We worked with the Anishinaabe Nation in Wisconsin to fight a proposed copper sulfide mine that would have devastated the Wolf River watershed and wild rice beds guaranteed to the Ojibwe people by the U.S. government.

In Montana, we worked with the northern Cheyenne tribe to support a moratorium on gold mining in the sacred sweet grass hills.

We traveled to the southwest to visit the Dineh (Navajo) reservation, and then played a show on the Hopi reservation at the civic center.

There were so many inspiring things we saw and learned on the tour: solar panels on houses in Hopi; a visit to the Oglala Lakota College with its 95% graduation rate, and interview at KILI radio on the Pine Ridge reservation. KILI radio was and is a badass, 100,000-watt station owned and operated by the tribe. So many days I was reminded of how important it is for communities to have a voice in their own future. While monolithic forces like power, mining companies, government atrocities and mismanagement have been a tremendous burden on Indian peoples, time and time again we witnessed how small but organized groups of indigenous activists were speaking truth to power and winning battles.

I could never fully cover the magnitude of the 1995 HTE tour in one blog entry. I was so deeply inspired by the activists and tribe members and friends that it was difficult to return home, and I remember not being able to adjust to life back in Georgia for a very long time. I remember thinking how Indian peoples have to work SO HARD just to survive on their own land because of the encroachment and poisoning by profit-driven companies. I remember the bus rides across 13 states, in and out of reservations, the laughs we had, the horses we rode, the fry bread we ate, the tears we cried at Wounded Knee, the inspiration we felt at KILI radio.

Honor the Earth started as a conversation between Amy and Winona at an earth day concert in 1991. By 1995, we were a full fledged organization, reaching 40,000 people on a single tour, raising money, awareness, and political support for Native people. And the people who were on the front lines of those environmental battles changed us forever with their determination, their simple approach to protecting land, water, and air, and their ability to affect change for the sake of all of us.

We can work together, we can learn from each other, and we can take songs wherever we go.

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 30



Emily, Sara Lee, Jane Scarpantoni, Jerry Marotta, Amy

KILI Radio, Pine Ridge, SD 1995

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 17



Emily and Winona LaDuke at KILI Radio, Pine Ridge, SD 1995



Amy as Jesus, Emily as Mary, Jesus Christ Superstar, Seattle 1995

📅 3 Nov 2014 ❤️ 26





ES

I was thinking about the making of *Swamp Ophelia*. Once again, the first things that come to mind are the guests who contributed, a kind of kitchen sink of brilliance and quirkiness. I was also thinking about the songs I wrote for *Swamp*, and how clearly I remember writing them and what they were about. So, I'm going to do a little ping ponging between the writing of the songs and the recording of them.

“Least Complicated” was written upstairs, literally “two stories above the street,” in my house in Atlanta, as I looked out the window and saw a boy and a girl holding hands, and walking on the sidewalk below. Now, of course, the window framed the metaphor-in-motion for the cynicism I had mustered up to that time when it came to thinking about love. I saw them as idyllic schoolyard lovebirds, and so I began to write about love as if it were a school lesson. Hence the crux, “the hardest to learn was the least complicated.” It’s funny to think that I had it all figured out at the ripe old age of 30, and

When it came time to record “Least Complicated,” the elements that went into the music emulated that playfulness. Lisa Germano wasn’t all that interested in playing violin by the time she joined us second time around (*Rites of Passage* was the first), which I remember thinking was nuts, because she was so good at violin. But she also had a very quirky side, and could pick up an instrument and come up with something inventive and cool, like the signature mandolin line that sounded to me like a snake and a snake charmer. It was Peter’s (Collins, producer) idea to do the very pop-y ”na na na na na na na’s,” and Jerry Marotta’s drum fill into the second verse that kicks in the beat is my favorite drum fill of any on all of our recorded material. Jerry also played the bongo outro that we used the sans amp on for a somewhat distorted effect. All very playful and upbeat brushstrokes on that song.

“Language or the Kiss” was written as a lament for the life I missed out on while I was away from home touring or doing other IG things. The “kiss” is the home life, the relationship(s). The “language” is the process of learning, creating, and growing that can only be fostered by the art and where it has to lead you. It’s a melancholy song about what I gave up to gain what I had. Amy and I were HUGE Jane Siberry fans, and I just thought it would be incredible for her to be on *Swamp* in any capacity. I was surprised and delighted when she accepted our invitation. In the studio, we just ran the song and asked her to sing, ad-lib, or whatever she wanted to express wherever she wanted to, and that’s what she did. There’s never anything ordinary about what Jane does. I think her vocalizing is very spooky and affecting on ‘Language or the Kiss’. While she took a few passes, and we sat at the board and listened, I couldn’t conceive of how her parts pieced together would materialize. But I knew that the thrill of her voice, and the depth of her sensibility were giving the song just what it was asking for. The other magic in that track was Chuck Leavell’s piano playing. It’s overwhelming to hear a master take your song that started simply with one guitar, and turn it into a more enriched thing of beauty through his instrument.

“Power of Two” was written so quickly, it felt like it wrote itself. The most memorable thing about recording it was that I met a guy in Nashville, standing outside of the Bluebird Café, and after hearing him sing a bit, I invited him to sing on our record, spur of the moment. His name was Sam ‘Shake’ Anderson. He came to the studio and, again, I asked him to just ad-lib what he felt and heard. He sang all over the track, and I wanted to keep all his parts, but Peter wanted to rein it in, so what you hear on “Power of Two” is what remained of his vocals, after Peter reigned it in. Otherwise it would’ve been a Sam Anderson track!

“Woodsong” has always felt like my Philosophy 101 song. It’s basically, if you don’t get the storm, you don’t get to feel what it feels like to make it through the storm. I can clearly remember wanting to express my belief in God but feeling like maybe I should cloak it a bit. So, I wrote, “no way construction of this tricky plan/was built by other than a greater hand/with a love that passes all our understanding...” Obviously, it’s not THAT

cloaked, as the last part is a direct lift from Philippians 4:7, but I definitely felt
trepidation about coming straight out and saying, “I believe in God, and God watches

repudiation about coming straight out and saying, "I believe in God, and God watches over the journey." The thing that stands out particularly in my mind about recording it was that I absolutely loved the violin intro, and I still do.

"Mystery" is about the strange pull between two people who are polar opposites. It's also about forces being heard but not seen. I started it at the end of an Atlanta summer on a night when I could hear the neighborhood dogs barking distantly, a sound that I always found haunting. In the end, I realize that there is no explanation for a love that seems to make no sense; it just meets in the middle of impossibility. It was the perfect track for Jane Siberry to vocalize on. Her note choices, the vowel sounds, the downright ethereal nature of her artistry brought "mystery" to life for me on that song.

"Fare Thee Well" was simply a fictional song about someone whose life was cut short, but it was a life that burned ferociously while it lived. I wrote this song in the tuning that Mary Chapin Carpenter taught me, my favorite tuning of all time, DADGBC. I honestly don't recall anything about the recording of this song. Sometime after *Swamp Ophelia* was released, however, I sang it at the funeral of an activist friend and mentor whose brilliant life was ended abruptly. Thereafter, I only think of her when I think of the song. R.I.P, MBW.

There are two other things that stand out to me about the making of *Swamp Ophelia*. Our friends, Mrs. Fun (Connie Grauer and Kim Zick), joined us on "Deadman's Hill." Connie played the melodica, that quirky little hand held keyboard that set the tone for the song. And, best of all, Dr. Larry Ray, Sr, Amy's dad, sang background vocals on the song. It was a momentous event! And now he is with us always, on record, and in our hearts.

📅 1 Oct 2014 ❤️ 182





Bill Connolly
1922-2014
11/13/194

DEAR 16 + Co

After talking w/my parents + other older members of my family, we came up with a list of names of people who perished that were o-k to be used.

They are:

LEON BENAROJO	LAY-ON BENAROYO
EDIT BENA ROJO	AY-DEET BENAROYO
MATILDA BENAROJO	MATILDA BENAROYO

IVO ALMULI	EEVDE	ABRAHAM AL-MOO-LY
WILLIE STERN	VILLIE STERN SHTERN	
FLORA STERN	FLORA SHTERN	
HILDE GRUNWALD	HILDEH GRUENWALD	
PETER GRUNWALD	PETER GRUEN-VALD	
PESEL PUCHTIC	PESEL POOCH- TICK K	
CHAYA-UDEL PUCHTIC	CHAYA CHAY-AM YOO-OLE	POOCH-TICK
SENDER MERIN	SENDER MERIN	⊕
ATZUR NUSEN PUCHTIC	NUH-SEN	POOCH-TICK

⊕

Some members of the family weren't comfortable even mentioning the names to me. It's still very painful to them.

I have come to the conclusion myself that I would be most comfortable if we didn't focus so much attention on names that I give you. Our family is just one of many who suffered. In some ways we are even more fortunate ^{thinks} ~~that~~ we have so many survivors.



AR

Swamp Ophelia is an intense record for me. I have rarely gone back to listen to it because it actually makes me sad and feel so much of the angst I was feeling before and after it came out. It grew out of the craziness of the year before-constant touring and ego trips and just about every hurdle I could of to think throw at myself. The public sphere was proving a challenge to me and my love relationship was suffering for a myriad of reasons. We were touring about 75% of the year and even though we kept our promise to ourselves to do short 3-4 weeks runs instead of being away for months at a time, the constant transitions between home and the road seemed an insurmountable issue. I could just never get it right.

remember coming home after a year of touring for *Rites of Passage* and shaving my head to get rid of all my baggage. Then I was home enough to get my feet back on the ground and write some songs on my screen porch while the crickets clicked away and the tree frogs made their cacophony. So these songs on *Swamp* were written in a peaceful environment that clashed with everything happening in my heart and mind.

“Fugitive” is an overwrought study in what it takes to appreciate your circumstances and your blessings, but still recognize how screwed up things can be when you live somewhat in the public eye-especially to your partner. I was always trying to convince her that we were lucky, but I think it sounded disingenuous from where she stood. I still think I am pretty lucky; I just didn’t handle it too well. All the road time gave me lots of space for contemplation and memory so I dug deep for “Dead Man’s Hill,” a dark song that featured our good friends, Kim Zick and Connie Grauer, from the Milwaukee Jazz duo, Mrs. Fun. I always thought their playing and energy made this song more bearable, somehow less sad, but just as violent and tender. The subject matter is still too hard to talk about, but I meant every word of it, and to top it off my Dad came in and sang it with me. He was there that night, and shared my pain. When I wrote, “This Train (Revised)” I was in a dark place for sure, and delved back into an incredible seminar I took at Emory University about the Holocaust, taught by Dr. Jack Boozer (my favorite religion professor who is now deceased) and a jarring visit to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in D.C. We used a music box for the front intro with names being read of people that had died in the Holocaust-the list was provided by Michael Lorant and his family, Michael played drums and sang on *Swamp Ophelia*-most famously the back up vocals for “Reunion” and “This Train.” He is one of my favorite musicians in life! Another stand out guest was Jane Siberry, one of the most special and gifted artist I have ever been exposed to. I still can’t believe we captured her voice in all its fragile and edgy beauty. The Roches also returned to sing with us, which was of course a total pleasure and even after all these years, I reference their records constantly for song writing, arrangement and harmony ideas. The song, “Touch Me Fall” was kind of a prototype for me, my venture into electric guitar and the rock I had inside me. I liked its psychedelia and even though the song is not a work of art, it reflected everything I felt coming off the road- all the confusion in my head and my fear of losing touch with my family and friends.

Although Emily and I rarely discuss song lyrics, I always felt a kinship with her lyrically on this record. We were in the same swamp in many ways. One thing I am most proud of on this record is our harmony arrangements; I was finally really starting to learn a bit about how to write my own parts, and could sing more challenging things. Plus Emily’s guitar work on this record is very special, and we paid so much attention to every musical detail and had the time and energy to make it all happen. Peter Collins once again took us into new territory and pulled the music out of us with his sense of arrangement, his musicality and his wit! David Leonard engineered this record and he has always been one of our most beloved engineers and mixers. He always knew how to capture sounds and he also would often understand my nonconventional ideas about song arrangement and the players I wanted to have involved in the recording. I often

liked to pull people from the punk and alternative world to play parts that would give my theme by Theme Anorak

We had a huge touring operation at this point, with a beautiful backdrop designed by artist, Michael Allen. Michael did the record cover as well, and it's one of my favorites we've had, I love his style and his vision. Michael also designed the inner space in my house, which kind of feels like living inside with the outside with you always....just a magical artist. Our band was top notch and fit like a glove. Jane Scarpantoni on cello, Jerry Marotta on drums, and Sara Lee on bass. We toured all over Europe and the U.S., and basically just rode the wave that we had willingly been swept up into. During this touring season, we had a lot of guests joining us on stage, either from the support band, or just friends that would sit in. K's Choice or The Choice as they were originally called took us through Europe where they were really big, and then we took them through the

U.S. What a great band. I loved our cover of "Rockin' in the Free World." Gail Ann Dorsey would come play bass with Sara Lee and we'd have two basses plus she would come out and do "Midnight Train to Georgia" with her crazy good voice, and Jimmy "Jam" Descant, our guitar tech helping us with The Pips harmonies and some classic choreography. We had such a good time!

📅 1 Oct 2014 ❤️ 50





1993 Gay Pride March, Washington, D.C.

Photos by Carol Tretz

📅 31 Aug 2014 ❤️ 87

In 1993, Amy and I were invited to sing at the March on Washington for LGBT rights. An estimated 800,000- 1 million people were there on the Mall, as we collectively demanded our rights: the end of sodomy laws, increased AIDS funding, the end of discrimination in the military, the legalization of same-sex marriages, the end of discrimination in the workplace, full inclusion in the education system, laws to prevent discrimination against LGBT's in the area of family diversity, custody, adoption and foster care and to define family to include the full diversity of family structure, rights to reproductive freedom, an end to racial and ethnic discrimination in all forms, and an end to violent oppression of LGBT's. When I consider the advances that have been made on all of these fronts since then, I am reminded of the sheer power in people gathering for civil rights, and I am in awe to have been part and still to be part of the civil rights movement for LGBT equality in the U.S.

It was a beautiful day, a glorious day. I and many others' spirits were bolstered by the recent election of Bill Clinton, and we relished the atmosphere of change that he fostered. Amy and I chose to sing "American Tune" by Paul Simon because it spoke so clearly of long journeys through dark times, clinging to the hopes of promised dreams and freedom. As we climbed the stairs to reach the stage, I remember that I was very, very nervous but also extremely energized and moved to the depths of my heart. To stand in solidarity with hundreds of thousands of people, queers and straight allies, is a moment in time I carry with me for the rest of my life. There were many brave people there. Some risked their jobs, their careers, their families, their churches and synagogues. For us, we were spared any great discrimination for a place at the podium. Music was our voice for inclusion.

It's strange to think that there was no internet then, and that word of mouth played a huge part in amassing such a monumental gathering. Prior to the event, I remember people around me everywhere we went saying, "are you going to Washington for the march?" and we all were. The plane to D.C. was loaded with marchers, the airport was crowded with marchers, the streets were filled, and the restaurants were filled. The atmosphere was joyous but charged with serious intent. I had seen footage of the Civil Rights march on D.C. of 1963, and pictures from masses gathering for democratic freedom in Eastern Europe, but until 1993 I hadn't personally witnessed the power of the people to effect change by standing en masse and demanding civil rights. It was awesome, in the true sense. It has been a great privilege to be part of the LGBT rights movement through all these years and, while we still have a long way to go, especially when it comes to alleviating the suffering of queer teens, homeless and suicidal youth, and to increase protection and support for trans members of our communities, we have indeed come a long way in many arenas of concern since 1993. I can speak to that personally, as I was legally able to marry my partner last year and sponsor her for a green card so that our family can live and work in the U.S. I never thought I would see the day in my lifetime. But I did. Activism changes lives for the better. The music we bring along lifts our spirits through the arduous work for change.

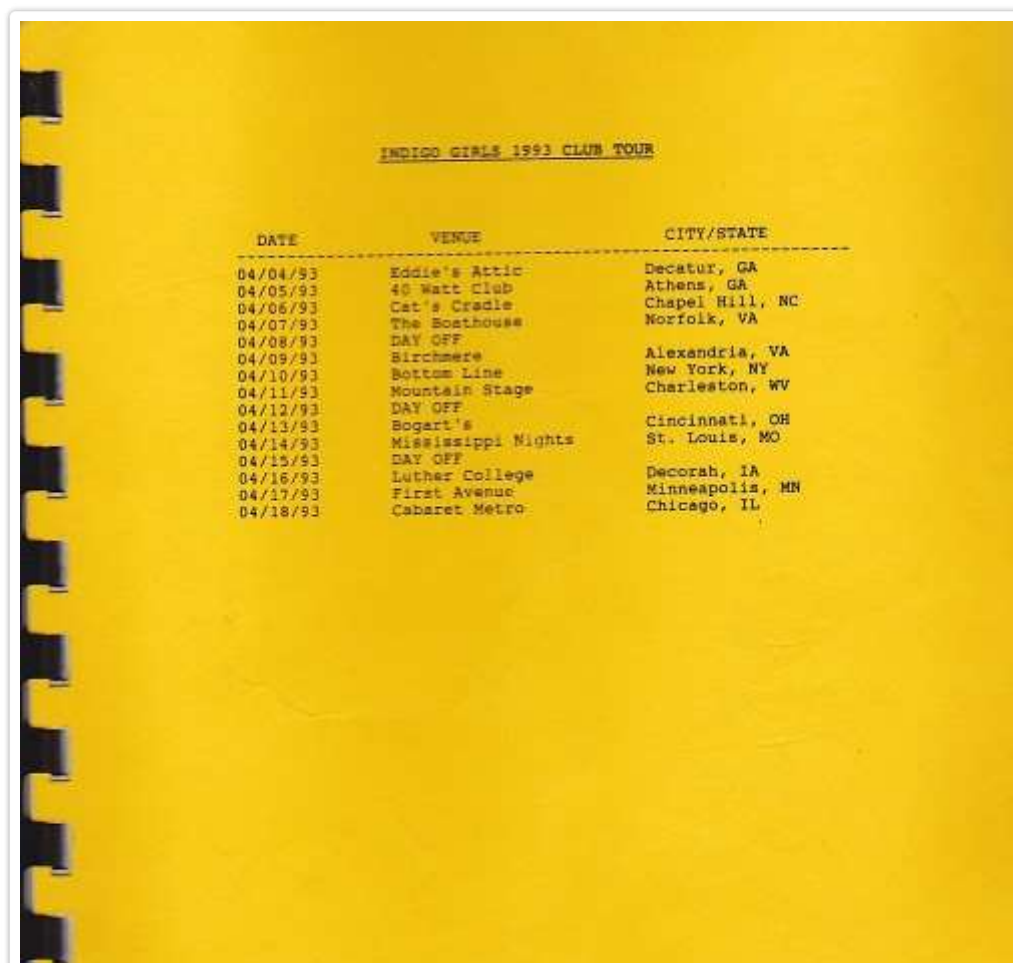
I'm going to swing wide now and just tell you that something else wonderful happened to us in 1993, and that was, WE OPENED FOR THE GRATEFUL DEAD! We flew to Eugene, Oregon and set up stage in Autzen Stadium. It was humongous. It was jam packed with Deadheads, and it was like being dropped in a foreign land all of sudden, but not being uncomfortable about it.

Before we played, I took a tour out on the grounds in what I can only describe as a sort of post-apocalyptic hippie joy fest; definitely a parallel universe, with a slightly smoky haze permeating the villages.

Our performance is a bit of a blur to me, honestly, because what I remember most is that, out of the corner of my eye, I could see Jerry Garcia standing there, watching us sing. And there is something about having Jerry Garcia watch you sing that makes you think, "o.k. it can never get any better than this." It was surreal and overwhelmingly fantastic to be part of the Dead world for one beautiful afternoon.

1993 was a full-on year of work and music, as we continued to tour Europe with our band, and we embarked upon a club tour, just for fun. Along the way, I was beginning to write songs for the next album, which would come to be called *Swamp Ophelia*.

📅 31 Aug 2014 ❤️ 53



INDIGO GIRLS 1993 CLUB TOUR

DATE	VENUE	CITY/STATE
04/04/93	Eddie's Attic	Decatur, GA
04/05/93	40 Watt Club	Athens, GA
04/06/93	Cat's Cradle	Chapel Hill, NC
04/07/93	The Boathouse	Norfolk, VA
04/08/93	DAY OFF	
04/09/93	Birchmere	Alexandria, VA
04/10/93	Bottom Line	New York, NY
04/11/93	Mountain Stage	Charleston, WV
04/12/93	DAY OFF	
04/13/93	Bogart's	Cincinnati, OH
04/14/93	Mississippi Nights	St. Louis, MO
04/15/93	DAY OFF	
04/16/93	Luther College	Decorah, IA
04/17/93	First Avenue	Minneapolis, MN
04/18/93	Cabaret Metro	Chicago, IL



The most memorable shows in my life as an Indigo Girl have always been the ones that made me the most nervous and challenged me on every level. Walking up the narrow, steep stairs to the top of the scaffolding and stage at the D.C. Gay Pride March in 1993, my knees were shaking, I felt like I was going to barf, and I was having an out of body experience. I really didn't think I'd make it through the song we chose to sing that day- an a cappella version of Paul Simon's "American Tune." The Mall was jam packed with a sea of people who I felt akin to on a deep, personal level, a vast community that I was part of, taking a public stance for the very core of who we were. The Gay Movement was gaining some ground; it was huge deal that MTV featured the DC Pride March in their news line-up, indicating that it was an important part of the pop culture trajectory. I remember riding in a cab that day and the driver commenting that he loved it when the "gays" came to DC to march because it was good for his business. He was just making a living and he didn't care where the customers came from, and this was a point the gay movement was starting to push at the time, marking one dollar bills as "gay money" to show how many gays were out there with spending power. And even though at that time there wasn't enough focus on the cross-issues of racism and classism within the ranks of the queer movement, this strategy did make a good point and resonated with mainstream America.

