

LIFEBLOOD
The Unofficial Go-Head Journal

Issue #2

June 8, 1992

rites of passage

On Tuesday, May 12, Epic released the Indigo Girls new album, "Rites of Passage". Amy and Emily celebrated the release in Atlanta at Turtles Records, playing a six song set Monday night that led up to the start of sales at midnight. Afterwards, they stuck around and signed autographs.

Friday, May 22, and Saturday, May 23, Amy and Emily played Chastain Park, an outdoor amphitheater in Atlanta. They were joined on stage by Jerry Marotta on drums, Jane Scarpantoni on cello, Scarlette Rivera on violin/fiddle, and Sara Lee on bass. Dede Vogt opened one night and later joined Amy and Emily onstage. The set list for the second night was (they continued to play after Airplane, but I don't know what):

Galileo
Three Hits
Ghost
Joking
Prince of Darkness
Secure Yourself
Nashville
Love Will Come To You
Jonas and Ezekial
Let It Be Me
Land Of Canaan
Virginia Woolf
Romeo and Juliet
Fare Thee Well
Chicken Man
Airplane

Tour merchandise includes T-shirts and an official "Rites of Passage Tour Book". The book has detailed biographys of Amy and Emily, childhood photos, a feature on Sara Lee, and info in the back on Greenpeace and other causes they support. The T-shirts are \$22 and the Tour Book is \$10.

if you can hear the truth, listen.



The Indigo Girls are already widely acclaimed for their raw acoustic honesty, pure harmonies, and emotional lyrics. Now comes "Rites Of Passage," their most energetic, textured, and diverse album yet. Featuring renowned guest artists joined by a host of talented musicians.

"Rites Of Passage" is not just a new album, it's a coming of age. Includes the first single, "Galileo," plus twelve more brand new songs.



SMV Don't miss the Girls and their band on tour this summer. For more information, call 1-800-554-EPIC. Make sure you have these Indigo Girls classics on Epic and SMV.



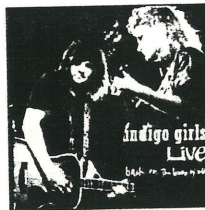
"Strange Fire"



"Indigo Girls"



"Nomads, Indians, Saints."



"Back On The Bus Y'All!" (EP)



"Live At The Uptown Lounge" (SMV)

indigo girls
"rites of passage"

The new album.
The next stage.

Produced by Peter Collins for Jill Music, Ltd. Management: Russell Carter
Epic Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Reg. strada / is a trademark of Sony Music Entertainment Inc. © 1992 Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

Indigo Girls: *Rites of Passage*

Release date: May 12, 1992
Epic Records

Review by Jennifer Eberlein

A friend wrote me last week, wanting to know if I knew which one of the Girls penned an old Indigo tune called, "If You Live Like That." Time was when Amy and Emily's styles were similar enough that you might occasionally be unsure of who wrote what, exactly.

That time has passed.

Rites of Passage, the Girls' fourth LP on Epic, is the latest step in the progression of their ever-diverging styles. Never is this more clear than in their respective uses of supporting instruments.

Backed by funky percussion, various calls of the wild, and buckets of fiddle and harmonica, Amy's seven cuts are steeped in the same earthy tones that were hinted at on "Welcome Me," "Hand Me Downs" and "Keeper of My Heart" from the last Indigo album, *Nomads*Indians*Saints*. On *Rites*, you don't have to listen much past "Three Hits" and "Jonas and Ezekial" before you're emerged in a world without walls, where a canopy of stars is your only ceiling. You can practically here the bones bleaching out on some southwestern highway on "Chicken Man."

Meanwhile, Emily's six tunes, cradled in strings and piano, build on the ethereal sound she achieved on "Giri With the Weight of World in Her Hands," from *Nomads*. Both "Ghost" and the exquisite "Virginia Woolf" resonate with a haunting, otherworldly tone.

Despite their increasing individuality, the Girls' ability to complement each other's distinct sound remains as strong as ever.

Producer Peter Collins triumphs on his debut Indigo effort, with a steady and even hand. An impressive collection of backing artists make vibrant contributions to the disc, but Collins' deft production prevents the Girls' vocals and guitars from being overshadowed.

