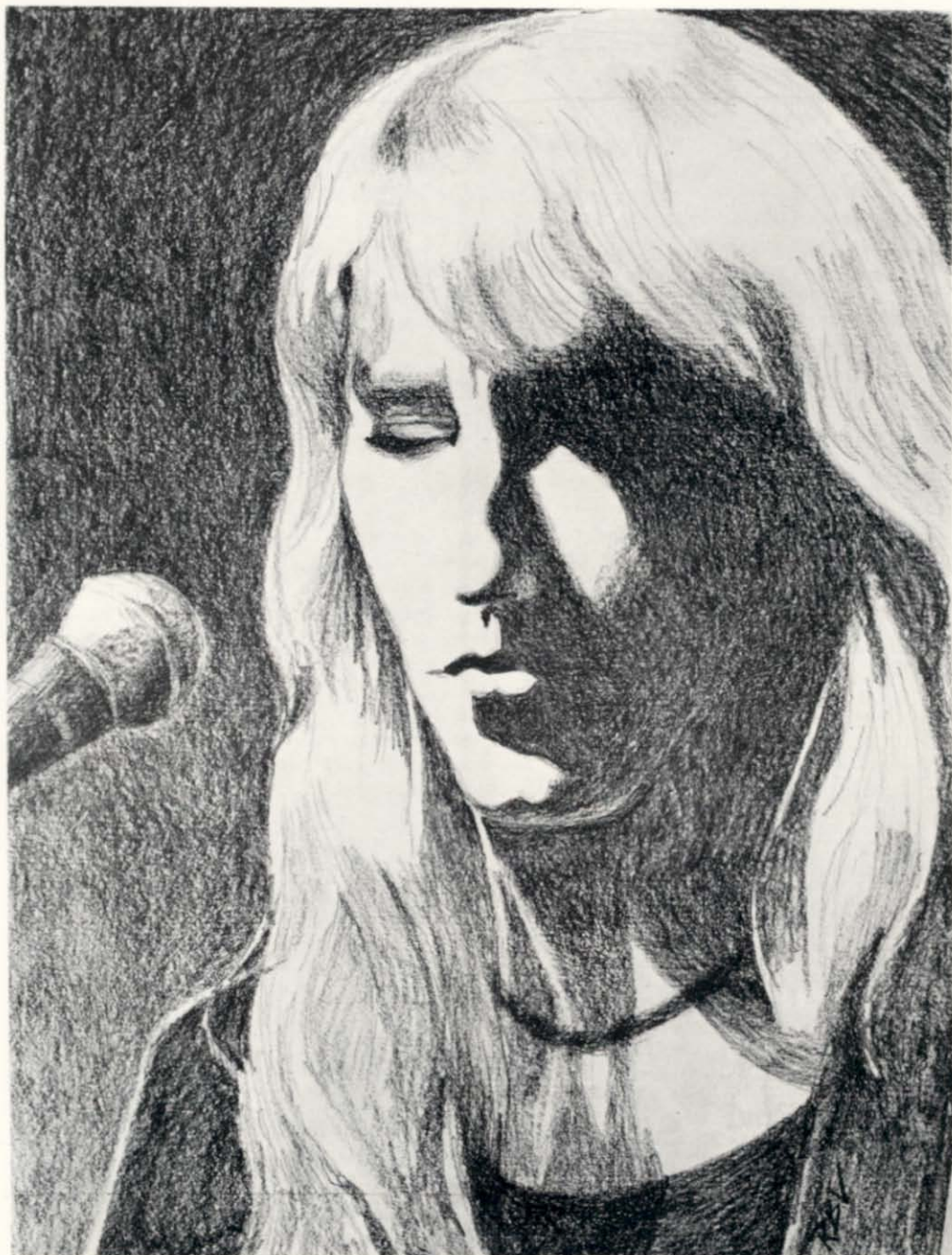




RHODEWAYS



Summer 1996 The International Happy Rhodes Medium Issue 9



The Happy Medium . . .

Thanks to the powers that be, the summer issue remained a summer issue. Thanks also to all of you who sent in your resubscriptions. Every summer, unfortunately, *Rhodeways* loses more than half its members to expirations (since many of you all joined at the same time), and *Rhodeways'* only financial support is **you** . . . Unfortunately, printers and postal services do not accept Visa. When your subscription expires (your last issue is indicated on your address label) please renew as soon as you can if you would like your subscription to continue. Postcard campaigns to remind everyone to resubscribe are an additional \$ *yike!*

This seems like a good time to mention our second readers survey, which is in this issue and contains some important questions regarding the 'zine. Please, please, a thousand times please, a string of pleases across the cosmos, PLEASE complete the survey and accept our autographed bribe to tempt you to do so (the survey is on page 4)!

