

**DRESDEN DOLLS**

Strange Conversation

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photo by Kelly Davidson

There is no one certain element to the Dresden Dolls that makes them a refreshing combination of musical integrity and rock 'n' roll. Vocalist and piano player Amanda Palmer pounds out the Goth/cabaret-infused melodies that float along her ardent vocals while drummer Brian Viglione, the band's only other member, sets the shifting speed. Each song is a contrast to the others, yet still relates to the music as a whole. The Dresden Dolls have composed a novel.

"The songs are so eclectic and we have so many different styles of music involved with our live show," Palmer says. "Any given song can pigeonhole the band in a different genre."

Palmer maintains a direct connection with fans by updating her Web site diary periodically. She's open and enthusiastic about her communication, whether it's regarding her distaste for touring or about artists that she comes in contact, such as Avril Lavigne.

PALMER'S INNER VIEW

"I'm always trying to get things done, get something out of [a conversation] or do something meaningful with it."

"People like that have so little in common, on a day to day level, with folks like me and Brian," Palmer says of the teen pop star. "I have less in common with them than the kid down the street working at the coffee shop. The thing that goes through my

head is 'Okay, I have certain feelings about this girl because she's a very particular kind of pop star. How can this situation be meaningful to me? She represents something and it happens to be something that really bothers me. What can I possibly say to her that would make me better understand something about myself, trying to figure myself out?' In an unselfish way, it can be totally fucking unbearable. I'm always trying to get things done, get something out of [a conversation] or do something meaningful with it. My head was spinning. I was thinking, 'I've got to make this meaningful.' Unfortunately, that wasn't possible. Even if I had some incredibly enlightened piece of wisdom to share with her, she was fucking wasted."

Palmer's concern is genuine, and her search for meaning translates into songs such as "Girl Anachronism" on their self-titled album. Her confessional lyrics and passionate piano playing have earned her comparisons to other female singer/songwriters. "Basically any time Tori Amos gets mentioned, the comparisons are drawn based on the instrument," says Palmer. "She obviously sings very personal songs and whatnot. I feel like the delivery is very different. The point of our band is different and I feel like if she were a guitar player, there would be no comparisons."

With Viglione, she is pushing the "male/female duo" constraints while still allowing mystery as to her relationship with her drummer. "People assume we're fucking, that we're boyfriend/girlfriend," says Palmer. "We're ambiguous in that way and we've known each other four years now. The relationship evolved within the band. We've become more and more grown up."

Dresden Dolls :: Park West :: November 5.

infra::strategy