

Lez Zeppelin Bowery Room



It is overwhelming that four women from New York City actually recreated the seemingly impossible synchronization of Led Zeppelin before a live audience. Lez Zeppelin is the Big Apple's all-girl tribute band that simply amazed 600 spectators in an intimate encounter at the end of January. Playing for uptown's Bowery Ballroom, the ladies didn't attempt to look exactly like England's legendary quartet. But Lez Zeppelin did have the style, majestic tone, and fierce stage presence full of intoxicating sexuality. The group is consistently inspired by the kings of stadium rock, but gives the work a rebirth, squeezing men's lemons from a new female perspective. The exhilarating cover-band gave rise to new meanings out of the 1960 and 70s classic lyrics without changing a verse. "We are the she-incarnation of them," claimed lead-singer Sarah McLellan. "And it becomes its own animal onstage."

In the Bowery Room, Lez Zeppelin begged, borrowed, and stole from Delta Blues legends. Contrasting the hardcore numbers, the ladies recreated the flamboyant lullaby "What Is and What Should Never Be." "Heartbreaker" led straight into "Living Loving Maid." During "Dazed and Confused," Steph Paynes stroked her guitar with a violin bow, as if she were Jimmy Page himself. Draped in a 1970's white suit sporting a dragon, Steph finger-picked her trademark double-necked Gibson.

Sarah bolted out orgasmic screams like only a woman or Robert Plant can during the hammering "Immigrant Song." During "Whole Lotta Love," the Australian native held an arm up with a limp wrist, another Zep-like mannerism, while showing off a flat belly in the vast outpouring of the blues. Mouths dropped as no one had ever seen a woman play "Moby Dick" like Helen Destroy. The woman's crashing cymbals and foot control was remarkable as she reproduced the original's colossal sound. It appeared as if she were punishing her drums with two sets of hands and four sticks. Wandering bass guitarist Lisa Brigantino fingered an electric piano during "Misty Mountain Hop." She moved to a mandolin, and they appeared just like the real Zeppelin, as the guitarists sat on stools for the soft acoustic number "Going To California." The multi-dimensional presentations of the 10-minute epic "Kashmir" and "The Ocean" were so good, so good.

The two set lists consisted of a fine mix of both radio-friendly tunes, along with a handful of unsung blues classics, such as

"Hey Hey What Can I Do" and "Black Mountain Song." Crowd favorites included the forth album's heavy riffs of "Black Dog" and the crashing hi-hat of "Rock And Roll." The audience was also serenaded with the melodic "Rain Song," as well as folk-styled guitar licks of "Over The Hills And Far Away." Listeners sang each of the familiar choruses over Steph's heartfelt solos. True, viewers in New York were denied any pop material from *In Through The Out Door*, but thankfully there was no "Stairway." "We'll all come together and go off with blistering improvisations during a complex number like 'Dazed And Confused,'" said Steph. "That magic is never rehearsed."

In my life, I have only imagined experiencing the thunderous reverb of Zeppelin. I couldn't fathom such a spectacle, the queens of all my dreams, tearing up a small club. But thanks to the women, I'm much obliged. The musicianship it takes to re-enact the greatest live music to ever tour is simply phenomenal. The women's recreation of Zeppelin material is dynamic and passionate, as their live show represents the monsters of rock on stage with authenticity.

Helen confirmed that it is always warming to play at home in the city after being so busy on the road. Hence, Lez Zeppelin put on a mind-blowing show outpouring of the finest rock ever performed. "We started off the new year with eight gigs throughout ski-resorts in Colorado, Idaho, and Wyoming in 10 days," she said. The precision found at a Lez Zeppelin concert will knock your ass onto the killing floor.

Lez Zeppelin hopes to round the world after rambling through Europe this summer. "There are no limits to what we can do as a traveling band," Sarah said. Although none of the artists have actually seen Zeppelin live, they anticipate meeting Jimmy and Robert on the road. And now is their time. Their time is now.

