

lifeblood

the unofficial go-head journal

december 27, 1994

issue #32

ULTRADISC RELEASED

Tuesday, December 6th, saw the release of "Indigo Girls" in the ultradisc format. In addition to the disc being pressed on a gold covered CD, the packaging includes a booklet with the artwork from the album version of the release. The ultradisc seems to be fairly easy to find, most record stores in the Dallas area have it for around \$25.

In other news, I am sad to report that the release of the video compilation "Watershed" has been pushed back to sometime (possibly June) in 1995. The June date seems to make sense with the Swamp Ophelia tour scheduled to run until late May. The "official" video list is: Least Complicated, Touch Me Fall, Galileo, Joking, All Along The Watchtower, Get Together, Hammer And A Nail, Land Of Canaan, Closer To Fine.

It looks like February will find Amy and Emily playing some dates in the southeast, several Florida shows have been announced for early that month. No other tour info is known at this time.

In other news, according to an ad in Goldmine, "Reunion" has been released as a promo CD. Also, a report that I have not been able to confirm is that a very small number of promo cd's featuring a German version of "The Wood Song" were released in Germany earlier this year. One more thing to look for, apparently the Allman Brothers portion of the Club R & R disc has been released as a regular cd (I have not been able to find one yet). It is supposed to have an additional track that includes Amy and Emily sitting in with them. With the official release of this disc the Club R & R cd's should be easier to come by (and hopefully cheaper).

Printed on recycled paper



Indigo Girls
May 13, 1994
World Cafe Radio Program

Interviewer: "Swamp Ophelia" just came out this week and we're very happy that Amy and Emily have joined us today. This album, if I were writing my term paper about this record two things would come up right away and one of them is the wonderful textures on the record. The use of strings with the quartet this time around and cello again and Lisa Germano on the fiddle. We're you looking to put new textures into the record when you sat down?

Emily: We both love strings. We've had a little bit of strings on all the records actually. It's progressed more and more. I mean there's nothing like a live quartet in the studio, it's really exciting.

Interviewer: I was wondering how that works. Do you sit around before hand and say "Ah we want to do this, this, this" or do you actually get into the studio and say "Ah now we need a string quartet".

Amy: Well...it depends.

Emily: Both. (laughs)

Amy: (laughs) Yeah, it's kind of a...it's a kitchen sink as Emily always says. I mean the record. I mean you're...it's like someone like Lisa Germano comes in and plays, you know her instrument, and then goes "But maybe I could try this on this" you know we go "Go for it" you know. And sometimes it's an accident and we decide to use it you know. So it really is. We experiment a lot. We have the luxury of being able to spend a little more time and do that.

Interviewer: I was wondering, particularly Danny Thompson on the acoustic base, what a nice texture that is.

Emily: Yeah.

Amy: Uh-hum.

Emily: Yeah, he's killer.

Interviewer: Well, there's one song and I guess it's one of yours Emily, "Wood Song", which has a great little string arrangement and some nice oboe parts and stuff. Unfortunately we didn't contract for the quartet today, but uh...

Emily: Whoa, that's a whole orchestra (laughs), it would have been tight quarters.

Interviewer: Could you do that one?

Emily: Yeah, we could do that one.

Amy: We'll do it.

Emily: This is "Wood Song", as in the wood that a boat is made of.

Amy: Wood.

Emily: Wood.

Amy : Wood.

Emily: Wood that rots in the storm of life.

(Live version of "Wood Song")

Amy: Whew...

Emily: Whew...(Both laugh)

Interview: Warming up today on the World Cafe, the Indigo Girls.

Emily: That's the truth.

Interviewer: That's a really nice song, "Wood Song", which is on the "Swamp Ophelia", the new album just out. Now, in my term paper, the other thing that sort of seems to come up in a bunch of songs, you

talked about in the little kind of release you put out with the record. It's a bunch of songs about the transition, the rites of passage from being a kid and being an adult, and being young and having all this energy. There's a bunch of songs that are kind of about that, I was thinking about "Reunion". But also, Amy your song "Dead Man's Hill" is kind of about a childhood incident.