Being one of three gay sisters, in a family that struggled hard with coming out and acceptance, this day was a triumph, but it was also a challenge to confront my own homophobia and stay present in myself when fear tried to overtake me. My oldest sister was there with her partner, and they are still together to this day! Their steadfastness to each other and support of me grows even more relevant as time goes by. What I realize now is that this day was not just a day to be active on a large community level, but just as importantly to affirm each other's singular love relationships in a world where they were rarely recognized as legitimate. It was early days for me in the movement for queer rights, but I had been reading a lot of books about the history of our movement and was humbled by the pioneers that had made this day possible. I could not have conceive then of where we would stand today, the progress we have made and the intricacies of the issues and oppressions that still exist.

I still consider opening for the Grateful Dead at Autzen Stadium in Eugene, OR as one of the coolest shows of our career, but also another one for the annals of challenge and nerves. When we landed this gig, I could not believe our luck. The legendary Grateful Dead! Wow! I was a big fan and had a lot of Deadhead friends, and these guys had written the book on how to treat your fan community and "family style" touring practices. I took everything in that day. Dinner was an amazing communal gathering, with their crew, family and friends all eating together from a huge selection of food for every diet and desire. I wandered around the parking lot to see the celebrations and watch the folks arriving for the show-many of them camped out from the day before. As they waited for the show, people were sharing food, drink, drugs and dances, and getting to know each other, creating quite an infectious reverie. Every part of this day was a big event! We played 2 shows with slightly different set list, doing our more standard set the first day and then venturing into a few more cover songs on the second day, including

“All Along the Watchtower,” which was a pretty bold move for a show with so many Dylan fans and such a close association with the poignant music of that era. But it was one of our favorite covers and it gave Emily a chance to play some ripping guitar solos. The audience was huge, a whole stadium of people and I felt totally petrified when we started playing. Would they listen? Would we survive this gauntlet? I saw Jerry Garcia watching from the side of the stage and it was such a thrill and comfort, I couldn’t believe he took the time to come out and hear us. The audience couldn’t have been more supportive-the absolute best opening audience we have ever had. I realized that Dead fans believed in supporting the opener and shared a common philosophy with the Dead around music and creativity- the show was meant to be a spiritual free experience for everyone and it was bigger than the sum of its parts. During the Dead’s show I got to watch from the monitor board at the stage right. They each had in-ear monitors and each had their own mix, so the monitor set up was really complex. The monitor engineer told me that we should use in-ears because our pitch would be better, which during that particular moment in the Dead’s show was a pretty hilarious thing to say, they were free-forming on something vocally and I don’t think pitch was the main priority. Of course not to take anything away from them, they were the ultimate lesson in how to be free during a show in order to have moments of absolute magic, you can’t have these moments without taking risks. Eventually, I took his wise advice, and now I use in-ears all the time and love it!

We were playing so many big shows, and they were adrenaline infused nights, with a certain kind of energy you can only get in a large gathering where everyone is singing in a united moment, but we still always had a yen to play some more intimate shows at the clubs we love. Club shows were where we cut our teeth- they inspired us and informed us, they felt out of time and mind. There was nothing that could replace the fervor and closeness of those sweaty moments. We were still playing club shows in Europe, and from time to time in the U.S., but this year we made a real fun plan and played a whole run of shows in the States, calling it “The \$10 Tour.” For me, this was inspired by the punk bands that I loved, like Fugazi who would play all their shows for the lowest ticket price possible, sometimes as low as \$5. We asked the first person in line at each \$10 show to make the set list for the night. We did give them some parameters and pointers, but they were mostly on their own to design our evening. This also helped keep us on toes and gave us some insight into other ways to organize our sets. These things were not meant to be a gimmick but more of a statement about our mission to always look out for and prioritize our audience. And just as importantly it put us back into some of our favorite clubs where we started like the Cat’s Cradle in Chapel Hill, and the legendary 40-Watt in Athens. Our music friends showed up in different places and joined us, Stipe sang with us in Athens, Michelle Malone played with us on much of tour, opening and sitting in, and The Roche’s joined us in NYC at The Bottom Line-a real highlight for me.

At the end of the year, we did a few songwriter shows in Atlanta to try out new material before heading into the studio to record *Swamp Ophelia*. We did some solo writers’ nights, playing the songs alone in their infancy, as well as a duo show at Christine Sibley’s gallery in Atlanta, Urban Nirvana, where we played a set of all the

acoustic arrangements we had finished for the record. Emily had written her classics, “Power of Two” and “Least Complicated”, and I was in a bit of an experimental stage with “Touch Me fall” and “This Train (Revised).” We had had a couple of crazy years supporting *Rites of Passage* and were ready to get to work on a new record.

📅 31 Aug 2014 ❤️ 52



Photo by Donna Santisi

📅 29 Jul 2014 ❤️ 34





AR.1992

When I look back through my Indigo photos from 1992, I am struck by the caliber of musicians Emily and I toured with that year. We've been blessed our whole career with playing with exceptionally gifted and interesting musicians, but this year was the pinnacle for me, especially when you consider the variety of backgrounds of our band members. *Rites of Passage* had been released, our career was in full swing, and we toured extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe. Our U.S. touring band was anchored by Jerry Marotta on drums and Sara Lee on bass. Jerry had made his mark with Peter Gabriel, and Sara was most famous for her stint with English post-punk band, The Gang of Four. We had a string section made up of Scarlet Rivera, on violin, most notably of Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue and Jane Scarpantoni on cello, who came from the Hoboken alt rock scene and had played with some of the coolest bands of the time. Swiss cellist and composer, Martin Tillman filled in for her on cello here and there. Kristen Hall, who later went on to be a founder and songwriter for country giants Sugarland,

opened for us throughout the year. (Kristen had also previously moonlighted as a guitar tech for us from time to time.) The band was super tight and close and we got to the point where we could jam and improvise on songs and turn the live experience of our music into something really special. These were the first times for me of really recognizing how much musical growth I still had in front of me. This band challenged us and brought the best out in our music. Scarlet and Jane were special players and thrived on expressing their souls through music. Their solos were major events in every show and they never got stale. We always knew they'd pull out all the stops and could really feel the music as much as we did. Jerry and Sara were consummate pros and gave us a firm but groovy foundation to work from. They made the songs feel right and feel good. In the U.S. we were experiencing our biggest audiences. Our tour was a two-bus tour (the band on one bus, the crew on another) with lights and production and a huge beautiful backdrop with art from the *Rites of Passage* record on it. When I look back at our crew list, I can't imagine having that many people working an Indigo tour, but we did, and the shows stand out in my memory for their artistry and the teamwork it took to make it all happen.

For our European tour dates, we asked Budgie from English rock bands The Slits, and Siouxsie and the Banshees, to play drums for us. He had played on a few songs on *Rites of Passage* and we really loved his presence and style, so we asked him to join us. We went to Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Denmark, Sweden, U.K., and Ireland, riding planes, trains, ferry boats, and tour buses. Sara Lee, Scarlet, and Jane were still on board, and our tour manager was Englishman, Geoff Trump, who had come from the R.E.M. camp. The tour was one of our longer ones and even though I didn't like to be away from home for so long, I remember that we actually got to see quite a bit, partly because we had a few days here and there of free time and partly because of the different ways we traveled. Geoff knew this kind of touring really well and believed in the train system! I ate a lot of cheese and chocolate and drank a lot of special beer. This was one of my last tours to drink on and I definitely made the best of it and came back with some extra pounds, ready for a good nap.

Another way we met up and collaborated with big talents was at Newport Folk Festival. This Festival was on its way to becoming a tradition for us, and we were lucky for all the years we were invited to play. It was a special time when our families often came up to Rhode Island for the weekend to enjoy all the music with us. Ben and Jerry's sponsored the festival and we got all the Peace Pops we could consume. Joan Baez had returned to be a fixture again at Newport Folk Festival and we shared the stage with her for a couple of years. We toured and collaborated with Joan throughout the 90's and she provided good company and mentorship, teaching us a lot about human rights activism and song performance. It was quite humbling to play with Joan at Newport and ponder her first year there in 1959 and all the performers that were to grace that bill over the years.

I had just moved up to the North Georgia Mountains to a small town that I had gone to church camp in when I was kid. This fulfilled my dream of living in the woods, and it did me a lot of good to get away from the city and get some solitude. Knowing I was

going home to a 2-mile dirt road and the isolation of the woods at the end of a tour, helped to appreciate all the cities we saw on tour and take extra advantage of everywhere we went. It also helped me to enjoy all the humanity that surrounded us in our touring life.

📅 29 Jul 2014 ❤️ 43



ES.1992

Just as there are any number of titles we can come up with to name a record, there are also countless photos and pieces of artwork to choose in putting together the album artwork. The photo above shows one of the final contenders for the cover of *Rites of Passage* that wasn't chosen. At home, I have drawers filled with scraps of photos and drawings and descriptions of various IG projects. Our friend from Atlanta, artist Karen Chance, drew all the rites of passage icons that were part of the final artwork. I love those drawings. To be honest, though, if I had it to do again, I probably wouldn't have chosen

the name *Rites of Passage*, as it feels a bit “stock phrase” to me now, and I definitely would not have had our hands and faces painted. It feels as though we were co-opting “traditional” body and face painting. But at the time, it seemed like a good idea and, obviously, it fit the title.

At any rate, *Rites* was done, and we launched exhaustive tours with our first ever-full touring band. Budgie joined us on drums for shows in Europe. You see him along with other members of the band: Jane Scarpantoni, who played cello, was fabulously funny and drew our first ever tour tee shirt; Sara Lee on bass, who had previously played with Gang of Four was living in Woodstock when we brought her on board. She became absolutely instrumental (ha!) in the identity of so many of our recorded songs for many years; Scarlet Riverra, who had toured with Dylan and was the most wonderful, gentle spirited, gypsy like violinist one could imagine. For the U.S. tours, Jerry Marotta played drums. He’s truly a brilliant drummer who also played organic percussion instruments, like a wood block thing he called “Dora” upon which he wrote the opening phrase of “Galileo” by hitting it with mallets. During live performances, he would start “Galileo” on Dora and then switch to drum sticks to play the body of the song. He was like an octopus, managing all the things he did at the kit.

The tours were long back then. This was before we stuck to a hard-fast rule of no tour longer than three and a half weeks in order to save our sanity and, probably, our longevity. When *Rites* was released, “Galileo” began to get good airplay, and we were building on the momentum of early success. As someone who always loved traveling in any capacity, playing in a band across Europe was intoxicating. I got to see the famous canals of Amsterdam, and run in Vondelpark, looking at the cows, visit the Rijksmuseum and learn to pronounce “Van Gogh” correctly. I came to love Germany, the seedy parts of Hamburg, the thrill of the autobahn, the dark green forests, the fabulous beer, and the stunning city of Berlin, with its monolithic government buildings and red lined street that marked where the former Wall stood. Then, the flea markets of London! The jacket potato stands and accents of Manchester! The austere beauty of Scandinavia! The lush countryside of Belgium! It all happened so quickly!. I wondered how it was a local bar band of two friends who played guitar and wrote songs could suddenly be playing across other parts of the world with people showing up to hear us play.

In the U.S. shows were no less exciting for me, including what was to be the beginning of yearly appearances at the Newport Folk festival. We met and began to play with our “matriarch,” Joan Baez, and we formed a foursome with Joan and Mary Chapin Carpenter. We called ourselves “Four Voices.” Hmmmm. Original! But, as a FAN of Chapin and Joan, I never got over the thrill of standing on the stage at Newport and singing with them. We built a lot of memories at Newport over the years, because Russell, our manager, brought his family, and our family and friends came, and it didn’t matter whether the sun shone or it poured rain. You see a picture of my mom and dad dancing in the rain at Newport in 1992. After the shows, we all went out and had a meal together, and it was just the best.

There were a lot of pistons firing in the touring engines back then. We had a record

company who was fully behind us. We had an amazing agent in Frank Riley who was booking the U.S. shows (we originally met Frank by showing up in his office in NYC a few years back with our guitars in hand and serenading him in hopes he would be our agent. We've been together ever since). We had full support in Europe and the UK. In the states we took two tour buses, one band one crew, and one or two trucks of lighting and gear. It was a BIG operation, massive by our standards today. But the greatest thing was the experience of the people we played music and toured with. I laugh thinking about Geoff Trump, our tour manager, and Budgie on the ferryboat, and how I never wanted to get up but was scared to death to stay in the bottom of the boat on the bus. I remember when we accidentally left Scarlet at a roadside stop and had to go back and get her. I remember a warm evening Amy and I spent with a wonderful record company rep at her small house in Belgium, where the adjacent woods still held tank and shell remnants from the War. I remember playing in Paris and opening up for Randy Travis to French "cowboys" who didn't like us, and Amy lost her voice. I remember how Jane had to buy a plane ticket for her cello.

When we were in the states, playing two nights at the Greek in L.A., a run of shows at the Beacon in NYC, 2 nights at Massey Hall in Toronto, a headlining gig at Pine Knob in Michigan, and so on and so on, I remember being in awe that this was happening. We are sometimes asked what kind of venues we like playing the most: big, small, and in-between. And, while, I honestly can't choose, because each experience is fantastic in its own way, I do have to say that there is something uniquely thrilling about thousands of people joined in song. I got to stand on those stages with Amy, and our musician family, and look out on to those crowds, into those faces, and hear them singing and see them having a really good time, and I thought, "it just doesn't get any better than this."

And then we got back to Decatur, and played a show at Trackside, one of our local bars where we had started, and most of the faces were familiar. It was a homecoming, and it was jam packed and hot and, except for my terrible mullet, it couldn't have gotten any better than that.

📅 29 Jul 2014 ❤️ 38

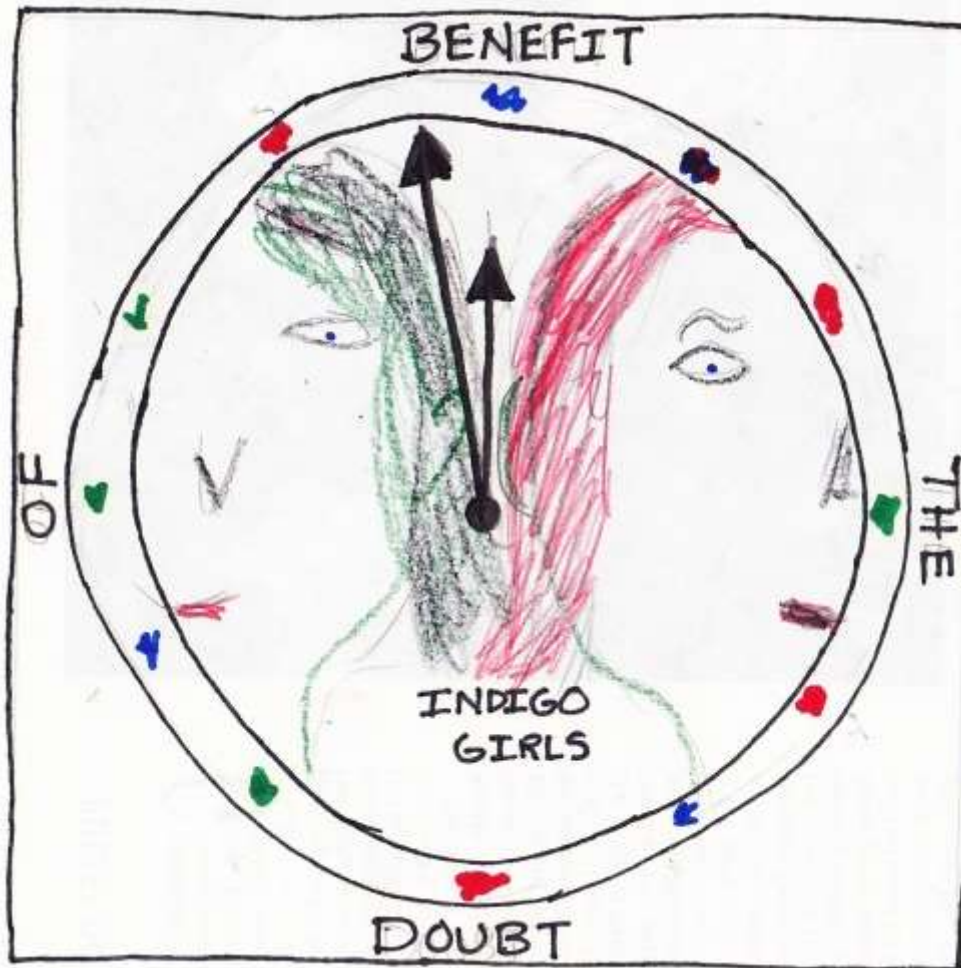






Photo by Susan Alzner

📅 29 Jul 2014 ❤️ 31



Indigo Girls Programme
Revised 27/11/91

Dec 2	}	Budgie
Dec 3		
Dec 4	}	Lisa Germano arrives - working in evening Sara Lee bass during day of 4th Evening - Amy & Emily leave for Atlanta
Dec 5		
Dec 6		
Dec 7	}	off
Dec 8		
Dec 9		Sara Lee bass
Dec 10	}	Amy & Emily vocal and guitar overdubs
Dec 11		
Dec 12		

- Dec 13)
- Dec 14)
- Dec 15) Talvin & Martin
- Dec 16) Sandy (harmonica on Nashville)
- Dec 17)
- Dec 18) Amy & Emily vocal and guitar overdubs
- Dec 19) Simone
- Dec 20)
- Dec 21) Edgar Meyer
- Jan = 230 John Seamus
- Jan 5) Donnal Lunney arrives
- Jan 6)
- Jan 7) Donnal & Irish musicians
- Jan 8)
- Jan 9) The Roaches

I Say Love Will Come To You

Guess I wasn't the best one to ask,
 Me myself with my face pressed up against love's glass
 To see the shiny toy I've been hoping for,
 The one I never can afford... ^{A A B GA GA G#}
 The wide world spins and spits turmoil, the nations toil for peace
 The paws of fear upon your chest, ^{F# G A A A A G# G}
 Only love can soothe that beast. ^{FAF#G#}
 My words are paper tigers, no match for the predator of pain inside her.
 But I say love will come to you ^{G that B A B}
 Hoping just because I spoke the words they're true ^{G (H D G B A B}
 As if I offered up a crystal ball to look through ^{I have offered up for you}
 Where there's now one there will be two. ^{For D C# B A}
 I was born under the sign of cancer - ^{close my eyes to the pain}
 Like brushing cloth, I soothe the wrinkles for an answer ^{all I can do is}
 Close my eyes and wish you fine. ^{I really}
 Even though I know you're not this time. ^{G# G# G}
 You dream about a place where you can't feel a thing ^{close my eyes}
 Holding onto God, swinging from a tiny string ^{NO}
 Dodging memories, a field of knives ^{Dodging your memories}
 On the outside looking in on other lives.
 But I say love will come to you ^{that}
 Hoping just because I spoke the words they're true
 As if offered up a crystal ball to look through
 Where there's now one, there will be two.
 And I wish her insight to battle love's blindness,
 Strength from the milk of human kindness
 A safe place for the pieces that scattered
 Learn to pretend there's more than love that matters. ^{G A F#}

July 17, 1991

wide
 5th ①
 4th ②
 3rd ③
 4th ④

my words
 tiger
 predator
 her
 6th

Love
 ①
 4th fret bar - ph
 will come you
 (twice)
 4th

AR.1991

We started recording *Rites of Passage* in 1991 and it spilled over into 1992, the year

it was to be released.

Tumblr theme by Theme Anorak

Aptly named, this record still stands out in our discography as a turning point in our career. Peter Collins was recruited by our A&R man, Snake, to take the helm in the studio and produce our record. Peter had made his mark with Rush, Alice Cooper, and Queensryche, but had also come from a short career as a singer-songster in England and had quite a breadth of experience and musicality. Snake was an old fashion, maverick of an A&R man and had a keen vision when it came to our music; he saw something in Peter that he knew would translate with us. He was right, we have worked with Peter off and on since that first meeting in 1991, and he has stepped in at many crucial moments in our musical lives and made records that have left indelible marks on our development as musicians and the time line of our recording career.

The recording of *Rites of Passage* is one of the most formative musical experiences of my life. We had a collection of songs to record that were really different from what we had done, and I think showed some exploration and growth. The majority of my songs were written during that year of touring, but some of the lyrics like “Chickenman” were drawn from a long period of time, piecing together stories from a lyric journal I kept. “Nashville” also came from my lyric journal, an early musing on the trouble I was having at Vanderbilt University. “Romeo and Juliet” was a cover song I used to do when I played the lounge at the Emory Sheraton hotel. I liked to throw in some of the songs that really moved me and this tune by Mark Knopfler was always the song I wished I had written. I wrote “Three Hits” for the poet, Frank Stanford, who was introduced to me by rock journalist, Chuck Dean. Stanford’s poetry is still where I go to find the magic of imagery, description and gut binding story telling. Like Frank Stanford, who had committed suicide at a young age, Dean also took his life a few years later. I considered Dean one of the truly gifted writers on art and music.

