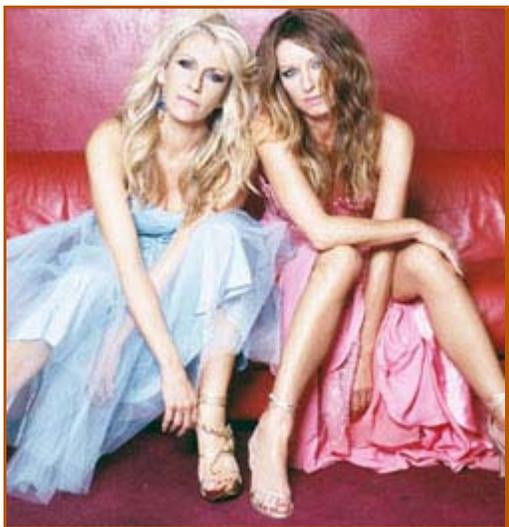




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MattUnleashed on Nightlife :: Bananarama or Goldfrapp?

by Matt Kalkhoff
EDGE Nightlife Contributor
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Bananarama signed CDs at Columbus Circle Borders Tuesday night.

On Tuesday night, I had to pick between an in-store CD signing at the Columbus Circle Borders where **Sara Dallin** and **Keren Woodward** were celebrating the U.S. release of their new album, "Drama" (which is excellent, by the way) or an in-studio mini-concert by Goldfrapp in Tribeca that was to be broadcast live on Seattle's KEXP radio station and website.

As much as I love Bananarama (yes, they're still recording, but it was just an appearance, no performance), I think I made the right decision by going with that other

English dame. After a lovely little happy hour excursion (see below), we made our way over to Gigantic Studios at Franklin and Broadway to catch Goldfrapp perform live. Shortly after 8:00 about 20 of us were ushered up to the 4th floor and into a very tiny room where we stood about 8 feet from Alison & Co., separated only by a large sound-proof window.

An interview with a KEXP personality split the four-song set, which included "Number 1," "Ooh La La" and two other selections from the "Supernature" CD. I was hoping to hear some older hits like "Strict Machine" as well, but alas, it wasn't meant to be. (I'm sure they performed that one and others at their Irving Plaza concert the previous night, though.)

Granted, there wasn't a whole lot she could do in that cramped, carpeted space with all the equipment and several band members surrounding her, but the diminutive diva looked and sounded terrific, sporting a simple black number, retro-fab blond locks and some serious shades that were either shielding her from the blinding studio lights or covering up evidence of whatever post-concert partying might have gone on the night before. Either way, I can totally see why **Madonna** was so inspired by both her sound and her look for the "Confessions" album. And the best part is that I didn't have to shell out 300 bucks to see this concert up close.

As for the happy hour venue, it's a downtown restaurant/bar called Grace that is conveniently located in Tribeca just steps from the Franklin Street subway stop on the 1/9 train. If you sign up online to receive their newsletter at www.gracebarandrestaurant.com, they'll e-mail you a coupon for a free "small plate" appetizer. I had the marinated steak with roasted pepper and onion rings which was not only incredibly tasty, but a full meal in and of itself. (Appetizers range from \$9-15; specialty drinks are \$10 that are also generously sized; full menu available.)

Based on its location and the other patrons we encountered, I would say the place caters to a predominantly hetero crowd. But I could totally see us fags infiltrating it every now and again. Heck, they had to know our group was gay (hi **Matt S.**!), yet the staff was very friendly. And considering the generous tip we left, I'm sure they'll be glad to see us back soon.

As this is my first weekend on Fire Island coming up, I'll regretfully miss **Victor Calderone's** "Evolve" party at Crobar. But if you're in town, it's about the most fun you can have dancing on a Sunday morning. Special

guest DJ **Behrouz** plays the early set Saturday night with Calderone going on sometime around 5:00am and playing well into the afternoon. Go to www.crobar.com for \$20 advance tix.

And on Monday, May 22, I'd like to invite everyone to join me at the LIVE OUT LOUD 5th Annual Gala Benefit at the Chelsea Art Museum. This amazing organization has dedicated itself to celebrating, empowering and mentoring today's LGBT youth, and on Monday it will honor five outstanding high school seniors by presenting each of them with \$2,500 scholarships. But the presentation is only one part of the evening. Between 6-9pm, there's also a silent auction and, of course, cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and lots of mingling with some of the community's most influential and altruistic members. Broadway's **Christopher Sieber** hosts along with special guest NYC Council Speaker **Christine Quinn**. Tickets start at \$65 and can be purchased at www.liveoutloud.info.

I'd also like to congratulate **Junior Vasquez** on his recently announced residency at the new Twilo. No, it's not in New York this time (sigh), but rather Miami, where old Manhattan nightclubs go to reincarnate, apparently. (A Sound Factory is forthcoming down there as well, I've heard.) The opening night for Twilo is Saturday, July 8, when Vasquez will join DJ **Abel** for what will surely be one hell of a massive party. Book your flights and hotel rooms now, kiddies.

Until next time: Be Smart. Be Safe. Be Yourself.

LINKS:

<http://www.bananarama.co.uk>

<http://www.goldfrapp.co.uk>

<http://www.kexp.org>

<http://www.gracebarandrestaurant.com>

<http://www.victorcalderone.com>

<http://www.djbehrouz.com>

<http://www.crobar.com>

<http://www.liveoutloud.info>

<http://www.juniorvasquezmusic.com>

<http://www.twilomiami.com>

Matt Kalkhoff is a New York-based freelance writer whose love for dance music is only surpassed by the depth and passion with which he writes about it. A full collection of Matt's work can be viewed at his website :: <http://www.mattunleashed.com>

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