

lifeblood

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INDIGOS PLAY EDDIE'S

On Sunday, September 26th, a packed house at Eddie's Attic had the pleasure of hearing Amy and Emily play some of Amy's new material. The show, which was advertised in local papers, saw people line up as early as 11am, trying to be the first to get in. By the time the doors opened that night, people were lined up down the street, many of whom were turned away because the club was too full. For those who spent the day in line their patience was rewarded when Amy, Cooper Seay, and Kelly Hogan (former lead singer with the Jody Grind), took the stage with a back-up band and began taking turns playing their songs. Emily joined Amy on stage and they commented that they wanted to dispel rumors that the Indigo Girls were no more. Two of the songs they played were "Nowhere To Hide" and a new song that is supposed to be especially moving that Amy wrote after visiting the Holocaust museum. The entire show was broadcast live on local radio, hopefully a tape of the show will surface soon. Rumors persist that Emily will soon be playing some of her new material in a similar setting.

In other Atlanta music news, Ashley and Mark had a terrific album release party Saturday, September 18th, at Eddie's Attic. Not only was their new CD "Live By The Dollar" available in the lobby, guests were also treated to performances by Caroline Aiken, Catbird Seat, Matthew Kahler, and several other great local performers, and, of course, Ashley and Mark and their band took the stage and played almost every song off the new CD plus several of the crowd's requests. By the time the show ended at 2am the crowd was worn out but had seen a super show.

Taken from Orientation 1993:

Exploring Life's Mystery

Indigo

Through Music

Girls

Helen R. Neinst

POLITICAL ACTIVISM. CHILDREN'S HEALTH issues. AIDS. Housing for the homeless. Maybe these aren't the first issues you expect to run across when you look at the lives of two young women pursuing their careers in the tough world of professional

Helen Neinst is coauthor of the book What About God? Now That You're Off To College. She is chaplain at Charter Psychiatric Hospital of Pasco County, Florida.

music. But maybe you don't know the Indigo Girls.

Spiritual. Sensual. Political. That's the Indigo Girls.

"When the Indigo Girls made their major-label debut in 1988, Tracy Chapman, 10,000 Maniacs, and Toni Childs were already on the scene," says *New York* magazine, "And the world didn't need more politically correct, earthy female singers." Instead, the magazine goes on to say, the Indigo Girls serve up a strong "call to action [while] making excellent music."

Spiritual. Sensual. Political. The Indigo Girls—Amy Ray and Emily Saliers—are hard to categorize. And they strongly resist categorization—both professionally in their music and personally in their lives.

When interviewers ask them what kind of music theirs is—rock, country, subversive-folk—they respond, quite simply, with one word: *acoustic*.

Their music might be labeled "acoustic," but at heart the Indigo Girls' message is a powerful, joyous, soulful mix of challenge and comfort.

Many fans of the Indigo Girls find their music to be therapeutic. "A lot of people who lose relatives and friends say that 'Secure Yourself' makes them feel better about the death and gives them strength to carry on," Amy says in an interview with music columnist, Robert Oermann. "There was one girl who was addicted to cocaine, and she had tried several times to give it up and was unsuccessful. Hearing 'Prince of Darkness' had given her the

strength to give it up for good."

Healing, strength, and comfort. That's an important part of Amy's and Emily's message. The other part of that message is education and challenge. "We're into education. Our goal is to help people have self-esteem. . . . It's the whole ideal . . . that the individual can make a difference if you have hope and really try," Amy recently told news correspondent Clay McNear.

That's why the Indigo Girls do so many

benefits, for so many varied causes.

Emily's and Amy's message is clear: Educate yourself about what needs to be done; then, go out and do it. "Hammer and Nail" from their third album *Nomads*Indians*Saints*, drives home that message of doing—not just talking about doing—good: "But my life is more than a vision/The sweetest part is acting after making a decision."

"Listeners," says Diana Hume George,

EMILY SALIERS ON GOD, COLLEGE, AND STAYING GROUNDED

In an interview with Helen Neinst, Emily Saliers answered questions primarily focusing on her college experience and her spirituality. Her views are excerpted below.

ON HER FIRST YEAR IN COLLEGE

College for me was all about learning to get along with other people and not having the safety net of parents right there. That was good for me.

I think one of the most important lessons I learned in college was that not everything you're told by professors is necessarily the truth. It's important to sort through facts for yourself. In a lot of different classes my professors urged me to explore, not to take anything for granted, not assume everything was true at face value, to think with your own mind, and learn for yourself. That was a very valuable and rewarding experience.

ON HER CAMPUS MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

I was involved in the chapel program during my college years at Emory because I had grown up going to church. There was a sense of community there that is often hard to find—not so much during college because you have your groups of friends—but especially after college when the world seems to be so much more of an alienating place. So you build that foundation through your

college years of being involved in campus ministry.

ON BEING IN TOUCH WITH GOD

What my involvement in campus ministry gave to me was a sense of being in touch with God, being in touch with something that was bigger and more important than I am. It was something that was profound and stimulating and very important for my life.

ON GETTING INVOLVED IN CAMPUS MINISTRY

I would encourage first-year college students to check out their school's campus ministry. Many times we get caught up in our own activities—and I know college is a big party time for a lot of people and you're stressed about classes and studying—so I think it's important to get in touch with your spirituality.

ON KEEPING A BALANCE IN LIFE

I can always tell when my life is getting out of balance. I start to feel restless. I start to take joy from things that are superficial, temporary, material. I think everybody knows when he or she is getting out of whack. To solve that, I always try to get back to what is basic and true and important, and a lot of that has to do with spirituality and simplicity. It's very hard for me to live a simple life now that I'm making decent money and touring all the time. But I have lots of friends who keep me in line,

and my parents help with that, too. I'm doing OK, so far.