I think *Rites of Passage* contains some of Emily’s best songwriting. With soaring melodies on songs like “Ghost” and “Virginia Wolf,” she also penned “Galileo” for this album, one of our most requested songs to this day. For me, I really needed to feel like I was progressing more after *Nomads*, *Indians*, *Saints*, so I was happy to spend a lot of time working on the arrangements for this record. We were more diligent than ever, painstakingly working out new types of harmonies and intricate guitar parts. The work we did really shows through and I often remind myself that this is the kind of time we need to put into every record we make. A part of the arrangement for one of Emily’s songs, “Love Will Come to You” is shown here. We each had our own way of mapping out arrangements. I used codes for guitar chords and wrote out my actual harmony notes, so

I wouldn’t forget the parts we came up with. I still use these notes when we need to relearn songs. I have been trying to find THESE notes for a couple of years and here they are! I also found another piece of paper with a rough draft of an album cover idea. We threw around a lot of ideas for titles for this record and used our downtime in the studio to come up with concepts. This is one of them. I have no idea what we were thinking, but I’m glad we didn’t use this one...

We made the record at Bearsville Studio in the depths of winter in Woodstock, NY.

Of course for me, the mystique of working in Woodstock was palpable. I lived in a little cabin with a loft, and snow lay on the ground for most of the time that we were there. My

cabin with a lot, and show lay on the ground for most of the time that we were there. My day. I was cold but happy- I was surrounded by nature, free thinkers and legendary stories of The Band! Snake and Peter worked together to assemble what is still a mind-blowing list of musicians to play on the record. I don't even think I fully realized how lucky we were. We got to play with many of our heroes and also make new ones. The Roches came in and sang harmonies on a couple songs- it was a huge moment. As women writing their own songs, playing their own instruments and creating unconventional music, Maggie, Terre and Suzzy had helped paved the way for women playing music and also broadened the music business's perspective on melody, harmony and folk music. They had been super influential on us from an early age. Emily and I used to cover their songs, and talk endlessly about their lyrics and harmonies. We had gotten the chance to open for them a few years before at The Moonshadow Saloon in Atlanta. I had given Suzzy a fan letter, which she had saved for years, and promptly brought out to show me when we were in the studio together. In this picture, you see Suzzy and Maggie with Emily, Pat McCarthy (engineer) and Peter Collins listening to the playback of either "Virginia Woolf" or "Airplane"-both songs featured their quirky and haunting harmony style.

Unbelievably to us, Jackson Browne and David Crosby both agreed to come by and sing harmonies as well. It was an out of body experience to hear them singing live in the studio. I just kept thinking about all the times I laid on my bed listening to their records play. I had cut my teeth on these guys. I knew every Jackson lyric there was to know, and I had every configuration on record or tape, including bootlegs, that Crosby had been part of. And even more amazing, somehow, Snake and Peter talked 3 members of Siouxsie and the Banshees into recording with us. First of all, Emily and I love the idea of musical cross-pollination and had always stressed its importance, so the fact that Snake was pushing for this was a real boon to us. And second, I loved this band! We got Budgie on drums and harmonica, Martin McCarrick on cello and accordion, and Talvinde Singh on percussion. "Chickenman" really came into fruition with Budgie's drumming and harmonica, it would have never been the song it is today without him. Martin was able to bring in a style that was akin to Michael Nyman who had done the music on Peter Greenaway's films. McCarrick's distinct parts in "Virginia Woolf" especially, gave that song its personality. Talvinde brought his traditional Indian percussion in to the mix, which was really cool in the context of so much Irish influence on the record-a contribution Peter had made when he gathered some amazing players from Ireland to play on the record. The drummer that married all these styles for this recording was Jerry Marotta. Jerry had also played on *Nomads*, and was living in Woodstock (as were a ton of other incredible musicians, it was quite a scene there). He came into this project full force and blew us away with his finesse and power. He gave us the distinct and infectious groove of "Galileo." We were blessed to play with him, and then to be able to play with him as part of our band for the coming years was totally fortunate. The other Woodstock player that had become a fixture in our lives was bassist, Sara Lee. Sara had also played on *Nomads* and was touring with us regularly. She is so musical, has a lot of class and is super fun to be with. Sara taught us a lot about music and her experience

helped us day to day in the studio and on the road. There were so many other greats that played on this record, including Lisa Germano and Kenny Aronoff-both from John Cougar's camp, and Edgar Meyer, the consummate upright bass player. Edgar was also a mathematics enthusiast and would do complex equations while waiting to play his tracks. My memories from this time are awash with all these different personalities around the studio-quirky, gifted, dramatic, serious, fun. And every time I drove to and from Bearsville Studios, I had Nirvana's record *Nevermind* blasting on my car stereo.

Good days.

📅 30 Jun 2014 ❤️ 68



In 1991, we began work on *Rites of Passage*, which otherwise might have been known as *Benefit of the Doubt*. But more on that later.

After *Nomads*, we decided to shift things and work with a new producer in a new environment. So, our A and R guy, Snake, put the word out (he was incredible at coming up with great ideas for collaborations), and Amy and I had in-depth conversations with both T-Bone Burnett and Peter Collins. Amy and I met with Peter, a dapper Englishman, at what was then one of the better eateries in Atlanta, The Buckhead Diner, and I can remember that we sat at a window table and talked about our songs, our working styles and, generally, what we hoped to experience in the studio. Peter had had a very successful career in production and, most recently, a wildly popular album with Queensryche. The fact that he could produce rock and pop, and that he had begun as a folksinger himself, made him a unique collaborator. I didn't realize, of course, sitting there with Amy and Peter, that we were about to embark upon a decades long friendship and working relationship. More fairy dust!

We went to work at Bearsville Studios, in Bearsville, NY, with Pat McCarthy engineering and Peter producing. We worked in the dead of winter, and spent two months cutting tracks. For me, *Rites of Passage* marked the end of our desire to stick very closely to what we had done as a bar band, i.e. very little production, and the beginning of our foray in to a musical palette expansion, colored by the vast and varied array of artists we asked to join us. More dreams were coming true. First of all, The Roches came to Bearsville and sang on "Virginia Woolf" and "Airplane." Some of you may know that The Roches, sisters Maggie, Terre, and Suzzy, were profoundly inspiring to Amy and me as young artists. I was nothing less than addicted to their songs, their harmonies, their inimitable wackiness and poignancy. Their soaring harmonies MADE "Airplane," and when Maggie chose to play a piano solo of half steps all the way up, I was slayed. It is a unique and remarkable blessing to have your heroes play or sing on your song. And so it was also, in Bearsville, that David Crosby and Jackson Browne sang on "Galileo" and "Let it be Me." Come on. I don't even know what to say here about that.

To be honest, those were the days of big recording budgets, and we reaped the benefit of handpicking, or having Peter or Snake handpick our dream players. We started working with both Jerry Marotta and Sara Lee on *Rites*, and subsequently went on to record and tour with them for many years. Amy was a huge fan of Siouxsie and the Banshees, and so we were able to have Budgie come on board to play drums as only Budgie can. Stand up bass genius? How about Edgar Meyer who forever shaped 'Love Will Come to You' with his part. I remember that Edgar did math equations for fun while in the studio during down time.

Peter insisted on a string arrangement for "Ghost" and was able to procure Michael Kamen, may he forever rest in peace, who transformed the song with orchestral beauty. I could probably write 6 blog entries about all of the incredible artists who helped create

In naming a record, Amy and I always toss ideas around and finally settle on something. I wish we had a list of every idea we've ever had. Fortunately, Amy saved the scribbling of *Benefit of the Doubt* and, while I can't recall what hidden meaning may have lain behind this, it's too much of a stretch to imagine having actually chosen it. All the could-have-beens! I think about this some now, as I imagine how different the records might have been if we had chosen a different harmony part, or picked a different solo, or added a chorus, or invited a different guest, or chosen a different producer.

For me, living and making a record in Bearsville was a wintry dream, walking on Woodstock's hallowed ground in the midst of both ghosts and present greats. We played pool at a local place called "Shirley's," and I got my first real taste of "health food" at Joshua's.

I sometimes like to think about the songs, where they came from, and what inspired them. "Galileo" was written in Atlanta after an intense discussion with my friend, Rache. I became twisted about the notion of reincarnation and decided that I had so much to work on in myself that there was no way the world could be annihilated before I got a chance to fix some things. And, if these tenets held true, then it didn't seem fair that I had to suffer fear of flying because one of my "past-ies" crashed his plane. And, of course, there had to be a laugh about it all.

"Love Will Come to You" was inspired by a conversation I had with a woman I barely new, as we walked in the gallery, following a women's golf tournament. As we walked, she was quietly telling me about a recent and very painful breakup. I found myself saying words of comfort to the effect that 'you will find love again' and realized that I didn't know her at all and couldn't truthfully assure her of anything like that. But because I wanted it to be true for her, and for any and all of us, I spoke the words. And then, when I got quiet and alone at a later time, I wrote the song.

📅 30 Jun 2014 ❤️ 46





ES.1990

Things were steamrolling in 1990. In February, we won our first Grammy for “Best Contemporary Folk Recording.” I can remember standing somewhere in the Beverly Hilton, where the Grammys were held, finding out we had won, and then calling my parents right away to tell them. I was so excited I was yelling. It seemed impossibly true to win a Grammy. There were many awards that weren’t televised when granted, including ours, but we did attend the televised event as well because we were nominated for Best New Artist. The other nominees were Neneh Cherry, Soul II Soul, Tone Loc, and Milli Vanilli. And, as they say, the rest is history. As I look back now, I am pleased that we were a part of the category that would be remembered over a lip-syncing scandal,

leaving the award vacated without a “runner up” chosen.

Tumblr theme by [Theme Anorak](#)

We also went back into the studio with Scott Litt to record our second album for Epic, *Nomads Indians Saints*. The turnaround time from our first record to the second was incredibly quick, but we were riding a wave of commercial success and were guided to make the most of it. It's hard to believe there was even time to write songs with all of the activity going on following the release of *Indigo Girls*. I was living in a tiny loft apartment in Atlanta and can distinctly remember hunkering down in my living room to write "Watershed." and "Hammer and a Nail." I had a screened front door, and my cat Batman would climb it and stretch across it and just hang out like that while I wrote. I also had a neighbor who complained of me making too much noise. Such is the life of an artist in a tiny apartment with thin walls!

In 1989, Mary Chapin Carpenter released *State of the Heart* which became one of my favorite records at that time. So, when it came time to make *Nomads*, we invited her to sing some vocals and her guitar player, John Jennings, to play some guitar. Chapin sang harmonies on "Southland in the Springtime" and "Hammer and a Nail." John played the signature arpeggio part in the choruses of "Watershed." It was flattering to have Chapin accept our invitation, as I only knew her from loving her record, and we became friends. She taught me my all time favorite guitar tuning, DADGBC, and I went on in later years to write numerous songs with it, including "Galileo," "Fare Thee Well," "Soon Be To Nothing," "Virginia Woolf" and "Run" to name a few.

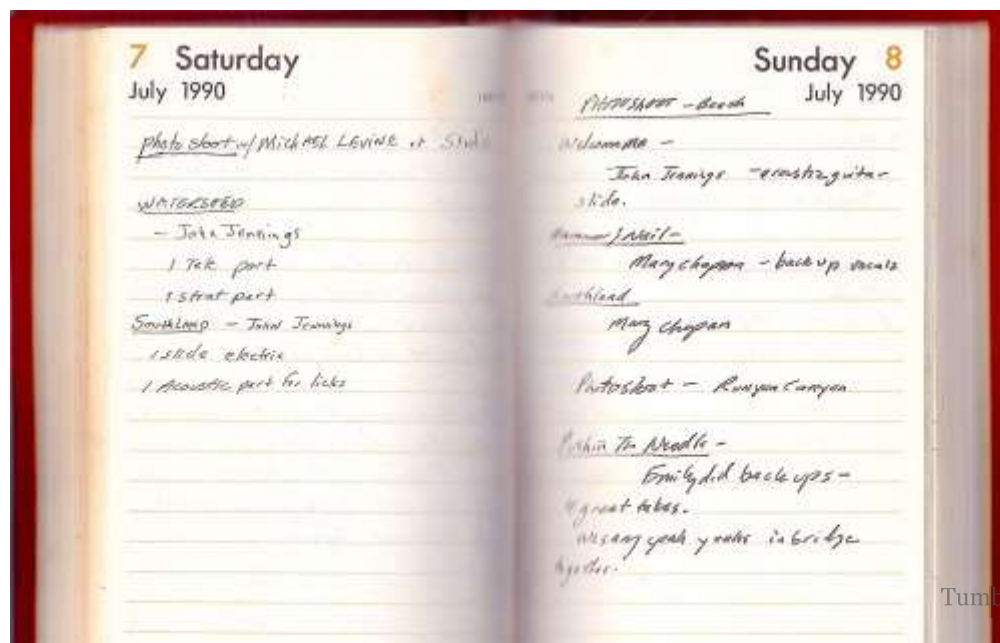
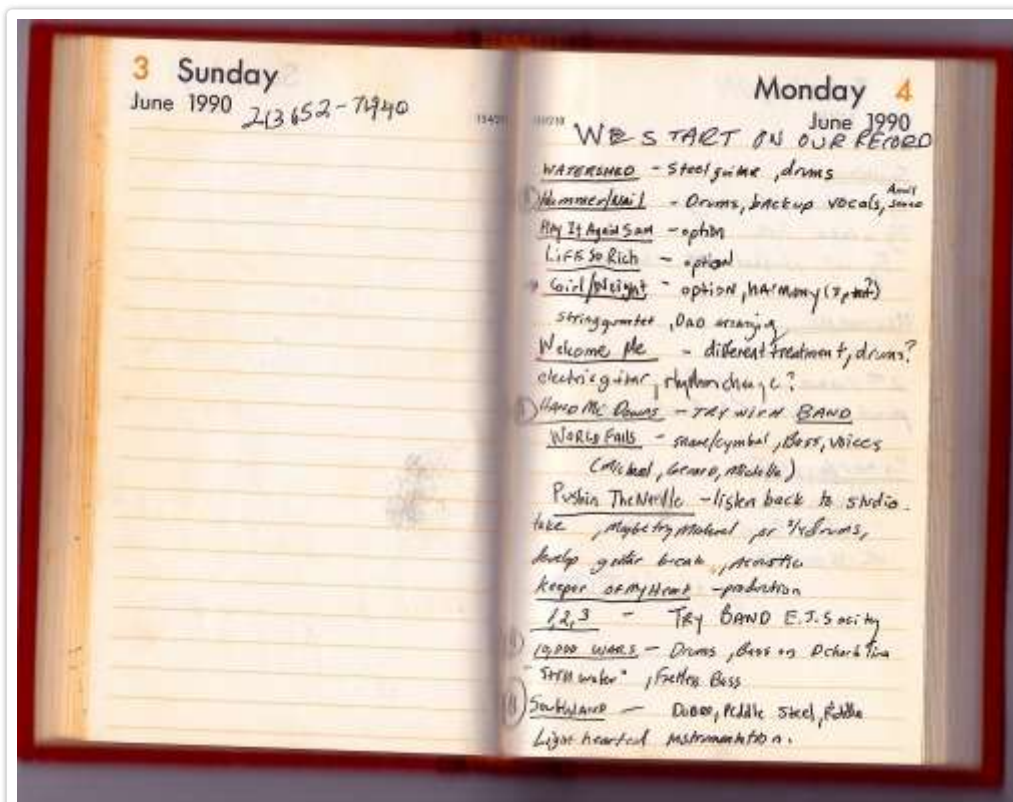
Nomads was also made special by the cross-section of hometown friends and world renowned musicians we had never met until they showed up to play. So, we had the Ellen James Society, an awesome local band, play "1-2-3" and we had Pauhline Da Costa, Brazilian percussionist extraordinaire, play on four songs, and the legendary Jim Keltner play drums on "Southland." *Nomads* also had us bring Sara Lee on board for the first time. Sara would become our principal bass player, live and on record, for many years to come. She is a lifelong friend.

Getting signed to Epic and having generous budgets for recording and new connections allowed us to open our world of musical collaboration, a natural extension of the hootenanny bar band we were at heart and in our experience. To ask a recording artist or favorite musician to show up and play on an Indigo Girls record is a deep good fortune at which I still marvel, even to this today. All of our records are marked by the textures and personalities of the guests who played or sang on them. The list of musicians, Georgia bred and not, paints the landscapes of our musical life, and the beauty of that is quite moving to me.

Along the way, there were some cool interactions, like when we played a record company convention and met a newly signed Canadian artist named Celine Dion who I remember as being incredibly nice, along with her husband/manager Rene. At that same convention, I was given a copy of a newly signed artist named Shawn Colvin whose debut record *Steady On* literally rocked my world. From the first time I put that record on, I couldn't stop listening to it. It was practically all I listened to for weeks and weeks. It hit me as hard as a new Joni Mitchell release and, for me, that's saying a lot. It was thrilling to know that there was a contemporary singer songwriter writing songs and making

When it came to playing new venues, these were the dream come true years, starting with opening for R.E.M at Madison Square Garden in 1989, to playing two nights at the Beacon, NYC, Chastain Park in Atlanta, and the Newport Folk festival all for the first time in 1990. Even as a very young child, before I became a musician, I was an obsessive lover of music. I think that's why everything along the way has been so thrilling to me, starting with getting local gigs. These were the stages where other great music had happened. And, so, even to this day, I feel as much a fan of music as I do a performer of it. I stand on a stage, playing music with Amy, whom I cherish, or having our opening act or the audience sing a verse of "Closer to Fine" and I can't believe I'm here.

📅 1 Jun 2014 ❤️ 49





AR.1990

Emily and I are in St. Louis playing with the Symphony tonight, we're in the car talking about the time line of our career; both of us are trying to finish this 1990 entry for our blog. Here's a little bit of how it goes:

Amy: "Didn't we start *Nomad Indian Saints* in Athens in 1989?"

Emily; "Hmmm, I don't remember going to John's during that record, I only remember LA."

Amy: "Oh okay, well maybe my 1989 blog is wrong then, I had something written in my calendar in 1989 for John Keane's studio, oh well, maybe it was something different. Did *Nomads* come out in 1991?"

Emily: *Nomads* came out in 1990, according to Wikipedia."

Amy: "Okay, well I think I have my dates mixed up here."

Emily: "Ha Ha, a lot happened in 1990, and we won a Grammy."

Amy: "Oh man, I totally forgot about that."

I look through old calendars to figure out the path of our IG life and sometimes it's still hard to suss out how everything happened, especially in such a whirlwind of a time. I thought we had started some production in 1989 on *Nomads Indians Saints* and then recorded the bulk of it in 1990. But now, I think that calendar entry was possibly for a recording of the song "Get together" that we released to benefit and bring attention to Habitat for Humanity. Now it's coming back to me and I'm remembering having a film crew at the Berlin Wall in '89 and them using that footage for the video for the song. That was one of our first activist ventures as Epic recording artists. At any rate, my 1990 daybook seems to reflect some kind of beginning in June 1990 in LA for *Nomads*, so I'll go with that and update the time line in my brain. Oh, and the Grammy, yes we won that Grammy for Best Contemporary Folk Album, even went to the ceremony and played in the untelevised portion of the show. I have tons of photos from that night, but as Emily says, "We can leave that for the book."

My 1990 book of days has "Nomads and EJS" scrawled on the front cover. EJS referred to a band in Atlanta called Ellen James Society. I started an indie label called Daemon Records right after we got signed to Epic. I loved the independent scene and there were a lot of good bands around the South that didn't have the resources to put out their own records. It was pre digital revolution and making records could be expensive and distributing them beyond the trunk of the car was an involved endeavor. It was a prolific time for "left-of-the-dial" bands. Whether it was punk, folk, alt-rock, jazz, or hip hop influenced, bands were finding an eclectic space and making music that was outside the genre norms. I had started listening to bands from the 80's like Husker Du and The

Replacements, revisiting Patti Smith, and starting to really dig the new 90's alt and indie scene as started to take over the airwaves. I wanted to remain a part of this indie world that IG's had lived in for our formative years, so with the money and resources I had come by, I jumped into having an indie label and working with bands. The first band I signed was an alternative / punk band from Atlanta called Ellen James Society. I went into John Keane's studio in Athens with them to make their first record, *Reluctantly, We*. My notes from the EJS recording session are very thorough and include all my observations and ideas about production and critical thinking about various takes. I can see that I was pretty sure of myself, much more confident than I deserved to be, but I was excited and as much a fan as anything else. That calendar book also has all the notes I was keeping as I set my label up, opened up a checking account, looked for a distributor for the label and figured out the first year of its course.