As for the ultra-gracious, thank you oodles to all you crazy donating people! I have recently received a few monetary boosters in addition to numerous computers! I bow to Randy Stevens of Orem, Utah and Bob Dreano of Suffolk, Virginia for their generousities. *Rhodeways* now has both a Compaq and Macintosh. Which brings me to bigger and better news: ***Rhodeways* now has an e-mail address.** I am dancing a jig on a daily basis. I have already received cyber-greetings from some of you and it's a fuzzy kinda thang. So feel free to use e-mail, and I'll check my messages when I'm not busy playing Meat Gone Bad. The address is (surprise):

rhodeways@aol.com

But before I get any more cries of "I don't have a computer!" or "I don't have internet access!", let me stress that *Rhodeways* remains a magazine, and magazines are made of paper and are mailed in envelopes with stamps on them. *Rhodeways* is something to be held in your hands and read while lounging, not something to be read sitting erect at a desk paying by the minute. Which is not to say that *Rhodeways* will never have it's own page, but the paper-type pages will prevail. Now as soon as I get a printer, I can scrap this crappy word processor and throw away my glue stick.

In this issue we will provide some information on Happy's last few gigs, finish up the Matt Adams radio interview, and begin another fantastic Happy interview by Aranea of *PagaNet News*. And guess what? We are conducting our second *Rhodeways* reader's survey! *Just in case you are skimming the page, we wanted you to know. Please send in the survey!*

Thanks for reading and supporting! *And sending in the survey!*



Sharon Nichols
Editor



RHODEWAYS

Contributors

Front cover art: R. Bart Vinoré
Photos p. 4, 9, 15, 16: Courtesy of Aural Gratification
Photo p. 7: Courtesy of PagaNet News
Photo p. 11: Sharon Nichols

Thanks be unto: H., K., Randy Stevens, Bob "Maskman" Dreano, Bear and Drema Baker, Matt Adams, Bob Brown, and Larne Pekowsky. Welcome, Crusty!

Hey! Check out these . . .

<http://miso.wwa.com/~vickie/happy/faq.html>
<http://miso.wwa.com/~vickie/happy/happy.html>

h_aPpY-n_i_nG_s

Happy Rhodes Performances

These are the latest updates:

5/9-10 Tin Angel, Philadelphia, PA -- 4 shows
7/7 Tinker St. Cafe, Woodstock, NY -- 1 show
8/10 The Botton Line, New York, NY-- 2 shows
10/12 The Tin Angel, Philadelphia, PA -- 2 shows
10/25 Troy Music Hall, Troy, NY -- 1 show

We are excited about Happy's upcoming performance at the prestigious 1000 seat Troy Music Hall which is notorious for it's wonderful acoustics and classical performances. This will be a special show with lots of new surprises. See Happy from a box seat! Reserve your \$15 ticket at <http://www.ticketmaster.com> or call the venue at (518) 273-0038.

Happy Demo/New Album Plans

Happy is currently putting the final touches on a 3 or 4 song demo which will be sent to major record labels upon completion. There have been several labels to express a great interest in hearing Happy's new material and this project has been the main focus at Aural Gratification for the past few months. Two of the songs to be included on the demo are (tentatively) "How It Should Be" and the song Happy refers to as "Jork". These will be live recordings that will include Kevin Bartlett and Carl Adami, not the studio versions that will later appear on the new album. The new album is all written and 80% of the music has been recorded.

The Latest From Echoes

Echoes, a radio program that seems to be mentioned more and more in our pages, has once again done Happy justice in a second promotional video containing a live cut of "Save Our Souls" (the first *Echoes* video we mentioned contained the song "Temporary and Eternal"). This second video has recently prompted phone calls to Aural Gratification from

Sony and Miramar. In addition, *Echoes* is in the process of producing 20,000 copies of a CD to support public radio and "Temporary and Eternal" will be included on the album. This album will include many major artists. For more information, please contact *Echoes* at (610) 458-0715.

Radio Programs

Happy made a live radio appearance at WXPB in Philly on May 9 and another another on Acoustic Breakfast at WDST Woodstock on July 7th.

Happy Rhodes Collectibles On The Auction Block!

The following items are up for grabs:

Guitar, Aspen, Les Paul Copy (w/case) -- This is one of Happy's personal guitars and was used on "Perfect Irony", "Ecto" and other songs from her early days. It is in excellent condition and you may opt to have the guitar autographed if you wish at no extra cost. Bids begin at \$150.00.

Original Happy Rhodes painting -- This is one of Happy's weird creations. It is 20" x 24" and bids begin at \$500.00.

For the truly interested, photos of both the guitar and painting can be viewed on the web at <http://miso.wva.com/~vickie/happy>. Phone in your bids to Aural Gratification at (914) 679-4728 between September 2nd and 23rd. Good Luck!

Kevin to Headline at Pagan Festival

Kevin Bartlett will be performing Saturday, November 2 at the Yorktown Virginia Harvest Faire. This Festival will run from 10 a.m. to 12 midnight and will include competitions, vendors, food, a bonfire, music, and dancing. To register, contact Aranea at (757) 539-4523 or e-mail paganet@aol.com.

Let Me Know You All, Just Like I Know Myself

This is our second reader's survey. It is important to know about you and what you think. Some of these questions differ from those of the last survey. Please send your answers to *Rhodeways* no later than November 1st by faxing us at (914) 679-5795, mailing them to P.O. Box 1233, Woodstock, NY 12498, or e-mailing us at Rhodeways@aol.com. One lucky participant will be chosen at random to receive a flyer from the Woodstock Tinker Street Cafe show, autographed by Happy and the entire band. Thanks for your participation!