Amy: Yeah.

Interviewer: When...how did you remember that incident? Has it always stayed with you?

Amy: Well that incident has been...yeah, it's had an impression on my whole life really cause I was so young when it happened. That song is kind of a coming of age song I mean, you know in every way of all the different things that you do when you're coming of age. And that was sort of my first time I came across sort of the evilness of people. But I mean I was a kid and I was watching...you know at night I was looking over at the field and saw these things go up in flames and they were screaming and it was cats and it was really bizarre. It was a very bizarre experience for a child to, you know, to come across and I was pretty sensitive, so it sort of directed my whole life. But I didn't know the song was going in that direction when I wrote it actually that just kind of popped out.

Interviewer: What direction was it going to begin with?

Amy: It was going in a little more of the chorus direction of... a little more passive.

Interviewer: Which is not a word I would use to describe your writing very often (laughs).

Amy: No, but ,you know, I thought it was a new direction for me or something (laughs).

Interviewer: You got your Dad to sing on it, is he a singer?

Amy: Yeah my dad sang on it. Well he sung a lot in college and high school and stuff but he's not a professional singer or anything. But the song was kind of, you know had some elements to do with him in it so I decided to asked him to sing on it and he did a great job I thought.

Emily: Yep.

Interviewer: Yeah, he really sticks out on the record.

Amy: Yeah.

Interviewer: Once again, not only do we not have a orchestra but we don't have him here, but could you do that one?

Emily: (laughs).

Amy: All right.

(Live version of "Dead Man's Hill").

Interviewer: "Dead Man's Hill" from the new one "Swamp Ophelia". Indigo Girls here and Emily on the little lead line on that one. Good song. In between records, we here in Philadelphia were really happy you had a song on the soundtrack to the film "Philadelphia". Was that your pick to go in there or did somebody suggest that?

Emily: Jonathon Demme picked that song.

Amy: Yeah, actually...

Emily: I guess one of the guys from the company pitched us to him, and I guess he checked out our music and liked it well enough and then he chose that song.

Interviewer: Did you know the song before you...

Amy: Uh-uh.

Emily: I had heard it. I had heard other people record it, you know, Rod Stewart and Everything But The Girl, I had heard their versions of it.

Interviewer: Right, had you ever heard the original, the Crazy Horse version?

Emily: Well we got tapes of it when we were learning the song.

Amy: That's the one, that's the one I listened to.

Interviewer: Cause yours is truer to that one in a lot of ways.

Amy: Yeah.

Emily: Yeah. I remember Amy saying when we were trying to learn it, she's like, "Now how would the Ramones play this song if they were going to learn it". Because we were trying to, you know, trying to make it a little bit different from how it had been recorded, but there was only so far you could go I guess.

Interviewer: Well I tell you what, let's play that cause I love hearing it.

Emily: O.K.

Amy: All right, let's do it.

Interviewer: Indigos, another one of their great covers. This is Danny Whiten's song, "I Don't Wanna Talk About It".

(Album version of "I Don't Wanna Talk About It")

Interviewer: On the World Cafe, "I Don't Wanna Talk About It" Danny Whiten's tune. Our guests the Indigo Girls, be back in a moment on the World Cafe.

(Break)

Interviewer: We're back on the World Cafe and Amy and Emily from the Indigo Girls have joined us. The new album "Swamp Ophelia" is just out and the record industry is devouring it and dissecting it and thinking about it (Emily and Amy laugh) and making these two people nervous about it. You know Amy in many ways, not to slight Emily's songs, but you're the one who's really pushing things lyricly and musically on this record. I mean you really tackle some deep subjects, I mean not to many songs about the Holocaust - light pop songs.

Amy: Well...I mean some of the stuff that Emily and I wrote about on this record I think is similar thematically as far as growing up, dealing with the past...but, yeah I did tackle the Holocaust. I mean, I went to the museum and I felt compelled to get something out of my system and then I realized I was writing a song type of thing and we both wanted to put it on the record. And that's really you know the only specifically sort of rough topic I've ever tackled that was so specific like that.

