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Little Steven's Big Score—The Cocktail Slippers And SXSW

Steven Van Zandt's Wicked Cool Records has been stirring up buzz everywhere lately, scoring legions of fresh new fans with bands like The Chesterfield Kings, The Grip Weeds, The Urges, The Chevelles and now, from Norway, The Cocktail Slippers. The premier label for garage, grit and grunge, Wicked Cool Records seems to be honing in on the some of the finest rock and roll roots mayhem out there, and much of it is being pumped into a destination near you.

The Cocktail Slippers have an interesting sound, mixing eclectic gone decades with images of street-tough runaways that would be right at home blasting out darkened obsessions at the Asbury Lanes. Hell, even the line-up shows attitude with members like Lisa Farfisa (vocal and organ) Rocket Queen (guitar and vocal) Squirrel (guitar) Sugar Cane (bass) and Bella Donna (drums).

And while the group can rip it up Ramones style, the main vibe stays much more complex when it comes to The Slippers' compositional direction. A bit of Marianne Faithful-meets-the-'70s-gold-of-Abba, and the '90s snarl of The Breeders, lets you in on their secret—a secret that Van Zandt is banking on as he tells you, "I'm seeing an all-girl band trend coming and The Cocktail Slippers are the perfect role models for a new generation."

The Cocktail Slippers' new record is entitled *St. Valentines Day* out on April 28, and features the man himself on two songs that he wrote, produced, and arranged for the band. Van Zandt flew to Oslo, Norway, to do the tunes, recording them in a converted bomb shelter. This marks one of only three rare times he's got involved with one of his

groups. The songs he produced were "St. Valentines Day Massacre" and "Heard You Got A Thing For Me," released on a sweet promo vinyl complete with a '60s kitsch cover in blood red.

This all ties in with Van Zandt taking his maximum rock and roll party heading down to SXSW on March 20 and 21. The weekend kicks off with the Magical Mystery Mondo Matinee And finishes in the wee hours at The Cowboy Angels and Gypsy Pirates A Go-Go—a sweet weekend for those lucky enough to have this on the "to do" list.

Wicked Cool Records is a fast growing mover of the best garage culture out there. The groups featured at SXSW will be The Chesterfield Kings, The Arc Angels, Cocktail Slippers, The Breakers, The Urges, The Krayolas and The Woggles. The Cocktail Slippers will also be slinging their delicious sounds at the Bowery Ballroom in NYC on 6 Delancey Street tomorrow night, Thursday, March 12, (tickets are \$15.00 and available at Ticketmaster.com) so come on out and grab a gritty piece of rock and roll old school history in the making. For further information head on over to wickedcoolrecords.com.

Carlyle while playing some very tasty guitar along the way. One of the more outstanding guitar players in her genre, Lisa shows keen sensibilities with rhythm and lead lines, melodic by nature and wily enough to understand that you play for the good of the song, not the player.

Produced by Bryan Russell, the disc works smoothly as his understanding of Bianco's music is very apparent, dropping Lisa's vocals and sizzling guitar work right on top of tight bass and thick drums courtesy of David Leathergood and Dan Duggins.

This is one of those rare times that I love the whole record. I just enjoy everything she's doing with *Post Data*. Some of my favorite tracks were the crunchy goodness of "Something To Prove," featuring hip choruses and guitar lines ala Elliot Easton (The Cars), easily one of the songs I would consider to be very radio friendly, it also showcases Bianco's much improved vocal strengths in fine fashion.

The atmospheric pull of "Falling Leaves" brings back images of early Heart with its acoustic intro and when it pulls into the proverbial station, Bianco amazes with her twists and compositional turns, winding out some highly inventive verses and contagious choruses. And of course the title track, "Post Data," says it all as Lisa sets up the chorus with a great bridge in the vein of Blondie before turning loose on the money shot chorus of

PHOTO BY LIPPE



Lisa Bianco's Post Data—Random Noise Records

I've watched this next "Shoreworld" artist grow in leaps and bounds since her last record. Lisa Bianco has become an excellent songwriter with a smooth addictive voice along the lines of Liz Phair and Brenda

this fine tune. Lisa Bianco is a unique musical fighter that's learned her trade and emerged on the winning side with a great disc full of label gold. Pick up a copy online and don't forget to see her live at The Cape May Singer Songwriter Conference on March 27. For further information go to lisaBianco.com.