ON HER COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL CAUSES

Amy and I are involved in social issues like AIDS, Habitat for Humanity, and educational things because as we grew up, we were taught by our parents to believe that it's important for each person to give back in whatever way he or she can. And this is the way that Amy and I can give back, by doing benefit shows because we don't have a lot of time right now to do hands-on volunteer work. But we don't really like to call attention to it because of all the people we admire who are actually delivering the meals to AIDS patients or actually using the hammers to build houses for Habitat—the people who are doing the nitty-gritty work.

ON BEING YOURSELF

I know I'm very fortunate to have had a loving family and a blessed life. I also know that it's very tough for a lot of people out there who haven't had the same loving experiences. But in the end, I think the best thing you can do is to try to tell the truth, to be true to yourself and your beliefs, and always to try to grow.

And keep your sense of humor. You have to be able to laugh at the world and all of our human foibles. You just can't be too serious, or it's gonna get you!

"find in their music a confrontation with personal pain, but also an invitation to heal the wound."

It's not just music about doing good—it's good music that stays with you. The Indigo Girls' performances have been called "unrestrained," "rousing," "rich," "poignant," "aching." Whether they are playing Randolph-Macon Women's College (a small United Methodist-related college in Virginia) or sharing a headline with Joan Baez or taking their music on European tour, Amy and Emily work hard, in the words of *Stereo Review*, to "make a joyful noise with modest tools—songs, hands, voices, and a lot of heart. They are open, down to earth, vulnerable, and candidly real."

Melinda Harris, writing for

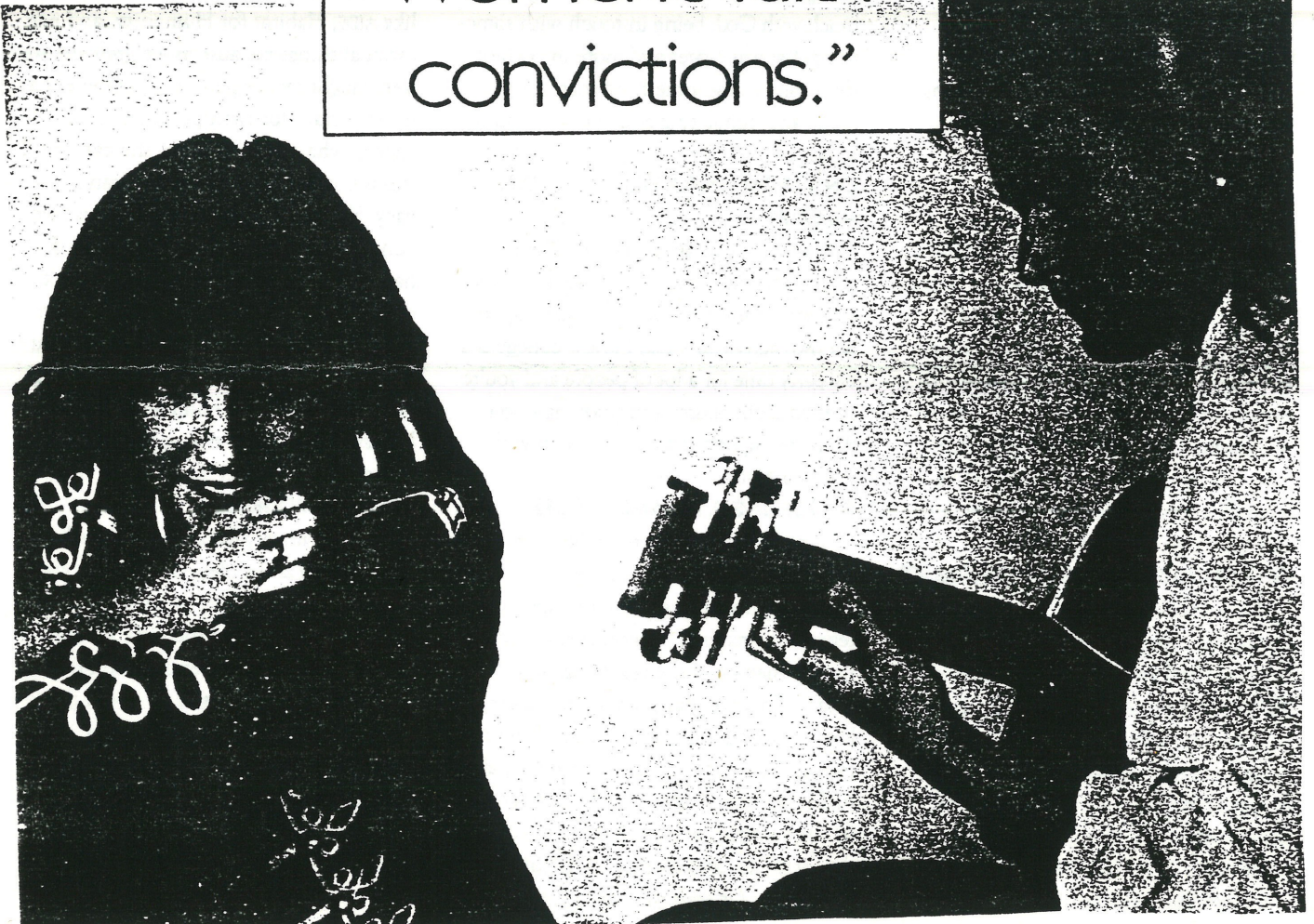
Atlanta magazine put it this way: "[The Indigo Girls are] rare among musical acts today in that their work overshadows their personalities," and not the other way around.