Diehards will be delighted to find that Amy's "Nashville" and her cover of Dire Straits' "Romeo and Juliet" are finally seeing release. Purists should be happy that the production on "Romeo" is virtually non-existent, leaving Amy, her guitar and that voice to shine on their unadulterated own. (Personally, this reviewer does miss the "Aw, shit!" line that used to follow the part that says, "Romeo? I think I used to have a scene with him." Hopefully, it will re-instated for live shows!)

On *Rites*, Amy and Emily seem to be traveling down two very different paths, yet their sweet synergy somehow remains as powerful as always. ■

Rites of Passage,
Indigo Girls, Epic

Those who have been reading Music Reviews for a while will know that I'm not a big fan of the Indigo Girls. Their records have been much too earnest, too tame, too politically correct. Still, they have garnered a significant following and have frequently gotten other popsters to work with them that I do like (members of REM, for instance).

Well, *Rites of Passage* is a good album.

Good Collaborators [NEXT]

2 of 4

On their latest outing the Girls from Atlanta--Amy Ray and Emily Saliers--have gathered an interesting collection of collaborators. On backup vocals they have Jackson Browne and David Crosby (Galileo, Let It Be Me) and the Roches (Airplane).

They also have the B-52s' bassist Sara Lee, and, on a couple of tunes, Budgie, the percussionist from Siouxsie and the Banshees.

3 of 4

But they've worked with good performers before. What's really different here is that the album has a pulse. I think that's largely because they chose Peter Cook as the producer (his credits include rockers Alice Cooper and Queensryche). He even gets the Girls rocking, as they do quite credibly on *Joking* and *Jonas & Ezekial*.

Although lyrically this album shares some of the excesses of their previous album, *Nomads*Indians*Saints*, the Indigo Girls seem to be at their songwriting peak here.

4 of 4

Songs titles like *Galileo* and *Virginia Woolf* give some idea that they are reaching out to broader themes. *Galileo* is one of the best songs on the album: "I call on the resting soul of Galileo/King of night vision, king of insight."

Galileo becomes a metaphor for the search for truth, which the *Rites* album also seeks.

PROD167

Indigo Girls get confused

Rites of Passage, Indigo Girls (Epic) — The best folk music tells detailed personal stories that reflect larger truths. The Indigo Girls use metaphors and platitudes to try to create meaning, but the lyrics often are impenetrable and must have significance only to them.

The Atlanta duo of Amy Ray and Emily Saliers can sing prettily and passionately and can write well-arranged, complex music, but not often enough to make their fourth album a success. The best cuts are *Joking*, written by Ms. Ray — the stronger songwriter — and *Romeo and Juliet*, a Mark Knopfler tune that Ms. Ray sings and plays intensely.

Joking provides the catchiest melodic refrain, along with old-fashioned hard acoustic strumming and a forceful vocal. The lyric "You kissed me like I was a soldier heading for war/I'm a dying man but I don't know what for," is one of the few moments of comic relief on an otherwise serious record.

Jonas & Ezekial is another standout, propelled by a haunting rhythm that could have come out of a Native American folk song. World beats recur on several other tracks as well.

But too many of the songs just lie there, straining to sound heartfelt. Awkward exaggerations such as "There's not enough room in this world for my pain" (on *Ghost*) come up again and again. If the folk revival isn't already dead, albums like *Rites of Passage* are pushing it in that direction.

— Manuel Mendosa



THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS
MAY 24, 1992

INDIGO GIRLS *Rites of Passage* (Epic: Ⓜ 68)

Even when they address strictly adult concerns—a newfound appreciation for Virginia Woolf, a poet's suicide—the pop-folk Indigo Girls (Emily Saliers and Amy Ray) show a distinctly adolescent sensibility. That works for and against them on their fifth record, *Rites of Passage*. Some lyrics could have been spawned by classroom assignments: If a 10th-grade English teacher had asked for a love poem with a literary allusion, lines like "I know now how it feels/To be weakened like Achilles/With you always at my heels" ("Ghost") would have earned a scrawled "Excellent!" Sometimes the melodies sound too impeccably groomed to spill any real guts. Still, Indigo Girls' honey-blond harmonies are lustrous, and the jangly cheerfulness of "Galileo" is almost as charming as a crooked smile laced with braces. Better yet, the vibrant, ragged-edge guitars on "Chickenman" and "Joking" suggest that they have spent time hangin' with the bad kids in the garage—spending a little more might help loosen the mighty grip of the English teacher. **B-** —Stephanie Zacharek

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
MAY 22, 1992

rites of passage

Before i talk about the album i have to confess that i spoiled the surprise by listening to lots of live bootlegs. Since i was familiar with most of the songs in duo or solo form before the record was released, i built up unconscious expectations for the finished product which it took some time to dispel.

