

## Atlas Shrugged

It's a Friday night in July at The Stephen Talkhouse. A line of people stretches down the sidewalk as they wait to fight their way to the bar and hope for a spot on the dance floor. It's a packed house inside and out and the bartenders are scrambling to keep the drinks flowing. Blond hair, short black dress, black high heeled boots, and oh yes, a feathered boa, Montauk's own smoking hot Rockstar, Nancy Atlas, takes the stage. You're in her world now and she's about to take the crowd for a wild and crazy ride to 3AM. The first set, the so called drinking set, starts and the battle for a little room on the dance floor begins. Nights like this you're lucky to have twelve inches of space to dance in. The energy swells with each song as Atlas and her band wail through covers of The Rolling Stones, Tom Petty, Johnny Cash and best of all some of their original music. But don't be misled, this ain't no cover band!

With each set, Atlas kicks it up another notch till the whole place is under her spell moving and shaking and begging for more. After three sets of steamy pure rock and roll from some of the finest musicians you'll ever see, you'll be asking yourself "Mick who?" There's a reason why this band continues to be the house band for The Talkhouse after 9 years....Quite simply because nobody rocks it like The Nancy Atlas Project!

Nancy Atlas is an extremely talented musician, songwriter and performer born to be up on stage. When asked what initially inspired her to get into music and write songs Atlas said "I've always had an ear for music. At three I was plinking out Three Blind Mice on the piano by ear and by 11 I was writing songs in three part harmony for talent shows. I was Commack's version of Debbie Gibson (laugh!). In high school I got involved in painting and pursued that avenue quite heavily. I returned to music after college, when at 21 I bought my first guitar. Three weeks and one Mel Bay book later I was off and running. I never looked back. Writing was always just a given. It was something I did without even thinking of it. With my painting I had some hesitations. I didn't believe I could go the distance. Writing, however, I felt in my gut. I was ready to be strapped to a track for it and I always believed that I was as good at it as anybody else. "

Originally from Commack, Atlas spent every summer of her life out here on the East End and currently lives in Montauk. In her words "I knew that the East End was where I wanted to be. I hit it hard when I am in the city but deep down I am definitely a country mouse. I like to give everything of myself to my shows. Full on. An open briefcase. That said, when I am off stage I like quiet and solitude. I haven't had TV for six years and I read almost every night. If I didn't have that balance to the craziness of my performance life I think I would have had a heart attack already!"

She has been performing professionally for about 13 years now. Has released four cd's on her own label, Neptuna Records. The latest cd, "Feels Like Home", is a double live cd recorded last summer by Grammy Award Winner Cynthia Daniels at Guild Hall and highlights another side to The Nancy Atlas Project's live performances. 21 songs of all original music that truly showcases Atlas' songwriting skills and musical talents of her and her band. She has an uncanny writing style that captures listeners and connects with them on a deep level. This is a must have for your cd collection! A great mix of powerfully moving slower songs and slamming rockers that will have you jumping up to

dance as Atlas sings about red headed lassies and her beloved pistachio green van, Large Marge.

Atlas' own thoughts on "Feels Like Home": "It was an achievement in letting go. I am a perfectionist and sometimes that can stop things from getting done. This was really just a case of the right album for the right time. I have been getting really wonderful responses to it. We have about 5 truly killer tracks on the new live album. When I was in art school my photography teacher always said, "If you get one great shot in a roll of 30 then your doing great." I like to think of a show in the same way. If you apply that philosophy to the album then we hit the ball out of the park. Its intention was to showcase the songwriting, which is why we chose Guild Hall." Visit [www.nancyatlas.com](http://www.nancyatlas.com) to purchase cd's or you can find them on itunes and digstation.com/nancyatlas. Be sure to also pick up a copy of the DVD on "Feels Like Home"; One hour and 20 minutes featuring live performances of 10 songs from the double live cd, and an exclusive interview with Nancy and Large Marge.