That becomes apparent as you listen to Emily and Amy perform. Alongside that realization comes yet another one: their commitments—and their personalities—are intimately bound up in their music.

The church—the faith community—had a great impact on both women during their high school and college years. Emily was part of a Presbyterian church when she and her family lived in Connecticut. When they moved to Atlanta, she became active in a United Methodist church. While she was a student at Emory University in Atlanta, Emily was very involved in the college chapel program. She says she has been deeply influenced by that college community.

Amy sang and played guitar in her local United Methodist church while she was growing up in Decatur. Amy's college major was

"The strength and power of the human spirit are central to both women's faith convictions."



religion. Much of the Indigo Girls' songwriting—"Land Of Canaan," "Hey Jesus," "History of Us"—reflects both their high school and college religious involvements as well as their own individual on-going spiritual journeys.

Amy and Emily have been musical collaborators since high school. Though briefly separated while Amy attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville in the early 1980s, they were reunited when Amy transferred to Emory.

After their 1987 independently-released *Strange Fire* album caught on, they signed with Epic Records to record 1989's *Indigo Girls*. By the end of the year that album was certified gold, and Amy and Emily collected a Grammy for Best Contemporary Folk Group. After that came *Nomads*Indians*Saints*, a live album (*back on the bus, y'all*), and *Rites of Passage*.

Their music changes and grows in much the same way their spiritual lives change

and grow. In a recent issue of *Ms.* magazine, Amy and Emily reflected on the importance of their spiritual seeking. Emily says they have in common a belief in "the inter-

There is no way to categorize the Indigo Girls—not their music, not their life stories, not their spiritual sojourns. Two small annotations on their third album's cover

"Spiritual. Sensual. Political. The Indigo Girls are hard to categorize."

connectedness of all things, the mystery." The strength and power of the human spirit are central to both women's faith convictions.

Amy describes her faith as faith in a God that permeates nature. She believes that "... with all our imperfections, the journey each individual takes may be a mystery to another individual, but it's a valid journey toward a truth." Someone called their belief system "an ethic of kindness, accommodation of complexity and diversity, concern for the rights of living beings. . . ."

reveal another intriguing glimpse into the faith life of the Indigo Girls: From Amy, quoting Audre Lorde, "Be who you are and will be. Learn to cherish that boisterous black angel that drives you up one day and down another."

From Emily, a Sioux Indian saying, "May the Great Mystery make sunrise in your heart."

Spiritual. Sensual. Political. That's the Indigo Girls. Explore their music. Explore the mystery. It's good stuff for body and soul. *O⁹³*

See "End Notes" at the back of *Orientation* for ways to use this article for individual reflection or in a group.



The Indigo Girls: Exploring Life's Mystery Through Music

1. Helen Neinast describes the Indigo Girls' message as "a powerful, joyous, soulful mix of challenge and comfort." In what ways do you feel a need to be challenged? In what ways do you feel a need for comfort? From what stresses could you use relief? Why is a mix of challenge and comfort a good recipe for what most of us need to move ahead and grow?

2. The Indigo Girls emphasize the importance of self-esteem. Why is this essential to allowing a person to make a difference? What has helped you develop a sense of self-esteem? What gets in the way of your liking yourself? Think about a time when you've done something that's made a difference in your or someone else's life. What role did your self-esteem play in what you did?

3. The Indigo Girls have chosen music as their medium for expressing their faith. In what ways do you feel most comfortable sharing your faith? In what ways do your faith and values affect how you live your life?

4. Consider these statements from the article and the questions that follow:

- "The journey each individual takes may be a mystery to another individual, but it's a valid journey toward a truth." What does this statement say about how we each understand and experience the Christian faith?
- The Indigo Girls' belief system is "an ethic of kindness, accommodation of complexity and diversity, concern for the rights of living beings." What does it mean to you to accommodate complexity and diversity? Where in the world today do you see evidence of an inability to accommodate others' diversity and to accept the complexity of life? When have you found it difficult to do so?
- "Be who you are and will be." How easy is it for you to do this? What is your image of who you are? of who you want to be? Do you see any conflicts between the two images? If so, how can you resolve this?



Indigo Girls

The **Indigo Girls** aren't just folk singers, they aren't only a blues duo, nor are they only rock'n'roll. The **Indigo Girls**...Amy Ray and Emily Saliers...two inspiring musicians who intrigue audiences with soothing harmonies while injecting them with soulful lyrics.

The **Indigo Girls** have emerged as one of the most respected and followed groups in the Southeast. They have just released a new album entitled *Strange Fire*. This LP, released on their own label, Indigo Records, is the follow-up to their unusually successful self-titled and self-released EP.

Strange Fire, produced by John Keane, is an accurate account of the **Indigo Girls'** sureness not only as stage performers but as successful studio musicians. Consisting of all original material, *Strange Fire* is magnetic in its appeal and features accompaniment by some of Atlanta's best artists.

Since their professional debut in Atlanta 3 years ago, the **Indigo Girls** have consistently filled bars and other venues with record crowds.

The **Indigo Girls** have a unique blend of styles and voices. While Amy strums with fire, Emily picks with finesse, and the two become a mixture of fine talent. An **Indigo Girls** performance shows a portrait of two musicians confidently professing their songs of hope with reason.

The **Indigo Girls** are not only well known for their obvious appeal in clubs, but they often dedicate hours of performance to benefits and social interest.

