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ASTA WINE OPEN MIC GOING STRONG

BY PEDRO PEREIRA

The second monthly open mic at Asta Wine Cafe and Art Gallery took place on Dec. 6, and it was a raging success.

Some 15 performers showed up, including a large contingent of ISS members. Among them were Sonny Meadows, Tony Tedeschi, Suzanne Ernst, Fred Bredfry and Scott McDonald. Other performers included Meghan Capaldo, Antonio DiMarco, Kevin and Steve, and Mike Pappalardo.

Running the sound was ISS member Bob Krummenacker, who deserves kudos for making everybody sound like a pro. Bob has also created sound files of the open mic performances, which you can listen to and download from www.bobkmusic.com.

I did the MCing for most of the night, but

had to leave before the gig ended so I handed the hosting duties over to Tony, who I am told did a great job. Tony, of course, got plenty of experience when he ran an up open mic in Sea Cliff until about a year and a half ago.

Bob and I are running another open mic at Cool Beanz in St. James. More details on page 2.

The next open mic at Asta is scheduled for Jan. 10. The event starts at 7:30 p.m. on the dot and wraps up by 10:15 p.m. I encourage anyone thinking of participating to let me know in advance so I can put together a preliminary list.

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Writer's Choice: It's a Tie!

BY WALTER SARGENT

The Writer's Choice award for December is a tie: "Puppy for Christmas" by Vincent Crici and "The Folksinger" by Tim Dillon.

"Puppy for Christmas" is a fun, infectious, light-hearted and artfully constructed song about wanting a puppy more than a world of inanimate toys. Member comments: "Wonderful music," "very touching."

"The Folksinger" is yet another expertly conceived and executed song from Tim. Member comments: "The lyrics pull you into a very personal experience."

And "great songcraft, great voice."

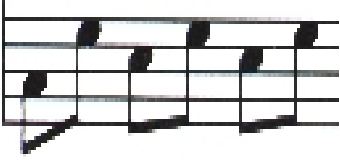
"Gingerbread Man" by Maria Elaina DiFalco came in second with a round of accolades: "great voice, terrific chords and theme," and "a standout."

Mike Svezia's irresistible "Beasties" came in a close third with comments such as "awesome," "killer" and "good tight tune." I'll second that; it was cute as hell.

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The next ISS workshop is scheduled for Feb. 5.

Asta Wine Open Mic Going Strong



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Send me an e-mail me at pedropereira@verizon.net. However, anyone who wants to play must still sign up the night of the event. Sign-up starts at 7:30 p.m.

Stephanie Yovino, owner of Asta Wine, located at 335 Main St., Huntington, said she is very pleased with the outcome of this event so far. We packed the house in December and nearly did so on our debut in November, despite torrential rains across Long Island.

ISS Director Sonny Speed was on hand both months and has been instrumental in spreading the word about this event, whose success we can only hope will continue to grow.

I encourage the continued participation of ISS members, whose performances contributed significantly to the open mic's success so far.

So be sure to come to Asta on Jan. 10, and also on Feb. 6 to support this endeavor, the goal of which is to promote original music on Long Island.

Also remember to support the business when you are at Asta. The open mic can only continue to have the approval of the establishment owner as long as it generates business.

Keep up with Asta open mic news by visiting myspace.com/astawinesopenmic. Check out Asta's menu and schedule at <http://www.asta1.com> and for other events taking place there.

"Remember to support the business when you are at Asta. The open mic can only continue to have the approval of the establishment owner as long as it generates business."

Come to Cool Beanz on Saturday Nights

Weekly Open Mic to Run Through January

BY PEDRO PEREIRA

Another exciting gig that has been taking place with the support of ISS is a Saturday night open mic at Cool Beanz in St. James.

Also with Bob Krummenacker running the sound and myself handling hosting duties, the event is slated to run weekly through January. We did a trial run early in November, which went very well, and we are now in the midst of a two-month stint that kicked off the first week of December.

Whether the event continues beyond February largely depends on whether we can sustain the levels of participation that so far we have been able to attract. Performers have included ISS members as well as singer/songwriters from all over Long Island.

Among the performers that have come down to Cool Beanz on Saturday nights

are Michele Monte, John Wacaster, Claude Margouleff, Mike Castoro, Tim Huss, Christie Baker, Kenn Machin, Nicole Evans, Kevin & Steve, and Kyle Lhommedieu.

Audio files from the Saturday night open mic at Cool Beanz are available for listening and downloading at bobkmusic.com.

