

Motif Interviews Arc Iris



Photo Credit: BRETT HENRIKSON

During the month of April something completely original and incredible will occur at Aurora on 276 Westminster St in Downcity. Every Friday the club will be home to The Zoetical Music & Arts Festival, a unique experience being curated by baroque pop act Arc Iris that'll showcase the best local music Providence has to offer along with a few things guaranteed to be out of the ordinary. I had a chat with Jocie Adams & Robin Ryczek from the band about the festival, musical influences and what we can expect from Arc Iris in the near future.

Rob Duguay: The Zoetical Music & Arts Festival has an all-star cast accompanying Arc Iris every Friday in April with Math The Band, Big Nazo, The 'Mericans, Roz Raskin, Haunt The House and many others jumping into the fray. You're also doing a tribute to David Bowie's *Hunky Dory* on April 17. What made you want to do this type of residency? Do you think it can be a yearly thing or will it just be a one-off festival?

Jocie Adams: We're going to see how it goes this year, but we hope that it'll grow and we'll be able to do it again next year and have it be even bigger and better.

RD: Now what made you pick a specific album like David Bowie's *Hunky Dory* to do an all star tribute to? Is there any special reason why you chose that album?

JA: It's really good (laughs).

Robin Ryczek: I think we all love David Bowie and that album in particular has so many aspects that we relate to and resonate with from arrangements to just the quirkiness of songs and just David Bowie himself we love. It's a really great album to do a tribute to.

RD: Speaking of great albums, Arc Iris came out with their self-titled debut last year. What I liked about it, in addition to Jocie's contributions which I was familiar with, is this orchestral baroque pop aesthetic you have going on. What were your main influences when you were starting the band and recording the album?

JA: For my solo album that Robin and I worked on back in 2010, the goal was strictly to figure out how to make songs as simple as possible and still be engaging and I felt we kind of did that and we both feel pretty awesome about it. Everyone in the band has studied all different kinds of music and by the time we got to this new project we were able to do just whatever we wanted at that point. The question of "Is this song going to be strong enough itself?" was answered so we could open up all the doors and make

sure that it's something even more exciting.

RD: So to pretty much make it limitless, you would say?

JA: Yeah.

RD: Were there any similarities or anything you did different with this record versus what you've done during your solo career and with *The Low Anthem*?

JA: I think the main difference between the way that we have recorded and the way *The Low Anthem* recorded is that when we go into the studio we try to capture live performances. *The Low Anthem* did that too, but there was a lot more intricacies and trying to make sure that it's perfect in a way. I tend more toward trying to just capture something and make a checkmark in time. There are certain magical things that can come out of both approaches and I'm sure that we'll go back to the other approach at some point, but for now that's been more of our go-to of trying to capture more spontaneous recordings. In fact, when David Bowie's album *Hunky Dory* was recorded, he only allowed three takes of every song.

RR: Which is also why we are very attracted to it.

RD: That definitely explains a lot.

RR: Living in the moment and the spark of what you do with it.

RD: It's kind of like what old jazz musicians would do. If you listen to Charlie Parker or Miles Davis, what you hear on the record would be totally different than what you would see live because of all these improvisations to make it very spontaneous. I think it's very cool that you're going down that avenue. W

hat does the rest of the year have in store for Arc Iris?

RR: We have a lot of little surprises that are growing in a secret little box. They will be released over the next couple of months, especially in April, but it's exciting to know about what's coming up.

RD: But the rest of us can't know about it yet. You're not at liberty to say?

RR: We're not at liberty to say; we kinda wish we were because we're really excited.

JA: This year is going to be a great one.

The Zoetical Music & Arts Festival will take place at Aurora on April 3, 10, 17 & 24. For more info on everything that'll be going on, check out the event page here: facebook.com/events/1375188096136524/