1. What is your name, sex, and age (optional)?
2. Are you an ectophile? (An ectophile is someone who subscribes to/participates in the Happy Rhodes electronic mailing list called *Ecto*)
3. Do you have an e-mail address? If so, please include it.
4. Would you like to be notified of all of Happy's performances? Just the ones in your area? Would you be willing to add one dollar to your subscription to pay for these notices? Would you like e-mail or postcards?
5. To help support printing costs, would you prefer that we temporarily:
 - a) change the paper quality or style of the 'zine? (i.e.: not use gloss stock, reduce number of pages, etc.)
 - b) charge a few more dollars per year?
 - c) put out issues less frequently? (i.e.: three times per year, though your subscription would still include four issues)
6. Have you seen Happy perform this year? Where? Comments?
7. When did you first begin listening to Happy? Comments? (If you answered this question in the first survey, you may disregard if you wish)
8. Name your top three favorite music artists or groups. (I know choosing three is difficult -- it's meant to be. Do not exclude Happy if she is one of your three. If it really hurts your brain to choose a godhead, skip the question and go eat a twinkie.)
9. What is your favorite Happy album? Favorite Happy song? Think hard.
10. Do you have any additional comments? Anything you want us to know? Any comments or questions for Happy? Any comments about god, family or country? Be nice, be weird, be yourself!



one for the rhode . . .

parts one & two

by Aranea

A few years ago, my husband and I were scanning some new compact discs at the local music store when I happened across one with a bizarre cover by an obscure artist named Happy Rhodes. As I listened, I was sure I could hear a whole group of people singing and I passed it on to a friend who was with us at the time. "You have to hear this," I told him. Instantly, he was hooked, as was I.

As it turns out, the host of voices I heard in the music emanated from one woman, and a rather petite one at that. Even now, when I know what wonders her voice can do, the vocal range she produces continues to astound me. It doesn't sound like a higher or lower Happy voice. It sounds like *someone else entirely*.

Recently, I had the good fortune to receive the gift of a ticket and a ride to one of her shows in Philadelphia. I immediately accepted. Through internet contacts, arrangements were made for us to actually meet her and conduct an interview for PNN and I began to look forward to meeting the bright, lively woman behind the voice.

I wasn't disappointed. From the moment Happy stepped onstage, she was *on*, charming us, teasing us,

making us laugh, making us think. She played her guitar, belting out the songs one right after another, pausing only to throw in a great one-liner or two from time to time; the ease with which she drew the audience into her own world was amazing. Her wit and intellect made even tuning moments enjoyable, while the atmosphere created by her personality and her music was truly magickal. If I was hooked on her songs before, I was a true Happy Rhodes fan after seeing her perform.

The next day, armed with a tape recorder, a camera, and an assistant, I met Happy in person. She came in calmly with her teacup, her honey bear, and her wit. Words will never convey the reality of Happy's energy . . . she had faces and voices for every occasion. Sometimes, it was like speaking to several people at once, not to mention the unexpectedness of some of her comments and replies. Yet her serious side came through strongly too, as we discussed the difficulties of being a woman in the music world which is largely dominated by men; the difficulty of integrating the dark aspects of oneself into a greater whole; reincarnation, and much more. Her frankness and keen insights kept me on my toes. The hour went by entirely too quickly!

Some of the questions we asked Happy were how she defines her own personal sacred space, what she does when she's feeling spiritual, and whether she uses music to help her get into the right state of mind.

"Yeah, I do [use music]. Every once in a while, I get into this space. I like to sit late at night, I mean late, *late* at night with no lights on, preferably when there's a moon out, and stare at the moon and remember how I was, in certain respects, when I was younger. It helps me a lot. There's one particular way that I used to be, where I feel like I had a lot of power in creating my own reality and changing my circumstances. There was a passion and a need and a desire that I used to have, just generally speaking. I could need or want something so badly that it would absolutely 100% happen."

So does she believe in magick?

"Yeah, basically I do. But I've let it get a little weak in myself throughout the years. I think I'm getting it back now. But amazing things have happened to me that I never thought would happen and I know it's because I needed it to happen."

When the question of religious paths came up, we

asked Happy if she has a name for her spirituality.

"No. But I have read a lot of Seth, and I usually use the phrase 'creating your own reality'. It seems to be a nice concise way of describing what I believe in. I believe that there could be an all-powerful entity that we're all a part of, although that conceptually is a bit vast for me to even ponder, just to spend time thinking about. So I kind of just feel secure and safe in saying [in a Happy voice], 'Yeah, ok, could be.'"

●○○●○○●○○●○○●○○●
PNN: *Why don't you tell me about the women's issues of being in music. I know it's got to be rough. First of all, you're intelligent; second of all, you're pretty, and I know you don't want to necessarily use that, like a lot of people do.*

Happy: Thank you. I have never in my life considered myself pretty. So I thank you very much for that. And it's a very important thing to have as a woman in this society. I'm probably a lot better looking now than I was when I was younger, in my formative years, especially in high school. I had short hair and braces and I looked like a guy, except for the (gesturing toward chest). I looked like a boy. And I was funky looking. Boys didn't want to have anything to do with me. It kind of taught me bad lessons really early, you know. When I was little, it was also impressed

upon me that if you're a woman, you better not get fat! Even my father, who was the kindest soul on the face of the earth, jokingly made fun of his wife for being fat and stupid. It was a joke, but he didn't realize. She'd leave the room and he did it to crack us up. There were three kids in the family. We'd be like (making faces, laughing) "Oh, Dad, that's really funny." She was our stepmother and he did it to buddy up with us. She knew he did it from time to time and she let him do it. So she was a really weak role model for me. I kind of learned, even from my dad and brothers, that if you get fat, they start making fun of you; you know, flat chested, everything else that boys growing up do to girls, so I kind of learned that being good looking was the most important achievement that a woman can make.