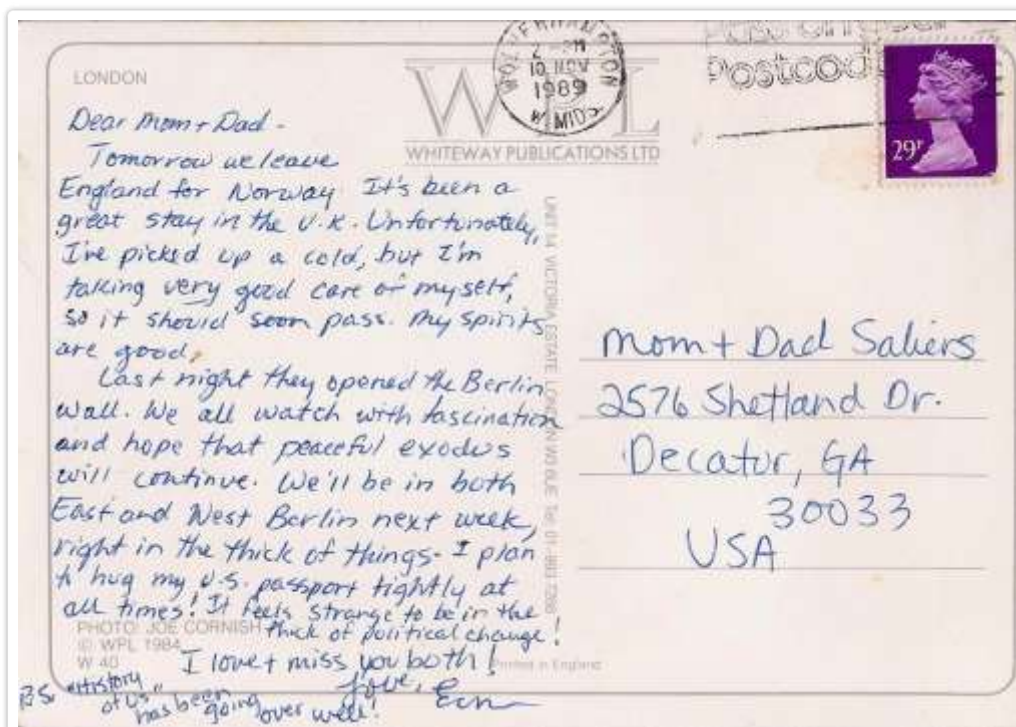
My life was a series of handwritten lists, not an email or website address to be found, just phone numbers and physical addresses, meetings to be had, people to call. Every day brought a new person, idea or place into our lives and it was like we were infants, learning language and motion and a new set of tools. And it seems like we had access to the cream of the crop- Michael Levine took our publicity photos, John Jennings and Mary Chapin Carpenter performed on our record. Todd Murphy painted our album cover, and we shared the stage with the likes of Michael Stipe, Natalie Merchant and Woody Harrelson for an Earth Day Show; and not just any Earth Day event, but the Washington, D.C. concert on The Mall!

Earth Day 1990 in D.C. was a high-energy day with an electric blue sky and masses of people. Earth Day was very ascendant at the time; there were a lot of high profile actors and musicians that were active on enviro issues, so Earth Day events brought a lot of media interest and big crowds. I wore these crazy surfer shorts with pictures of The Jetsons all over them, I thought they were so cool, but *yikes* now I can't believe I wore them on stage. In this photo we are singing "Get Together." We had learned some songs with Stipe for the 1988 Athens Music Festival so we knew quite a few, and we did three of them together on this day. Natalie was hanging with Michael at the time, so she shared the stage with us as well. Somewhere along the line in these early years, Woody hung with us while we were in LA recording, Emily and him became good friends. We would cross paths with Woody a lot in the coming years at environmental and activist events.

We worked at Ocean Way on *Nomads Indians Saints* with Scott Litt-same set up as the first record. As I said in my last blog... In retrospect I wish I had spent more time on my writing and sometimes felt like we missed the boat on production, but one thing we got right was having Mary Chapin Carter and her guitarist / producer John Jennings come in to sing and play on the record. Chapin's harmony voice fit snugly with our own harmonies and it was the beginning of a musical relationship that has yielded some of our favorite times. John brought versatility and guitar parts that complimented what Emily was doing but still allowed her to shine. Scott Litt had a true gift for bringing out the best in Emily; especially her guitar playing, he really respected her gifts.

The single for the record was “Hammer and a Nail,” and we shot the video at Atlanta artist, Todd Murphy’s studio using the album cover he painted as the backdrop. Music and visual art had a strong relationship, especially down South, spurred along by the influence of the Athens’ music scene and R.E.M., who often married visual artist and music in their videos. Great attention was paid to cover art, because vinyl with its large format cover was still vibrant. Record stores made big displays for their windows and walls using album art, so bands took a lot of time in creating visuals to promote their music. We loved this marriage between visual art and music, it felt very community oriented to us, and provided another way to reflect the music beyond just photos of ourselves. And music videos were a huge deal at the time, so the labels would provide a video budget and it was considered a big part of album promotion. We filmed and released our concert video, Live at the Uptown Lounge in 1990. At that time, we were as much a part of the Athens scene as the Atlanta scene, and this video really represented our ties to Athens and the club that had launched our presence there. Drivin’ ‘N’ Cryin’ and The Squalls gave us our first breaks into Athens by letting us open for them at The Uptown Lounge. After that the club kept letting us play shows and build a following, and it became one of main gigs for a couple years.

📅 1 Jun 2014 ❤️ 38





ES.1989

Our first album on Epic, 'Indigo Girls' was released in February of 1989, but I have to dip back into 1988 briefly because I have deep memories of making that record in Los Angeles. The memories almost feel like retroactive butterflies as I recall going out to L.A., setting up living in an apartment Amy and I shared in North Hollywood. It was a 2 bedroom apartment with a kitchen and living room, and outside the door that fed into a courtyard of sorts, you could look down to the swimming pool in the center. It wasn't anything fancy, almost something out of 'Mulholland Drive', and you could look up to see the hills and sign of Hollywood.

Very soon after we arrived, we experienced our first earthquake. I remember it happened, shaking the apartment, and Amy and I both came out of our rooms like, 'what was THAT?' We both went outside, realizing it was an earthquake, prepared to evacuate or SOMETHING, but no one else had seemed to be disturbed by it, as the courtyard outside was completely empty. So, we went back inside and shook it off, so to speak, went back to sleep, and I remember thinking, 'this is a weird, spooky place'.

North Hollywood felt unsettling to me, as if something dark was perpetually lurking. During that time, I listened to the Allman Brothers cassette tape of 'Eat a Peach' obsessively and went running on the sidewalks of the neighborhood. Los Angeles was a world I hadn't experienced, and I was both charmed by and fearful of the energy that buzzed beneath every surface. It was almost like living in a dream too exotic and removed from the life I knew to be real. Funny, I remember driving to Ocean Way Studios where we recorded and being particularly thrilled to have a parking space reserved for us near the entrance to the studio. I don't think I was able to absorb the magnitude of what was happening all around me, both the daily living experience so far from home and the thrill of making a record with Scott Litt and having Hothouse Flowers come in and shape 'Closer to Fine' and having "Michael Stipe" forever imprint 'Kid Fears'.

When the record came out in 1989 and began to do well, I was excited. We shot the video for 'Closer to Fine' in Atlanta, in an abandoned warehouse area. Along with Hothouse Flowers, many of our closest friends and family show up in the last part of the video, as we all walk down a road together. I think that captures the essence of what was happening then; our world expanding with new musical friends from across the sea, and our hearts rooted in our family and friends at home who had nurtured us all along. We

still know or are in contact with every person from our community that showed up in the video. The little baby boy in our manager's arms is Cooper Carter, now 25, who recently played electric guitar with us onstage. The woman with the little girl is Caroline Aiken who first took Amy and me under her wings when we were just starting out.

In 1989, we began to tour other parts of the world for the first time. The traveling was thrilling, and it was interesting to get to experience the different style of music journalism from one country to the next. The pinnacle of trips outside the U.S. that year was our arrival in Berlin. You can see from the postcard I sent to my mom and dad, that news of the wall coming down had arrived, and we were heading right to the epicenter. Amy and I got to Berlin and went to the wall, which had been dismantled in parts but not completely. I will never, ever forget being able to chisel off bits of rock from the wall and putting them in my pocket. It was bitter, freezing cold, and we shot footage as part of a video we were making of 'Get Together' to raise money and awareness for Habitat for Humanity back home. How was it possible that music had brought me and Amy from Georgia to Berlin, standing in solidarity with East and West Germans for peace and unity, chiseling off bits of that monolithic wall of division, shooting video for a song about togetherness to raise support for a group that built foundations of hope? I get chills to think of it now.

Of all the years of our career, 1989 stands out for me as a humdinger year in so many ways. All of the excitement that I might have hoped for in signing to a major label was actually happening. We got to sing, record, and tour with some of our musical mentors (R.E.M, Hothouse Flowers) at one of the most storied studios in the history of recorded music (Ocean Way Studios). We had a song on the radio, and the album went gold in six months heading to platinum. We got to shoot a video. We got nominated for our first grammy. We began to travel to other parts of the world and play music on distant shores. We had the privilege of doing exactly what we had always done, only for a broadening audience.

Of course, all of this sudden change and expansion took some toll. In the wake of momentum and success, there was a lot of pressure to make endless appearances and tour incessantly. It made both me and Amy stressed out and even angry with each other.

As I recall, it was the only time in the history of our friendship and career that we actually got in a verbal fight. So, it was at that point we both decided not to go out on the road for any longer than 3 1/2 weeks at a time, a rule to which we still hold fast. Once we were able to balance our time of work and home, things felt so much better, and we stopped being in personal conflict with each other. And that's the way it always has been with me and Amy; some things aren't worth any amount of money, home and family life always come first, personal and creative autonomy are critical, and the way to be happy and grateful is to surround yourself with a team of people who share your values. When we signed to Epic, we made it very clear that what they saw and heard was what they were going to get. Continuing to just be who we were, musically and personally, was the only way we would have ever been able to continue. And so we did.

POST-REGISTER
 IDARD FACUS, ID
 DAILY & SUNDAY 24, 442
 FRIDAY
SEP 15 1989
BUNNELLS
 25 83

Inconsistency marks Indigo Girls' album

Indigo Girls' "Indigo Girls,"
Post-Register.
 This album is at its best, and its worst, right from the opening track, the single "Closer to Fine."
 The acoustic guitar interplay between Amy Ray and Irby Saliers is buoyant and skiffle. Their vocal harmonies are always tight and at times startling. There are some nice lyrical details, after all, none is the rock song that describes a philosophy professor "with a power of Foucault and a beard down to his knee."
 But for every beautifully elegant line, there's another that's just badly overwrought. And after a few lines, when you digest the song, what are the Indigo Girls really saying when they sing, "The less I seek the source for some definitive, the closer I am to fine?"
 Basically, the worse thing Bobby McFerrin said with his low-duto-

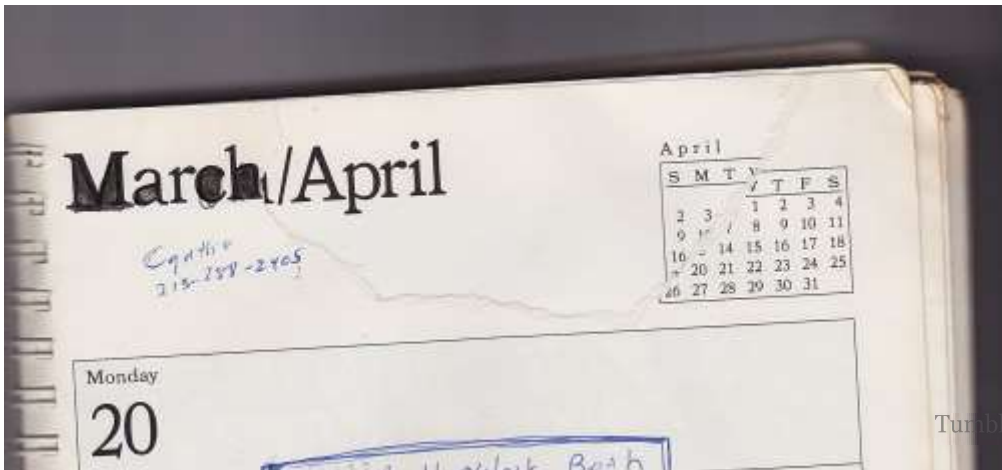


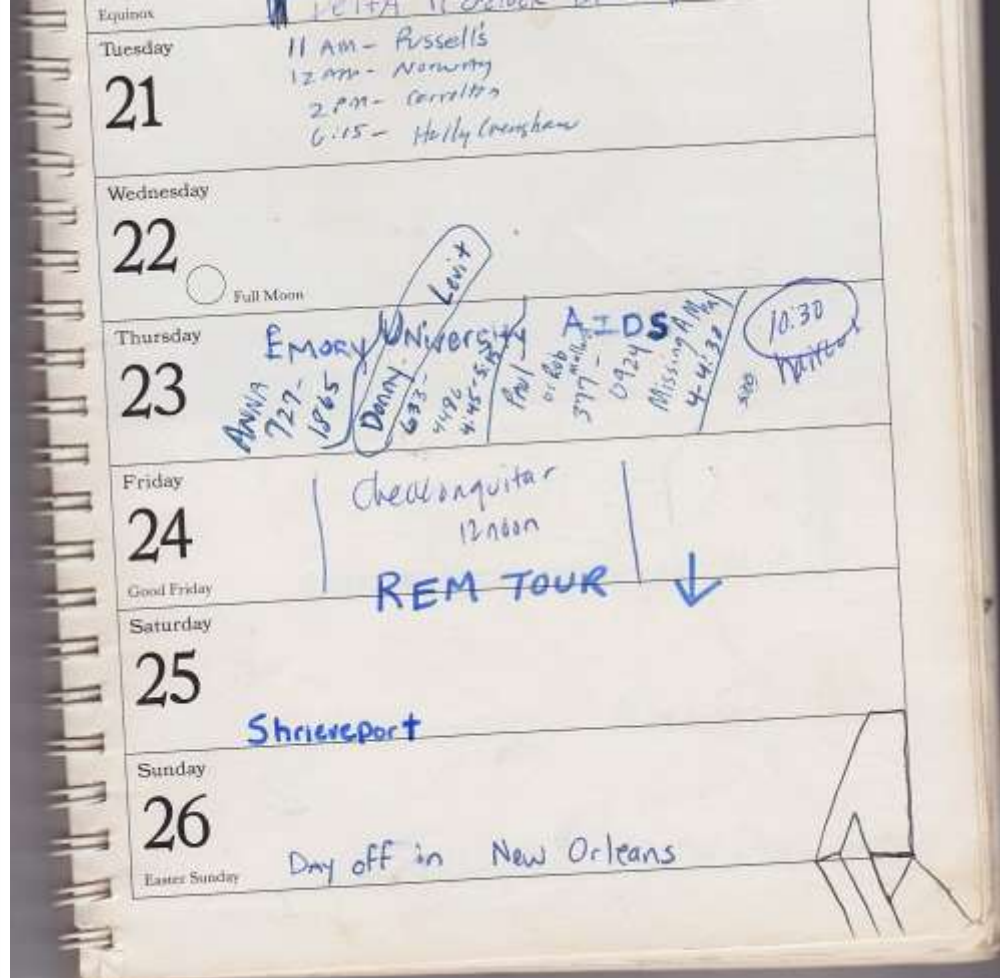
Kevin Richert
 Vinyl frontier

wouldn't be such a tease.
 On "Honey of Us," Saliers takes a mystical walk through Paris, marvels at statues of lions and beehive-riddled artifacts, and reflects, "We must love while these moans are still called today." That's a fancy way of telling you to make love, not war, or to just live for the moment. Either way, it all sounds very familiar.
 And even if you lower your expectations and stop looking for a statement that simply isn't there, "Indigo Girls" means you on another front. It's inconsistent.
 Ray and Saliers are good detail songwriters — just about every cut is good for a terrific line or two, or

a nice musical hook. But no one song clicks from start to finish, and a couple never really get out of the starting gate.
 Well-worn themes aside, "Closer to Fine" is a pretty good effort, as is "Prince of Darkness," if you can selectively listen to its lyrics. The words can be anywhere from powerful ("The dreamer came in like needy children begging at my sleeve, I said I have no way of feeding you, no love") to maudlin ("My heart flew free its cage and it beat upon my sleeve").
 As many problems as this album has, I wouldn't give up on Indigo Girls yet. Ray and Saliers have their acoustic folk performance

down cold. It elevates the marginal "Blood and Fire" to a real stunner; to the point that the final line, "I am in pain, I am in love, I am in pain, I am in love," should hardly be news to anyone who listens carefully.
 If ever there was an album that deserves ambivalence, it's "Indigo Girls." It has too many weaknesses to be a triumph, and it has too many sparkling moments to be a total waste. And as far as the future is concerned, it shows just enough promise to make you hope for something better down the line.
Kevin Richert covers the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory for The Post-Register.





AR.1989

I made a lot of mistakes in 1989. It was hard not to, I pretty much followed the typical path of a newly signed artist who gets swallowed up by ego and expectations. What ultimately saved me is how grounded we were in our community when we got signed. Also, we always tempered each other and had the innate sense to retrieve each other from the extremes. But, I have had years here and there of just letting the industry get the best of me on every level and this was one of them.

master of her trade and taught us the ins and outs of the press world, which in 1989 was all in print or on TV. She would compile these big notebooks of reviews and clippings that we got with each release- something to keep for posterity and show how much work went into promoting our records. I started out the first year of our Epic deal, reading every review and taking it all to heart. This particular one, pictured here really struck me because when I first read it, I was pretty mad and bummed, I took myself very seriously at the time and criticism was hard. But, I always made myself feel better by looking at context, which in this case was a writer whose credentials cracked me up for some reason-a music reviewer whose main job was covering the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory. Of course, now I realize it was kind of a defense mechanism because in truth anyone can write about music and maybe he was more of a connoisseur than even the typical rock journalist. I still keep this review to give me perspective on many levels and to remind me not to get too absorbed in myself. Reading reviews and articles about Indigo Girls definitely impacted the way I wrote and stunted my growth a bit because I was either second guessing myself or giving myself too much credit- a dangerous thing when I still had so far to go as a song writer.

But in spite of what I consider to be a sort of fledgling state of artistry for myself, WE were blessed with an amazing team to record and promote our first record, which was released in 1989. REM and their camp were instrumental in the first year of our major label career. Scott Litt signed on as our producer, which was a huge deal; he had just made two incredible records for REM -*Document* and *Green*. We worked in Athens at John Keane's studio on some of the tracks, and REM came in for "Kid Fears" and "Tried To Be True." I love this picture here because it shows everyone's personality so clearly. I am looking at Michael Stipe, and he is looking at Emily. Scott is in the back with his trademark smile that fueled so many good times in the studio. The ebullient, Mike Mills is engaged in conversation with all of us. Buck looks quietly amused, Berry looks like a total rock star, and John K is actually focused on the camera and the project at hand, putting up with all of us to get his job done. This was a great moment in time for us.

In the last part of 1988, after our time in Athens, GA we went out to Ocean Way Studios in LA to record the rest of the *Indigo Girls* album. It was a luxurious time, living in an apartment in LA for a month, getting up every morning and jogging up into Nichols Canyon, and then heading to the historical and perfectly appointed vintage studios of Ocean Way. We were in the heady world of rock stars and movie stars, a big budget, any food we could imagine, everything at our fingertips. It was an adjustment for sure, but we went into it wide-eyed and laughing. Our A&R guy, Snake lived in LA and actually helped to keep us grounded. And rather than stomp out our spirit, he added to what we were doing and introduced us to some amazing people. The guys from Hothouse Flowers came in and recorded "Closer to Fine" with us and brought their Irish energy to the room. They were a favorite band of mine and totally infectious; we ended up touring together and becoming fast friends.

shows opening for REM, and this launched our success. At the time, this kind of touring slot was invaluable to a band. It was a type of exposure you couldn't get any other way. There was no Internet, so in order to play in front of a larger audience, you had to open for someone big or get a break at radio or TV. The REM tour led to so many opportunities for us, there would be no way to overstate the importance of the help they gave us. They treated us super well on tour and showed us the ropes. Sometimes Michael would come out and sing "Kid Fears," which would help tame the audience a bit. We did pretty well, but we were playing big arenas as an acoustic duo, opening for a superstar rock band on the rise, so it was pretty scary most nights. One night someone threw a bunch of M&M's at us during "Land of Canaan." It pissed me off and made me play twice as fast. Most nights, I would pray that Michael would show up and sing with us in the set, so people would take us seriously and I wouldn't be so nervous. It's a real game changer when you're opening for someone and they come out and sing or play during your set. To this day, a lot of folks that support our music still tell me that they first heard us when we opened for REM!

The 1989 European tour was a brand new experience for me, on every level. I had never flown overseas, had never seen any of the places we went to, so I was breathless with trying to see and experience everything at once. We did endless amounts of press and TV, and had a travel schedule from hell. I think this 6-week stint is still the longest we've ever been gone from home, and we sure learned our lesson from it. We were so stressed out and tired, my ego was so out of control, we had the first and only real fight we've ever had- I mean a full on fight. With that we knew that we had to change something to get ourselves back to a good place. So we established some parameters around touring and agreed to do only 3-4 weeks at a time with decent breaks in between so we could go home and get grounded, and then go back out on tour feeling happy and refreshed. We were lucky to have each other and we knew it, so it scared us to have a fight and feel that tension. I think one of the things that we've always had is a mutual respect for each other and the recognition of how special what we have is. Ego and lack of boundaries often breaks bands up prematurely, and we didn't want to fall prey to those things.

I definitely let the hubbub of success take over my life and my writing really suffered. When we went into the studio to record our second record in October 1989, I was experiencing what is commonly known as the "sophomore slump." I thought if we duplicated the previous recording conditions, everything would just fall into place. But I hadn't spent enough time on my writing, and my songs for the second Epic record were marred by over confidence, over indulgence and not enough attention to detail and editing. I do like the seeds of the ideas for my songs, but I just didn't work on them enough. It was a good lesson for me to learn. Emily came through with some great songs for this record, but even so, I think the production could have been better and more unique; I felt like we were holding on too tightly to our concept of production and Scott was hemmed in a bit by that. For me, being burnt out and tired is a real enemy to creativity and openness, and I think that's the best lesson I learned that year.



