

MIXED MEDIA

HOMeward BOUND - INTERVIEW WITH NANCY ATLAS

BY STEVE MATTEO

NANCY ATLAS HAS BEEN ONE OF THE EAST END MUSIC SCENE'S LONGEST RUNNING SUCCESS STORIES. ATLAS AND HER BAND PUT ON ONE OF THE MOST RAUCOUS, GOODTIME ROCK SHOWS ONE IS LIKELY TO EVER SEE, BUT SHE ALSO WRITES AND SINGS SONGS FROM THE HEART THAT MAKE HER ONE OF NEW YORK'S PREEMINENT SINGER-SONGWriters. HER BLUESY ROCK STYLE, LACED WITH AUTHENTIC COUNTRY TWANG, HAS AN EDGY FORCE, YET HER MIXING OF STYLES, HEARTFELT SONGS AND RAW VOCALS MAKE HER MUSIC TIMELESS. HER LATEST CD, FEELS LIKE A HOME (NEPTUNA), IS A LIVE DOUBLE DISC THAT WAS RECORDED IN AUGUST OF 2006 AT GUILD HALL IN EAST HAMPTON. AS GOOD AS HER PREVIOUS STUDIO ALBUMS ARE, THIS RELEASE PUTS ALL OF ATLAS AND HER BAND'S TALENTS ON FULL DISPLAY.

ATLAS GREW UP IN COMMACK AND NOW LIVES IN MONTAUK, BUT SHE HAS LIVED ALL OVER THE EAST END. SHE'S MARRIED AND HAS A TODDLER AND, ALTHOUGH SHE HAS NOT BEEN TOURING NATIONALLY OF LATE, SHE PACKS THEM IN WHEN SHE PERFORMS REGULARLY AT STEPHEN TALKHOUSE IN AMAGANSETT.

ATLAS SHINES WHEN SHE'S ON STAGE AND IT'S CLEAR THAT SHE ENJOYS IT. "I LOVE PERFORMING LIVE," ATLAS SAID. "I THINK PEOPLE ARE ATTRACTED TO US AS A LIVE BAND BECAUSE WE DELIVER THE GOODS CONSISTENTLY. I HAVE DIFFERENT SHOWS FOR DIFFERENT AVENUES OF MUSIC." IT'S APPARENT THAT A LOT OF HER SUCCESS IS DUE TO THE MUSICAL BOND SHE HAS WITH HER BAND. "I LOVE MY BAND," SHE STATED. "I AM PROUD OF MY BAND. I LOVE THESE SHOWS. THEY ARE A TRUE BATTLE BETWEEN BAND AND AUDIENCE AND I WAKE UP THE NEXT MORNING EXHAUSTED AND WELL BRUISED WITH FEATHERS FROM MY BOA STILL STICKING TO MY NECK."

WHETHER LIVE OR ON RECORD, ATLAS DRAWS FROM A BROAD WELL OF INFLUENCES, WHICH ARE ALWAYS CHANGING. "MY PARENTS LISTENED TO A TON OF CLASSICAL MUSIC, INTERMIXED WITH SIMON AND GARFUNKEL AND JUDY COLLINS," SHE RECALLED. "WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I LISTENED TO A LOT OF THE POLICE, GENESIS, STEVE WINWOOD, BOB MARLEY, BUCKWHEAT ZYDECO AND THE PRETENDERS. IN THE PAST FEW YEARS I'VE GOTTEN TURNED ON TO LUCINDA WILLIAMS AND, OF COURSE, THE GOD OF ALL GODS, TOM PETTY. SWEET JESUS, CAN THAT MAN WRITE SONGS! I HAVE A FANTASY ABOUT OPENING UP FOR PETTY AT RED ROCKS."

WHILE SPENDING MORE TIME WITH HER FAMILY AND LESS TIME ON THE ROAD HAS MARKED A BIG CHANGE FOR ATLAS, IT SEEMS LIKE PERSONALLY SHE'S IN A GOOD PLACE. "I HAVEN'T TOURED IN THE PAST TWO YEARS AS I HAVE A 17-MONTH-OLD SON NOW, BUT THE ROAD IS ALWAYS CALLING AND I'M SURE WE'LL BE BACK IN THAT SADDLE SOON ENOUGH," SHE STATED. "I THINK SUCCESS IS BEING ABLE TO DO WHAT WE DO AND WALK DOWN TO THE BEACH AT THE END OF THE DAY, NOT PACKING UP MY LIFE EVERY 48 HOURS AND HAULING OFF TO ANOTHER TOWN."

NANCY ATLAS WILL BE PLAYING THE REGATTA PARTY AT BARCELONA NECK IN SAG HARBOR ON AUGUST 5 AND THE STEPHEN TALKHOUSE ON AUGUST 11 AND 23. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.NANCYATLAS.COM.