PNN: *I think we're all taught that, from the time we're (holding hand about 2' off the floor).*

Happy: Yeah, we are. I'm not beyond it because I won't let myself get fat and generally won't leave the house without at least some makeup on. So I'm still going along with it to a great extent. Because of my knowledge of why I have these beliefs and why I feel this way, I have this compassion for all women, especially women who get implants and go that whole route. You see them on the street and you just want to go "oh, god" -- you know,

you want to pull them aside and go, "Please stop, you know you don't have to do this." But it's not something where you can just go (waving hand) "You have self-esteem now! Go upon your merry way . . . be strong."

PNN: *So what's it like being a woman in such a competitive business as music?*

Happy: I just found this particular aspect of the music business out recently, as a mater of fact. I just learned that men in the industry, when there's a woman who's up and coming who is obviously talented, men seem to gravitate toward them and want to be their guru or this svengali type thing, you know. For some reason, men are saviours. I mean it's just a little female-male thing, but men want to rescue the woman because [she] can't possibly take her talent to the next step. They do it to me all the time. In other words, women are generally good singers, you know. They're like (Happy voice) "Oh, she's got a lovely voice" and the man comes in and says "Okay, here's what we should do now. I'll show you how to do this, don't you worry. You sit there and you can sing," and most of them are not that blatantly sexist about it but they do it to me all the time. As an aside, Kevin's [Happy's S.O.] not one of them. But I meet men all the time who are constantly telling me, "I'll show you what to do," and

I'm like (affecting voice again, playing with hair like a bimbo), "Really? Ok, coz" (voice back to normal) It's bad, it's really bad. At the same time, I appreciate all the help that I get. It's not like getting help from a man is automatically a bad thing, but they all seem to think that a woman can't produce herself. We can't possibly fathom any kind of technical aspect of our lives. We can only do the creative emotional thing. It's bull. In fact, I'm one of the most analytical and rational [people], just in terms of my thought processes. They're logical and analytical probably to a fault. I go over everything, and over and over. I'll be obsessing over things and Kevin will just have to sit there and listen to it. I go, "Don't you think? Don't you think? Because if it happened this way then it should happen this way." And he's like "Yeah, Hap. Mmm hmm."

PNN: *You do all the computer, the midi and everything while you're mixing, right?*

Happy: Yes, I do. I program all my stuff. Not always, but certainly these days I do. I program all my stuff and I mix stuff and engineer. I'm not real good at any one of those things yet, you know, but I don't need anybody's help. I'm to a point where I can do it all on my own. *Building The Colossus* is my most hated album. I'll regret that album 'till the day I die.

PNN: *Why?*

Happy: Because that's when I experienced the weakest darkest moments in my life; I didn't take control of the mix. I was working with a new engineer and new equipment that I only saw and never used for 9 days out of my life . . . it was a SSL board, an automatic, automated computer run board. So now I'm in a position where I'm working with this guy who's perfectly nice, I mean, we're great friends to this day, but I assumed that he knew everything better than I did because he was in his environment and I was going to stay in mine. I didn't want to overstep my bounds so much so, you know, I wanted to be so congenial and likeable and easy to work with that I didn't assert myself for the things that I really wanted and needed. I hate the album because of it.

PNN: *If you could go back*

and redo it, would you? or would you just toss it?

Happy: I suppose I wouldn't redo it, because I imagine I learned incredible things from that experience. I hated having gone through it, but I'm glad I know what I know about it now. So I suppose I'd just leave it the way it is, as a reminder, "Don't be a wimp, Happy!"

PNN: *You're working on another one right now, by the way . . .*

Happy: Yeah, I can redeem myself, hopefully.

PNN: *Do you feel that way about it, like "Oh good, now I can make some changes?"*

Happy: Yeah, tentatively I feel that way. I'm not gonna say that until it's done and I think it's really good. I can't just go around redeeming myself, because



it could be crap, you know. (laughter) Maybe I really don't know what I'm doing. I think the most important thing that I want to get across to women is that we all seem to grow up with role models who we're fooled into thinking are strong. They're not really strong at all. You know, [some] female role models. The fact that [we] even use sexuality as a thing of power -- it's something we all have, you know what I mean? For me, it's like there are so many aspects of a woman that we can use for power, personal power, not power over other people or anything.