ES.1988

In 1988 we were signed to epic records.

For me, getting signed to a major label was mind-boggling. It was dazzling. It was exciting! How did THIS happen?

After all, it was only a short while ago that amy and I literally had to talk russell carter into being our manager. I remember sitting at a table with him in Little Five Points pub during a show night to talk about it. I think he agreed because we badgered him enough, and he was a nice guy.

Additionally, there was no 'bidding war' to sign us to a major. In fact, the only other label that remotely showed interest was atlantic records, and that just kind of fizzled out.

It just so happened that, back then, CBS records (not yet purchased by sony), which owned epic records, had a college department. We had a friend, tom simonson, who worked for the college department, and he got a cassette tape of our music to the desk of roger klein, A and R guy for epic records. Lots of labels were poking around the Athens/Atlanta scene back then. R.E.M. was exploding, and the area was a wellspring of fresh music. Additionally, the trend gods were shining upon women with acoustic guitars: suzanne vega, tracy chapman, melissa etheridge, shawn colvin, mary chapin

I believe that only roger klein would have signed us. He was eccentric and deeply passionate about music and, after hearing us play at little five points, I think he truly grasped who we were and what we were about.

In the meantime, amy and I just carried on doing what we had been doing, which was to write new songs, track college radio play, get our records in retail stores, book gigs and tour, tour, tour. You can see in the photo that we have pulled over to fill up amy's toyota van with gas, most likely somewhere between new orleans and austin. I am play-acting traveling misery. And although 'southland in the springtime' would later chronicle this very route of travel and experience (atlanta to new orleans to austin and back), I wasn't, in fact, 'dirty from the diesel fumes' as you can see. I had forgotten how skinny and preppy and all dressed in white I was.

Life as a bar band is perfectly fitting for a restless soul with wanderlust. I can't recall ever being anything but excited as we embarked upon tours we had set up. I particularly enjoyed trying out the bizarre food at road stops and gas stations: pickled eggs in jars, weird sausages, bubble gum, every little new thing that fast food restaurants introduced (mc rib!!!). we stopped at flea markets, like the one where amy met the chickenman, and we stayed at cheap hotels or in questionable, smelly lodging provided by dodgy club owners. We hauled around boxes of our lp's to sell, and we got paid in cash. In the van, on the way to the next stop, we listened to music on cassette tapes and talked and talked.

The miles rolled on.

When we got signed to epic and began to work toward our first major label release, some operational things began to change, as you can read in the article from our local newspaper, the dekalb news sun. first of all, we began to play slightly larger venues in addition to all of the clubs we frequented. We started to write set lists for these shows, as opposed to just making up what we wanted to play as we went along, talking, making jokes, and tuning our guitars through most of the set (and drinking beer!). As any band might hope, after several years of playing live and implementing a grassroots process for promotion, we began to see our audiences grow in number. And the people who came to see the shows were loyal and came back next time we came to town. Playing in larger venues provided us an opportunity for more people to attend a show, to hone the 'show experience', which would come to include hiring a guitar tech to tune guitars between songs and a tour manager to help manage the details of travel. We just hired our friends to fill these shoes, so we were like one big happy family.

The truth is that playing our first concert at a 1000 seat venue was absolutely thrilling to me, but it was no more thrilling than the feeling of playing our first gig at little five points pub. Relative to our trajectory of growth, every next step of opportunity felt like the biggest thing that could possibly happen. That made for a very fulfilling job and life as a working, writing musician in a band with my closest friend.

Even so, getting signed to a major label was, for me at that time a kind of pinnacle. I

knew that things were going to GET BIGGER, whatever that meant in reality. At our

hometown shows, I felt a new energy and buzz of excitement. I also talked with friends and long time loyal fans who said they felt like they were sending their kids off away from home. They were happy for us, but they would miss the tight knit, home grown, visceral hootenanny experience that we had built together over the short few years as a bar band staple.

What signing to a major also meant was having to work with a new team of people, and to put our trust in the hands of people who worked for an industry with questionable ethics and profit motives. Fortunately, and I believe we never would have signed had this not been the case, epic records was chock full of really good people, from publicity to marketing to 'product development', who loved music, and understood that we were not a band to be 'imaged', or have songs written for us, They took us for who we were, and appeared willing to nurture us along in the music business. Because of this, amy and I were able to have the best of both worlds; we were able to continue to play clubs, write songs, and be as we were. And we had epic records behind us, especially roger klein, to help widen our audience, support our activism, and put up the advance money for us to make the records we wanted to make.

I'm grateful.

📅 1 Apr 2014 ❤️ 52

Indigo Girls

Invoice

Sold To: WAN N' FACTS #8028 Date: Oct 20 '88
Shipped to: WAN N' FACTS

Work Order No. _____ Our Order No. _____ Catalogue _____
Date Shipped: Oct 20 1988 Shipped Via: Express F.O.B.: Amy Ray Terms: 25/25

Quantity Ordered	Quantity Shipped	Spec. Number	Description	Price	Per	Amount
50	50		LOMTA LP Shogun	5.00		250.00
		check # 7991				
			PAID			125.00
			Balance Due			125.00

Wilson Jones
6200 340 11000-44-402 3 9917
© 1982-1994 WILSON JONES

Duplicate

Invoice



AR.1988

After *Strange Fire* was released in 1987, we spent our days taking care of the details of distribution, continuing our retail and radio promotion, and touring further away from home in an effort to find new communities to establish our music in. We had cobbled together a distribution system, consigning records to local stores and chains, as well as going through national distributors, like Important Records Distributors (which was mostly known for hard rock and eventually became R.E.D.) Radio play was a true force for us at this time, opening up new cities and colleges to play. It was much more of a factor than it is now in our life and we followed its path to find our gigs.

1988 was a transitional year and we found ourselves out on the road in Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and going all the way up the east coast to Maine. The swing out west was formative for me, we came across a lot of challenges in this uncharted territory. We were a bit sheltered and had gotten used to our world of Atlanta and Athens clubs, South and North Carolina gigs, and we were used to the cast of characters that ran these clubs. We had a lot of friends and allies, but it was also a case of “the devil we knew.”

because there was plenty of dirty dealings-wrong door counts, offers of drugs instead of

money for payment, and sound guys and promoters that would patronize us and try to take advantage. I say “sound guys” because we rarely saw any women running the board. When we extended our travels, we had to learn a whole new set of ropes and personalities. There was an undercurrent of danger during that time in club land, especially in the South; I can see it better now than I did then. We were in it and rolled with the punches, just like we did at home. But rolling with it didn’t mean I wasn’t starting to see glimmers of how our sexuality and gender were playing out and affected how we navigated our days and nights. We were on top of the world in some ways, but inside I was riddled with self-hate and fear, and fought to keep my head up. We were keeping our sexuality quiet and dodging conversations about it with people that weren’t in our close community of friends or family.

I have vivid memories of this time, especially the road west: WC Don’s in Jackson, Big Mamou in Austin, Carrollton Station in New Orleans, and Fitzgerald’s in Houston. I remember being in awe, when I saw posters of bands that I loved who were playing these same clubs, bands like The Replacements on the same circuit as us! We only had a handful of people at most of these shows, but at least we had landed the gigs and were in the good company of many bands that we looked up to. Days on the road were special, we spent a lot of time joking around, and the important things were simple—a good pay phone, a clean restroom, an interesting gas station and discovering a good thrift store. We stayed with friends and in cheap motels, and sometimes the clubs had little houses they would put us up in, but these were pretty grimy and felt unpredictable at best. I remember the “club house” at Fitzgerald’s—it was supposed to be ours for the night but it filled up with a scary assortment of revelers, which totally scared me and made me want to sleep in the car. I think accommodations are often the hardest thing to negotiate as a young vulnerable band on the road.

We got signed to Epic Records in 1988. Epic A&R man, Roger “Snake” Klein was in town to see The Rave-Ups, and was rumored to be looking for a way to get to R.E.M. and woo them over to CBS Records. He dropped into Little 5 Points Pub during one of our regular gigs. A friend of ours Tom Simonson, who was a college rep for the label, had put our name in the hat at Epic, but I was never sure if Snake just accidentally dropped by because the Rave-Ups were playing down the street or if he had an intention to see us. At any rate, he liked what he heard and he brought his boss back to see us when we opened for Nanci Griffith at Center Stage in Atlanta. It was a bit of a fairy tale music story, one of those things that just seemed too miraculous to be true. It was a time when a portal into the major label world opened for us—a unique moment of lucky timing. Snake took us under his wing and fought hard for us to get signed, and most importantly to get signed on our own terms. He was a rare bird in the music business.

I wasn’t sure if I wanted a deal with a major label, but I was pretty tired from attending to a constant flow of business, and knew if we wanted to keep writing and touring at the pace we were at, we might need some help. It was undeniably exciting to be courted by a label. We went out to eat at the Buckhead Diner with Snake talked about what we wanted out of our music and the things that were important to us. We focused a

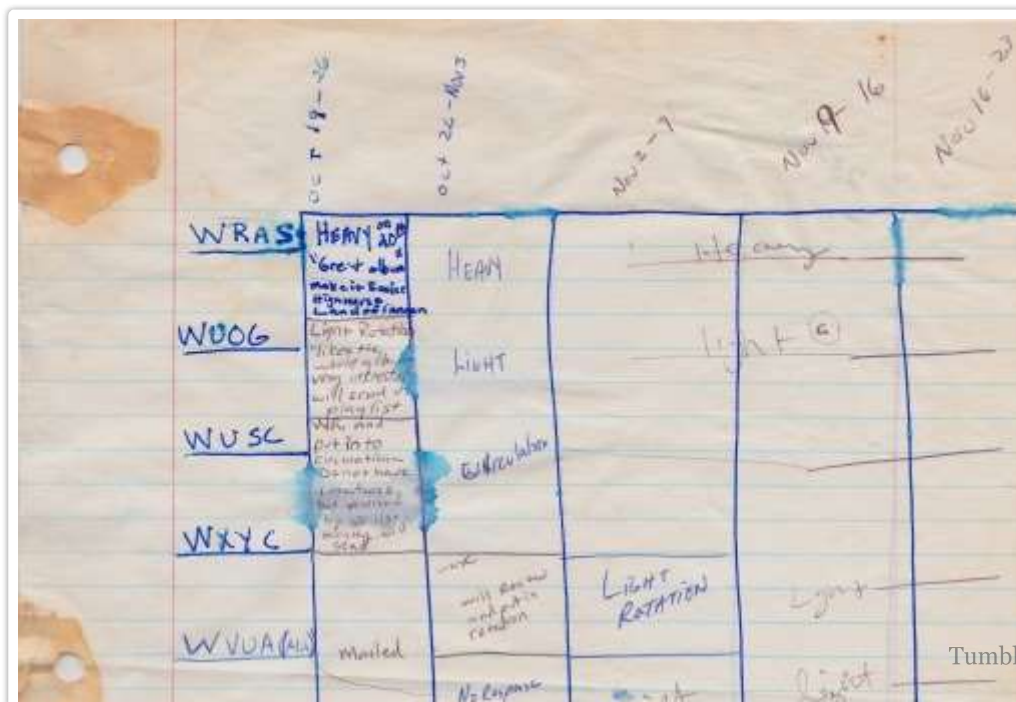
lot on the desire to stay in our community in Atlanta and not lose touch with the core values that had brought us this far. We wanted full creative control over our music- a request that most artists make of a label; no one wants to lose that.

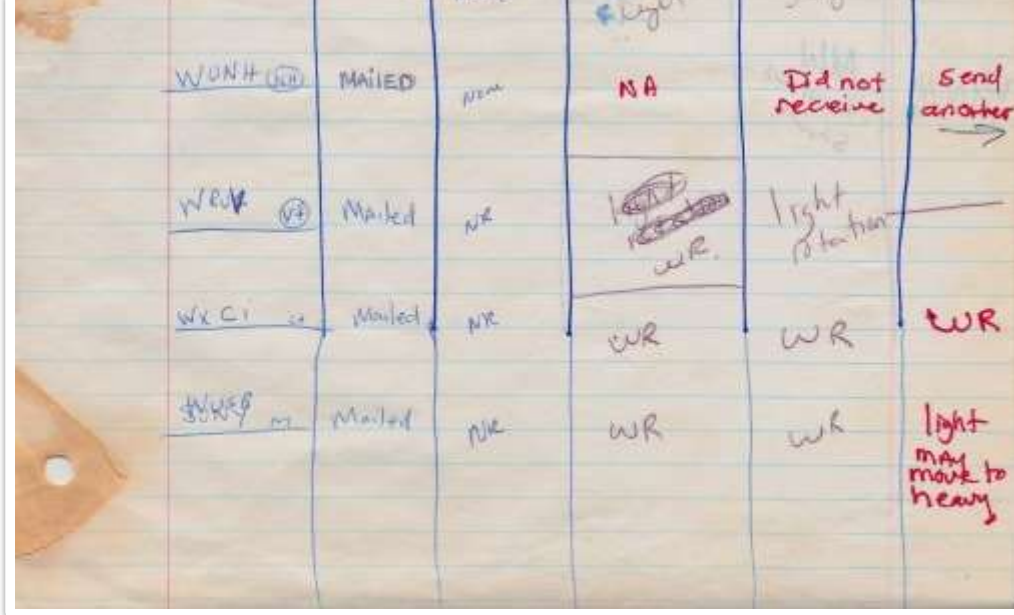
We had no manager at the time, but we had a creative and smart lawyer, Russell Carter who was doing some legal work for free and Tom Simonson had been helping us as well, giving us advice and generally being an advocate for us. We consulted with both of them about what to do and spent a lot of time weighing the ramifications of our decision. We decided to go for it and Russell stepped in and lawyered the deal for us. We still remind him that he told us we'd never get signed....ha ha...

I was so depressed right after we signed the contract; I had the worst feeling that we had signed away our freedom and all our hard work. The independent world was so important to me, so worthwhile and relatively free of corporate meddling. Ironically though, a good indie label felt out of reach to us, but with this deal, we were being offered a chance to grow beyond where we were, and to have access to the resources of a team of people who knew the music business. Epic was a solid label in those days and we ended up in good hands and had amazing label mates over the years-Oasis, Pearl Jam, Joan Jett, Rage Against the Machine, just to name a few.

When all this happened, we were in the thick of booking gigs, touring, and making plans to record a new record on our own label, so this deal really did come out of the blue, and at a time when we had just planned to continue on the road we were on. We had booked our first extensive Midwest tour and scored a gig at the famous Chicago Metro club. After bugging Joe Shanahan relentlessly for months, I had to call the club and cancel the gig. I also had put in my application with DeKalb County Schools to be a substitute teacher, and that notion was quickly behind me. For better or worse, life was taking on a whole new shape.

📅 1 Apr 2014 ❤️ 50





AR.1987

Not to sound like a dinosaur but the IG's really did do everything by hand back in the late 80's. I kept most of our notebooks and paperwork in file folders and boxes that I've been moving from one living space to the next ever since. We were so proud of every little goal we reached, so I hung onto the proof of our hard work and the system we had created as we moved through the early days of our career. Releasing a single and an EP had given us something to hang our work on, music to spread around and the vehicles to help us establish and achieve goals. When I go back through all these files and boxes of notebooks, I can see that, just as it is now, touring was the big priority. Touring helped our recordings mean more and the music we left in our wake helped the touring mean more. They were inextricably linked, so we collected club names and gig contacts from every source we could find. There were coveted lists of clubs and the name of the bookers floating around town, and we often got new resources from other musicians passing through or friends who had played in places we hadn't gone yet. A lot depended on curiosity and the exchange of information and ideas, and on us going to other shows to meet new musicians and see how they did their thing. We just worked through our list and methodically mailed out our music and tried to conquer the world of gigging one club at a time.

As our touring base expanded, we were also writing more and focusing on original music. So in 1987, we recorded and released our first full-length album, called *Strange Fire*. When I look back at my little calendar book, I see that we met with the Athens producer and engineer John Keane in the spring, proceeded to record and then had the record out by the fall. We had no sense of the "correct" way to "set a record up" for release - a long lead-time for press, etc. We were flying by the seat of our pants and eager to get the music out there. So we turned it around as fast as possible and just started mailing it out to everyone we could - radio stations, clubs, promoters, music writers, musicians and friends. It was an exciting time for us and we celebrated the release of *Strange Fire* at Little Five Points Pub, the bar where we cut our teeth, and for me, the most significant gig of our career, because it ushered in most of our growth and kept us

tightly bound to our community. The recording of *Strange Fire* established our relationship with John Keane, who became a fixture in our lives for quite some time and did many recordings for us, including our work with R.E.M. I'll never forget the way it felt to work on *Strange Fire*, I finally had the sense that we were really doing this music thing and not just faking it. This record represented a real growth for us, and even though the songs on *Strange Fire* feel young to me now, at the time, it was a transition to a new level of maturity- moving from EP to LP.

When it came to album cover artwork and promo photos, I had a bit of a learning curve to get through. I had kind of botched the EP cover when I didn't noticed the lines from the cut and paste job showing through until it was too late, they were already printed and we couldn't rationalize printing a whole new run of record covers. So for *Strange Fire*, I really wanted to get it right and have a good LP cover and good press photos to send out. We had a photographer friend, Kris Anderson who did cool black and white work that was both mystical and documentarian in style. We enlisted her help for the record cover and publicity shots. There was an African Methodist Episcopal Church near my neighborhood where I grew up, I had always loved the building and the setting because it felt timeless, and this particular denomination reflected some of the struggles of spirituality versus the "institution" of religion. As a religion major in college, my songwriting took on certain metaphorical language that grew out of studying peoples and their faiths, I was obsessed with religion actually, so for me, it was an image that reflected this time. Now it feels pretty heavy handed, but those were the pitfalls of youth and ultimately I feel like our earnestness served us well, if not always artistically, it helped us have the energy and convictions to persevere. Even with its youthful drama, I still love this cover and the photos Kris took that year, I can look at the images and all the strong feelings of that period of time come to the surface.

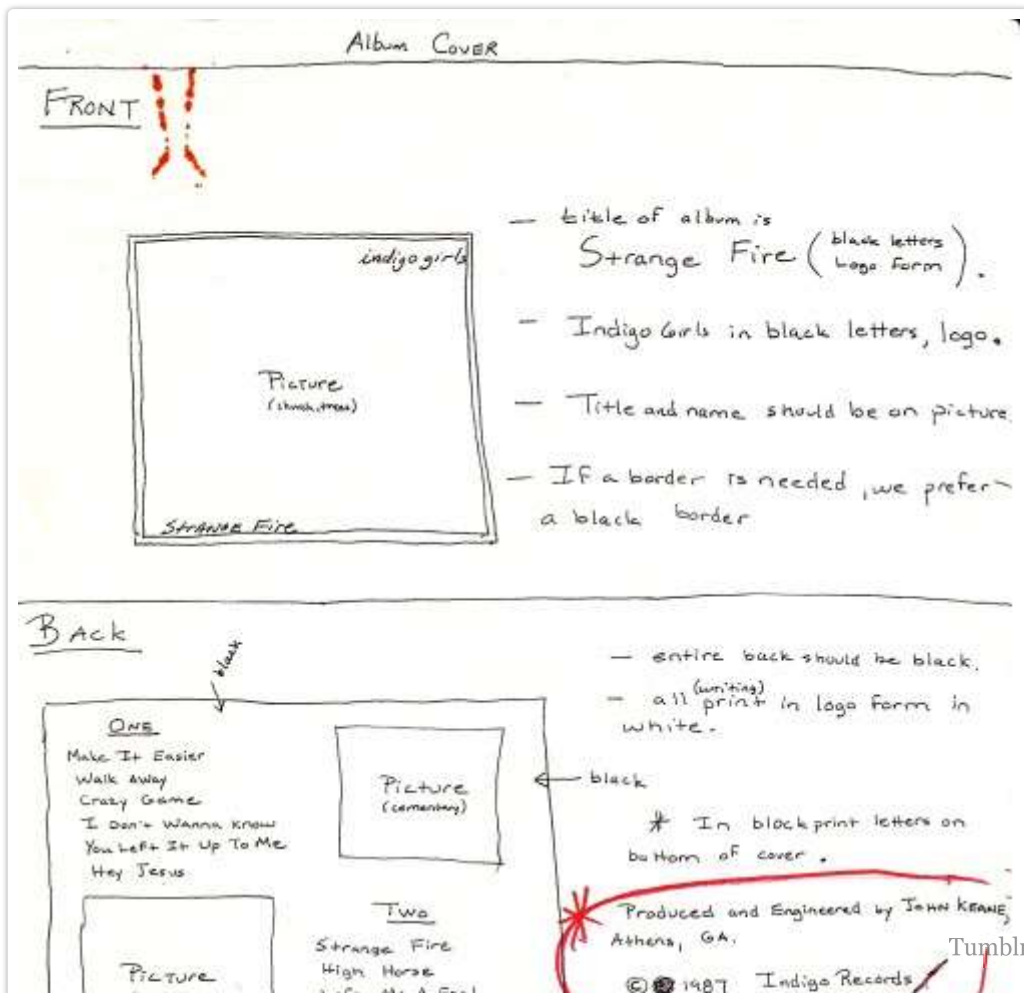
For me, *Strange Fire* was the record and the experience that got us to where we are now. I think it really helped us create a model for how we work, what we think is important, and how to build a community and a fan base. It was the blueprint for us, and it led to good things. We sold over 10,000 albums through a combination of indie distribution, consignment, and show sales; we had a really successful radio campaign; and managed to extend our touring up to Maine, across to Texas and diagonally to the Midwest. These were the lines we followed and tried to build on.