The **Indigo Girls** have proven themselves to be dedicated musicians as they captivate a growing number of avid listeners.

PERFORMANCE

NAMES

At Atlanta's famed Moonshadow Saloon, the **INDIGO GIRLS** were the opening act for:

Lloyd Cole and the Commotions
Suzanne Vega
Dave Mason
Janis Ian
John Sebastian
Loudon Wainwright III

LOCAL CLUBS

They play regular gigs at key Atlanta Clubs:

The Harvest Moon Saloon
688 Club
Little Five Points Pub
The Point
White Dot

MANY MILES

The Bluebird Cafe (Nashville)
Cat's Cradle (Chapel Hill, N.C.)
Chestnut Cabaret (Philadelphia, PA)
The Bitter End (N.Y.)
The Uptown Lounge (Athens, GA)
Tipitina's (New Orleans)
The Big Mamou (Austin, TX)
Einstein a-Go-Go (Jacksonville, FL)

PRESS

CREATIVE LOAFING

August 31, 1985

INDIGO GIRLS: "Crazy Game" b/w "Everybody's Waiting (For Someone To Come Home)" (Jellis) - Different from most in this lot in that it's a duo with acoustic guitars, Indigo Girls are Amy Ray and Emily Saliers. Their finger-picking guitar styles and vocals blend harmonically while their differing approaches to songwriting balance the material. One might quickly assume them to share the traditional American folk stance of so many singer/guitarists. Not so. Salier's "Crazy Game" has more in common with the Everything But The Girl/Sade/Working Week school currently on the English charts while Ray's "Everybody's Waiting" borrows from the late '70's English folkies.****

CREATIVE LOAFING

November 29, 1986

INDIGO GIRLS (Folk) Have just released what could be the most simple and direct local record this year. Fleeting moments of happiness, a balance of inspiration and talent, and production by Frank French who displays a gift for understanding his artists and realizes that to produce doesn't mean to overwhelm.

CREATIVE LOAFING

November 7, 1987

INDIGO GIRLS (Folk) One of the best and strongest rock bands in town has no drummer and is a female duo.

Various Dates / Passion and Control.

Don't miss the Indigo Girls at la Terraza on the 16th, Halby's on the 20th and Cat's Cradle on the 22nd. I can only think of one word to describe this progressive folk duo, "hot," but my friend Jenny Clash, the infamous Chapel Hill disc jockey, had this to say: "The Indigo Girls are the best thing out of Atlanta since the Braves. Amy Ray spits out pure fierce passion, perfectly complementing the exquisite control and finesse of her partner Emily Saliers." For more information and show times call up any of the clubs. La Terraza and Cat's Cradle are in Chapel Hill; Halby's is in Durham.
-Andrea Selch Chapel Hill and Durham

CREATIVE LOAFING

June 20, 1987

INDIGO GIRLS (Folk) The "Spinal Tap" of acoustic duos; Amy's the rocker, Emily's more restrained; together they're astoundingly graceful and melodic.

CREATIVE LOAFING

June 27, 1987

INDIGO GIRLS (Folk) Meteoric folk duo who flash over you, fill your heart and head and are gone. Versatile and vibrant.

PRESS

Indigo Girls make a permanent impression with 'Strange Fire'

By Gerry Yandel
Staff Writer

There's a lot more to being a working musician in Atlanta than playing guitars and singing harmony.

Just ask Indigo Girls — Amy Ray and Emily Saliers — the local folk-rock duo that has just released its debut LP, "Strange Fire," on its own label.

"We're tracking 250 stations across the country," Ms. Ray said, referring to the Indigos' efforts to send out press kits to radio stations nationwide.

A typical day for Indigo Girls is spent sending out about 75 press kits, calling the radio stations that already have received them, and going to the post office to mail out more.

"Every day, you think you'll get done [with the paperwork]," Ms. Saliers said. "Every day of the week, you're doing the same thing. Then at night you go play."

The job still entails plenty of singing and playing; the duo has to satisfy a local following that borders on the obsessive. The Indigo Girls frequently play in other cities, including meccas of new music such as New Orleans, Austin, Texas, and Nashville, Tenn. This weekend, the Indigos will be playing two clubs in Greenwich Village, the Bitter End and the Speakeasy, before returning Tuesday to Atlanta and the Little Five Points Pub for a monthlong engagement.

Indigo Girls have also found that they get a good reception from college towns, and they have large, loyal followings in Athens and Chapel Hill, N.C.

"I didn't think [colleges] would be [places where Indigo Girls are popular], but they are," Ms. Ray said. "It's where the artsy crowds are. It's the only place where there are new-music clubs."

Usually when the Indigos play out of town, however, it's to crowds of 50 or fewer. As their following grows, however, they are content just to spread their sound.

Promoters by day and musicians by night, Indigo Girls say they're in it for the music but admit fame and fortune would be nice.

Although fans never tire of the Indigo repertoire, Ms. Ray and Ms. Saliers are always trying to write new songs. But their busy schedules leave little time to work on new material.

The old stuff came out in mid-October on "Strange Fire." The album is an accessible collection of original songs that are at times beautiful and tender, other times angry and haunting, and sometimes all of the above.

Indigo Girls are hoping "Strange Fire" will attract a record label along the lines of the independent Island records.

"EMI called us and wanted to hear more, so we shipped them a copy of the album," Ms. Saliers said. So far, no word from that label.

The record is getting heavy air play on non-commercial radio stations in Atlanta, especially WRAS-FM, and it would appear Indigo Girls are close to breaking into better-paying gigs.

"I have a shiny new sports car and a condominium in Virginia-Highland," Ms. Saliers joked. "Nah, not really."