When asked about her band made up of four amazingly talented journeymen Atlas replied "I love my band. I am proud of my band. Brett King (bass) and Johnny Blood (lead guitar) have been with me for 10 years. Rich Rosch (drums) for 7 and Neil Surreal (accordion and keys) for 5. I always tell people that band years are like dog years.. Multiply that by 7 and you get an accurate number. It is hard to keep people together. Despite our many differences all it takes is getting in Large Marge, our touring van, and the laughter starts. 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. I think success is being able to do what we do AND walk down to the beach at the end of the day. Not necessarily packing up my life every 48 hours and hauling off to another town. I'm in this because I love writing songs. IT's that simple." The Nancy Atlas project is as tight as they come. Their dynamics and energy will quite simply blow you away!

About her live performances Atlas says" I love performing live. 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. For example, our late night Talkhouse shows are a raucous, sweaty, pumping party. We play till 3-4 in the morning. 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. I sometimes think of someone like Jewel or Norah Jones. I think of how many shows they play where people just sit there and stare and clap politely at the end of it. Maybe some whistles from some parts of the stadium. I don't know. But sometimes I think, and I am taking a big liberty by saying this, how much they would probably LOVE to have a show like this, where the audience is letting it all hang out. Where they are screaming at you from the passion of the music and just loosing it on the dance floor. Where everyone is laughing and following your lead. They trust you.

I also have acoustic showcases that highlight the original music at Guild Hall and the Parkside Lounge in NYC. Those shows have their own following too. They are equal in performance but a lot deeper. A little more Richie Havens style talking with the audience and shooting from the hip. We have fun but no bruises at the end of the night.

Top this all off with the fact that we have now really gotten known for private parties. Last year we went to San Francisco, Vermont, Florida... All over because people just need a Rocking band for their

parties and fly us in. The last three years have been pretty crazy. I can't keep up! The biggest problem I have is people wanting more originals when we play late night at the Talkhouse. That is a really good problem to have."

All of Atlas' hard work over the years seems to be paying off. Her song "Love is Suicide" was aired on an episode of Guiding Light and the viewer response was so huge that the song got a write up in Soap Opera Weekly. A Best Chevrolet in Norwalk, Ct. has recently picked up another of her songs "Best is Yet to Come" as their new slogan. Her website, [www.nancyatlas.com](http://www.nancyatlas.com), where you can find out about the latest gigs and news, has received over 4 million hits. She hosts a television show, "East End Legends", on Plum TV and is also the spokesperson for Winn-Dixie, a southern grocery chain down South. About Winn-Dixie and Plum TV, Atlas responded, "Winn Dixie is just a blessing. Long story short... Winn Dixie was coming out of Bankruptcy and hired a hot shot advertising company (On Ideas). They in turn hired Lyle Greenfield who is uber famous jingle man that also happens to reside in Amagansett when he's not writing a jingle for Heineken or Pepsi. Lyle gets a call from the Advertising company and he and Brian Wilson (Bang Music) write the Winn Dixie jingle "Getting Better All The Time". There is a casting call for a 30 something chick who will sing the tune and actually be the same person on the commercial. I go into the city, meet Lyle on an off Monday in August and sing the clip, they video tape it and submit it. About 12 hours later I'm on a plane to Georgia with the same clothes on for the final round of auditions. I beat out the Nashville Redhead and the smoking Chattanooga Lassie. Oh yeah, and I'm about 3 months pregnant.

Plum TV came to me when they were first starting out. They had heard about me on the street so to speak. They pitched me to do a local MTV style show where I would interview musicians and such. However, I could never do a show like that justice as I just don't listen to enough music like a proper audiophile would. I asked them if I could do a show instead that focused on the real "celebrities" of our town. The everyday people that everyone knows and have their own fame after the summer months are long gone. They bit and East End Legends was born. I got Kate Fixx my uber talented film friend on board (she does shoots and edits all the fashion shows in NYC) and the rest is history. I really wanted to do it as a time capsule as everything is changing so fast. My one regret is that we never got to the Penny candy store!!!!Drats!"

When asked what her next project was Atlas replied "Nancy Atlas on the Road- Rockumentary 2. The seed was planted by David Kuhn (Plum TV head honcho) on the day of our release. Our collaboration on this past project (DVD) was artistically dreamy. Everyone was in the same boat. Aaron Neu did such a fabulous job directing and capturing it with his team of 5 cameras. In short, we are creating a project just so we can work together again!"

Nancy Atlas is the REAL DEAL folks! Living her dream and loving it! So get out to one of her shows and buy her music. Trust me you won't be disappointed. See ya on the dance floor!

-By Nicole Wilson