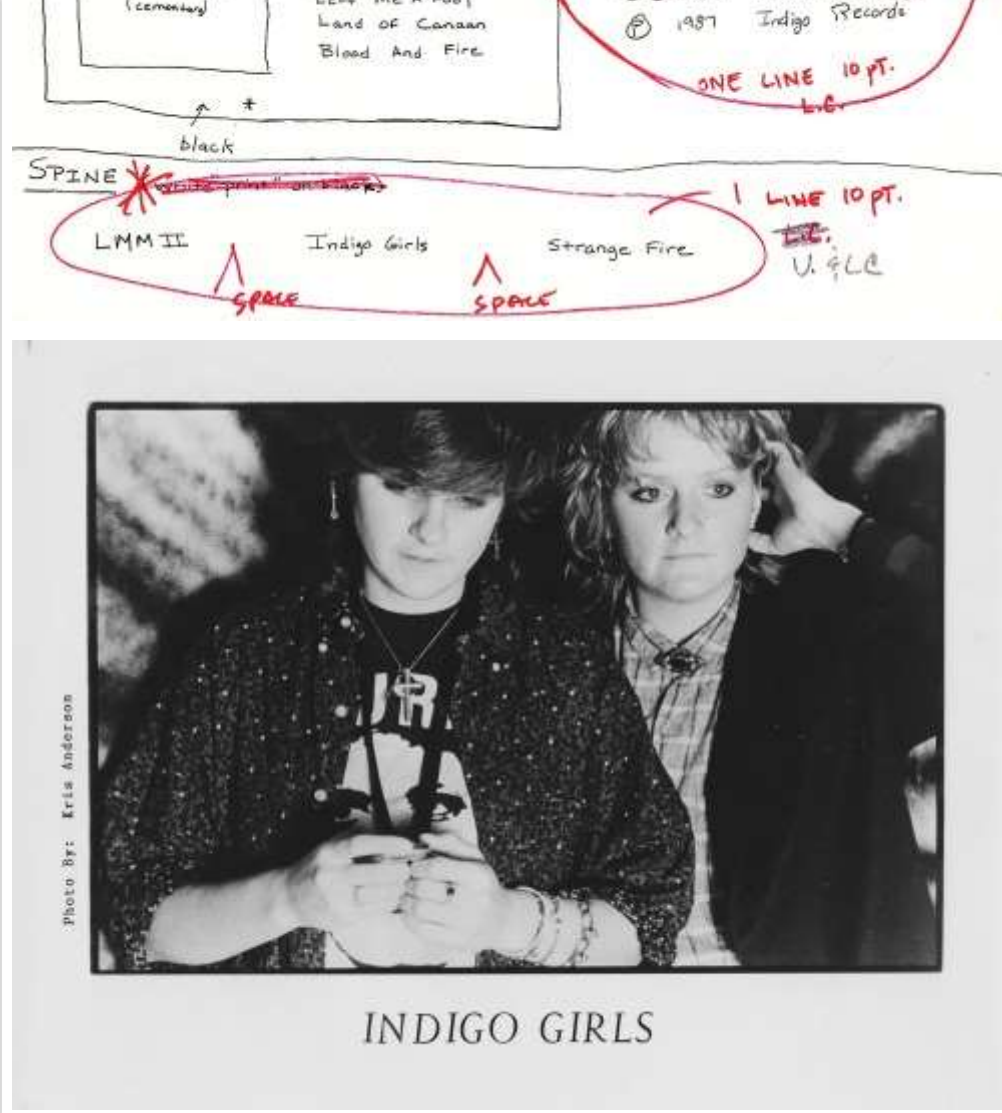
We worked this record hard, figured out how to promote it ourselves, split up the duties and diligently took to the phones, fax machines and the U.S Mail. College Radio was huge at the time and a real maverick in the industry, totally challenging convention and opening the doors for indie musicians of all stripes. It was a unique and fertile time in college radio that fostered interest in all sorts of music that was off the beaten path, but it didn't last long; in the ensuing years, college radio was over-exploited by the major labels and often became just another cog in the wheel of the corporate music machine. We got lucky though and hit it at a moment of true diversity and non-commercialism, and the radio play we received had a thorough impact on our early indie days.

friends at other colleges, phone books, music magazines, whatever we could find. Our main workhorse was the College Music Journal or CMJ-it was like the bible for me. I read it religiously and used it for everything we did. We made our little lists and charts, and then called the stations and asked them to report if they had received the record, if they were playing it, and how many spins. The biggest deal was to get on the playlists that actually appeared in print in the CMJ, a total thrill for me whenever it happened, somehow it felt more legitimate to see the tracking lists in something besides our own handwriting...

We used this “tracking” information to convince record stores to carry the record and to prove to clubs we were worth the risk. And it worked the other way around too. So if we got a gig in a city, we always used the gig as something to build on. We’d go after press in the local arts paper, radio play on the indie station, and try to get stocked at the local record store. That was pretty much the formula. Whatever you got first, you built on it. So sometimes press or radio led to a gig or the gig led to press or radio. The “constant” in the formula was that you really needed all three ingredients to happen in order to be successful in that town, and so we took one town at a time and worked towards that equation. We started where we knew people, so North Carolina, where my sister lived, or New Orleans where Emily had gone to Tulane, everything was all about family and community and the contacts they shared with us, and that has never changed, even to this day!

📅 28 Feb 2014 ❤️ 50





ES.1987

In the life of a musician, there is nothing quite like the experience of making one's first full-length album. At least for me, this is true. And back when we were starting, vinyl wasn't just a cool retro special release; it was what your album was made of. And it came enclosed in a jacket, 12.375 square inches large. That meant there was lots of space for inner sleeve and jacket design, and when you held it, you were holding a little world. My album collection was *my* world, and I lived through those songs, and held the sleeve jackets, pouring over lyrics and credits and thanks, gleaning everything I possibly could. Nothing was more appealing than a big collection of LP's, filed neatly and alphabetically. It was the best thing in the world to spend money on, and there were some artists whose complete catalogues I collected: Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne, CSNY, Stevie Wonder, The Jackson Five and Michael Jackson, Heart, Ferron, Carly Simon, and James Taylor, and The Gap Band, to name just a handful.

We embarked on our first full-length LP, 'Strange Fire', in 1987. At that time, Atlanta and Athens, GA. were like very different sisters who got along quite well and supported each other. Regional alternative rock or folk/rock music, all across the country, was alive and well on commercial, non-commercial and college radio stations. The Georgia Satellite's, a band I used to see locally in Atlanta, had a radio hit. The BoDeans and Violent Femmes, from Wisconsin, were coming on strong, and so were Sublime, from

So-Cal. I can remember how rich and varied the musical radio landscape was at the time, and I got a taste of the flavors of different areas of the country just by listening to the music those communities produced.

But Athens was the Mother Lode! Amy and I became deeply inspired by many of the bands and artists who would show up in the classic 1987 VHS release, 'Athens Inside/Out'. These were bands that were at the forefront of the alternative music scene in Athens: Pylon, Love Tractor, the B-52's, the BBQ Killers, and so on. And, of course, there was R.E.M. Athens was literally exploding with the new alternative.

John Keane was an Athens guy who Amy heard of because of his work with R.E.M. and other local bands. He had a studio in his house and was also an excellent musician. When we were ready to make an album, we decided we wanted to make it in Athens with John Keane.

The drive from Decatur to Athens took about an hour and fifteen minutes, mostly traversed on a two-lane highway, U.S. 78. I remember getting in to Athens on studio work days and buying lunch, either at the Varsity Junior, or the Taco Stand. It felt purposeful and invigorating to make the drive out of town. Our other recording experiences had all been in Atlanta, close to home. Driving to Athens was an adventure.

John's studio was warm and laid back, fitting for John's personality.

We had a list of 11 songs, and we recorded them all acoustically, very simply and straightforwardly. Honestly, when I listen back to most of my lyrics from Strange Fire, I literally cringe. There are some real humdingers of overwrought images and feelings.

But, hey, I was 24, and you are where you are. Still, when it came time to re-release Strange Fire a few years later for Epic Records, I didn't want the song 'High Horse' on it and, to this day, since the era of the original recording, we have never played it live.

I want to skip ahead to what happened when Strange Fire was released in 1987. This was after we had done the recording, had the pictures taken at the Mt Zion A.M.E church on La Vista Rd, completed the album package, and put the record out.

Amy and I had a list of primarily college radio stations and program directors to call and try to get them to play songs from Strange Fire. We sent each program director a package with Strange Fire, a promo shot, and whatever else we deemed important for them to know about us. There was no single released. As you can see from the photo, these are Amy's notes from her charting of radio play progress. We divvied up the stations and went to work at our telephones, making the calls, taking notes, talking about the record, self-promoting, booking gigs in the towns where the stations were. It was a remarkable time. The fact that an artist could actually make contact with radio programmers and plug the record and have them PLAY the record is something that simply cannot be done in today's world. And when we booked gigs in conjunction with airplay, and had albums to sell at shows, we actually began to build a real following beyond our hometown crowd. There was real exhilaration in watching a song go from light to heavy rotation, as a result of our grassroots efforts, and college radio stations were powerful and organic tools for us to get our music out. Of course, to me and Amy

back then, there was no conscious awareness that we were a 'grassroots' band. We just knew that we could work diligently in an organized manner, play all the live shows we could possibly book that made sense, and make use of the resources that were available to us.

I can't overemphasize the beauty and impact of being smack dab in the middle of the Atlanta and Athens music scenes in 1987. There was a buzz, an energy to the bands and artists that was palpable, and I often felt that we were riding the wave of all of that intense and creative music. And I also remember that there was a genial camaraderie between Athens and Atlanta, and that when one band or artist did well, everyone else was happy for them. In the spirit of that inclusion, Amy and I were able to carve a niche out for our acoustic music.

By this time, there was nothing to keep us from continuing to make a career of music. Before actually realizing it, we were a band with no sign of stopping, and it was exciting. And we could do everything on our own to propel ourselves.

1987 was the perfect storm of independence, access, opportunity, inspiration from others, and passion for the thing most all-consuming: MUSIC.

📅 28 Feb 2014 ❤️ 61

indigo girls



The Indigo Girls perform their own material and feature material from local Atlanta artists. Both women have come out of the folk tradition and believe in creating their own unique sound. Amy's songs are gutsy, powerful, and upbeat. Emily's are more lyrical, jazzy

and ballad-like. Indigo Girl music is a unique blend of styles and voices, crossing over from underground progressive to a commercial and accessible folk sound.

CONTACT:

Amy Ray (404) 982-0156
Emily Sallers (404) 892-1027
EP producer Frank French (404) 874-0903

ES.1986

1986 feels like the year we really started getting BUSY as Indigo Girls. As you can see from the calendar, we began playing gigs almost every night of most months, and we began to expand our geographical horizons. We had our own sound system, so we just loaded up the vehicle (usually Amy's) and headed off where the gigs were, many in South Carolina, Charleston and the nearby beaches, and in Colombia. This particular calendar was pretty much a dream come true calendar, because we were playing out of town in Charleston and on St Simon's Island, GA, AND we were opening for Donovan at the famed Moonshadow Saloon, had a couple days with two shows booked, and had scored the ultimate crossover gig: the 688 Club! Amy landed that gig for us, and it was extremely important because 688 was a pre-eminent rock club in Atlanta, 'alternative' was the term, and we were a couple of young women with acoustic guitars. It pushed the boundaries of the perceptions of what kind of music could be played where. We never felt at home playing in 'folk clubs' where singer songwriters mic'-ed their guitars instead of plugging them in directly, and everyone in the audience sat quietly. We wanted to stand up, have people stand up if they wanted to, turn it up a little louder, and just be who we were. A show at 688 allowed for that. It was a milestone.

We released our first EP in 1986, produced by Frank French. Frank also owned Far East Futon in Atlanta, so we got to make a record, and we got to get a discount on futons, which I loved at that time. They smelled incredibly good, almost like sweet grass. Any way, it becomes easy to digress thinking back to a time that was so chock full of so many exciting things. It was during the making of the EP that we met Kristen Hall, one of the best songcrafters I have known. We were also joined by local Atlanta musicians, including Caroline Aiken who had taken us under her wing, Michelle Malone who still maintains a distinguished thriving career, and DeDe Vogt, a local hero from the bands Scallion Sisters and, later, Paper Dolls. Two of the songs, 'Land of Canaan' and 'History of Us' were later recorded for our first Epic Records release. It was an indescribable feeling to record that EP and then hold it in my hands, just like the single from the year before, but it marked a period of our growth, and we used it as a springboard to further our travels and get the word out about our music. And it introduced us to working with a producer and friend who could expand our sound while holding true to our essence. I look at the bio we have from 1986, so innocent! So generic! Our home phone numbers listed! But we were finding our way. We were both emulating and fashioning our own path to promotion and musical growth. We always believed it was important to have your music to put in to peoples' hands at the shows if they liked what they heard and wanted to hear more.

The patchwork quilt of gigs that made up this calendar shows exactly where we were and where we were heading. But we started as a bar band, a DIY touring band, making up our own bios, asking friends to take photos, sharing the recording experience with other musicians who inspired us. We were the little band that could.

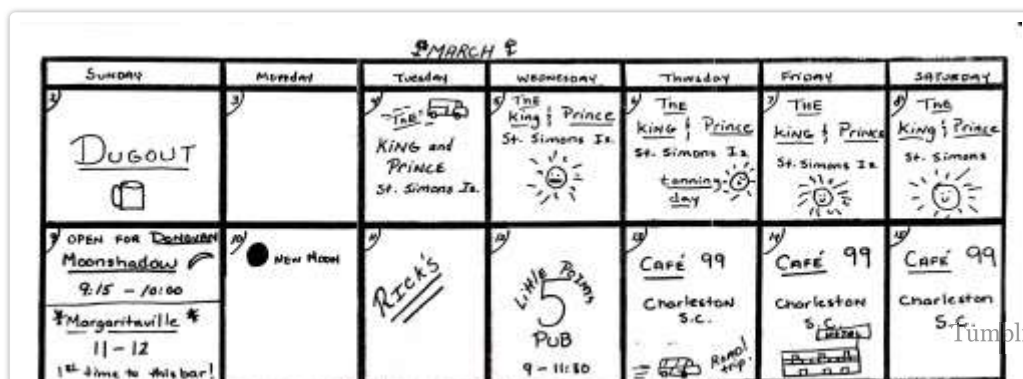
1986 was an important year for me personally as well, because I had graduated from college, I had made a career choice decision that was proving fruitful, I was playing music with my best friend, and I was renting my own place and paying my own bills. I got to travel and stay in cheap hotels, make new friends from strangers, sleep on living room floors and be too young to wake up stiff. We could play 26 shows a month and hardly be tired. Hours of driving and car griminess didn't dampen our spirits, and every hour put in to all that never felt like paying dues, as they say. You could say we paid some dues, but it NEVER felt like it. Well, maybe I should check with Amy on that because she had to endure my snoring when we shared hotel rooms! But, seriously, I think I wasn't weary because living music is not living linearly. We were fully alive, dimensional in every experience, and we were forging our own path together.

In 1986, we played a benefit for The Open Door Community in Atlanta, a residential outreach community who ministers to the homeless and incarcerated and seeks to abolish the death penalty, racism, sexism, and heterosexism. The Open Door celebrated 30 years in 2012, so when we played that show in 1982, they were a nascent community. Again, we played with a collection of Atlanta musicians, so many of whom are still in our lives today, and we learned how easy it was to organize to benefit others, and how deeply our lives were affected by helping to make change through music. It became clear early on that activism, community participation, and bringing social issues to light through the sharing of music would be inextricably tied to our career. It just feels good and right to let the music shine a light on the darkness. And it all started from getting involved in our local community.

So, there it is and was.

Incidentally, my favorite song of 1986 was 'These Dreams' by Heart. I still can't listen to it without getting choked up, because I'm pretty sure all that was happening that year was encoded in that song. Who knows why? But there was a lot going on. And it was good.

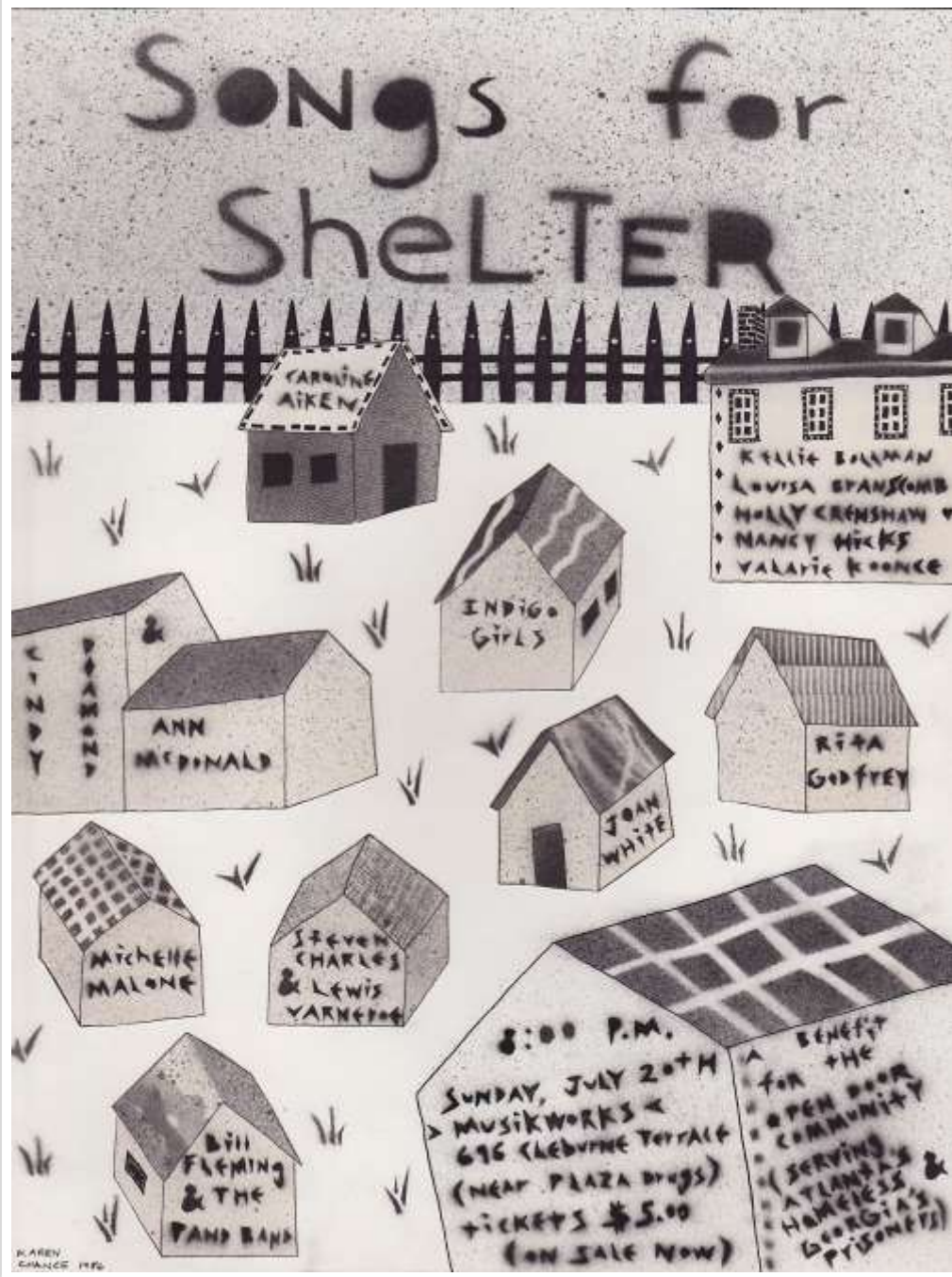
📅 1 Feb 2014 ❤️ 62





indigo 9/2

* we need lots of support for the GSB and mag-graduate - Thanks!!!



AR. 1986

What's crazy to me when I look at this homemade Indigo Girl Calendar for the month of March 1986, is that I was still in my senior year at Emory. I had to go back and look at my diploma to make sure I had it right. I actually did graduate, with the help of

old day planner to make sure these dates were right, I found a few notes about classes and a tiny reference to graduation, which that night I celebrated by playing a gig at The Purple Parrot, a little hang-out in the Virginia Highlands of Atlanta. But at this point, it's easy for me to see now that music was taking over my life, my path was pretty much set, with a Plan B to either teach High School or go to Divinity School.

The most significant date on this calendar for me is still Atlanta's 688 Club, which was open from 1980 to 1986 and saw the likes of bands like R.E.M., Echo and the Bunnymen, Sonic Youth, Alex Chilton, Siouxsie and the Banshees, and Iggy Pop. As far as I was concerned, most of the greats of the Alternative, Punk, and New Wave scene had played that stage and it was my goal to have the IG's up there. We made it in just under the wire and played a couple times before it closed in 1986. Musically, we weren't even close to a punk band, but our sensibilities and the way we saw the world were firmly rooted in the alternative scene, so these Alt / Post-punk clubs made the most sense to us.

We had a lot of convincing to do to the club owners at first, but most of the time it panned out. We weren't totally acquainted with the ways in which our sexuality played into the "outsider" status of the Alt music world, but I can remember feeling a little shunned in the "coffee house" world, which at the time was actually pretty traditional and very straight. At least at the Alternative clubs there was some playing around with gender and sexuality, even if they were grappling with homophobia, sexism, and racism, just like the rest of us. In the Alt-Punk Rock club scene there was a culture and an aesthetic that transcended the narrowness of the folk scene of which, even though our music might fit in, we felt disenfranchised for reasons we couldn't understand at the time. So, personally, I was pulled to where I felt comfortable, and the punk club gigs were my favorite ones.

