

Long Island vibes

the local scenes
by Rich Hughes

As the Year Ends

Excitement Loom Throughout 2006

I don't know about you, but 2006 felt to me like a very confusing year on the local music scene. There were many things to be excited about. The future looks bright, with more Long Island artists signed to labels than I've seen in a long time. We paid homage to our past with the first-ever induction ceremony for the Long Island Music Hall of Fame. Plus, I heard more high-quality CDs by local artists than I have in any year since I've been involved with the local scene.

On the other hand, it felt to me like something of a dead year in terms of live shows.

There seem to be fewer smaller and mid-level venues for original bands, which spells a mediocre live scene. I'm hoping to see more good venues open in the coming year.

That being the case, I'm going to devote most of this column to my 10 essential full-length CDs by Long Island artists for 2006. In alphabetical order, here they are.

Action Action - An Army of Shapes Between Wars - British-sounding electro pop comes to Long Island. This Victory Records release proves to the rest of the country that emo isn't the only style Long Islanders can play.

As Tall As Lions - As Tall As Lions - On this, their sophomore effort, the band sounds more and more like the Island's answer to U2. A strong CD from beginning to end.

The Defibrillators - Triple Bypass - The world's oldest boy band scores again with yet another disc full of songs both funny and bittersweet on the theme of aging. How can you not love songs about getting your new false teeth, and horrendous medical side effects?

Deborah Lombardi - On the Fringe - This is a very impressive first full-length effort by Lombardi that showcases both her unique voice and her ever-

increasing songwriting powers. This CD wins her my Top Growth by a Local Artist award for 2006.

Head Automatica - Popaganda - An unapologetically pop effort by the other project of Glassjaw frontman Daryl Palumbo, this one is full of songs with great hooks and a high hummability factor. Yet another Island effort for lovers of British bands such as Squeeze.

The Raygun Girls - The Ones I Denied - This is a dark mix of goth, industrial and metal with powerful, melodic female vocals. Like a frightening yet highly erotic nightmare.

Ready in 10 - Face the World - This is the new original music project by several members of the acclaimed local cover band Peat Moss and the Fertilizers, and it's an excellent first effort. The style mixes rock, pop and blues, with very strong songwriting. You'll be hearing more about them for sure.

Taking Back Sunday - Louder Now - It's been a big year for this band and they deserve it. Emo might not be the only style Long Island is known for these days, but this CD proves it isn't dead, either.

Ultra High Frequency - Matter in Time - Yet another local band that can rock, but that also isn't afraid to write a good pop song. Another band you're probably going to hear a lot about in 2007.

Toby Walker - Toby Walker Plays Well With Others - The internationally acclaimed local bluesman turns in his strongest effort yet with this CD. Some of the songs still showcase his fabulous sense of humor, but some also demonstrate a welcome darker side.

There were many others I could write about, including strong efforts by Edison Glass and the Sleeping, but these were my 10 favorite local CDs for 2006. I can't wait to see what 2007 will bring.

To send information about Long Island's original music scene to either Mike Ferrari or Rich Hughes, e-mail us at longislandvibes@hotmail.com.