"Strange Fire" marks a milestone for Ms. Ray, 23, and Ms. Saliers, 24, who met in grade school in Decatur and were attending Emory University when they started to play for pay.

Playing in small neighborhood bars including Rick's in Virginia-Highland and the Dugout near Emory was an education. There, the Indigos refined their stage presence, tightened their mesmerizing vocals and wrote a slew of songs that call to mind Bruce Springsteen and John Mellencamp with a little early Dylan thrown in for good measure.

Everything the learned can be heard on "Strange Fire," engineered by John Keane, who produced "Athens, Ga. — Inside/Out," a showcase album of Athens' bands. Ms. Ray's

vigorous rock riffs on her Martin acoustic guitar are complemented by Ms. Saliers' smooth, rich leads on her Alvarez Yairi acoustic. The lyrics draw upon the Indigos' academic background (both were English majors) and Ms. Ray's fascination with theology. On the album, their starkly different but harmonic voices enthrall even more so than in the intimate confines of a neighborhood pub.

They said working with Keane taught them patience and how to relax in the studio. The Indigos had recorded before, an EP titled "Indigo Girls," produced by Frank French of the local band Drivin' and Cryin'. The six-song EP studio sessions were important, the musicians say, so they could get their feet wet in the studio. But it lacked the commercial smoothness of "Strange Fire."

Thanks to Keane's slick production abilities, the band now has a good sampling of its music to shop around the country. Still, the road to stardom is paved with frustration.

"In D.C., they say you have to be played on the radio before you can break the city. They won't play you on the radio because nobody's heard of you, so it's a turnaround," Ms. Ray said.

"It can be frustrating having to prove ourselves over the phone," Ms. Saliers agreed. "I hate having to do that. Not that I don't believe in us, [but] it's hard when someone's opinion is: Who the hell are you? It's not like [in the movie] 'Coal Miner's Daughter,' where you take your tape around to all the stations and then you get your record deal."

Indigo Girls return Tuesday to the Little Five Points Pub, 1174 Euclid Ave. N.E. \$3 cover. Tuesdays-Thursdays through New Year's Eve. Music starts at 9:45 p.m. 577-7767.

PRESS

Indigo Girls: Intensity, Delicate And Honest

As the popularity of singer/songwriters increases, more of them are becoming visible. The Indigo Girls (Amy Ray and Emily Saliers) of Atlanta, though, have not found attracting an audience much of a problem. Successful on their home turf, in the last year or so the duo has played at a number of the Triangle's nightspots and won a devoted entourage.

They first met in the sixth grade in Decatur, an Atlanta suburb, where Ms. Ray had been growing up and Ms. Saliers had moved from Connecticut. They started playing music together in high school, around 1981, practicing in Ms.

Ray's basement. By 1982, they were playing for money; in 1984, they went professional and the Indigo Girls were born.

The Indigo Girls were successful in Atlanta, even though at the time a duo with two acoustic guitars was not "fashionable." They say the town has been a great place for music of various types and they received a lot of support from the musicians in the area.

They have also managed to put out three records: a single (*Crazy Game/Someone To Come Home To*), a eponymous six song EP in 1986 produced by Frank French (of Atlanta's Drivin' and Cryin') and, recently, an album, *Strange Fire* produced by John Keene (who produced the Squalls' recent LP and helped with R.E.M.'s *Life's Rich Pageant*) on their own Indigo label.

"We want to do it on our own and do it now," Ms. Saliers told the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* in February 1986. "We don't want to wait five years for a Warner Bros. contract."

The LP features Ms. Saliers on vocals and lead guitar (mainly) and Ms. Ray on vocals and rhythm guitar. They both get one turn solo, Ms. Saliers on *Hey Jesus*, Ms. Ray on *Blood and Fire*. Some other musicians and vocalists perform on half the cuts, but it's basically the Indigo Girls' private affair.

Wisely, producer Keene has left the album uncluttered, which works in the pair's favor. All the songs save one were written by the Girls (they write individually); the exception is *I Don't Want To Know*, co-written Ms. Ray and Michelle Malone, another Atlanta singer/songwriter. Two songs were on their previous records: *Crazy Game* and the EP's stand-out track, *Land Of Canan*; the Girls say they like the new versions better.

The album is a showcase for their blend of intertwining harmonies and guitars. Ms. Ray has the lower voice. There are dynamically charged songs, such as *Land Of Canan* and *High Horse*, and quiet, somber ones, such as *Hey Jesus*, that at first seem delicate to the point of breaking but upon repeated listenings reveal underlying strength.

The lyrics deal often with relationships, especially troubled ones. Sometimes they're bitter ("I do not want the dirt from your shoes/Or from the hooves of your high horse"—*High Horse*), sometimes they're crying for mercy ("Hey Jesus it's me/I don't usually talk to you but my baby's gonna leave me"—*Hey Jesus*), but there is a pervading air of honesty that runs through their work. It's as if these women sing things to get them off their chests and be done with them.

Though most of the songs deal with relationships, the Indigo Girls write some political material; the lone example on the record is *Make It Easier*: "I am rowing as hard as I can and they're selling me up a stream/I'm always one step away from the American dream."

Live, the Indigo Girls are even more intense. Last Sunday night at Chapel Hill's La Terraza, they played two sets, an hour each. They played their own songs, songs by other Atlanta writers and better-known pieces.

In concert, they were more political. Ms. Saliers' unreleased *Up In Smoke* was both a cry of anger ("I've watched my country practice nuclear suicide") and a plea for sanity ("We don't want to go up in smoke"). There were two vibrant songs from the EP, *Cold As Ice* and *Never Stop*, and a superb cover of Bob Dylan's *All Along the Watchtower* that lashed out with a vengeance.

