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Drawing Board Brewing company to host 'incubator' event

by [Ryan Feyre](#) | Aug 19, 2024 | [Hampshire County](#), [Local News](#)



Amy West (left), Jess Martin (middle) and Abby Hanna (right).

Reminder Publishing submitted photo

NORTHAMPTON — If you are looking for a performance that seamlessly blends multiple mediums into one, then Drawing Board Brewing Company is the place to be on Aug. 24.

Jess Martin, Amy West and Abby Hanna are bringing their eclectic mix of original music, live projected puppetry and videography to the 36 Main St. location. Dubbed as an “incubator” event by the three artists, the performance will also feature an audience feedback session.

“When you’re a smaller artist, you want to have some type of hook that draws an audience in,” Martin said in an interview with *Reminder Publishing*. “We want to make this as engaging of an experience as possible.”

A Northampton resident who brings a soulful and bluesy-punk style to their music, Martin is a singer-songwriter whose songs reflect their love for literature, adventure movies and monster flicks like old *Godzilla* movies.

That love will manifest itself on Aug. 24, when Martin will play three of those songs that are near and dear to them: “Danger in the Deep,” “Nevermore” and “Bride of Frankenstein.” Martin said that the three tracks meld real life experience with those literary and cinematic themes she holds near and dear.

She told *Reminder Publishing* that they are a response to their outsider identity developed during her time in Texas.

“Growing up queer in the bible belt of Texas in the 1980s, I felt like a monster in hiding, haunted by the me I couldn’t be,” Martin said. “With ‘Nevermore,’ ‘Danger in the Deep’ and ‘Bride of Frankenstein,’ my fears are made manifest in music with monsters composed into a form of punk rock liberation.”

Martin’s vividness and love for literature are what drew West to their music and is why West was so interested in creating the live puppetry projection headed for Drawing Board on Aug. 24.

“Much of it lends itself so well to visual storytelling,” West said of Martin’s music. “I feel like a lot of her music is about transformation one way or another.”

A professional stagehand, musician, puppeteer and puppet builder based out of Boston, West said Martin usually submits her original songs to West so West can pick the ones that speak to her the most. Once West picks the songs she enjoys, she will then ruminate on the lyrics, build images and then figure out the style and color of puppetry.

She then creates sketches and a storyboard for Martin to look at.

“We’ll make adjustments, and then once she’s good to go with what I came up with, then I start to build the show,” West said.

This will not be the first time their blend of puppetry and music will be on display. West, Hanna and Martin also performed a couple of Martin’s songs in Boston earlier this year, and the crowd response was so positive that they felt the need to continue this type of artistry.

“We thought, ‘we’re onto something here,’” West said. “This is something we should keep doing.”

Hanna, a singer songwriter and bass player, has helped direct and curate many of Martin’s music videos including “Danger in the Deep,” will perform a couple of her original songs and play bass on “Nevermore” during the Aug. 24 performance.

Her musicianship, along with her audio and visual background are integral components to this troupe, and will be on full display during the performance.

“I like working with Jess and Amy a lot,” Hanna said. “We’ve got all these great perspectives on things, and I think we’re really coming up with a lot of great stuff.”

The group said that this performance is part of a wider project that the trio plans to present across venues and festivals throughout New England, which Martin said will eventually lead to some type of EP.

Additionally, the trio is filming an NPR Tiny Desk concert at Amherst College before the Drawing Board performance to showcase these songs even more and they are also planning another performance in October.

“Our goal is eventually to build this into a full-length show where it’s probably maybe six pieces that are live music and different forms of puppetry, all centered around this sort of Gothic monster transformative theme,” West said. “The idea is that we may be able to apply for grant funding so that we could tour it around New England or possibly beyond.”

Readers can learn more about the event at Drawing Board by visiting Martin’s website: jessmartin-music.com/. The trio currently does not have a name, so they are hoping to ask the audience during the feedback session of the performance.