

SUREFIRE BROADCAST

Headquartered in Hammonton, a city right in the heart of southern New Jersey, Surefire Broadcast has taken root in what would not seem to be the most hospitable of environments when it comes to creating and playing pop music. Blueberries, on the other hand, thrive there, hence the title "Blueberry Capital of the World." But being within close proximity to Philly, and with their annual rockin' pool party (this year's lineup included 1Adam12, Lee Jae-Won, Creeping Weeds & Oppenheimer just to name a few), they still have plenty of opportunities to prove their mission, which seems to be providing quality pop to get your feet tappin', your ass shakin', or just getting a finely crafted song stuck in your head for a week straight. SFBC and blueberries, 2 fine exports of Hammonton, and both good for you!

First, let's get a little history of the band- When did SFBC form, and has everyone played at sometime prior to Surefire forming?

Lisa: Dan and I played previously in a band called The Angry Breed (from Jersey), who released a 7" record which was distributed on Cargo and Claire Records. Rodney played in several bands while residing in the Southwest. Rodney and I met in New Mexico where I had moved to pursue graduate studies in Dance Choreography. Surefire Broadcast began as a bedroom project in 2001 consisting of Rodney and I, after moving to Sea Isle City, New Jersey. Two years later, Dan joined in on drums and we began to play shows in the area. In 2005 we released a five-song ep titled "Live from the AM." Since then we have played shows in Jersey, New York, Philly, Oregon, Boston, Providence, & Maine.

Being from South Jersey, I find it to be pretty rare to come across an indie band that you know upon hearing for the first time, are quite unique to this neck of the woods...are you guys totally cool with being headquartered in these parts or have you ever entertained migrating to more hospitable environs for indie rock? I know you recently went out Portland to record, a place that sounds incredible right now for independent music...

Rodney: Being in New Jersey has been quite the experience. Because we are so close to the shore, I find the music scene revolves around a lot of cover bands. Unless you have Margaritaville in your 3 hour set list, chances are that you probably won't be gigging a whole lot around these parts. This is why we play mostly in Philly. Although the scene is a little more competitive, the people are more receptive to what we are doing. Lisa and I recently bought a house nestled between Atlantic City and Philadelphia, so I don't think that Surefire Broadcast will do any migrating for at least another 30 years.

I've had the opportunity to see SFBC twice, the second time at your recent pool party with the addition of a keyboardist for a song or two. Is this something that's going to be possibly evolving more in regards to the bands sound?

Dan: As mentioned earlier, Rodney was writing SFBC songs on a project basis. Those songs tended to consist of keyboard parts that, up until recently, were unable to be performed "fully" as a result of us only being a trio. So the addition of Amanda on keyboards has really been a quite a positive. As far as the bands sound evolving, that would certainly be the plan. The notion of us now being a quartet is very exciting.

Amanda: Hell yeah!

How do you guys feel about the state of indie pop these days? Is the sense excitement about music still there or has the appreciation changed since the days of buying everything on vinyl, with no iTunes or MySpace to help instantly promote a bands music?

Rodney: Times have certainly changed and some, like us, have benefited greatly from such things as MySpace and the Internet. These resources have been a great tool for networking friends, fans, and would be listeners. As far as I'm concerned, the medium to which music lives is irrelevant. It must only exist and be heard to be appreciated.

Lisa: I think there is a lot of great music out there, too much for me to even keep up with these days. Actually, most of the other bands we are friends with, we met via the Internet and MySpace. There is so much good music out there, and the Internet gives everyone access to it all, which is so amazing. I have to say I was always a music junkie and having unlimited access to all types of

music at any given time is a dream come true. Although, I will still buy an album on vinyl if it is available. I have a pretty large record collection and still nothing can compare to the warm sound of music on vinyl.

Dan: I'd have to say that, for me, the sense of excitement is not the same as what I once felt in days past. I don't seem to get as excited as I used to about the majority of music I'm hearing today. I'm very picky, just ask these guys. That being said, there is totally some really great music out there. It's just that the amount of crap that has to be dug through to find it has gotten larger over the years. I guess I'm just waiting for that next great band to fall from the skies...

I know you guys have played in various cities on the East Coast, but not sure if you've hit the road extensively..if not, is everyone keen on gettin'-the-van-and-doing-gigs-around-the-US thing during some upcoming summer?