Interviewer: Well I was thinking that "Dead Man's Hill" is not really an easy song.

Amy: Yeah, I didn't know I was going to tackle that one though so that just came as a surprise.

Interviewer: Had you seen Schindler's list around the same time?

Amy: Uh-uh. I didn't actually.

Interviewer: Cause the image of the train is so much a part of that film too.

Amy: I took Holocaust course at Emory University and the train image was very heavy in that course. Cause the film's constant barrage of trains and then the museum obviously features that as a large...that's one of the things that you do that has the most impact. When you walk into the boxcar and stuff.

Interviewer: Ah...I haven't been there. Oh God...

Amy: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well let's play it cause its not going to be an easy one to do today. So this is "This Train Revised" from "Swamp Ophelia".

Amy: O.K.

(Album version of "This Train Revised")

Interviewer: The final track on the new Indigo Girls album "Swamp Ophelia" - "This Train Revised". Want to do another one live?

Amy: Yeah.

Emily: Sure.

Interviewer: I'm trying to think where we're at. It's probably time for another...

Amy: Do you want to do an old one or a new one?

Interviewer: Oh, if you can do some old ones that would be great.

Emily: We can do an old one.

Interviewer: I had this whole idea of making you tell everybody what your favorite song of the other person's was, but I don't know if that's gonna work cause you can only do so many things today.

Amy: (Laughs).

Emily: (Laughs) We've got a lot to learn of our old stuff.

Amy: But what we're gonna do one that we like...that I like of Emily's. "Watershed"?

Emily: "Watershed". I hope we remember this too.

Amy: We're gonna try this one.

Emily: We went through this in the dressing room a couple weeks ago.

Amy: We played it.

Emily: We never played this one live did we?

Amy: Oh...we didn't play it.

Emily: We didn't...it's gonna be like...it should be fun. I'm trying to remember the chords.

Amy: Uh-oh. All right, let's go for it.

Emily: Want to wing it?

Amy: Yeah.

(Live version of "Watershed")

Interviewer: "Watershed". It's funny I keep introducing songs as like "Emily's song", "Amy's song", everybody knows them as your songs. Is this a difficult relationship professionally to keep two writers, two different points of views under one banner?

Emily: No.

Interviewer: No?

Amy: It just happens.

Interviewer: Yeah?

Emily: I mean I think both know that what we bring to us is different from what the other brings. You know what each individual brings in this sort of like celebration of both styles and influences and all that stuff. We've know each other forever, I mean we've been friends for a

long time and it is pretty miraculous when you think about it. I mean compared to other partnerships that have tried to work over time, but...

Interviewer: I was just thinking so few bands have two strong writers in them. You know it's very often that one person kind of takes over. It's great that it works so well with you people.

Amy: Well it's important to give...I mean we give each other space you know. So there's a lot of things we differ about, you know and then we have different lives and we're allowed to exercise our differences in those lives and I think that that's the key really.

Emily: Yeah.

Interviewer: Remember that boys and girls, that's true.

Emily: (Laughs).

Amy: (Laughs) It's true in any marriage too. Anything...

Interviewer: Indigo Girls our guests. You're also record company record executives (Emily and Amy laugh) at Daemon records. You're pretty good A & R people, I mean your acts are all getting signed by majors.

Amy: Yeah...(laughs).

Interviewer: Is that good or how do you feel about that.

Amy: Well their not all getting signed. I mean Kristen Hall got signed and James Hall is getting signed. And some of them are good, some of it's good...some of the artists I want to get signed, and that's the purpose - to be a stepping stone to the next level. And some of it is, you know, to do special projects that me and Emily might be involved in or just things that we've always wanted to do with friends. And some of it is artists actually just want to be independent for a long time cause that's what I am, I'm and indy label. I don't solicit tapes or anything.

Interviewer: Right, right, right. Anything coming out?