We also played a lot of "neighborhood" bars, places where music wasn't really the main thing, but we didn't care, and just wanted to play wherever we could. Our friends came out and eventually we started developing our own crowd and meeting new people and musicians. The gig at Little 5 Points Pub would eventually become our touchstone and most significant gig. We started out playing for free a couple nights here and there but it ended up being our main gig. This pub was like no other. Every walk of life, from Drag Queen to Business Man happened by there-poets, families, transients, addicts, artists of all stripes, working folks, truly a neighborhood pub where differences were celebrated. The man that ran this pub was John Blizzard, and he helped guide our career as much as anyone has. He died of A.I.D.S. some years later and his life and death had a huge influence on us. One of the best gifts John brought to us was to introduce us to so many artists and musicians in our town, and to encourage us to engage and give back to the community. We saw a lot of down and out folks at L5P pub and on the streets of Ponce De Leon Ave., and one of the first ways we got involved in activism was to do a benefit for the Open Door Community, a group who is still serving the homeless and folks in prison for over 30 years now. We got together a bunch of our new musician friends and put on a fund raising show. The artist for the show poster, Karen Chance continued to create a lot of artwork for IG's.

Columbia, SC called Traxx. It was sort of a cross between a honky tonk and a disco, with a very wild bunch of patrons. We had a blast, but we were running the gauntlet for sure.

Café 99 in Charleston was just as crazy, but it was mostly a straight preppy drinking crowd, with a few local stragglers and musicians from the other bars on Market Street. We had a lot of college buddies that came along for the ride and road tripped it to these weekend gigs, and thankfully so because sometimes they were the only ones listening.

While we were cutting our teeth on the rough and rowdy crowds, we were also starting to venture into the nerve-wracking world of writer's nights at places like The Bluebird Café in Nashville. I almost preferred the chaos of our drinking crowds, rather than deal with the quiet and attentive audiences of proper songwriter establishments. The Bluebird was such a huge deal to us, so respected and lauded by the songwriting community, I knew I was sort of in the "fake it till you make it" phase of my career, so this kind of gig was the hardest for me. But when I made it through the night, I felt a real sense of pride and part of a tradition that I held as sacred. The Nashville songwriters were considered the cream of the crop-even if you weren't into the current country scene, no one could deny the craftsmanship of the writing.

All these gigs we were playing were helping us get more solid in our performance and writing, so we recorded and released a vinyl EP that year. EP's were kind of what you did before you had a full album's worth of material. We met a guy named Frank French with a studio / label called Dragon Path Music and he helped us make our record. His assistant at the time was Kristen Hall, a songwriter who turned out to be a life long friend and inspiration. Frank and Kristen were two peas in a pod with a constant, sometimes frenetic stream of creativity pouring from every cell of their bodies. I was in awe of how they came up with ideas and how active their process was, it really made me appreciate the recording studio in a whole new way.

I had moved to an apartment in a complex called Emory Woods and it turned out to be a nexus of sorts for me, with many of my best friends, Daemon Records cohorts (Andrea White and Stacey Singer), IG's first tour manager and dear friend, Beth Stubenbord, Michelle Malone, Kristen Hall, and the list goes on of other musicians, artists, working people and activist types all living there. Rent was cheap and it was spread out with grass, trees, a junky outdoor basketball court, and a swimming pool. Dogs weren't allowed but we all had cats, and they would sometimes slip through the 2nd floor windows and walk down the overhangs to the next-door apartment and visit the neighbors. This is one way we got to know each other, through out cats' antics. In the summer we had cookouts and sat around talking about our big dreams and all the funny stuff that happened on our little tours. I think this apartment complex is still one of most precious memories from that time. I'll never forget how it felt, sitting at my little desk, looking out the window, while I drew these monthly calendars.

📅 31 Jan 2014 ❤️ 49



A.R. 1985

1985 was a singular year for Indigo Girls. We settled on a name after using our last names for a couple of years. The story goes that we had an important gig coming up, opening for a big artist at one of Atlanta’s best clubs, The Moonshadow Saloon. I had been working on getting a gig there for a long time, back in those days a lot of the music clubs would use local acts to open for National artists, so we would talk to the clubs and find out who was coming to town and pester them for opening band slots. Persistence paid off, we opened for a handful of bands at The Moonshadow and at Center Stage, ranging from Lloyd Cole and the Commotions to Suzanne Vega. I don’t recall what band this first show was with, I just know it was a huge victory to get the gig. We were trying to come up with a proper band name before we played the “big gig,” our first gig opening for a national act. I was thumbing through the dictionary for ideas and was struck by the word “Indigo.” It was a significant Southern crop, fraught with the brutality of slavery, deadly working conditions, and international trade debacles, but I was young and liked the color blue, and we were spending a lot of weekends playing in Charleston, SC, an Indigo farming center, so I think something about it appealed to me. Subconsciously, I might have been going for some subversion here, with such a dark underbelly to an innocent word, but I certainly didn’t have the historical or moral maturity to play this angle right. On the surface, we didn’t consciously attach that much significance to it, but just thought it sounded cool. I talked to Emily on the phone during her summer stint as a camp counselor and she seemed to like the idea and thought the alliteration of the word “Girls” would work well with it. Of course, at the time, we had no plans to be 50 years old and still strumming away...so we just settled on the name and moved on.

That year at Emory University was fruitful for us. We had gigs on campus and at clubs around town and were traveling regularly to play out of town on the weekends. We had started playing a significant number of our own songs and were trying to focus on becoming an “original music band.” We had a long-standing gig at a bar on the edge of campus called The Dugout. It was a hangout for professors, students and locals, with beer pitcher specials, eats, and sports playing on big screen TV’s. They also had a good

stage and were set up well for local bands to come in and play for the college kids. We made it our home for a while and not only played there, but I for one, spent most of my free time there as well. I'd study for a while at the library, head down to The Dugout, and then head back to the library-it was good life. At this point, I lived in a cool one-bedroom at the University Apartments, behind Lullwater Park near campus. My Mom and Dad, who met when they were in school at Emory had lived there after they first got married while he was finishing medical school. I always liked walking by their old street and thinking about them.

Emily and I were now venturing into making proper recordings-sometimes at studios and sometimes capturing live shows. At the time, the D.I.Y. movement was alive and well, and bands in Atlanta were releasing their music on cassette tapes, either giving them away or selling them at shows. If folks heard us play, we wanted them to go home with some of our music in hand, so we decided to make a tape of our originals and a few of our favorite covers. A friend we met on the music scene, Dorn Dutton really liked our music and helped us out by recording some of our shows there. We had also done some recording at an Atlanta studio called Web IV Studio. The studio was a big deal in the South, but still accessible to us, which was one of the coolest things about growing up on the Atlanta music scene-the accessibility factor was high in our town and gave us a chance to garner real experience. (Web IV was the original name of a publishing company set up by well-known Atlanta producer, Bert Berns –the name was derived from the names of his partners Gerry Wexler (W), Ahmet Ertegun (E), Berns (B) and Neshui Ertegun (IV). When Bert Berns died in 1967, his widow bought a studio on Faulkner Road in Atlanta and named it Web IV Recording Studio. It thrived in the 70's and 80's and was one of the most important studios in the South.) We made a bunch of recordings at Web IV, engineered by Tommy Cooper, and used some of them along with live recordings from The Dugout for our first cassette release, a little tape we called *Blue Food*-a name that for better or worse, was true to form for us. There were 12 originals and 3 cover tunes. We made cassette copies of *Blue Food* at home and created the cover from a photo shoot proof sheet, using the old cut and paste technique. I haven't heard that cassette in a long time, but I noticed there are a couple of Saliers / Ray co-written songs on it, which is pretty funny since I don't remember writing them or what they sound like, so I'll be digging that tape out for sure.

Around the same time we made *Blue food*, we made our very first 7-inch record! We took the strongest song from our Web IV Studio recordings, "Crazy Game" and made a vinyl single out of it, with a dark maternal dirge called "Everybody's Waiting for Someone to Come Home," as the B-side. Both *Blue Food* and "Crazy Game" came out in 1985, under the name J.Ellis Records-a name that paid homage to our mentor and high school English teacher Ellis Loyd. The *Blue Food* tape had more music on it, but the single was a bigger deal and we considered it our first official recording. My Dad loaned us a couple thousand bucks for the project. The record was pressed close by at Georgia Record Pressing, which was such an inspiring process to me that I got a job there later, and worked off and on in the summer and between gigs. We sold the "Crazy Game" 7-inch at the campus bookstore and consigned it to record stores around town, it was our

📅 26 Dec 2013 ❤️ 64

CONTRACT BLANK
FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS
ARTISTS MANAGEMENT, BOOKINGS

P.O. Box 1204
Charleston, SC 29402

803/577-6590

THIS CONTRACT is made and entered into this 4th day of DEC., 1985 by and between
INDIGO GIRLS, managed by
CAFE 99
party of the first part, hereinafter called Artist(s) and
party of the second part, hereinafter called purchaser, for the personal services of the artist(s) and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth:

- Name and Address of Place of Engagement: CAFE 99
99 S. MARKET ST., CHAS., S.C.
- Date(s) of Engagement: JAN. 10 & 11, 1986
- Hours of Engagement: 9pm - 1am EACH NIGHT
- Type of Engagement: CLUB CONCERT
- COMPENSATION AGREED UPON: 450.00 + 325.00 @ 49% tip

A. To Be Paid By Deposit \$ 0 Balance Payable IN CASH ONLY TO
MAY RAY BY END OF ENGAGEMENT. 0

Deposit Received

SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND / OR INSTRUCTIONS:

ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The agreement of the artist(s) to perform is subject to the detention by sickness, accident, civil tumult, strikes, epidemics, Acts of God, or conditions beyond their control. In any such event, the deposit will be immediately refunded to the purchaser or an equally good act will be substituted. No substitution will be made unless one of the above conditions exists, and the purchaser authorizes the substitution.

Purchaser and Artist(s) further agree that this contract is not subject to cancellation unless both parties hereto have agreed to such cancellation in writing and such written cancellation is delivered to the office of FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS.

For the true and faithful performance of all and every covenants and agreements herein mentioned, the purchaser and Artist(s) bind themselves each unto the other in the penal sum of the amount set forth above as "Compensation Agreed Upon" as liquidated damages to be paid by the failing party.

That this instrument contains the entire agreement between the parties and that no statement, promises, and inducements made by any party hereto or agent or representative of either party hereto, which is not contained in this written contract shall be valid or binding and this contract shall not be enlarged, modified or altered except in writing signed by the parties and endorsed hereon.

It is understood and agreed by the Purchaser and the Artist(s) that FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS is not a party to this contract and that its only function is that of an entertainment bureau; and further that FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS is not responsible to either party for breach of this contract. However, FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS will assist and aid in arbitration or settlement of any breach provided both parties are willing to arbitrate in good faith.

By executing this contract as purchaser or artist(s) the person executing said contract either individually or as an agent or representative represents and warrants that he or she is twenty one years of age and further is executing said contract as agent or representative, that he or she has the authority to enter into this agreement and should he or she not have such authority, he or she personally accepts and assumes full responsibility and liability under the terms of this contract.

The performance to be rendered pursuant to this agreement is not to be recorded, reproduced or transmitted from place of performance without express written permission of FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS and Artist herunder.

Cost of repair or replacement of instruments or equipment necessary due to audience action, theft or fire while in venue is responsibility of purchaser.

Purchaser and artist agree by signing this contract that for any and all future engagements contracted for above place of performance, FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS shall receive a minimum of 10% of the gross wage agreed upon and that future offers shall be directed to FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS for contracting.

Witness our hands and seals the day & year first written:

<p><u>CAFE 99</u> Purchaser's Name <u>[Signature]</u> (384)</p> <p><u>99 S. MARKET ST.</u> Signature of Purchaser or Agent thereof Street Address</p> <p><u>CHAS. S.C. 29401</u> City State Zip Code</p> <p><u>803 577-6599</u> Phone</p>	<p><u>INDIGO GIRLS</u> Artist's Name and/or Manager <u>[Signature]</u> (384)</p> <p><u>40 FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS</u> Signature of Artist and/or Manager Address</p> <p>This engagement arranged through FAT CAT PRODUCTIONS.</p> <p><u>Bubba Taylor</u> W</p>
---	--





E.S.1985

When I think of 1985, the first things that come to mind are that I graduated from Emory University, and Amy and I made our first professional recording on vinyl with “Crazy Game/ Everybody’s Waiting (for someone to come home).” By 1985, Amy and I were in full swing as Indigo Girls. Up until probably mid-school year, I was still meeting with my academic advisor and pondering grad school, and while we were playing numerous gigs and beginning to develop a very small but devoted following, Amy was doing all of the groundwork; making connections, getting gigs, hanging posters, running sound. She finally had to actually ask me one day if I wanted to go to grad school or if I wanted to be a full-time musician. It was literally a day of reckoning, and I made a quick, clear, and easy choice and never looked back. And I started to try to pull my weight with Indigo responsibilities. Amy always seemed to know how to make the next right move. I was in awe of her ability to book gigs. A gig at the Moonshadow Saloon in Atlanta was a mind-spinning gig. And she knew that we would be better suited plugging in our acoustics and playing rock clubs rather than playing pin-drop quiet folk clubs. She shaped our destiny at the outset, even though neither one of us had or talked about aspirations of “making it big” or getting a record deal. We simply wanted to get the next great gig, and Amy always had a way of making that happen.

We borrowed money from Amy’s dad to make our first single, as studio time was quite expensive, and we didn’t have the funds. The thrill of booking and going to into a studio, wearing the headphones, playing it until we got it right, adding the reverb, organizing the artwork, naming our own little label after our high school English teacher, Ellis Lloyd, having it mastered and pressed and then just holding it in our hands was something I will never forget. It was somehow validating to have a ‘real’ recording. We took boxes of the singles to the Emory campus, set up in front of the student center, and sold them. In 1985, making that single felt as big a deal as it did to get signed to a major label three years later.

I hadn’t thought about *Blue Food* for many years until Amy found the original artwork for this independent, homemade cassette release we made in 1985. The guy who engineered it, Dorn Dutton, was a fan and friend who came to every show as far back as I can remember. It was recorded at The Dugout, an Emory hole-in-the-wall hangout on Oxford Rd that no longer exists but was for us a regular gig, and a springboard for developing a following, much in the same way that the Little Five Points Pub would become soon after. When I look at the photos from the Blue Food artwork, I am struck by how playful and silly they are, and how we dressed up and used a backdrop and a handwritten Indigo Girls logo of sorts. There is a charm and innocence, almost as if we were emulating what a “real” band would do when they released a recording. It was as homegrown as could be, and when I reflect on Indigo Girls now, 28 years later, I realize

I suppose I think every year was pivotal in one way or another, both personally and professionally, but 1985 seems to be the year we became Indigo Girls and stayed Indigo Girls.

The day I graduated from Emory, my family and I took a trip to Europe, and it was there, as we traversed parts of the continent in our rented VW van, that I began to form and finish the song "History of Us." I stood in dusty cathedrals and art museums, and at the base of the mighty Alps, filled with awe at the tiny lights of whoever dwelled there. And I took everything I experienced over there back home with me to Atlanta, where I picked up with Amy and carried on, an Indigo Girl, a full-time musician, a devoted partner, a grateful traveler. And life as a so-called "real" band became grad school.

📅 26 Dec 2013 ❤️ 58

Chatahochee RIVER COMPANY is bustin' out all over!
*Enjoy good old days and nights with us.
Live entertainment, food & spirits.*

EVERY WEEKEND
OUTSIDE PATIO AREA

FRIDAY 7 P.M. - 11 P.M.
SATURDAY
& SUNDAY 5 P.M. - 9 P.M.

featuring
Amy Ray
424-6949

AR.1984

Coming home to Atlanta in 1983/84 to go to school at Emory University was one of the best moves I ever made. I lived with my parents for the summer before the school year started, and immediately began looking for gigs-solo and with Emily. I was so relieved to be back home where I felt comfortable, that I experienced a huge jolt of energy for writing and playing. Throwing off that straight jacket of the last year at Vandy was my best Houdini. Sure, I was still struggling with my sexuality and depression, but I was back in the same town as Emily, going to the same college, and knew there were a lot

of cool shows to be had. I was tired from the last year's emotional chaos, but I was excited and raring to go. I loved my classes, especially my Literature and Religion courses. My Dad and Mom met, and fell in love while attending Emory in the late 50's, and my Grandfather was a student of the theology school, so I had some roots there. And even when I was taking these connections for granted, I know the history stayed with me and gave me solace at times. When I first started the school year, I lived on campus in a makeshift dorm room, which was a study lounge split up with dividers to house a few people. It was a total drag for my roommates because I would come back to the room all hours of the night, lugging my PA System and guitars in with me, making all kinds of noise. I eventually moved into a one-room roach infested apartment in a house across from campus. It was pretty gross but at least I had my freedom.

Emily and I were still playing at Good Ol Days in Buckhead and occasionally at the location up in Sandy Springs, but we started adding in a lot of new places and doing shows around campus. We basically would play anywhere that would give us a shot. I played solo gigs too, because I just couldn't get enough and it seemed like I needed every opportunity to get better at what I was doing. Sometimes, I played a happy hour gig at The Emory Sheraton Hotel, and because it was a 5-7 pm kind of thing, this allowed me to go play a gig later in the night with Emily. I started trying to veer from the standard singer-songwriter fare and played tunes by writers like Elvis Costello, Dire Straits and Patti Smith. It was a friendly crowd leaning towards grad students and professors, so I could get away with a bit more. Emily and I were also trying to explore new song territory and experiment with adding originals into the mix. I was pretty far behind her in the songwriting department, actually I was behind in a lot of ways, my harmony and guitar skills had a long way to go, but we took advantage of our different levels of musicality and made it work for us. When I look back on those times, I really do have to credit Emily for her patience with me. I guess we both knew at the time that while she had the musical prowess, I had the drive and passion for the music business, and we needed both of these to get the shows we wanted.


The poster for this Chattahoochee River Company gig makes me laugh. I guess putting my phone number on a poster was kind of like posting your web or email address on a flyer, but it seems crazy now, and from such a simpler time, when we didn't even use area codes. I can't remember who took the photo; it was either a neighborhood friend or my Dad. There was a whole series of these stoic hippie Amy photos, and I believe they were also printed in a neighborhood darkroom; maybe the one at my family's house-it was such a community effort. I can't recall how this gig came to me, but I played it for quite a while. Chattahoochee River Company was well north of town, up in Marietta. It was sort of the country version of Good Ol Days. It was outdoors on the town square and attracted a lot of redneck revelers. I learned a bunch of tunes that leaned country, in hopes of taming the clientele a bit, but to be honest, I was ineffective and had a long way to go in my craft, and this was pretty much my classroom. I was trying to write and work originals in, here and there, but my writing was so young and introspective that it couldn't possibly grab the ear of a drinking crowd. So, cover tunes abounded, but I had fun no matter what I played. I got paid a really small fee, but got to

make tips, and sometimes, even though people weren't really listening, the tips were crazy high. My mom reminded me the other day of the \$100 tip I got from a guy who was totally blitzed-I saved it and gave it back to him the next time I saw him, it just didn't feel right taking money from a drunk. One night I was playing, and I met a bunch of Cajun musicians, living in a big house up that way, I'd say now, it was remarkable to meet such people at that time in that neck of the woods, but we got to be good friends and I ended up dating one the guys off and on, for my last foray into the hetero life. They were quite a clan of creative energetic musicians and made an indelible mark on that time for me.

Now that I am writing this, I can see how rich that whole year was for me. Even though I know I was in a lot of muck and suffering under the weight of my own homophobia, I basically lived in two really cool worlds-the night time world of clubs and all the folks I met and played with, and the college campus world of learning and hanging with a totally different set of peers. They fed each other and made me strive harder to be a songwriter and a working musician.

📅 21 Nov 2013 ❤️ 57

Turman West RHA and Residence Life
Present:



EMILY SALIERS & AMY RAY
“B-BAND”

“Folk Rock at its finest.” --Joni Mitchel

“Professional, yet approachable.” --National Lampoon

“This crowd better sing!” --Amy Ray

“I think Emily is very talented.” --Mrs. Saliers

THURSDAY MARCH 8
10PM- UNTIL?
IN THE TURMAN DELI
BEVERAGES SERVED WITH ID

1984 was a pivotal year in the story of Indigo Girls, even though we weren't officially Indigo Girls yet. Both Amy and I transferred to Emory University at that time, but neither had planned it with the other. Looking back, I still find this remarkable, as it is mind twisting to imagine that things might have gone a very different way had we stayed at different universities.

I rented an apartment, my very first one, with a roommate at the corner of Clifton and North Decatur Rds, down the street and walking distance to my classes. While I had given every effort to 'spread my wings' by attending university away from Atlanta and my parents, I was truly relieved and excited to be back home. And, as it turns out, Emory was a fruitful environment for me as a student, and for us as a band.

My class at Emory was made up of many bright, charismatic, and gifted people who inspired me academically and supported Amy and me faithfully as we began to play on campus and in local bars, so that our time at Emory was truly a springboard for our burgeoning career. I remember feeling a step behind most of my friends intellectually, even though I made excellent grades. It felt akin to being the youngest sibling and not able to quite keep up, but always glad to be a part of the gang. On the other hand, being in the company of so many bright minds inspired me to work hard at school and aspire to continue on to graduate school. I wanted to be an English teacher. I started talking to my academic advisor about post-bachelor education opportunities.