Rodney: Each of us have so much going on in our lives outside of the band that touring for long periods of time is very difficult. Three of us are attending college and Lisa teaches high school. When we do hit the road, it's usually for no longer than ten days at a time. So far we've done a small tour up New England, several shows in NYC, and one show in Portland, OR. Although there seems to be many obstacles keeping us from doing long tours the chances of us hitting the road increase with every semester of college.

Lisa: I have two months out of the summer off from my full time job, so touring during this time would be ideal for me. Although I do teach camps and dance workshops in the summer, I would love for us to tour if the possibility fell into our hands. I would really like to play on the west coast along with Italy and Japan.

As mentioned earlier, I know the band was in Portland to record recently. How did that go, and how soon before any of the new recordings are released?

Rodney: While we were out in Portland, we managed to record five songs with Dusty from Rocketship. We mixed until it was time to go to the airport, but left before the mix was completed. As far as when it will be available, we're not sure. It's a work in progress.

Lisa: It was very exciting. Dusty is a hero of mine, so I felt honored to have him record us. We were in Portland for a short time, so we had to rush everything. But, it turned out pretty good considering the time crunch. Now we are just waiting for Dusty to work his magic on the mix. He actually did a tweaked out mix of "When I Need Someone" which sounds awesome. We are also hoping to release this with some other remixes he is in the process of creating. We just need a little help in this department. Anyone?

Who are some of the band's influences musically, maybe first collectively as a band and then maybe some of everyone's own as individuals?

Lisa: We all have such diverse influences. We like a lot of similar music, but cannot really agree upon a certain style or band that has collectively influenced our songwriting. I think that the Swirlies, The Lily's, Henry's Dress, and 60's girl pop have influenced me the most. Oh yeah, and somehow Italian pastries seem to have a way of influencing me creatively.

If not mentioned in the answer to the previous question, are there any new bands that have you guys have been listening to or been impressed by?

Rodney: I'm not sure if they're new, but I'm digging Architecture In Helsinki, Oppenheimer, and Jenny Lewis and the Watson Twins.

Lisa: Yeah, Oppenheimer, Stars, and Deerhoof are amazing! Oppenheimer just recently played our pool party in August, which we are very grateful for. Bar/None just asked us to play a show with them in Arlington VA at the end of the month, just in time for Halloween, which we are very excited for.

Can everyone in the band remember the first record they went out bought with their own money, embarrassing or not!?

Lisa: Wow! I had a lot of records as a kid. But I think the first one I actually walked into the store and paid for was a 45 of "Hey Mickey" by Tony Basil, which I still own.

Rodney: Ride Nowhere

Dan: Crap! Mine is totally lame. It was Quiet Riot's "Metal Health"

Amanda: Mine's the worst: Ace of Base The Sign!

I know you play a fair amount of your shows in Philly area because of the proximity, are there any specific bands from there that you guys like being booked with for gigs, whether it be friends of yours or bands you like, etc.?

Lisa: There are a lot of good bands coming out of Philly these days. Philly's music scene is so diverse. The thing I like most about it is that you wind up playing shows with so many different bands, from all different styles of music,





and somehow the bands seems to compliment each other. My favorite bands to play with are: Lee, Jae-Won, an experimental noise-rock outfit that is sure to rock your socks off, and Walker Lundee, jangle-pop-rock- and a bit country all in one. They are also some of the nicest guys on the planet I've ever met.

What about any memorable or favorite past performances?

Lisa: My favorite performance was a show we played this summer at the M-room in the Fishtown section of Philly. It was a going away party for our friends Doug & Kate who recently moved to Australia. We were one of 8 bands. Just being there, surrounded by all these people who had all met at some point through music, was a delight to be a part of.

Rodney: Plus our performance was almost flawless.

Amanda: And that was the first time I ventured onto the stage with the band. I had just learned Men at Work's "Down Under" a few hours before the show.

Dan: Mine would have to be an all-ages show we played a few months back. We somehow succeeded in making a roomful of kids dance. That has always been a dream of mine. Yeah!

Does the band have a routine or method when it comes to writing new songs or is it one of those things where it can happen spontaneously when everyone's together?

Rodney: Because we used to practice so infrequently, I would write a song on my 8-track. I would then give a copy to Dan and teach Lisa the parts. Lately, it's become more spontaneous, with Lisa writing a lot more.

I find SFBC to be a great and catchy name for the band. Is there a story or anything significant in the name itself you can tell us about?

Rodney: I actually heard two DJs use it in some on-air banter. The funny thing is that I wrote it down and a friend of mine asked if he could use it for a band that he was just starting up at the time. I didn't mind at all, but when one of their members was unable to pronounce it, the whole thing fell through. It was destined to be our band name.

