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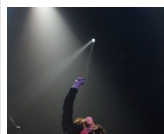
Lez Zeppelin cruise around NYC, lookin' for you!



Jeff Slate, NY Rock Culture Examiner

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Steph Paynes of Lez Zeppelin gets her Jimmy Page on

Credits: Courtesy Lez Zeppelin

July 12, 2011 (New York, NY) -- Steph Paynes takes her role as "Jimmy Page" in the all-girl tribute band [Lez Zeppelin](#) seriously. "We do this out of love. We do this not just to play the songs, but to try to reach that place that every musician knows is the pinnacle: Where you are playing off each other and you transcend the song."

Pretty serious talk from the member of a tribute band, but Lez Zeppelin are much more than just another band thrown together to play classic songs and make money.

Paynes started the band in 2004 and had the near-impossible task of putting together an all-girl line-up that could not just play, but could pull off a Zeppelin show. "We rehearsed for 6 months before I even let us out of the rehearsal space," Paynes told me recently. "I knew that as girls we would be judged harshly. But I also didn't want to do an injustice to this music that I truly love and admire."

Paynes flew candidates to New York from out West and Canada, looking for not just players but chemistry. The band's [2007 album](#) was solid, but its new album, a note-for-note version of "[Led Zeppelin I](#)" is a [huge artistic leap forward](#).

"We recorded on 2-inch tape and used the same gear Zeppelin used," Paynes said proudly. "We didn't cheat with fuzz boxes or anything."

The sounds on the album are of a band. A real band. Not just some tribute act.

And what of that legendary first 5 seconds? "Yeah, that's the whole thing," Paynes admitted. "We had to get that right."

They do.

Lez Zeppelin have always been a bit the darlings of the press. What rock writer wouldn't be taken by an all-girl, probably lesbian, band that can pull off the classic Zeppelin sound? But fate has shined on the band, too. After the 2007 London reunion of Led Zeppelin, rumours were flying about that the band would play Bonnaroo the following summer. Coincidentally, Lez Zeppelin were booked to play the festival.

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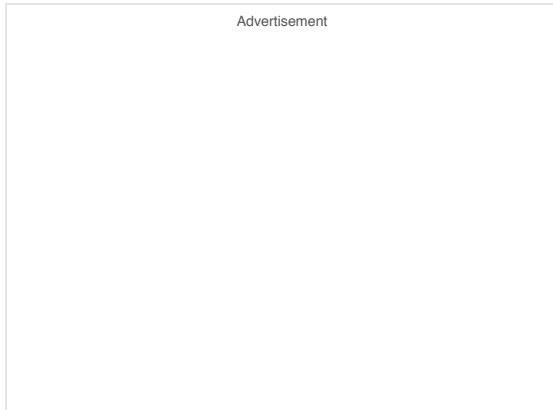
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When an enterprising reporter from Reuters mistook a "z" for a "d" in a press release Paynes spent a glorious few daysfielding calls from every major news outlet to correct the story and talk about her baby. And after all the hoopla, Lez Zeppelin's 2008 set at the festival was triumphant.



"I couldn't see anything," Paynes recalled. "It was just a sea of people; but it was dark. But I could hear them. It was amazing. We had them from the first note."

Lez Zeppelin will play a [cruise around Manhattan this Friday](#) and Amagansett's [Stephen Talkhouse next Saturday](#).

Will Paynes break out her "Jimmy Page dragon suit"? You'll have to show up to find out.

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By Jeff Slate
NY Rock Culture Examiner

Jeff Slate is the founder of the NYC-based band The Badge. He has interviewed and written about everyone from The Beatles and KISS to Monty Python...

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