Amy: Well we just put out a record by the New Mongrels which is something Emily and I are involved in. It's a writer named Haynes Brook who lives in L.A. now, who used to live in Decatur and then Seattle and then L.A. He went to college with us and wrote a bunch of songs and we've always hung out together in a circle of musicians and he put a bunch of people together and we recorded all his songs. And it's me and Emily, Kristen Hall, uh is she part of it, is she on this?

Emily: She's not on that one.

Amy: She's not on this is she. Michelle Malone's on it, Big Fish Ensemble, all the...

Emily: Gerard McHugh.

Amy: Gerard McHugh, who else? There's a bunch of Atlanta musicians and some Seattle people and it's kinda like...

Emily: Dede Vogt.

Amy: Dede Vogt...it's all the people that we hang with and play with. So that just came out, it's a hootenanny record.

Emily: It's great.

Interviewer: Look for that.

Emily: Great fun.

Amy: Yeah.

Interviewer: We'll be back with record executives and songsters the Indigo Girls I just a moment here on the World Cafe.

(Break)

Interviewer: We're back with the Indigo Girls on the World Cafe. And another one of Emily's songs. Now I know you wrote this cause the first line is staring out of a second story...two stories up in the air, were you on the roof or were you in the window...

Emily: (Laughs) Is that how you knew I wrote it? (Laughs again).

Interviewer: Well...

Amy: Did you really write it sitting two...

Emily: I really did, honestly. I was two stories above the little street watching the kids walk home from school and thinking about patterns and actually (laughs) thinking about my little sixth grade boyfriend. Which seems insignificant now but it was just like the beginning of patterns. And it's a lot about love and a lot about life. Just a little ditty about that, it's called...

Amy: That's when you go to the movies and make out in the back row. Sixth grade...

Emily: Yeah (laughs). Life was good then.

Amy: ...the roller coaster.

Emily: Yeah.

Amy: O.K., anyway...(laughs)

Emily: (Laughs). Intense. I mean anyway...this is called "Least Complicated".

Interviewer: Back row of the movie theater, first seat in the roller coaster.

Amy: Yeah. Definitely.

Emily: (Laughs).

(Live version of "Least Complicated")

Interviewer: "Least Complicated", one of the less complicated songs on the new record "Swamp Ophelia". The most complicated song has got to be "Touch Me Fall", which was the first thing that was released. Just in terms of the arrangement of that song.

Amy: Actually "Least Complicated" was the most complicated to record. (She and Emily both laugh).

Interviewer: Was it?

Emily: (Laughs). It was, it took forever.

Amy: Yeah cause Emily's rhythm is so wacky on that song. It's like Ritchie Havens or something (Emily laughs), we're all going "What?". (Emily and Amy both laugh).

Interviewer: And then the congas or the drums or what ever they are on top of that.

Amy: Yeah, it's great.

Emily: Jerry Marotta.

Amy: Well "Touch Me Fall" started out real simple, you know, just kind of a really beautiful electric guitar song that turns into, you know, a grunge song, not grunge, more like a Clash type song at the end. Real simple, straight forward, but we kinda needed something to help us bridge the transition, so we brought in this young guy, Nashville guy, that we had met, a musician that became kind of a friend of ours, to help us with the string arrangement, for some of the transitions. And he a...and he did it.

Emily: He did, he bridged the gap.

Amy: (Laughs). He did a bang up job of it.

Emily: We just went crazy in the studio on this one.

Amy: Yeah, we just kind of did whatever. You know we did it live, we did like...actually I had a wreck the day we recorded it. And I came into the studio about three hours after the wreck and we put down about six takes of it and edited what we liked together of all the takes, it was all improvisation, all of it. (Laughs).

Interviewer: Wow, really?

Amy: And a...we kept Emily's, all of Emily's lead stuff and we just sorta went "Well this is the song, now what else does we need?" And we threw horns on it and strings...

Emily: It was fun.

Interviewer: It's an ambitious first single off the record, why did you do that?

