

Mobile DIY Antifolk Rockers Celebrate 10 Years

Durham, North Carolina based folk rockers Beloved Binge will be stopping in RI on their country wide tour. The couple, who describe their music as, “rubble pop in a punk pot,” have been compared to Olympia, WA indie record label k-records, placing them somewhere in the ranks of indie folkies and shoegaze rockers. Beloved Binge is celebrating 10 years of making music, their 10 year “bandiversary”. Their music spans the rolling sounds of folk, and extends out to the feedback filled backbone of garage rock. The constant that winds through their recent album *Pockets* is the way the duo’s voices come together, part folk chorus, part rock anthem.

Eleni Vlachos is the self-identified drummer of the multi-instrumentalist duo, which will be gracing the stage at AS220 this Wednesday. She and husband Rob Beloved, quit their jobs and got in an ‘82 camper van with their dog, to tour the United States in celebration of making it 10 years.

Beloved Binge does more than just make music. Both members are vegan and work to raise awareness of the suffering of animals, especially as part of the high production food system. On a trip while touring they were traveling from LA to San Francisco and passed a feedlot for dairy cows, the conditions in which the animals were being kept convinced them to take the step from vegetarianism to veganism.

“One of our interests is reducing suffering in the world,” Vlachos explained. Animals make up a lot of life on the planet, and the members of Beloved Binge believe that with increased awareness of plant-based food options, people can make the switch.

“It’s hard to change,” she acknowledged, “Every meal is choice.”

Vlachos is also interested in film work. She has made two films, one called *Seeing through the Fence* which focusses on the reasons for switching to vegetarian and vegan diets, and why people are reluctant to do so. She will be giving out free copies at the show. While they are on tour this fall she is working on a new project called *Big Talk*. She is asking the artists they meet while touring questions off her “big questions” list, such as “What is the hardest part of being alive?”

Vlachos grew up in Seattle, working the cash register at her father’s pizza place. Her mother’s family had many classical musicians. She started playing the drums at age 21.

In 1998, Vlachos traveled to Crete, as part of a trip around Greece to get to know the country and visit her father’s family, there she bought a *bouzouki* (μπουζούκι, pronounced: boo-ZOO-kee), a Greek instrument resembling a lute.

“My father was embarrassed,” she joked, the instrument is usually played by men.

Vlachos met Rob while they were both still living in Seattle. She was looking to get involved with a new band. After the third member of their group left, they re-located to Durham, North Carolina.

“We were kind of broken-hearted,” Vlachos said. They decided to move somewhere new. They had heard nice things about the weather in North Carolina, so they packed up their stuff and moved.

“When we got there it was like a ghost town,” she remembered. But the town opened itself up and revealed a welcoming arts community that has helped them feel at home.

When planning their tour to celebrate 10 years of music making slotting Rhode Island in was an easy choice. Rob’s father lives in the city.

They have played AS220 before and are fond of its DIY ethos. The DIY movement is a large component of what they do. Their tour is self-organized and they are traveling by camper van with their dog.

Looking back on ten years of writing and performing Vlachos finds that the biggest changes are those of perspective.

“You look for ways to entertain yourself,” she said. Tired of playing gigs the same exact way every time they incorporated a theatrical element. Once, they put on a show of Three’s Company inside their performance.

But touring is a major draw when for Vlachos when it comes to going around the country.

“Playing shows is a way to connect with a community that you don’t get when you’re just traveling.”

Beloved Binge will be playing AS220 Thursday August 14. Check out their music at belovedbinge.bandcamp.com.