But I also equally wanted to be a professional musician, and when Amy and I both ended back in the same place, it rekindled the unique and exhilarating thrill of playing together. The poster you see was for a gig we played at Turman Deli, which was nothing more than an open lobby, eating space in the Turman dorm complex on campus. It wasn't a proper venue. But we hung posters around campus, brought our own sound system and set up and played for other students and friends, and it was as big a deal as anything else. That's how I remember those days: any chance to play anywhere at all was AWESOME. Both Amy and I were continuing to write and expand our repertoire with both covers and originals. I remember Amy becoming interested in what was then beginning to be called 'alternative' music. Although the shift may have been evolving earlier, I remember circa 1984 being the period of time when what she and I listened to began to clearly diverge and offer the different colors of influence that shaped us and our material. One alternative band that intersected our tastes was Everything But the Girl, and we learned their song 'Easy As Sin' which was my favorite cover song that we performed at that time. Through Amy, I learned about Robyn Hitchcock, Lloyd Cole and the Commotions, Elvis Costello, Siouxsie and the Banshees, R.E.M and others. On the pop edge of alternative, I loved XTC, the Eurythmics, and Howard Jones. Indefatigable in my original song oeuvre, however, I wrote about love, love, and more love. That, amidst all other change of scenery and events, was a constant!



Amy.1983

I have so many mental images of my life in 1983, but not that many photographs or things to document the arc of that year. But I found this one, which seems pretty innocuous but packs a punch in my head.

My family drove me up to Nashville, TN and dropped me off for my first year of college at Vanderbilt University. I stayed there from Aug 1982 to May 1983. My Dad took this picture and that's my younger brother, Larry standing with me near the student center. I was bumming because my girlfriend was 300 miles away in Athens at UGA, and Emily was down in New Orleans still, at Tulane. We had played a lot that summer and I

guess I wasn't sure what I was going to do with myself or how to maintain the ground we had gained. I made that shirt you see me wearing in the photo; it celebrated a very short era of calling our duo The B Band. I really have no idea where the name came from, it was some silly inside joke I'm sure, but I wore The B Band shirt all the time. When I started my days at Vanderbilt, I was hoping to have some college years of discovery while working on my own musical craft, and still for me, everything musically was about adding to the experience and growth of my music with Emily.

My oldest sister Laura had gone to Vandy and I had visited her a couple times and thought it'd be a good place for me. I'm not sure what transpired in the time after she graduated but the community of D&D playing, philosophy majors and free loving hippies had kind of disappeared off the campus and what was left, was pretty much a choice between the conservative young Republican kids who majored in Fraternity and Sorority life and the conservative business, pre-med or prelaw driven intellectuals. I know now there were a lot of other kinds of students there, but I was such a hermit that I couldn't find them. I was trying to come to terms with my sexuality and scared of everything I was feeling. I was in Music City, U.S.A. and I knew I wanted to make the best of it, but still couldn't really connect the dots. Vanderbilt and Nashville were legendary in my mind for alt country bands like Jason and the Scorchers and badass women rockers like Marshall Chapman. The Bluebird Café had just opened and was already a happening place. The SGA at Vandy was renown for hooking up stellar shows; R.E.M. came through on its Murmur tour and opened for The English Beat. I kick myself now, because I couldn't get out of my misery enough to discover this world that lay at my feet.

I did have a super cool job though, at the most amazing used record, comic, and bookstore on Broadway called The Great Escape. It really became my savior during that time. I spent my hours going through tons of vinyl records in a dusty upstairs room, checking them and pricing them, organizing comics, ringing up sales, and doing gopher work. It was The Walker's family business and they knew a lot about music. My sister had also worked there when she was school, so the Walkers took me in and treated me like their own. I spent most of my earnings on vinyl and comics, but the job gave me some structure and helped to feel like I was in Nashville and not just isolated on a college campus. Gary Walker was a Nashville songwriter and gave me some songwriting advice along the way. It took a while to apply his advice but it was a seed that got planted and grows even now. I played some gigs here and there, even played on campus, and it was really a big part of whom I was, but I was having so much trouble negotiating my inner life that I couldn't really turn it into anything. I felt like such an oddball, and sometimes out of insecurity, I was strange for strange's sake, but it's hard when you feel all painful and crazy inside to figure out how to show it on the outside without giving it all away, so I guess that chip on my shoulder got pretty heavy.

I had a couple of entrusted friends that saved my butt for sure, I still use the guitar strap that they gave me in an act of total grace and support. But, there was nowhere that I didn't feel homophobia and at the time, I didn't even know what to call it, I hated myself and did whatever I could to stop that hurt. I wrote *Blood and Fire* in the throes of all that mystery and pain. But it was more than just love and sexuality chaos, my left

wing was growing, my politics developing and I was truly feeling the pull of activism. I didn't understand it all yet, it was just growing inside and I couldn't help myself from taking in all that was wrong with the South in the 80's. I wrote the lyrics for *Nashville* that year too, I left the original lyrics in a seedy Atlanta hotel I holed up in for some respite called The Dial Inn. It took me a while to pull it back up from my memory. I felt the Old South's racism, classism, and all the negative parts of a wealthy old southern university and a conservative music city and that song was my way of coming to terms with it. But you know how it is, where there is that much frustration and anger, there is bound to be an equal helping of yearning and love; over the years that city has become a friend to me.

When your 19 years old, you don't think of yourself as young, but you are, you are young and vulnerable and your senses are on hyper drive. I was pretty lost and always asking myself why did everything feel so off kilter, secret and dark? The creeping discovery of sexuality, politicization, social awkwardness of a freshman year, and powerful musical ambitions all culminated in a potent coming of age that lives with me even now.

📅 18 Oct 2013 ❤️ 103





Emily.1983

I don't remember exactly how I found the Penny Post, or how it found me, but playing there regularly was one of the highlights of my musical experience at Tulane. Of course, the other highlights happened virtually constantly: live bands and barbeque shrimp at Jimmy's, going to Tipitina's, listening to the Radiators, Irma Thomas, or the Neville Brothers on the quad with boiled crawfish and quarter beers, playing L'il Queenie 'My Darlin' New Orleans' on the jukebox at the Irish pub in the French Quarter, hearing Cris Williamson and Vicki Randle for the first time on campus, becoming friends with Eric Vincent, who came all the way from France to play at Tulane, going to the New Orleans Jazz Fest, and driving around in my friend Sharon's AMC Spirit AMX listening to a mix tape of the Gap Band, the Dazz Band, and Rick James. My time in New Orleans was drenched in music and, at the Penny Post; I found a haven for performing my fledgling songs. I belonged there.

The Penny Post was a coffeehouse where people could come to play board games, listen to music, chat and chill. Like any good coffeehouse, it had its regulars, or 'patrons', and many of these people became my friends. One friend in particular, Richard, was my greatest supporter. He took me under his wing, always came to hear me sing, believed in me and my future in music, and recorded all of my songs for free in his home studio. There are people who come into our lives at just the right time to help us along our paths in one significant way or another, and Richard was one of these people for me.

When I look at this photo of me playing at the Penny Post, I am reminded of a couple of things. One was that I was soooooo proud of that Ovation guitar. I thought the rounded plastic back was the coolest thing ever, even though it always slipped down my lap when I held it to write. It was also super cool because it had a pickup in it, and so I could plug it in at the coffeehouse, which felt very rock and roll at the time, instead of having to mic my guitar.

I also think about that white beret, Mon Dieu! I wanted to be Joni Mitchell. It was a fashion choice in a long line of fashion mishaps that would color my part of Indigo Girl photo shoots, album art, and live performances. The pride in that beret may have only been matched up to that point by the pride in my faux leather gun holster I sported as a child wanna be cowboy.

I used to take the Amtrak train from Atlanta to New Orleans. It was an eleven-hour trip, traversing the backside of Mississippi, the underbelly of the Delta, and culminating in the crossing of the mighty Lake Pontchartrain. I loved the rocking movement of the train, the lonesome whistle, the unknown lives and scenery whizzing by, framed by the large glass windows. It was much fodder for daydreams and song lyrics, and was a portent for the shifting, fluid connectivity and displacement of a life lived in constant motion, one I still crave, even when I am still.

By the time this photo was taken, I would have already completed my transfer to Emory University, and would soon be leaving New Orleans. I can honestly say that I was always on the edge of a nagging fear coupled with exhilaration in New Orleans. In many ways, it was a brutal place with flooding and violence and corruption and raw sexuality. The music, culture, and history were so deep they scared me. I was frightened because I was awakening as a young woman artist with snow-white innocence and an aversion/attraction for darkness. And, truthfully, I only had a guitar and nascent prose to come to grips with it all.

📅 18 Oct 2013 ❤️ 71



Amy.1982

The summer of '82 looms pretty large in my mind, even now. I had just graduated from high school, and Emily had spent the year away at Tulane University in New Orleans. We had played a few weekend open mic nights here and there, even spent a day busking in Jackson Square in New Orleans, but all in all it felt like a long time away from our music. In 1981 my junior year, Emily's senior year, we had started playing a bar in Buckhead called Good Ol' Days. It was a seemingly bohemian joint plopped down in a neighborhood that was considered an elite suburb for North Atlantans, about 20 minutes as the crow flies from our houses over in Decatur. Our entry into that scene was the open mic night on Tuesday, which we played religiously until it turned into a standing gig in 1982. I remember a quick meeting between our parents and the restaurant manager where some permissions were exchanged, and then we were pretty much set, playing for the punters and drinkers in Buckhead. Although at times, the Buckhead Good Ol Days was a refuge for the artistic set, if I had to play that gig now, I'd say it was a mostly a tough crowd of rich preppy boys and girls cruising each other, tables full of drunk, chatty people eating "flowerpot" sandwiches, and general mayhem occurring on

the sidewalk across from the stage. But truth be told, it was a huge break for us. It was a ritual every time we played that gig, loading up the crappy little Peavy PA system with its white microphones, getting our song list ready for the night. We played mostly cover songs, a typical offering of the 70's folk pop that became standard fare for the folk bar scene. When we could, we snuck in obscure covers and left-of-the-dial stuff, even tried a few originals. But that gig was a lesson in bargains-if you wanted to play "The Angels Wanna Wear My Red Shoes," you also had to play "Margaritaville."

In the 1981 photos from that Good Ol Days gig, you see us sitting on opposite sides from where we stand now, Emily is playing a classical guitar and I'm on the 12 string acoustic; we look super bewildered and happy. By the time Emily came back from her college freshman year in the summer of '82, it felt like a lot had gone down and you can sort of see it in our demeanor in the photos from that year. I mean maybe it wasn't as dramatic as it seemed, but for me high school senior year felt like the end and the beginning all at the same time. I had lost my position as class president, which was a real blow to my ego at first, but evidently just the thing I needed to seal my status as an outsider. I was falling in love with a girl in my class, without any language for it, without even knowing what the word queer or gay or homosexual meant. I was self-righteous about my innocent love and defended it to parents and teachers like I knew what it was all about, but really I was completely lost, I had no idea. I spent nights pining and sneaking out to run the three miles to her house, just to knock on the window, get a glimpse or steal a quick hold of the hand. But we were star crossed from the beginning, and what I found out about teen queer love was that it was mostly weeks of angst for a few brief moments of stomach dropping chill bumps. Along with this new-found part of myself, I was also discovering the underbelly of society, the politics of caste, religion, and love; I was shedding my preppy garb and walking around with a bandana tied around my leg, my identity floundering somewhere between a hippie and left wing redneck. Music and sexuality were coming into fruition and it was ushering in a whole new worldview for me.

So, in the summer of 1982, Emily came home to this, and even then we didn't talk as much as you'd think about everything going down inside of ourselves. Come to think of it, I can't even remember when that "coming out" conversation happened, I think it was later, 2 years down the road in a Wendy's at Toco Hills Shopping Center. It took a long time to get to that point, to figure out how to talk about what was going on inside. For a while all I knew was that I had been transformed, and even though I had a glimpse of how Emily was coming into her own, the context was completely different-a year apart in age was like a whole stage of growth back then. I can remember going to see her in New Orleans, during my senior year and her life feeling so exciting but so alien to me. It was the typical story between a high school senior and a college freshman losing touch when the older one goes away to school-straight out of an episode of Friday Night Lights. For me, all of that doubt and painful self-discovery was absorbed by the gigs we played that summer at Good Ol Days- warm summer nights, taking our breaks in the alley behind

the bar, meeting other musicians that would happen by, before or after their own
Buckhead gigs. We met a lot of our mentors in that alley and we were pretty green, but I
knew enough to know I had found the world I wanted to be part of -a sort of
sisterhood/brotherhood of wandering minstrels- a life connected by gigs and highways,
and the lore of the road.

📅 20 Sep 2013 ❤️ 90



Emily.1982

In the fall of 1981, I left Atlanta for New Orleans to attend Tulane University.

For Amy and me, it was a given that we would both be going off to college
somewhere. At that time, of course, we had no idea we would both end up transferring to
Emory University in Atlanta, me after 2 years at Tulane, Amy after 1 at Vanderbilt. But
I'm getting ahead of myself.

the first time I had been away at length from my parents, and I was terribly homesick and, at the same time, eager to spread my wings, particularly my artistic wings.

I was a serious student, and helped pay tuition by doing work-study in the library. I had every intention of being an ENGLISH TEACHER. I studied hard and made good grades, just like a future English Teacher should, and I loved school.

But I was obsessed with music.

And my time at Tulane marked the most prolific songwriting stretch of my life. I had a lined journal with a thick, burgundy faux leather cover, and I sat in my dorm room with my guitar and wrote endlessly. There was a day I remember completing five songs. That's not to say I didn't repeat the same themes over and over again (unrequited love, the world's injustices), but the channel from my nascent artist spirit through the guitar and to the page was wide open, and I let it flow. Music was constant through the chaos of loneliness and awakening.

During this time, I had a cheap LP player in my dorm room, and it was there I devoured Joni Mitchell's 'Hejira', dropping the needle at the beginning of the title track the second the song came to an end. Over and over and over again. And the song put me in a trance-like state, but not so 'tranced out' that I couldn't feel the physical heartache the song's lyrics caused me, or the wonder of their vast landscape. If I didn't live in such depth, I would DIE!!!! And if I couldn't write songs, I would WITHER. Such was my reality at that budding age.

There was a window at the end of my dorm hall, and I would sit there sometimes at night, you know, pondering, looking out at the oak trees below... One night, I looked down and saw a guy on the front steps of the building and he beckoned me down and we spoke for a few moments. I don't remember what about. Then he gave me a cassette, cued up to a song, told me I could have it, and to go listen to it. The song was 'The Moon's a Harsh Mistress', Judy Collins' version, and I lived with it, like a secret lover, for a very long time. Who was that boy who came and went and left a song? There was absolutely nothing but music to give expression to such wonders during that year.

When I wasn't in my dorm room hunched over my guitar, writing furiously, or breathing in songs, I actually went out into the world of New Orleans. I played regularly at a coffee house called The Penny Post on Daneel Street. I was a guest on WTUL's Sunday folk show. I played my guitar on the quad. I went to a friend's studio and made my first studio recordings. Amy came to visit, and we went to the French Quarter and busked with our guitar case open for tips. The reunion was seamless and thrilling.

To listen, write, and play was everything.

It wouldn't be long before Amy and I were back in the same city, re-forging the duo path. But 1982 was mostly the year I stepped out alone, ears and heart wide open.



BASF

LH-EI

No.

Army Ray and Emily Selices in Summer 1981
at Amy's with 12 string and 6 string classical

00 00
LH-EI
BASF



Position:
Fe (Normal)

STEREO NOISE RED.
60 90

(the idolation)
infatuation
stage.

1	TIME/ COUNTER	2	TIME/ COUNTER
You've Got a Friend (good)		Long Ago and Far Away	
(we repeat it then talk)		Rock Me on the Water	
Wysteria	00G	Father and Son (mess up 3 times)	
Its Too Late (I talk to Daisy)		2 diff. keys at F and G	
Carolina in My Mind (talk to R.B. h)		Father and Son	
(sex joke)		It's Too Late	
Junkie's Lament		(talk to Daisy and Pippin)	
Her Town Too Clever's too High)		You've Got a Friend	
Her Town Too (talking to Daisy)		Dancing Shoes	
(Dog speech)		Dancing Shoes	
Post Corner / Danny's Song		Long Ago and Far Away	

AMY.1981

Years ago, I came across an old high school love letter I had written for Emily-it was the days of unicorns and waxing in fledgling poetic phrases about the moon, calling out our high school on it's failures, and our dreams of getting out there. But, it wasn't a typical "love letter," those were reserved for greasy Southern rock-boys and forgiving football stars. My love for Emily was a high school infatuation for something I wanted to be. I saw another, a year older than me, playing guitar, singing, writing music, connecting to something bigger than the confines of high school.

We met some time in 1974 across a lunch table in a cafeteria. I don't really remember much except the playground and the cafeteria scenes-girls gathered around Emily while she played her guitar. Emily and I barely knew each other, that one-year gulf between kids in elementary school is a chasm of great proportions. I do remember thinking, as I listened from afar that music was the ultimate vehicle for communicating the underdog notions in my head.

It was the sheltered suburban south, we were coming out of the civil rights movement and things were still bad. I was barely aware of what was going on around me, but it seeped into my bones as I lay listening to my sister's Woodstock records- Janis Joplin and Jefferson Airplane. By 1981 I was peeling the Reagan bumper sticker off my car, hanging out with the high school chorus and learning a James Taylor song with Emily called A Junkie's Lament.

known.

I was already fueled by a new independence of thought and being, and music was a big part of it.

I played guitar on my own, sitting in my bedroom, at my church youth group meetings...but this new found bond over music with Emily was different from every high school rock band I had tried to form.

Most of the time, we got together in the basement of my house, across the street from our high school. School loomed large for me, the football field with it's pep rally bon fires, the sounds of drill team, marching band, it was like a pressure tank in my heart -the sounds, the teams and clubs that I would try so hard to be part of. Nothing would ever feed me the way music did, nothing would bust through to who I really was. As soon as I felt the way our voices sounded together, I was inconsolable, except by the music we would make.

When we started playing together our practices had no real goal. For me, having time together to sing was the point, in and of itself. I mean we had small dreams, like playing for our mentor, Mr. Lloyd's English class or doing an open-mic night, but the biggest and most intense feelings I had were in the that intimate space of a 1970's ranch house basement- a pool table from Sears, a Panasonic tape recorder, and hours of learning cover tunes.

We can claim all our influences and they were varied and often opposite, but when you look at the songs we were learning, well, I guess something about them felt in reach for us. We couldn't do Jackson Five or the Allman Brothers, but we could do Jackson Browne, Dan Fogelberg, James Taylor, and Carol King. It was the era of singer-songwriters who were emerging from the Summer of Love and moving into the slick production of 1980's folk pop. Some of these writers would endure for us- Jackson, Carol, and James were something to aspire to. We talked about Joni Mitchell for hours, taking apart her lyrics and chord progressions. I couldn't play all those fancy chords, but Emily could cop a Joni song easily. This difference between us is what helped to define us, and it helped us create our sound. I had a long slow learning curve and I just wanted to sing and play so badly that I didn't have the patience to properly learn the guitar or work on my harmony singing. It was in me from church choir and camp town songs, but YMCA guitar lessons only went so far. I was satisfied to sing the melody and play the chords the way I knew how, so we approached the songs from two different sides. If I had to sing a harmony, then I thought of it as a melody, I voiced my chords differently, more simply from Emily. We sang counter melodies because they came easy to us and that's how we could make the song more fun and dynamic. The first days of playing were just this urgent need to sing songs, sing anything, just to hear the sound of our two voices.

I taped everything we did. I made notes- I mean I noted everything happening in the room. There are only a few tapes that survived the years, but when I read the cassette covers and listen to them now, it's enough to understand where we were at- the incessant

talking and giggling between songs, the awkwardness of such a big catalyst entering our life, and the blend of two voices that feels as familiar today as it felt shockingly liberating in 1981.

📅 5 Aug 2013 ❤️ 170



EMILY.1981

I am pictured sitting in the chorus room at Shamrock High School, most likely in late Spring, 1981, as there is a yearbook to be signed, sitting on my lap.

Although we had met and been acquainted since we were 9 and 10 years old, Amy and I really only became friends when we both joined the chorus in high school. Being in the chorus together truly bonded us, as it was a chance for kids from different grades to hang out, and Amy and I were immediately and deeply simpatico. Shamrock had a very good choral program, and we worked hard as a choir, which set some of the stage for our diligence in practicing and arranging. something to which we still hold fast as IG's after all these years.

Chorus was the springboard for our friendship and burgeoning musical path. And then A.P. English at Shamrock for me and Amy, with our dear teacher/mentor, Ellis Lloyd, further greased the wheels, as Ellis encouraged us to play for the class, and we had to know songs in order to play!

During 1980-81, Amy and I spent a lot of time in the basement of her house, listening to and learning songs endlessly. It was the most fun I had ever had, and we both wanted to include original songs in the mix. Early on, we loved James Taylor, and we used to write and speak Joni Mitchell quotes to each other, particularly from 'The Last Time I Saw Richard'. Amy turned me on to Jackson Browne, I can clearly remember. But it was original music that we really wanted to focus on, as time went by. We made a point to 'sneak' in original songs, while we were a 'cover song' bar band, both having fake i.d.'s and our parents' encouragement to carry on. And it was the original songs that became the most gratifying.

