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For Lez Zeppelin, The Songs Remain The Same



Lez Zep

"My ultimate fantasy, of course, would be to have Jimmy Page join us onstage. But it was very cool meeting John Paul Jones after the Zeppelin reunion a few years ago in London, and having him tell me that he's heard a lot about our band and that he can't wait to see us play someday," says guitarist Steph Paynes.

Led Zeppelin play a big part in the life of the New York-based musician.

Since 2004, Paynes has led a group of like-minded rock goddesses called Lez Zeppelin.

Steph (in the role of a female Jimmy Page) along with Megan Thomas (bass), Leesa Harrington-Squyres (drums), and Shannon Conley (vocals) have been all over the world, faithfully adding their own feminine mystique to some of the most vaunted songs in rock 'n' roll history. They're a tribute band with a woman's touch, but that doesn't mean they don't approach the music with a fierce, authentic rock 'n' roll attitude.

Lez Zeppelin have recorded with Eddie Kramer (one of Led Zeppelin's original recording engineers), and have even employed some of the same vintage equipment as Zeppelin to re-create some of the tone and feel of the original records.

Most recently, for their second album, Lez Zeppelin decided to faithfully the record that started it all: the 1969 debut album titled simply, 'Led Zeppelin.'

"Every note of 'Led Zeppelin' is amazing," Lez Zeppelin founder Steph Paynes told Noisecreep. "It was a true challenge to recreate. It's so blues-based, and really reflects the origins of the band. But those songs can be hard to play and so we studied everything very closely. When you're tackling 'Communication Breakdown,' 'Dazed and Confused,' 'Babe I'm Gonna Leave You' -- you don't want to mess around. It's got to sound right, and feel right."

The band is hitting the road in July in support of the new album, and Paynes says she's always pleasantly surprised by seeing who comes to see the band play live.

"There was always this impression that Zeppelin was just a total guy's band. But I know plenty of women loved the band, and I think our audience reflects the diversity of whom that band reached. We get tons of women, plus lots of young people, teenagers, who name Zeppelin as their favorite band. The Led Zeppelin legacy is remarkable. We try and deliver on that legacy while putting our own special spin on things."

This summer, the ladies of Lez Zep will have a chance to show off what they've got in front of some fairly impressive audiences, including an

opening slot at Rock on the Range festival in Columbus on May 20.

"I'm very excited about 2011," Paynes said. "We've got so many things in place, and we're now in a position to take this concept to a whole new place."

Might that include an onstage visit from the musical idol whose searing guitar chops she pays tribute to each night?

"You never know," she laughed. "But Jimmy, we're ready for you. Trust me, we're ready for you."

Watch Lez Zeppelin's 'Dazed and Confused' video

Lez Zeppelin 2010 Dazed and Confused part 1.mov