They alternated lead vocals. Some of their harmony involves singing slightly out of synch, one voice following a little behind the other, until they meet at the end of a phrase or chorus. They sing with a fury and the guitars are strident, without being harsh. Ms. Saliers is an accomplished guitarist, pulling out elaborate runs that filled out the compositions.

There were also quiet moments, the highlight an ethereal a cappella rendition of Paul Simon's *American Tune*. It capped a fine evening.

Durham Morning Herald
Friday, December 4, 1987

PRESS

Expect the unexpected

Atlanta's Indigo Girls come to town with a new great album and a few unexpected surprises.

By Betsy Shearron

The first thing that strikes you when you hear the music of Indigo Girls is the harmonies — two voices blending effortlessly, each one perfectly complementing the other and yet standing out on its own. These are the kind of harmonies you'd expect from the Judds...The Everly Brothers...a family duo that grew up singing together.

Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, collectively known as Indigo Girls, who'll appear at the Uptown Lounge Saturday, November 21, are not related and they sure didn't grow up singing together. Granted they grew up together, attending the same Atlanta elementary school. But they didn't sing together until much later. In fact, they didn't do much of anything together until much later.

"We went to elementary school and we were kind of....competitive," Amy Ray explained with a laugh. "You know how competitive those kickball games can be — who's gonna be the first one chosen for the team? Then when we went to high school, we were the same way."

Mutual friends and the Shamrock High School chorus eventually brought the two together. "And once I got over my insecurities about her being a better guitar player than me, we became friends," Ray revealed.

While Saliers does handle lead guitar on most Indigo Girls songs, comparing the two is comparing apples with oranges. If ever there was proof that opposites attract, this duo is it. Although both women play acoustic guitar and sing, that's as far as the similarities go. Salier's songs run more toward the jazz side; Ray's work offers a harder edge. Somehow, the two styles mesh together beautifully, although no one, including the women themselves, is exactly sure why.

"It's weird," Ray admitted. "We've had a lot of discussions about which directions we're branching out towards. I listen to Husker Du, The Replacements, Alex Chilton — people that are a little more progressive. Emily listens to more jazz and a little more funk. She likes funk a lot and soul. She likes what I like, too, but she tends to go more toward the Joni Mitchell direction, and I tend toward the more rough edged stuff."

So far, the differences have worked for the duo. The variety of musical styles enjoyed by Indigo Girls has resulted in a versatility that is rare for acoustic duos. Folk, rock, jazz, and even a bit of the blues are all a part of an Indigo Girls show. This versatility has earned the group regular dates in Atlanta clubs for the past several years, both as headliners and opening shows for Suzanne Vega, Dave Mason, Janis Ian and others. Their vinyl efforts, a self titled EP (produced by Drivin' and Cryin's Frank French) and the just released LP *Strange Fire* (produced by John Keane), have been well received and earned the duo a loyal following in the South. Obviously, the women's musical differences aren't a problem for audiences. And they aren't a problem for Saliers and Ray either.

"We never really argue about anything," Ray said. "We don't argue about whose songs we're going to do or anything like that. When we chose songs for the album, it was just a nice coincidence that it turned out to be half her songs and half mine. We just wanted to put our strongest material on it, the stuff we thought worked well together. We never argued about."

The reason for that, Ray says, is simple. "We like each other's music," she explained. "Both of us are moving further and further away from each other musically, but it's just making our music more interesting instead of screwing it up. We used to try to figure out what to do about [the differences], but then we decided to just let it go and not worry about it — just do it. If you think about things too much you

start trying to dictate what kind of style you should write in. We both decided that we're going to be true to ourselves and if the songs are able to be played together, then we'll play them together and if not we'll do them solo."

Solo performances are nothing new to Saliers and Ray. Each woman has played numerous solo dates, dating back to their high school years. In fact, the first scheduled Indigo Girl date — a high school PTA talent show — ended up being a solo performance, when Saliers was unable to attend. Still, Ray says she prefers being part of a duo.

"First there are the obvious reasons for being in the duo — the harmonies, the two guitars — it gives the songs a fuller sound. And then there's the emotional thing. It's easier when you have someone else up there with you. And I guess in our case — we're such good friends, we have the same kind of values and both are looking at the same goals as far as life goes — we can support each other in what we're singing. It makes it a little more sincere, I think, because we agree in what we're doing."

At the moment, both Indigo Girls agree that an independent record deal is a top priority. In the past, the duo has released projects on their own Indigo label. But regardless of a record deal, they're going to go ahead and start work on another album in the near future. And, as usual, it won't be what you'd expect.

"We're going to try to do at least half the album with full band arrangements — tasteful band arrangements, something that doesn't take away from the sound of the music, but maybe have some tunes that are a little more driving and experiment with different sounds. It's naturally what we'd want to do after doing something like *Strange Fire*. We just want to try something different, keep everybody interested."

That's a practice Indigo Girls have mastered.

**Classic City Live
November 18, 1987**

PRESS

Matching the differences

The Indigo Girls integrate a dichotomy of styles into one honest sound.

By Beth Stubenbord

There is a band: two people, two guitars, two cars, two apartments, two sets of parents, different daughters of different mothers. The two are night and day. The Indigo Girls integrate a complete dichotomy of musical styles, and whatever it is their music does, it's working.