Turn to page 4 for more information on open mics around the area.

The Cool Beanz Saturday night open mic starts at 8 p.m., and sign-up is a half-hour before that. Be sure to participate. Cool Beanz is located at 556 N. Country Road, St. James. Keep up to date with the open mic by visiting myspace.com/coolbeanzsaturday.

Next Workshop

The next ISS workshop is Feb. 5. Remember, it's always the first Monday of the month, except on holidays.

CD Release: ISS Webmaster Walter Sargent Serves Up Something Fishy

BY PEDRO PEREIRA

You've probably heard most of the songs if you have seen Walter Sargent perform around the area in recent years. Now you can have them to keep, in a sparsely produced CD titled "14 Fish Two Bottles and Shoe."

Released late last year, this collection of songs shows off the considerable talents of the ISS webmaster, from the now operatic, now understated vocals, to the competent guitar playing, to the thought-provoking lyrics.

Walter, who teamed up with Huntington-based producer Dave Cook, also an ISS member, to put the CD together, demonstrates in this collection of tracks why he has often won the Writer's Choice

award at ISS.

His songcraft is well-developed, producing work that is at once pleasing to the ear and intellectually compelling. Standout tracks include the ballads "Don't Go Now" and "Me, Myself and I."

Most of the songs feature only vocals and one or two guitar tracks, with the opening track, "Beautiful," being an exception. In "Beautiful," Walter shows that in addition to playing delicate finger-picked patterns and melodies, he can also make an electric guitar scream.

The 17-track CD includes several instrumentals. It is a departure from the glossy production of Walter's first CD, "Dunderhead: Songs of Dunder." "14 Fish" is a winner.



Who Played What

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

Andrew Kirschner
Everybody's Singing My Song
Bill Goldsmith
Tears Are For Yesterday
Steve Bregman
Unconditional Love
Tim Dillon
The Folksinger
Lisa Ross
You Done Broke the Bank
Howard Pavane
These Iron Bars
Vincent Crici
Puppy for Christmas
Estelle Henrich
Who Else Could They Be?

Bill Mega
Christmas Morning
Pat Beecher & Dave
You Come To Me
Maria Elaina DiFalco
Gingerbread Man
Frank Gambino
Old Guys
Mike Svezia
Beasties
Vince Gangi
Hey Baby
Guy Pezzulo
Whet My Appetite
Adam Winters
Speaking Without Meaning
John Remitez
Hello

Toby Walker Live

Long Island bluesman
Little Toby Walker is
recording a live CD
during a performance
Jan. 26 at the Boulton
Center for the Arts in
Bay Shore. Get tickets at
www.boultoncenter.com

The Island Songwriters
Showcase wishes
everyone a
**HAPPY NEW
YEAR!**

www.islandsongwriters.org

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Mike Svezia

Steve Robinson

Frank Gambino

We're on the Web!

See us at

www.islandsongwriters.com

Writer's Choice: It's a Tie!

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December was another full house with new faces. Congratulations to everyone who braved the hot seat for the first time.

Other nominees include:

"Tears are For Yesterday," Bill Goldsmith

"Speak Without Meaning," Adam Winters

"Unconditional Love," Steve Bregman

"Old Guys," Frank Gambino

"These Iron Bars," Howard Pavane

As one ISS member put it, it was "hard to choose - many great songs." Ah, sad but true. Wait. Not sad!

Monthly Workshop

Test out your songs in front of a crowd by playing them for fellow musicians who will provide constructive feedback with the goal of helping you improve as a songwriter.

The ISS workshop takes place the first Monday of every month, except if it falls on a holiday, at Five Towns College, off Burrs Lane in Dix Hills. Run by ISS Director Sonny Speed, the workshop starts at 7:30 p.m.

Bring a guitar if you wish to perform your song live, or you may bring a

recording on CD or tape. A piano is available for those who write their songs at the keys.

Be sure to bring 25 copies of your lyric sheets so the other workshop attendees can follow along while listening to your song. It is much easier to provide constructive criticism when people can read the lyrics.

The ISS workshop is at the center of the organization's mission to help songwriters perfect their craft. Many performers on Long Island got their start at ISS.

General Information

For general information about ISS or how to join the organization, contact ISS Director Sonny Speed at mcspeed@optonline.net or 631- 462-3300.

To submit items for publication in the newsletter, contact Pedro Pereira at pedropereira@verizon.net.

Visit our web site at www.islandsongwriters.org.