

Lesley Gore
International Fan Club
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February, 2009 Newsletter

Volume 44, Issue 4

ISSN: 1098-1802

Lesley Gore Itinerary

All appearances are confirmed and up to date as of Feb. 12, 2009, and subject to change. Check venue before making plans. Consult the lesleygore.com website for changes or additions.

- Mar. 7, 2009: Emelin Theater, Mamaroneck, NY (www.emelin.org)
- Mar. 21, 2009: Williamson Theater, College of Staten Island Theater for the Performing Arts, Staten Island, NY, 8 PM (www.cfashows.com) 718-982-2787
- Mar. 28, 2009: Keswick Theater, Glenside, PA with Jay Black (www.keswicktheater.com)
- Apr. 18, 2009: Tarrytown Music Hall, Tarrytown, NY (www.tarrytownmusichall.org)
- Oct. 10, 2009: Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts, Patchogue, NY (www.PatchogueTheatre.com)

***If you would like an updated itinerary between newsletters, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the club address.

Lesley Gore International Fan Club Newsletter
February (Winter), 2009

Hi! Welcome to our first newsletter of 2009! Hope you are all well.

As I am writing this, Lesley is opening tonight (2/13) at the famous restaurant/jazz club in San Francisco, Yoshi's. She was originally supposed to appear at the Brava Theater, but this engagement is taking place instead. I understand Yoshi's is a very upscale sophisticated club which features many prestigious performers. Will reprint any press from this show in the next newsletter.

I am still working on the fan club website. Hopefully it will be up and running soon. I'm still trying to decide what should go on this site. Any suggestions? Lesley's site is also still under construction, but the site is constantly updated with Lesley's performances: www.lesleygore.com.

At the October '08 Metropolitan Show, Lesley mentioned seeing a documentary on the life of Anita O'Day. It is called "Anita O'Day: The Life of a Jazz Singer" and features interviews and concert footage including a live version of "A Nightingale Sang in Barkley Square" which Lesley is currently doing in her own show. Jim Allio, who saw the documentary, adds: "Lesley has always named Anita O'Day as one of her main influences, and when you see this documentary, you will understand fully why she says this, from her phrasing, to her unique sense of timing, her commitment to the lyric and her straight up swing. You will note many similarities in live performance between O'Day and Lesley."

I recently came across a 4 movie DVD set titled "Beach Movies." One of the movies is "Ski Party." I spotted this set in my local Costco.

"The Canvas Can Do Miracles" is now available for downloading on iTunes. The track order has been changed and it is called: "Lesley Gore: Studio 102 Essentials." The original album was released in 1981 on 51 West. In 1980, during the same session in Nashville, Lesley re-recorded six of her biggest hit records, "It's My Party," "Judy's Turn to Cry," "You Don't Own Me," "She's a Fool," "Sunshine Lollipops and Rainbows" and "That's the Way Boys Are." They were released on an album: "Forever Seventeen: Lesley Gore Meets Bobby Vee." These songs are also available for downloading at iTunes but are titled "Her Very Best-EP."

A biography of Bella Abzug, "One Tough Broad from the Bronx" has been released. As you probably know, Lesley was a very close friend of Bella's and some of us were treated to Bella on stage imitating Marlene Dietrich during Lesley's East Hampton, NY show in 1997. Lesley has contributed many personal insights and reflections in the book. Great reading!

Quincy Jones has released a new autobiography "The Complete Quincy Jones on Insight Editions. Lesley is mentioned in the book.

Hope you enjoy the attached interview, "Lesley Gore-Out Here on Her Own." It was originally done in 2005 for the magazine "Rockgirl" which went out of business shortly after the interview.

If you see anything at all on Lesley in the papers or on the internet, please let me know so I can share it with everyone. Until the next newsletter, stay well and keep in touch!

Jack Natoli

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2009

"Lesley Gore - Out Here On Her Own": Audrey Bilger

(As announced yesterday, today's guest blogger is Audrey Bilger, who conducted the following interview with pop star Lesley Gore. The interview's great, & be sure to check out the video of Gore performing "You Don't Own Me."

Thanks so much Audrey—& without further ado: Audrey Bilger & Lesley Gore):

*This is an interview I conducted in the summer of 2005, right after the release of Lesley Gore's most recent album **Ever Since**. It was originally supposed to appear in **Rockgrl** magazine, a venue dedicated to celebrating women in music, but when that amazing publication folded, I put the interview aside. I feel privileged to have been able to talk with Ms. Gore. She was frank and funny, and I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to share it here.*



In the 1960s, Lesley Gore rose to fame as the good girl's bad girl with a string of hits, including "It's My Party," "Judy's Turn To Cry," and "You Don't Own Me." Whether standing up for her right to throw a full-on tantrum or even more defiantly proclaiming her independence, Gore's songs became anthems for women of all ages. The 1996 film *First Wives Club* paid tribute to the durability of Gore's brand of girl power when stars Bette Midler, Diane Keaton, and Goldie Hawn sing "You Don't Own Me" in the final scene.