Creative Loafing music critic David T. Lindsey says "(Indigo Girls): Meteoric folk duo who flash over you, fill your heart and head and are gone. Versatile and vibrant" (Aug. 1, '87-29A). The band's independently produced E.P. *Indigo Girls* received critical acclaim, and they have just finished recording an album with Athens' own John Keane. "I know we're getting exposure nationwide," says Indigo Girl Emily Saliers, "because some guy who's the boyfriend of someone I went to elementary school with called me from New Haven, Connecticut to say he found our E.P. in the bargain section of a local record store."

Right now Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, the Indigo Girls in entirety, are playing to packed houses in Atlanta and across the Southeast. Just two guitars, two voices, a symmetry of musical style, fire and ice. What's the big deal about them?

"The thing is," Amy says, "that people want to feel like people — they want frustration, tension, and peace, and that's our main objective: If it's too easy no one will feel, if it's too rough no one will listen. There's birth in frustration (no, wait — that's too deep). I think the big deal is obsession."

"Amy is obsessed," Emily laughs. "I don't want tension. I do want peace, and I don't want to sing bleeding heart songs any more, even though I do. We try to explain ourselves and end up having a million

different interpretations of what we do and what our music is and means. We ought to just shut up and play."

Classifying or explaining Indigo Girls music isn't easy, although one feels the need to know just exactly what it is that draws people to their performance "We aren't women's music," they insist. You could call it folk, but it's more progressive, more upbeat and intense than traditional folk. The lyrics are introspective. Their music, though, is definitely music for the people. From Amy's rocking, gutsy songs to Emily's more jazzy, understated tunes, the performance is honest. No glitz. No high-tech effect. It's unpretentious music from the heart, and if all the machinery of modern music ever broke down, there would still be Indigo Girl music: simple and clean.

Although they have received major label attention, Amy and Emily remain independent. "Some people would say we didn't want to sell out, but the truth is, we haven't gotten an offer yet. You can always remain close to your source, the people, no matter how big your label is. The trick is to be on a major label and not to compromise. That's the only way to change what seems to be an overly sappy commercial technopop industry. All I really care about is the feeling, the honest, and the energy." Words from Amy Ray.

Emily notes, "Playing music is not really something you choose to do. If it's in you, you have no choice. I feel a basic need to create. If I ever had to write music in order to sell, according to standards other than my own, my creative process would become a mechanical "churning out" function. It would be time to forget it."

The Indigo Girls will be at the Uptown Lounge this Tuesday, August 25th. The new album, all acoustic, will be out in October. The symmetry of styles remains intact, and the music is more vibrant than ever. Everyone's invited to be a part of it.

Classic City Live
August 19, 1987

PRESS

Local Indigo Girls create superb album

Atlanta Constitution
December 12, 1986

By Gerry Yandel

■ **Indigo Girls.** "Indigo Girls" (Dragon Path Music).

There's a new entry in the race between Austin, Texas, and Atlanta to see which city can come up with the best new local acts. While Austin can boast such groups as the Tail Gators, Evan Johns and the H-bombs, the Meat Puppets and Timbuk 3 — not to mention Stevie Ray Vaughan and the Fabulous Thunderbirds — the Atlanta area can brag on the Heartfixers, REM, the Georgia Satellites and Love Tractor.

While those are rock and new wave-type groups, the fledgling Indigo Girls, with their mellow, positive-sounding folk rock, soon should be joining the ranks as a major local group if their debut album is any indication. In the mere two years they've been performing, the Indigos have watched their audiences grow from a handful to full houses.

The new album by "the girls," who already have a fairly large following in the South, with a few forays into some Eastern clubs, is a local endeavor in every sense of the word. In addition to Indigos Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, who play to packed audiences in Midtown and Little Five Points clubs when they're in town, backing on the disc is provided by DeDe Vogt of the Scallion Sisters, Joan White, who frequently appears with the Indigos, and local

singers Michelle Malone and Caroline Aiken.

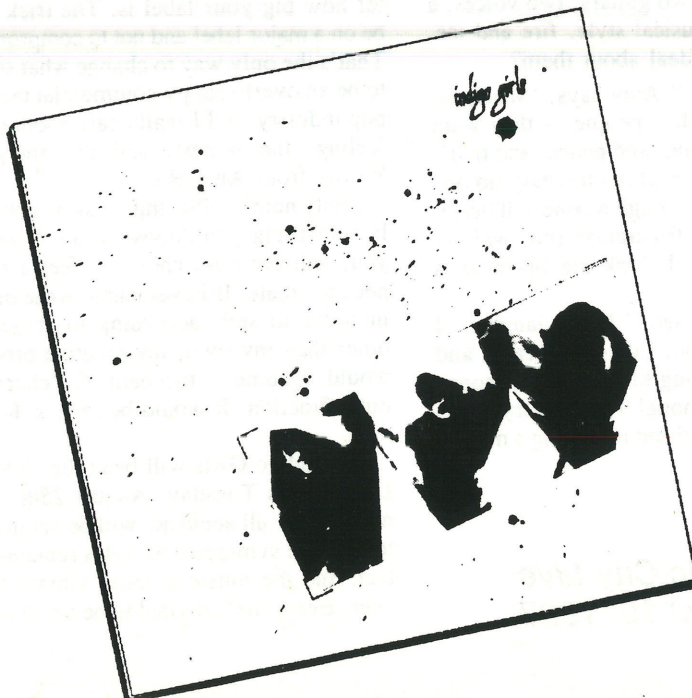
The producer of the album, Frank French, is another home boy most often seen with the group Drivin' and Cryin'. French does a decent job with the album's mixing, and some extraneous instrumentation, such as the weird clicking percussion on "Cold As Ice," is easily overlooked.