PNN: *Empowerment.*

Happy: Yeah. Why would sexuality be our first choice? And it always is, it's like well, we can control men, we can get what we want, we can blah, blah, blah . . . to me, that's useless. Yeah, ok, you can do that, that's nice. Young women need to know that they can do things or else they're not gonna try. I'm a perfect example of that. There are a lot of things it took me a long time to even try doing because I felt it wasn't my place. I never saw a woman doing it before. It's like driving. Sometimes you get the kind of thing where the woman automatically never drives the car, when the couple goes together somewhere. She doesn't drive. He's always in the driver's seat. You see it in commercials usually; she's just reading the map. That's an example

of how we're barraged with imagery, images of what we can and can't do. What we can't do supposedly is clearly more vast. Women need to see other women doing things, technical things, things that are generally considered male dominated genres.

PNN: *Even today, I'm still seeing these Shake and Bake commercials where the woman is dressed like it's the 50's and the kids are sitting around the table eating and the husband comes home from work and he's eating and she's just (making face of heavenly adoration).*

Happy: My life is fulfilled!

PNN: Yes.

Happy: Which I'm sure is a lovely thing, but . . .

PNN: *Well, there's a place for that, but not all women are like that, and unfortunately they're teaching little girls that that's how it should be.*

Happy: Can we talk Pocohontas? Pocohontas whose waist is like this (holding hands with fingers touching) and she is gorgeous, beautiful. I mean she's just a drawing . . . but Pocohontas, and the Little Mermaid, and the little girls want to be princesses because in all these things they keep teaching our children . . . see, I get crazy about this. Everybody's like "Oh, you have to see *The Little Mermaid* it's so cute." It's

like *Babe* "Oh, you *have* to see *Babe*, it's so cute." I'm a big animal freak too, and I don't wanna see a pig talking. Pigs don't talk. They have a different consciousness; 'course the rest of America doesn't seem to realize this.

PNN: *What I really think is cool is that they're coming out with dolls now for little girls that have a more real body proportion.*

Happy: Yeah, but you can't override Saturday morning cartoons. And I watch Saturday morning cartoons, so I see all the ads for Mattel's Barbies and all the things that they have and they're all just gorgeous and it all involves getting a man. You know what I mean? All the accessories and stuff like that. It's polluting young girls. That's okay, as long as there's stuff to counterbalance it. And there's not enough stuff right now.

PNN: *So you feel confident in yourself, and your abilities in the music industry?*

Happy: Absolutely. I feel steadfast most of the time, but it's amazing how often I find myself doubting and double checking.

PNN: *Do you feel that that has changed for you? I can see a difference in your music, and I would say there's a tremendous difference in the strength of person you have now and the strength of person you had [when you first began].*

Happy: Yeah. I hit a change in 1987. Before [that] -- this is really strange -- but I think I must have been under the impression that when I had an opinion or a point of view it was always emotional crap and I always regretted having said anything I ever said around a man because, you know, especially an argument or any type of face-down confrontation. Afterward, I would always feel like, "Oh, man, what was I thinking? I am such an emotional . . . he's right, he has to be right. They have to be right." I used to beat myself into the ground thinking, "Please don't talk around men, 'cause you're an idiot." Then one day I woke up and I just said boink! I swear to god it actually feels that way. I just woke up one morning and I was a completely different person. My eyes opened in bed and I went "Fuck you." (laughter) It was like "Hey! That felt pretty damn good." I just went around that day [singing] "fuck you, fuck you," just getting used to it you know.

PNN: *What's the most comprehensive piece of advice you can think of to give other women who are trying to break into a field or who are trying to gain respect in a field that is mostly male dominated? Any field.*

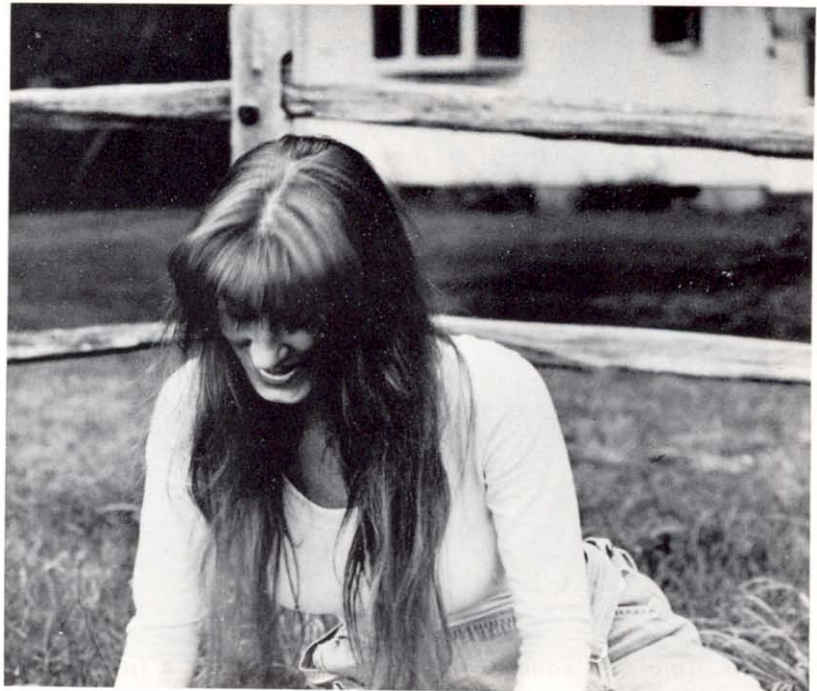
Happy: The strongest thing that we have is instinct. And I guess the best piece of advice I can give is to adhere to it, because I don't

sometimes. I let a lot of shit get in the way and I let a lot of men's opinions get in the way especially in the industry, not just music. I can't tell you how many people know "the right way" that it should be done. Whatever it is you're doing, fifteen other people around you know a better way. They know your path better than you do. You just have to adhere to your intuition, trust your path, whatever your gut tells you to do, you have to trust it. no matter how long Joe Schmoe has been in that business, no matter how much experience he has. It's worked for him -- that's well and good. But you have to trust your path. It's the only way you're going

to respect yourself in the long run. Other people will respect you too."