Did blueberries or shopping at IDEAL have anything to do with Surefire taking root in Hammonton? I mean you've got the best of two worlds right in your own backyard...and any chance a song will be written about that wonderful berrie? Unfortunately, I don't think anyone can outdo the IDEAL jingle...



Lisa: Surefire Broadcast began when Rodney and I were living in Sea Isle City NJ, hence the song Seagulls was born there, and the lovely images of seagulls printed on our ep "Live From the AM". We set roots in Hammonton after Rodney and I purchased a home here two years ago. We didn't plan on winding up here, but we fell in love with our house and it's convenient location and a short distance to Philadelphia. Being the "Blueberry Capital of the World" just makes it extra special. I mean who doesn't like blueberries? I hope we do write a song about them someday. If not, we could always cover the IDEAL jingle. How about a noise-pop version? I mean it's time they made a new commercial already.

Rodney: It's almost inevitable that we write a song about where we live because it becomes a part of you.

Dan: I actually don't live there, but I'm constantly leaving items there in an effort to move in.

What are some of the band's favorite SFBC songs that you guys have written?

Lisa: My favorites are Inner Child and Some Seek While Some Find.

Rodney: When I Need Someone and The New Romantics.

Amanda: I like Hey Baby... it makes me wanna dance. And Some Seek. Now that's rock and roll.

Dan: The song that made we want to join the group was Miles Apart. After hearing it for the first time, it remained stuck in my head for a few days. It was just so catchy. Songs like that are one in a million. And for some reason I just love playing the drums on Inner Child.

What about cover's? Not sure if I ever heard SFBC play any but have you been know to throw one into a set? Or maybe guilty pleasures when you guys are rehearsing or warming up?

Lisa: We've covered Henry's Dress "You're My Radio One" and Teenage Fanclub's "Radio", to name a couple. We had a radio theme going on for a while, but we've sort of moved on from that.

Dan: We also did a pretty decent cover of Men At Work's "Down Under."

Any long term goals for band or things you hope to accomplish?

Rodney: We're looking for a proper recording and release. The ultimate goal would be to release an

album a year and do longer tours.

Dan: I haven't been to Europe yet, but I'm really hoping to be on tour when I go for the first time.

Thanks so much for you time guys & looking forward to seeing SFBC rock again soon!

Lisa: Thank you and thanks to Dagger for being a resourceful and constant source for quality music to indie music lovers everywhere. XO Dagger!



SFBC Desert Island Discs:

Lisa:

- Swirlies- What To Do About Them
- The Beatles- Revolver
- Henry's Dress- self titled on Slumberland Records
- Rocketship- A Certain Smile A Certain Sadness
- T.Rex- The Slider
- Lilys- A Brief History of Amazing Letdowns
- The Sea and Cake- Oui
- My Bloody Valentine- EPs
- Handsome Boy Modeling School- So...How's Your Girl?
- The Clash- The Story of the Clash!

Rodney:

- Pedro the Lion-Its Hard to Find a Friend
- Broken Social Scene-You Forgot in People Unrest-B.P.M.
- David Bowie The Rise and Fall of...
- Wu-Tang Clan- Enter the Wu-Tang-36 Chambers
- Fugazi-Margin Walker
- Ride-Nowhere
- The Sea and Cake-Nassau
- Flake Music-When You Land Here, It's Time to Return
- Milemarker-Frigid Forms Sell

Dan:

- Wedding Present: Sea Monsters
- David Bowie: Space Oddity
- Mouse on Mars: Vulvaland
- The Byrds: Sweethearts of the Rodeo
- The Smiths: Louder Than Bombs
- Beach Boys: Pet Sounds
- John Coltrane: A Love Supreme
- My Bloody Valentine: Loveless
- Jesus & Mary Chain: Psychocandy
- Velvet Underground:
- Velvet Underground & Nico

Amanda:

- Belle & Sebastian: If You're Feeling Sinister
- Belle & Sebastian: The Boy With The Arab Strap (I really like B&S)
- Aisler's Set: Last Match
- Henry's Dress: Bust 'em Green
- Neutral Milk Hotel: In The Aeroplane Over The Sea
- Liz Phair: Exile in Guyville
- Stereolab: Refried Ectoplasm
- The Raveonettes: Chain Gang Of Love
- Pavement: Brighten The Corners
- Ramones: Rocket To Russia

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