Amy: Well, actually we, you know, we felt that number one we wanted to go out to more of the independent college commercial alternative, that kind of thing, cause that's where our support has always been. And we wanted to go to that first. And we didn't want to go out in top 40 and try to drum up support somewhere we didn't have it already. We just felt loyal, pretty much I guess, to the format. And we wanted to try, we talked about trying something that I had done, something from my camp of music, cause we'd always kinda of been in Emily's camp for the first time and thought this would be an interesting thing, but I didn't think that was going to be the one. And that was something that the record company just kept going, "Well, let's just try this" and I was like "Yeah, right". So a ...

Interviewer: It's interesting, I'm not sure if on the single version that came out, the little message thing that's on the beginning of the album, the little thing about skating. (Emily and Amy both laugh).

Amy: Oh, it's not on the single probably. (Both laugh again).

Interviewer: Now, what does that have to do with the song?

Amy: (Laughs). Nothing.

Emily: (Laughs). Nothing.

Interviewer: I've been trying to figure it out.

Emily: We have a lot of fun on this record.

Amy: You know where that's from, some friends of our, Mrs. Fun...

Emily: Mrs. Fun.

Amy: ...who recorded "Dead Man's Hill" with us. They were the guest band on the record. They went to see a friend of theirs play who used to go, you know when you're at the skating rink and they go "All skate, now reverse", you know. I was just saying it and we stuck it before that song because we thought it represented what the song was doing. (Emily and Amy both laugh).

Emily: It means nothing.

Interviewer: So I guess this is the un-embellished version of "Touch Me Fall".

Amy: This is the very un-embellished version. (Emily laughs). This is like Billy Bragg doing a duo.

(Live version of "Touch Me Fall")

Interviewer: Imagine you're all alone in a club and Neil Young and P.J. Harvey are dueling on stage. (Emily and Amy both laugh).

Emily: Yee-hah!

Interviewer: That's my perspective.

Emily: Cool!

Interviewer: That's great. That's "Touch Me Fall", live version from Emily Saliers, Amy Ray. Yeah the Indigo Girls have joined us. Thanks a lot for coming by.

Amy: Sure man.

Emily: We like it here.

Amy: Anytime.

Interviewer: Especially bringing those guitars, that was fun. (Emily and Amy laugh).

Emily: Yeah.

Interviewer: You gonna be doing the shed thing this summer? Any innovative tour plans?

Emily: We're doing the shed thing. We're coming to Philly, we're going to the Mann Center.

Amy: We're being alone this time.

Emily: Yeah, just me and Amy.

Interviewer: Oh great!

Amy: So we won't have the mellatone strings or the...

Emily: Or the quartets. No quartets.

Amy: ...the love sponge quartets...

Emily: Just me and Amy.

Amy: Or the horns, the Salvation Army horn band. We won't have any of that, we'll just be alone.

Emily: Back to basics for the most complicated record we've ever made.

Interviewer: It'll be different. Thanks a lot!

Amy: (Laughs). Yes it will.

Emily: Thank you.

The Back Page

Wow! It's hard to believe another year has gone by so fast. I devoted this entire issue to a radio interview that Amy and Emily did earlier this year, I have been trying to work it in for some time but haven't had room. It has some great information on "Swamp Ophelia" and seemed like a good way to end the year. I hope you enjoyed it.

If you are interested in getting some professionally shot photos of Emily and Amy you might want to try:

Nancy Barr-Brandon
506 Windermere Ave.
Interlaken, NJ
07712
(908) 531-7544

She sent me a letter in early December asking me to run an ad, it caught my eye because she says that most of the proceeds from her photos go to support her animal rescue work. I have not done business with her yet but plan to after the first of the year.

I am helping out with a project on the internet to create a large site full of Indigo Girls information. My end of it is typing up as many articles as I can scrounge up so they can be included. If you have any (especially old ones) and would like them included please send me a copy. Right now we are working on the 400+ articles I have accumulated through being a fan and publishing Lifeblood - the site is going to be the ultimate go-head guide.

The January issue of Lifeblood is about half finished and should be on it's way to you in a week or so. It looks like postage is going up after January 1st, as soon as I find out what the new rates are I'll let you know.

I hope you and yours had a great Christmas and that you are happy and healthy throughout 1995.

Take care and be well -

CAROLN ☺