Aranea is the publisher/ editor of Paganet News, a pagan newspaper published 8 times per year. PNN focuses on Wicca and other earth-centered spiritual belief systems. Parts one and two of this interview were originally printed in the Litha '96 and Lughnasadh '96 issues. Copies of PNN are \$3 each and can be obtained through Paganet News, P.O. Box 61054, Virginia Beach, VA 23466. Phone/Fax: (804) 539-4523. Internet: paganet@aol.com & http://vabch.com/pnn





happy gigs ahoy



A lighthearted and happy review . . . by Sharon Nichols

The Tin Angel, May 9 and 10th, 1996, Philadelphia, PA

Can't say much about May 9th because I wasn't there. But hey, she's always good. May 10th was pretty dang cool nonetheless. The band consisted of Kevin Bartlett on guitar and effects, Carl Adami on bass, and Happy on nylon string guitar. Happy stepped out barefoot in a black top and sarong. The mood was set with a candelabra which was sorta creepy, I must say. Happy's mother, Danny Robbins, attended the show and sat to the right of the stage. The show began with "Words Weren't Made For Cowards", after which Happy made a comment about the heat putting the instruments out of tune, but hopefully not her voice. One from the archives followed, "Take Me With You", which contained some fancy guitar work from both Kevin and Happy. Happy commented on how she could not be a joke a minute this time because of the heat and would have to resort to being drab (what a lie). This would seem to indicate that I had missed some sort of Comedy Central act the evening before. Damn. Next, the band performed a yet different version of "Save Our Souls" and her famous bulgarian tune "Lay Me Down", which earned Happy the honorary title of Queen of the Macabre and made me wish for a bigger candelabra and some beer. The next tune was Freddie Mercury's "Lily of the Valley", which she claimed was not one of her own tunes, but she still loved it anyway. Ahem . . . This tune was done solo acoustic and lead right into "Possessed", which goes without saying. The song that followed is one that she lovingly refers to as "Jork", mainly because when storing it on her computer, she named it the first thing she could think of. A Bjork CD lay next to her, so basically she dropped the "B", gave it a temporary (not eternal) title, and left it to the audience to work it out on their own. "Jork" is a peppy new song, and by far my favorite of all I have recently heard live. After "Jork" came what seems to be a new segment in Happy concert lore: sticking a tape recorder in someone's face for what could be an eternally glorious or embarrassing experience. After selecting someone from the audience, she asked that person to tell quickly what their fondest memory was. She then played a small section of the voice recording into Kevin's guitar by placing it against the strings. This snippet was quickly recorded into a looping device, and by stepping on a pedal, it was incorporated into the next tune, "The Issue Is", with the phrase repeating itself in the background (a very cool gimmick that would be implemented at the next two gigs as well). Following "The Issue Is", the band performed "Phobos" and "Summer", after which Happy wished her mom a Happy Mother's Day. "If So" was the final number, aside from a rousing encore of "When The Rain Came Down."

For the second set, "Happy added "Collective Heart", "Hold Me" and a beautiful rendition of Peter Gabriel's "Here Comes The Flood". Happy had completely regained control of her comedy act by jesting about food in her teeth, singing in the wrong key, giving her water bottle to a choking audience member, blurting out "I have no idea" during a lost lyric moment, and asking that someone else feed the fire for a change (when asked to perform her legendary tune). It was a stupendous affair!

Tinker Street Cafe, Woodstock, NY, July 7, 1996

This was a special night, owing to the fact that it didn't involve any driving. However, I didn't get to see much of the show because the club was small and packed, and I was on the patio gabbing with friends and stuffing my face. I guess that doesn't make for a caliber review. Happy, however, looked darling in knee socks. Kelly joined the throng this time and added to the band by way of a little percussion and, as always, astounding

backing vocals. The show, which consisted of one set, included "Look For The Child", "Words Weren't Made For Cowards", "Collective Heart", "Take Me With You", "Save Our Souls", the new tune "How It Should Be", "Lay Me Down", "Possessed", "Jork", "The Issue Is", "Phobos", "Summer", Duran Duran's "Come Undone", "If So", Crowded House's "Don't Dream It's Over", "Flash Me Up", Peter Gabriel's "Here Comes The Flood", and "When The Rain Came Down". It was a more casual gig, but blue-ribbon nonetheless. It was especially nifty that Happy's Woodstock neighbors got another taste of her talents.

The Bottom Line, New York City, August 10th, 1996

August 10th . . . the date always makes me want to shriek because it sticks in my mind as the date of my first Donny and Marie concert. Hopefully, that is all now washed away after seeing Happy and Company perform at the Bottom Line. Happy's performance was again enhanced by the talents of Kevin, Carl and Kelly.