So, some first impressions:

The cover - Huh?!? well, OK...

The "inner sleeve" - i hate it when they print the lyrics all run together like that. If i hadn't already been familiar with the songs, trying to follow along would have been very frustrating.

Did anyone else notice they misspelled "ezekiel" throughout?

Being used to live versions, i found the studio cuts too slow in tempo and a little lacking in energy at first. i was especially disappointed by "Romeo & Juliet" - sure, she sings it loud and with feeling, but compared to the live cut-loose-and-scream performances, it sounds too contrived, the guitar sound is too clean and pleasant, it's missing its edge.

Having gotten the criticism out of my system (when you've spent as much money as i have on concert tickets, you're allowed to criticize them as much as you want), i'm happy to report that with repeated listening most of my doubts have vanished. This album doesn't have the immediacy of IGs or even Nomads (the "blow-me-away" effect), but it definitely improves with time. And no one can accuse them of being constantly heavy and dark and depressing this time. I'm particularly attached to "Jonas", "Chickenman" (wish the loud parts were louder!), and "Ghost", but i'm sure i will have other favorites as time goes by. i admit their lyrics don't seem to have the same depth and density they have in the past - "Let It Be Me" in particular seems to be about nothing much - and i wish the engineers hadn't taken so much of the edge and fullness out of the acoustic guitar sound. But on the whole i find the album to be very well crafted and definitely worth repeated listenings.

Niki Pantelias
Cambridge, Mass.

INDIGO GIRLS ARE GOOD TO GO

"Poetry in motion" is the second lyric from "Three Hits", the first song on the Indigo Girls fifth album, Rites of Passage. It could almost be a way of describing their new-found style, which remains true to their usual stark intensity. However, those looking for a repeat of their smash Indigo Girls, or a follow-up to 1990's Nomads*Indians*Saints, might be a bit disappointed. While keeping the standard wave of reality that has become their trademark, Indigos Amy Ray and Emily Sailers have chosen to embellish their release with pounding drums, soaring blues harps, strings, and many flowing background harmonies, including the voices of David Crosby, Jackson Browne, and the Roches. Although it appears that the Girls have overthrown their basic style for a more "produced" effort, they have also integrated much of their new material for tasteful instrumentation. "Chickenman", a spooky tale of some of Amy Ray's journeys through the southland, explodes with a rambunctious crash of drums, but is also tempered by the mournful wailing of a blues harp. The single, "Galileo", a finely -penned tune from Emily Sailers, ponders decisions gone awry. One of the most intriguing cuts, though, is the haunting "Jonas and Ezekial", a murky look at society's rapidly decaying values. As is the norm for the Indigos, their music isn't for the faint of heart. A prime example is "Nashville", a lament to anyone who has given their all and been shot down in flames. Even though there are traces of light peering out through the deepening shades of blue ("Let It Be Me", "Love Will Come To You"), the basic message remains the same: hope through the process of anguish. Considering events of late, such as the L.A. riots, the Indigo Girls' message is among the most heartening around.

Karin Dalesky
Tacoma, Washington

ATLANTA NEWS

EDDIE'S ATTIC

Eddie's Attic, former Trackside manager Eddie Owens new club, has opened in Decatur. Located at 515 N. McDonough St. on the square downtown, the club serves "pub food" and is open from 11 am to 2 am daily. It seats about 250 people, and for a \$3 cover charge (all of which goes to the artists) patrons can hear a wide variety of local, regional, and national acoustic acts. Check it out next time you are in town.

Note: Trackside Tavern is still open, but has been converted to a sports bar.