Gore has spent the last decades touring, writing songs, and as she modestly puts it, "practicing." Her new album *Ever Since* is the first she's recorded since 1976, and it's unlike anything she's done before. Released on indie label Engine Company Records, *Ever Since* contrasts starkly with her slick, Quincy Jones produced chart hits. The mood is intimate, wise, and frequently dark. She recasts "You Don't Own Me" as a slow torch ballad and renders her own, ripened version of the Academy Award-nominated song "Out Here On My Own," co-written by Gore and brother Michael and first performed by Irene Cara in the 1980 film *Fame*.

Unlike many former teen idols, Gore happily performs her early songs on tour and doesn't seem to resent having to do so. *Ever Since* will introduce fans to Gore's serious side. The mood on this record is much less sing-along-with and more been-there-done-that. Either way Gore says it, we can all relate.

What was it like to have a hit single when you were 16 years old?

It was fascinating, it was exciting, it was adventurous, it was scary, it was a little nerve-racking. It was all those things, simultaneously usually. A lot of work, a lot of good times, a lot of really wonderful, special memories, and there were a lot of things that also went wrong. Whenever anything happens to you, there are usually good results and not such good results, and I find that's true of pretty much everything, even a really good relationship. It's got its ups, its downs, its ins, its outs. It was difficult at 16 becoming so famous and having to learn how to deal with it.

You had a series of hits in pretty quick succession. Were you constantly touring then?



Actually, I was really fortunate because my parents and I both believed in an education, and I didn't spend a lot of time on the road. I really stayed in school for the most part and only traveled during the holidays like Christmas or summer, and very often I could take off a day or two for a television show like *Ed Sullivan* or *Hullabaloo*, but at the time, those shows were being recorded in New York, so I didn't have to take off too much time.

Every now and again I'd come out to L. A. and do a *Shindig* or one of the local shows there, but there was plenty of exposure then, and I pretty much stayed in school.

When did you start touring heavily?

After I finished college.

When did you start writing songs?

Come the '70s by the time I got out of college, I really had no recording career left. I kind of had to start from the beginning again. Mercury had let me go. The English sound was pervasive on American radio. I had to find a way to wake up in the morning and be a musician, so I started writing songs so I could at least be involved in the music industry.

How do you think you've evolved as a songwriter?

I think my songwriting has gotten better. I think I've only just begun. I think there are a lot of songs in me yet. This album is the first album in a long time I've gotten an opportunity to show some of those skills. And I've already begun, because it's been such a good experience, writing some new stuff for the next album.

The songs you wrote on *Ever Since* are wonderful. I like the humor and wisdom of "Not The First." How did you come to write it?

It's meant to be a little sardonic. It's an older woman telling a younger woman what it's really like, it's about relationships, it's about life.

Two of the other songs you co-wrote on the record, "Words We Don't Say" and "We Went So High," seem very poignant, even melancholy.



"So High" came out of a very specific relationship, and I always think of one human being when I sing that. "Words We Don't Say" was more of a group effort as you can see. Two of the musicians on the album wrote the song, as well as two of my background singers, so it was less personal, although it was something personal I wanted to say. It's not as heart-rending as "We Went So High."



Engine Company Records seems very committed to that kind of collaboration. Do you enjoy that?

Well, they certainly are. They are the model of indie. It was basically them coming to me suggesting that we do an album this way that got me interested in recording this album. I've found an incredible collaborator in Blake [Morgan—founder of Engine Company Records]. It's been an incredible experience, very creative, very inspiring, very invigorating.

You spent most of your early career working with major labels. How does this experience compare to that?

It's very much more hands-on, very much more collaborative, and it's very grass roots. It's exactly the antithesis of everything I'm used to. But it's kind of wonderful, it's fun, you see everything as it's going down, and it's very exciting to watch it happen.

Did you set out to make a record that would have such a jazz-influenced sound?



We set out to make as honest a record as we could and be as honest to my voice as humanly possible. I think because of so many of the singers I was raised on as a young person, that some of those jazz influences are there, whether I'm conscious of them or not. It comes from a music I loved so much and

from so many wonderful female artists that I followed, like Dinah Washington, and Anita O'Day, Julie Christie and Sarah Vaughan. It was Blake who brought those to the forefront.

Did Blake write the songs "Better Angels" and "It's Gone" for you?

He didn't write them for me. He presented them to me, and I fell in love with them.

The new version of "You Don't Own Me" is amazing. You've said elsewhere that you treasure this song the most of all your hits.

I do. You know, "It's My Party" is a wonderful song. It was a really great record, but looking back at it some years later, it's easy to see how that song is somewhat dated. We talk about "going steady," which I don't think kids even know about today. "You Don't Own Me," on the other hand is a song that kind of grows every time you sing it. So I feel as though I was really fortunate to have that song in my repertoire because "It's My Party" is not that serious a song, and "You Don't Own Me" is a serious song.

