

This chick singer is bad ass rockin'

Emily Bell is "knocking down walls, destroying fears, rising up to live in a dream,"

By Jan Sikes

EMILY BELL HAS STEPPED FROM BEHIND the curtain and let all preconceived notions fall away about what a chick singer is supposed to be in today's music world.

With the release of her new EP, *Kali*, she crosses boundaries and pushes limits. The music is original, fresh and bad-ass rockin'!

There is a common theme running throughout the album and it is of defiance, of boldly stepping out, unafraid of scrutiny or judgment.

The unique cover design of the album shows a headless woman sitting in the lotus position holding a beheaded head in her hand. Emily said, "The cover design is inspired by the Goddess Kali. In all the artwork of her, she is depicted with beheaded heads of men around of her neck and holding a head in one of her many hands. She represents the destruction of ego and ignorance. So, for me it was more of a statement of applying that to myself first. I think of Kali very personally. She destroys things in order for change to happen."

Traveling was a big part of Emily's growing up. Her father made sure his family went as many different places as they could. She said they had the concept of being citizens of the world ingrained into them. On one such travel, Emily went to India where she fell in love with the concept of the Hindu Goddess Kali. She brings it full force into this album. Destroying all ideas of how a girl singer is supposed to act,

look, write and sing.

It is a known fact of how difficult it can be for a woman to garner respect in the music business. So, how does Emily handle that aspect of it?

"I handle it through my music, especially on this record. I think defiance is a great word for it. You don't have to accept that this is a man's business. For so long, it truly was. It was hard for women to break through without getting stereotyped. For her to come out the other end without so many stigmas attached to her, as to who she has to be, is difficult."

As more incredibly talented female songwriters and performers emerge, that image is getting a makeover.

Emily continued, "I think it's time for women to defy the stigma that we don't have to sexually exploit ourselves in order to gain recognition in the music business. It's tricky to find a middle ground, to be a sexual person through your art and be a woman but to also be taken seriously."

Emily has experienced men in the music industry trying to put her in a box, telling her how to dress, how to cut her hair, and trying to change what she was. But, no more. Emily Bell has rebelled.

The songs, music and production of her new CD, *Kali*, is classy and edgy, yet serious and

makes an empowering statement not only for Emily, but all women as she channels Kali, the Hindu Goddess of Destruction.

She explains that she co-wrote "Can't Talk Back" with her partner in life, the legendary John Evans, and Tofer Brown. A video of this song directed by Bryan Poyser was released in February and premiered in BUST maga-

zine. It features an all-female tackle football team, the Austin Raiders taking over a male football game. The girls are out to teach the guys a lesson about talking back. Actor Bill Wise stars as the coach. Emily sings, "I'm the tremor of your earthquake/the sugar in your milkshake..."

And it is that song that kicks off this new EP.

"Girls that Never Die, written by Emily, screams truths with a distinct message. "We're knocking at your door/don't waste our time/dim our light/We don't do that anymore... We are the girls that never die."

A native drum begins "Goddess of Destruction" and John Evans' rocking guitar carries it. Emily's tribute to the Goddess, Kali is all about knocking down walls, destroying fears, and rising up to live in a dream.

"Goldmine" is a tasteful declaration of independence and individuality. It's about not breaking and staying true at the same time. The lyrical content in this song goes deep along with Emily's soul-filled delivery.

"Crashing Hearts" slows the tempo and Emily had a fascinating story about this song. "My first songwriting partner ever, a friend from high school, had a song with this title. It was always my favorite of hers. Then as time went by and we both moved to different cities, I always remembered this song, but never remembered exactly how it went. So, I contacted her and asked if I could take her song and write a second version and she agreed. I did and that's how it all came together and that's how myself and Abbey Wilson wrote this song."

If I had to pick a favorite out of this collection of Emily's songs, it would be this one because the depth, the storyline and the production is stellar.

The players on this album are John Evans, electric and acoustic guitar, Sam Powell, keys, Charles Cruz, bass, Tony Brown on guitar and Anthony Pummell on drums. Emily along with John Evans produced the album.

What's next for Emily Bell?

"I'm already working a new album. That's always what's next."

So, we can look forward to more from this rock Goddess who is empowering women everywhere with her honest and raw lyrics.

The CD release party for *Kali* will be held in Austin at 3Ten Austin City Limits Live, on April 29th and Emily promises a Dallas date on the books soon. You can visit Emilybell.com for more. ■



Breaking stereotypes and empowering others: Emily Bell



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