"ACOUSTICS"

Atlanta has a new monthly publication, "Acoustics". It is devoted to "covering Atlanta's acoustic music community" and the May issue featured a cover story on Kristen Hall, a calendar of who's playing when and where in Atlanta, and info on other Atlanta artists like the Ellen James Society and Ashley and Mark (Mark was a guest columnist). Subscriptions are \$18 a year, write:

Jennifer Eberlein, Publisher
Grapevine Publications
P.O. Box 360055
Decatur, Georgia
30036-0055

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT - WENDY BUCKLEW

In a spring that has seen almost all of my favorite artists release new albums, one that I am still eagerly waiting for is the new release by Wendy Bucklew. Wendy put out a cassette titled "Rage in the Ring" in 1990, which features nine original songs and showcases her songwriting, acoustic guitar, and vocal skills. She also had a cut, "Buckets of Rain", on the Atlanta artist tribute to Bob Dylan, "The Times They Are A Changin' ". I have had the good fortune of seeing her play live almost everytime I have gone to Atlanta and recommend seeing her if you get there, and "Rage In The Ring" is definitely worth checking out. I'll keep you posted on the new release, in the meantime you can write to her at:

P.O. Box 5375
Atlanta, Georgia
30307

TOP 10 UNRELEASED SONGS

The results of our reader poll are in:

Play It Again Sam
The Untitled Song
Half Moon Cafe
Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters
Holy City
Fare Thee Well
No Way To Treat A Friend
If You Live Like That
Don't Give Up On Me Baby
Running From The Cold

The biggest surprise was the absence of "Squeaky". These 10 songs would make a great album. Maybe someday . . .

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Amy Ray during the recording of "Rites of Passage":

"The challenge that we were presented with this time was the music was a little harder, specifically for me 'cause I'm not as good as Emily instrumentally and vocally. Sometimes I don't learn as quickly as her. The music and the harmonies were a lot more challenging."

"We've gone from really goofy titles, like Walla Walla Ying Yang, Benefit of the Doubt, Luxury of Time, and What Becomes You to really heavy titles. Everyday we come up with new titles. I'm reading as many books as I can right now because I'm hoping I'll find something somebody else has written that I can use as a title."

Music Express
February 1992

NEW RELEASES

Stanley, Son of Theodore: Yet Another Alternative Music Sampler

Epic CD, EK 47304

"Pushing The Needle Too Far" live - same version as Shades of Indigo.

"Galileo" cassette single

Epic 34T 74326

"Galileo" plus excerpts from "Ghost", "Joking", "Love Will Come To You", and "Jonas and Ezekiel" (all album versions).

"Let The Good Times Roll"

Island Visual Arts/Polygram Video

Filmed at the 1991 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, includes performance by Amy and Emily.



APPERANCES

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

Week of 6/1. Amy and Emily were interviewed by an enthusiastic Joan Lundun and played "Galileo". Amy was sporting a new haircut. similar to before but now it barely touches her shoulders.

CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED: Land of Canaan promo only CD. with live cuts. The songs are the same as the vinyl edition. with two different cuts. I, like everyone else, am hunting for the EP. Also everything else in between. especially imports. Posters, promo items, video and audio tape; all items will be considered. Thanks alot! Karin Dalesky, 4710 79th Ave. Ct. W., Tacoma, WA. 98466. Tel 206-564-5502 anytime within reasonable boundries.

WANTED: "Rites of Passage Tourbook" Carolyn Spidle P.O. Box 940643 Plano, Texas 75094-0643.



COLLECTORS CORNER

Epic commercial releases in support of "Indigo Girls" album:

CD's

Closer To Fine/History Of Us/Center Stage
654907 2 UK release. Cardboard sleeve, front same as album cover, back lists song titles.

EP's

Closer To Fine/History Of Us/Center Stage
654907 6 UK release. Glossy paper sleeve, front same as album cover, back lists album song titles.

45's

Closer To Fine/Cold As Ice
34 68912 Blue label with silver writing. No picture sleeve.

Closer To Fine/History Of Us
654907 7 UK release. Front sleeve same as album cover, back of sleeve lists album song titles.

Cassette Singles

Closer To Fine/Cold As Ice
34T 68912 Green cover with dark green lettering.

Land Of Canaan/Never Stop
34T 73003 Cover photo of Amy and Emily. Features remix version of Land of Canaan.

THE BACK PAGE

Hope you liked issue #2. I would like to thank everybody for your support, ideas, articles, and information. I will be running an ad in Goldmine soon to see if there is anyone else out there interested in joining us.

For those of you lucky enough to hold tickets to shows, have a great time and if you get a chance jot down a few notes to let the rest of us know how it was.

I am now working 3rd shift (9pm to 6 am), you can still call anytime you want, the answering machine will be on if I'm asleep or not home.

I will be making a pilgrimage to Atlanta over the July 4th weekend, if any of you are going to be there too let me know. Thanks again for everything and take care-



NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVAL AUGUST 10, 1991