It's a song that's been taken up by many women as a kind of anthem.

There's no question that women have taken that song and made it theirs. Of course, the last scene of *First Wives Club* also said the same thing. Here were these women, who, after you've seen this whole movie, what do they do? They belt out "You Don't Own Me." It doesn't necessarily have to be women. It can be men, too. But I think a lot of women have taken it as theirs, which is fine. I'm very proud of that.



Do you feel in other ways that you've been a role model for women and particularly for young women?

I hope so. I didn't consider myself one, but as some of the responses come in and so many people have an opportunity to write you because email is so easy to get today, a lot of young people are telling me that they picked up a bass because they saw me singing on Bandstand, and it's very nice to hear. I'm very glad if I've influenced even one little human.

Do you have any advice for women who are trying to make it as musicians?

I just think that everyone should just continue rocking, especially the girls. We need more rock women. We need more rock women in the record industry. We need more executive women. That's what I'd like to see. It seems to be happening in the film world, but it's taking its time in the record industry.



So you haven't seen much improvement over time for women in the record industry?

I've seen virtually no improvement, very little improvement in the record industry, and I find it still the most homophobic of all the industries, as well. It's unbelievable. It's 2005, and we're still fighting some of the same fights I was trying to fight forty years ago.

It's a tough business.

It is, especially for women. I'm sorry to say that, but we've got to make that better.

You don't own Lesley Gore - but you can see her
at Yoshi's next week

By Andre Torrez

I've always known of her music, but a few months ago and admittedly after watching John Water's *Hairspray* for the first time in its entirety, I became eerily obsessed with Lesley Gore's song "You Don't Own Me." That song is great. Almost immediately I bought one of her compilation CDs, shamelessly playing the track on repeat.

I guess there were hints of pessimism in some of those early '60s hits although they maintained their poppy playfulness (i.e., "Judy's Turn to Cry" and "It's My Party"). It's hard to believe Gore recorded them at the tender age of 16. Oddly enough, Quincy Jones of *Thriller* fame was responsible for many of her early gems - which could explain their broad appeal production-wise.

But this song, a far cry from "Sunshine, Lollipops and Rainbows," had a much darker tone. It's almost sinister. Gore really belts it out here, convincing listeners of her sincerity and ambivalence toward what it means to be someone's girlfriend during adolescence. The lyrical content transcends teeny-bopper kitch, suggesting it was a feminist anthem ahead of its time and definitely before such rants were socially acceptable - at least by 1964 standards.

Even Joan Jett recognized the song's power, eventually giving it her own treatment. Gore's proclamation nears anguish as she deals with female subservience to men, objectification, and the notion of women as property. She protests against being viewed as merely an object of an immature man's pleasure, something he will eventually outgrow. "I'm not just one of your many toys," she sings.

The song can be adapted by anyone who identifies with the need to live their life freely - it's a theme that may very well have played out later in Gore's adult life since she didn't realize her own sexuality until after college. You can catch the performer and composer now that she's all grown up at Yoshi's SF on Friday, Feb. 13.

LESLEY GORE

Feb. 13, 8 and 10 p.m., \$35

Yoshi's SF

1330 Fillmore, SF

(415) 655-5600

The Keswick Theatre

March 28, 2009

Jay Black & Lesley Gore

Saturday

8:00PM



Sat., Mar. 28, 8 PM

+ LESLEY GORE - the original voice of "Cara Mia," "Come A Little Bit Closer," "This Magic Moment" & more - all his hits in one great concert - *plus* the most commercially successful solo artist of the "Girl Group" era, with hits including "It's My Party" and "You Don't Own Me." \$54.50 & \$49.50 (Discount group rates available for parties of 20+ tickets by calling Ellen in Keswick Group Sales @ 215-572-7650x208.)

Buy Your Tickets Now!

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/02/08/PKOP154PR8.DTL&hw=Lesl...> 2/9/2009

Lesley Gore

Facts about **Lesley Gore**: She was 17 when "It's My Party" went to No. 1 in 1963, drawing rabid fans to her house in suburban Tenafly, N.J. Her real name is **Lesley Sue Goldstein**. She also had hits with "Judy's Turn to Cry" and "You Don't Own Me," which could be the first feminist pop anthem. She came out as a lesbian in 2005. She was discovered by Quincy Jones, who produced her hits. She sang Laura Nyro's "Wedding Bell Blues" the same year as the Fifth Dimension did, but her version (hear it on YouTube) failed to chart. She's playing at the San Francisco Yoshi's Friday night. Check her out on YouTube. \$35. 8 and 10 p.m. Yoshi's, 1330 Fillmore St., San Francisco. (415) 655-5600, sf.yoshis.com.