

MUSIC CONNECTION

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The Dresden Dolls

Date Signed: 2004

Label: Roadrunner Records

Band Members: Amanda Palmer, Brian Viglione

Type of Music: Brechtian Punk Caberet

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A&R: Dave Bason

When the Dresden Dolls won Boston's WBCN Rock & Roll Rumble battle of the bands in 2003, it signaled the end of the beginning. Rising up from the city's art world, the band started out performing gigs at art galleries and art parties. Over time they built their fan base until they could pack clubs.

"It totally blew us away that we won the Rumble, because we didn't consider ourselves a rock band," says Amanda Palmer. "We stood out so much; I think that's what turned people's heads. It was a huge step for us. We had the record in our pocket, but winning the Rumble and getting a ton of local Boston press seemed to impress nobody in New York. Publicists laughed at our press kit. Not a single publicist would take us on, even though we had the money."

When their CD began to chart on college radio, *CMJ Monthly* took notice and gave them a write-up that brought them to the attention of Roadrunner Records A&R person Dave Bason. In no time Bason, along with label owner Cees Wessels and President Jonas Nachsin, were en route for an eight-hour drive through a snowstorm. Their destination: a Dresden Dolls gig at a Vermont college. "They came to this room with 50 college kids. Even though all the equipment sucked, it was a fantastic show. We really put out. We went upstairs with them after the show and they said they wanted to sign us. We said, 'Alright we'll think about it.'"

After the initial offer was negotiated to the point of submission, an agreement was struck. Palmer credits her success to constant networking, never turning down a gig, and reading the book *All You Need to Know About the Music Business* by Donald Passman. The Dresden Dolls are set to tour with Nine Inch Nails. The Dolls' self-titled CD will be re-released April 26th.

—Oscar Jordan