As seems to be the trend with Happy performances these days, she bedazzled the audience with her wit once more. Since she had just savored another birthday, several of her admirers passed her gifts between songs. The first set included "Look For The Child", "Collective Heart", "Take Me With You", a new song entitled "Tragic", "Save Our Souls", "How It Should Be", "Lay Me Down", "Possessed" (in which she offered for one time only the opportunity for any dancing at one of her shows), "The Issue Is", "Jork", "Phobos", "Come Undone", "When The Rain Came Down", "Flash Me Up", and "Summer". For the second set, she added "If So" and "Here Comes The Flood".

What made this show extra special was that Happy headlined the prestigious Bottom Line for the first time, sharing the stage with the ghosts of pre-megastars such as Peter Gabriel and Bruce Springsteen. Happy was asked to perform at the Bottom Line (many artists have to do the asking) and the owner, Alan Pepper, wants to book more of Happy in the future, stating that he is excited to be involved in something so musical and creative. Of course, prophecy tells us she may need Radio City instead. After all, who said there was Life on Mars? ♥





THESE GLORIOUS SONGS



The interview that follows is the final portion of the three part interview with Happy conducted by Matt Adams of 106.2 WCR in England. This portion of Matt's three hour radio program covers the era from *Equipoise* to *Building The Colossus*.

How do you think the rapid growth in technology will effect the human psyche?

I think the growth in technology is an incredible thing. I also think it's a physical thing. In terms of affecting the human psyche, I think growth and technology affect how we live our physical lives. Although, I believe our psyche is our psyche, period. I think we're all on this earth to accomplish things for ourselves. And regardless of what the technology of the time is, we're still going to accomplish those things.

After *Equipoise*, you released *Rhodesongs*, which is a sort of compilation CD of old Happy material with some recorded in acoustic format. Why?

I released *Rhodesongs* because it was an artistic way of making a very smart marketing move. That's a really nice way of putting it. I realized that it would be a good idea to make a certain type of album that was very easy to listen to because some of my music can be extremely challenging to the listener and for radio formats, which is very important. So I felt the need to release an album that showed a body of work that was on the easier side of listening so that people could hear cuts from all of my past albums. They could get to know who I was as an artist and also make it easily accessible to the listener and to radio.

There's also one new track, "Summer".

I'm very fond of "Summer", only because I think for me it captures how having a crush on somebody feels. And I don't want to say "love" because

I think love encompasses a lot of things. Love can be how you feel after you've been with someone for twenty years. What you feel is an intense love; there's a bond there. But there's something different about initial love, about really yearning for somebody that you're not with yet. And I called it "Summer" I guess because it brings memories of certain summers of my life where the air is really sweet and its warm and you can be outside at night and not be cold, not need a coat. So that's why I called that "Summer" and I think it a special song . . . for me anyway.

<On "Ashes To Ashes">

I think it's basically a fluke that I recorded "Ashes To Ashes." There was a time in my life when I insisted that I would never record a cover tune or do cover versions live. I think basically that came from me being so prolific. I never really felt a need to cover anybody else's material. But I was just playing around one day and I was listening to "Ashes To Ashes" and I thought that it would be a really good song to do; one, because I was very influenced by David Bowie, and two, because the song musically pulls me. Obviously, the lyrics were a little psychedelic. It's not anything that I could personally relate to, but musically I was so drawn to this. I just thought it was beautiful and I really wanted to do my take on it.

At the moment, you're signed to your own independent company in the U.S. Do you plan to continue along that track or would you like to sign up with a major company?

I don't really have any distribution in the U.K. right now but as with all things, there are possibilities. I think that's definitely going to happen in the near future. In the meantime, there is direct mail order. If people need to get my stuff they can by writing to Aural Gratification at P.O. Box 380, Bearsville, NY 12409 and just request a catalog. It will be sent off to you immediately.

<On "Hold Me">

"Hold Me" was more me coming to terms with the fact that I needed support. I really needed a shoulder to lean on, because what has happened with the years is that I've become very emotionally independent. I've really always believed that I had all the self-confidence in the world to keep me going and I was strong, and this and that. But I came to realize that I needed a break from that once in a while. It's really nice to be able to reach out and say "Right now, I want to be weak, I really need to rest; can you please be strong for me?"

"Just Like Tivoli" is dedicated to the children of war. What was the trigger that set you off about writing this song?

"Just Like Tivoli" is a really important song for me. I didn't write it for the children of war; it is **dedicated** to the children of war, but that's more of an afterthought. I wrote it about an experience I had personally in my childhood that I likened to the children of war. And that is that when I was young, my existence was filled with fear; it was very unsafe. Without going into any detail about that, suffice it to say that there weren't many days when I could just play and feel comfortable playing as a child without any cares or worries or fears. In the song, I refer to a day in this town called Tivoli, which is located very close to where I am now. I was taken there as a child on a hot summer day, and it was a very joyful and peaceful experience. The

whole day was just beautiful, sunfilled and warm, and I could play and there were no cares and there were no worries, and it filled my heart with such joy. As an adult, it makes me sad because I think about all the other days of my childhood that weren't just like that. And so after the fact, I likened that to children of war. I thought, well that must be what their existence is like. For instance, children in Bosnia can't just go out and play, because a sniper could shoot them dead in an instant. This is a very chaotic unsafe existence.

