

January 2008

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Next Workshop
March 3

**Borders
Open Mic**
March 7

**CD Release
Party**
Denise Romas'
"Inspired," Jan. 26 at
Body Awareness, 50
W. Montauk Hwy,
Lindenhurst. Open
mic 8-9 p.m. followed
by Denise's set.

Happy New Year!

CD Review

Brilliant on 'All Sides'

BY PEDRO PEREIRA

A lot of artists in the local circuit released CDs last year, and one of the standouts is without a doubt Doug Kwartler's double CD "All Sides."

Doug, a producer, multi-instrumentalist and songwriter, put all of his musical skills to good use on this 21-track collection. Not content to replicate his earlier work on "Silver Meteor" and "Halfway House, Doug wastes no time in cueing the listeners that he is taking them on a new musical path. The first track, "Banjo Eyes," written for his daughter, is a catchy number with a New Orleans jazz flavor.

The New Orleans vibe spices up other tunes on "All Sides," but lest you think Doug has taken up residence in the Crescent City, he reaches into a rich range of musical styles to switch smoothly from folk to pop to jazz to blues. There isn't a stinker in this collection of songs, a remarkable achievement when you consider the number of tracks. Highlights include the aforementioned "Banjo Eyes," the two versions of

Continued on page 2

Writer's Choice: 'Testosterone Party'

BY WALTER SARGENT

Another month, another close one. What do you get when you pit two perfectly drop-dead gorgeous ballads from Mr. Dillon and Ms. Romas against one utterly hilarious number from Ms. Henrich? You get an exercise in arithmetic. When ISS members put more than one song on a ballot, the ISS Arithmetic Unit swings into action. Here's how it works:

The policy is to not let ballots with multiple nominees count more heavily than singular nominees. If ballots contain two- and three-way votes, all votes must be multiplied by six, because six can be divided by 2 or 3. Estelle got three whole votes, plus one part of a three-way tie. $(3 \times 6) + (1/3 \times 6) = 20$ pts. Members wrote, "hilarious, great narrative." "Love the idea, the words and the delivery." No points are awarded for comments. They are the "confetti" in the equation. Estelle wrote of her own song, "best yet!" and signed it, "Estelle." I want to remind everyone that this is perfectly legal. It's called BYOC, "bring your own confetti."

"The Order is too Tall" by Denise Romas got three whole votes: 18 pts. Members wrote, "Great performance, loved the Eva Cassidy/Judy Collins vocal quality...beautiful, rich texture..." "Hauntingly beautiful" and "beautiful delivery." "Season of Hope" by Tim Dillon got two whole votes, plus one third, plus another half vote. That's $(2 \times 6) + (1/3 \times 6) + (1/2 \times 6) = 17$ pts. Members wrote "Beautiful melody and guitar work evoke winter, snow..." "simply gorgeous." "An Ocean Is Small" by

Continued on page 2

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Writer's Choice: Henrich's 'Testosterone Party'

Continued from page 1

Frank Gambino got two whole votes, plus a half vote (15 pts). "Great song, wonderfully delivered." Four songs came within a fraction of a vote. That's how close these things get.

Other comments: "The Way Home" (Joe Pappacardo): "Very memorable and touching." "Guess I'm Getting Home Late tonight" (Walt Sargent): "Great words, great grooves, love the rhythm changes."

Kwartler Brilliant on 'All Sides'

Continued from page 1

"Just About to Die" and "My Closest New York Friend." "Park Avenue," on the second CD, is the musical equivalent of chocolate mousse – rich, tasty, smooth.

Having worked with Doug, who produced my own CD, "Last Man on the Planet," I know what he is capable of. But even having heard some of the tracks in the studio before the release, I still found plenty in "All Sides" to surprise and delight me.

Doug will be playing a set Friday Jan. 11 at Cool Beanz in St. James. I will also be performing a set as will ISS member Tony Tedeschi. The show starts at 8 p.m.

ISS Open Mic

The next open mic at **Borders Cafe**, Route 25, Syosset, is Feb. 1. This gig is monthly, on the first Friday of the month, hosted by Vinny Crici. Signup is at 7:30 p.m and the music starts at 8 p.m.

Who Played What

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

Mike Svezia: One Good Reason; Tim Dillon: Season of Hope; Maria Elaina DiFalco: These High-Heeled Boots; Frank Gambino: An Ocean Is Small; Estelle Henrich: Testosterone Party; Phil Kennelly: Somebody's Having a Bad Day; Denise Romas: The Order Is Too Tall; Bob Campbell: High Noon; John Finnerty: Gone (The Best of Times); Joe Pappacardo: The Way Home; Fred Blumenaur: Great Big World; Susan Davis: Twinkle Twinkle; Walt Sargent: Guess I'm Getting Home Late; Bill Goldsmith: She'll Be There

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.