Anyone who's seen the Indigo Girls' live performances — usually just their superbly melodic voices accompanied by acoustic guitars — will appreciate the added instrumentation and the slick studio sound.

The album provides a good sampling of the distinct styles of the two musicians who've known each other since grade school. Amy's rocking "Cold As Ice" and "Land of Canaan" maintain the intensity of the live versions — both songs are two audience favorites — although her voice is higher and not quite as raspy on the vinyl versions.

Emily's beautiful love song "Never Stop" definitely benefits from the lack of beer-drinking crowd background noise to be had on an album. Likewise with her mellow and pretty "History of Us," which she sings sweetly and softly.

But the best thing about this album is that the Indigo Girls haven't even tapped into the large reservoir of original tunes they've performed for their fans in the past. Hopefully, Indigo Girls II is already in the works.



THE BACK PAGE

Greetings from Texas, the land of the eternal summer. As I type this on September 30th, it is 9pm and it is still 90 degrees outside.

I hope you have enjoyed this month's issue, I am very happy to say that I think my printing problems are behind me now so this issue should have found it's way to you on time. I included the press kit for the original "Strange Fire" and the back page is a homemade leaflet that was given out at some of the recent shows by an anonymous fan trying to support Daemon. I thought it was pretty cool that someone would go to so much effort to try to help out.

While I was in Atlanta a couple of weekends ago I not only had the good fortune to get to go the Ashley and Mark's album release party, but I also managed to squeeze in a visit to the Fox Theater. They give tours on Saturday mornings and for \$5 they spend two hours walking you through the theater. This may not sound like a wild time out on the town, but it is definitely worth the money and the time. Not only do you get to see the starry night sky on the theaters ceiling but you also get to see the Egyptian ballroom and some other neat things that I will never be able to make sound as cool as they are. Anyway, this one is worth checking out.

Fortune has been smiling on me lately and it looks like "Lifeblood" and I will be relocating to Atlanta in February. I will also be visiting from December 26th through January 3rd, so if you are going to be in town let me know and we'll meet up somewhere.

Pierce Pettis' "Chasing The Buffalo" and Ashley and Mark's "Live By The Dollar" have been wearing out my CD player lately, I was thinking in the December issue it would be fun to run a list of everybody's favorite CDs and songs from 1993, so if you want to participate drop me a line or leave a message on my machine and I will start putting it together.

For those of you who are Michelle Malone fans, she will be putting out a new live CD in early 1994 with Band De Soleil. That should get the new year off on the right foot.

Guess that's it for this month, as always thanks to everybody for your support. Take care and be well -

CAROLYN ☺



Hello Dæmon Fans! Let's go over the latest from Daemon. I'm sure ya'll know by now that The Ellen James Society has decided to go their separate ways. What exactly does this mean? Well for us it means ALL ELLEN JAMES SOCIETY STUFF HAS JUST BECOME COLLECTORS ITEMS! So if you haven't already got your copy of the latest single- Amsterdam (ONLY \$4) NOW is the time. Also, the Ellen James Society's releases are not going to last forever so if your copy is worn out, you'd better consider replacing it now while you still can. As for bumper stickers and Ellen James Society T-Shirts, so far there are still some left.

Also, fans remember Kristen Hall? Of course ya' do! Well she's doing very well with Highstreet-Windham Hill Records. Fact and Fiction has been successfully re-released on their label. There are some Kristen Hall CD's left on the Daemon label. To order these- send to Daemon Records.

Gerald McHugh is out playing when he can. No one knows when he's going to be on the West Coast again, hopefully soon. For now we've got his CD More Than I- that will have to do. Remember, he just got married in May, we'll give him a little while to settle in. But, not too long.

Michelle Malone's re-issued first album New Experience is out!!! This re-issue includes bonus tracks and poetry never before recorded. So even if you have the original- this CD is a whole New Experience.

As for the three new bands- James Hall Band, Lay Quiet Awhile, and Holly Beth Vincent, their not quite out yet but there's still hope! The James Hall Band's record is in the process of emerging. Order your copies of these releases in advance to show your support for these new bands! Also, maybe a little extra \$ would help speed the process! You know you're going to order them anyway, so better to do it before there's a big rush!

One more small thing to remember. T- Shirts!!! Daemon T-Shirts are black with the Daemon dog on the front and a big paw print on the back. They are excellent quality, and only \$15!!!

Please send in your order today. Daemon really needs your support, and if you can't afford anything right now at least get onto the mailing list so that you can stay up to date!!!

Gerard McHugh

Ellen James Society

Holly Beth Vincent

Kristen Hall

Michelle Malone

Lay Quiet Awhile

Order Form

James Hall Band

ITEM	CD	CASSETTE	LP	SIZE	QTY	TOTAL
Gerard McHugh More Than I (7-5052)			N/A			
Ellen James Society Reluctantly We (7-5050)						
Ellen James Society The Survivors Parade (7-5054)						
Ellen James Society Amsterdam- single						
Kristen Hall Real Life Stuff (7-5055)			N/A			
Kristen Hall Fact & Fiction (7-5053)			N/A			
Michelle Malone New Experience- re-issue						
James Hall Band *one of the new bands						
Lay Quiet Awhile *one of the new bands						
Holly Beth Vincent *one of the new bands						

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These prices include shipping and packaging. Please allow 6-8 weeks for all items except for James Hall Band, Lay Quite Awhile, and Holly Beth Vincent, which will be 6-8 weeks after the completion of thier albums.

Don't forget to include this information with your order form, or request to be put on the Daemon mailing list!!!

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