I have to admit that the track "Dying" has got me puzzled. Just what or who is this song about, and who are Oxy and Eze?

"Dying" to me illustrates another irony in my life, and that is that I am a very solitary person. What I have found is that if I allow myself to go on for too long being that reclusive, then I become very used to it; it makes me very socially inept. I can't have that because I need people. I think basically that's what this song is about, me coming to the realization that I really do want people in my life. I really need other human beings. Also, the song illustrates the worries that I have, the fears that I have that if I'm not pulled out of my shell, then I won't come out voluntarily. So, thus, the chorus of my crying, "Can't you see I'm dying?" To me it's a sort of emotional death, being that secluded. The references to Oxy and Eze are [to] my nephews.

<On "If I Ever See The Girl Again">

"If I Ever See The Girl Again" is about me pondering what it would be like if I, as an adult, could go back in time and encounter myself as a child. The me that was a child was a terrorized sort of person. I was a tortured little soul. If I could go back as myself, I would try to tell that little girl how wonderful life is and how many possibilities there are,

so that she could feel a glimmer of hope. I remember that when I was a child, hope was not something that was abundant in my life; it was something that was very hard for me to muster up in my soul. It certainly would have benefitted me to get a visitation from a future self, letting me know that everything was going to be really cool.

"Down, Down" . . . that was a song inspired by the film The Hunt For Red October, wasn't it?

"Down, Down" was heavily influenced by The Hunt For Red October, lyrically speaking. It was also influenced by Das Boot, which was a very intense movie. Musically, it's kind of an old song. It's more like "Collective Heart" in that it was written right after Warpaint was released, or right around that time, in the 1990-91 era. The song was really about how fascinated I am by man's capacity for technology and how we don't always use our technology for the best means. Submarines are a good example because in my mind, it's amazing that we figured out how to move around like sea creatures under the water and for the most part these vehicles are used for war. So it's kind of an interesting clash of ideals there.

<On "Big Dreams, Big Life">

"Big Dreams, Big Life" is about how I realize that I create my own reality. When I was writing that song, I was going through a time where it looked as though things were going to happen in my life that are very scary, yet they are things that I've always wanted to happen in my life. It's about me looking at all the possibilities of my life and coming to terms with the fears that go along with those possibilities. It has nothing to do with not being able to beat the system and just going with the flow. It has everything to do with [knowing that] if you're going to create your own reality, then you're going to have to conquer all the fears that go

along with that. You have to be prepared. I have to be prepared. And that's not very easy for me because I am such a solitary person. I'm in the kind of industry that requires me to be very "out there" and very sociable, so it's a strange thing that I've done to myself. But I love this; I love what I do. So if I want this in my life, I need to come to terms with those other aspects that go along with it.

"Glory" is something of a girls-club song, isn't it?

"Glory" is really cool because I wrote it during a time when I was realizing the amount of accomplishments that women have. Up to that point, I basically was under the very wrong impression that all of the great things that have been created in this world, all the things that gain respect are created by men. Now don't get me wrong, I never thought that was a good thing necessarily, but I was always misled to believe that women just aren't very creative, they're not inventive, they're not doing great things. And then I started opening myself up to that possibility and as soon as I did that, I started becoming aware. Right under my nose were all these women who were doing these incredible things, and I was so inspired and filled with joy because of that. I never really gave women the benefit of the doubt, and that's very odd, because I'm one. If I don't acknowledge it in other women, then what about myself? I got into this habit of doing just that, of acknowledging other women's accomplishments. And they're great; they're incredible. I think it's really important for women to open their eyes and look around them and see what other women are doing. We all need to know that we have that kind of potential. I don't think that's really encouraged in us. An example of that would be engineering, I mean sound engineering. How many women are encouraged to do that? How many women are encouraged to pick up an electric guitar

and be in a rock band? You do see that occasionally, but it's still a bit of an oddity in this society. I think it's just so cool that more and more women are doing it. I think we really need to support each other in that area.

Thanks very much Happy for taking the time to talk to us. Tell us what does the future hold for you now?

Currently I writing for my next release; I'm not setting a release date for it right now because I'd like to take my time on it. When I released Building The Colossus, I did it in a very quick fashion, and in retrospect I would have liked to have taken a little bit longer on that album. So for this next one, I'm going to try to do that. There are some other things in the works. I'm still playing out live right now, in the United States, and there might be some other releases on Aural Gratification, one of which that I might particiate in, but I don't want to talk too much about that now. Basically I'm looking forward to my next release.

Happy Birthday Happy August 9



Rhodeways is a non-profit organization which exists solely to promote Happy Rhodes and has the full support of Ms. Rhodes and Aural Gratification. Subscriptions are \$15 annually in the U.S. and \$18 overseas (U.S. Funds only). *Rhodeways* is published quarterly and welcomes correspondence, stories, photos, and artwork. Issues #2 - 8 are available for \$5 each; autographed issues are \$10 each. *Rhodeways* is copyrighted 1996.

Rhodeways

P.O. Box 1233
Woodstock, NY 12498
Phone/Fax: (914) 679-5795
E-mail: Rhodeways@aol.com

Member of:

