

Stephanie Curran · November 7, 2018

Diversity in Music: Evelyn Jess and The Role of LGBTQ+ Community in the Downtown Scene

Evelyn Jess is a local performer and LGBTQ+ activist, originating from Musgrave Harbour, Newfoundland. Her love of music stems from an early age, coming from idols, such as Stevie Nicks, and Cher, which ultimately lead her to the decision to teach herself how to play the guitar, and leave her hometown for bigger and better things.

was a response to the incident in Springdale where the request for a rainbow crosswalk for the LGBT+ community was denied several times by the town council. This song has over 40,000 views on Facebook and launched Jess' career as a professional musician.

Paint The Crosswalk - Evel



On October 26, Jess was involved in [Evelyn Jess + The Hot Mess Ghouls Night Out Halloween Show](#), hosted by Eda Kumquat and Doctor Androbox. This show was held at the Fat Cat and featured a blend of LGBTQ+ talent, including music by Thursday at 10 and Centerfold, as well as performances by Doctor Androbox, a local drag king, and Queen of the Night winner Eda Kumquat. The goal was to express

that encourages bands from all backgrounds and genres to come perform and express their love for music and is a safe space for members of the LGBTQ+ community, with their staff making sure that everyone feels safe and at home while in their bar, by including gender-neutral bathrooms for their patrons. “All performers and staff attending this show are aware of the ‘safe space’ and any bias, conflict, criticism, or potentially threatening actions, ideas, or conversations will NOT be tolerated”, said Jess.

Jess decided to have Doctor Androbox and Eda Kumquat host the event. “The idea for this show began with just Evelyn Jess + The Hot Mess and Centrefold. We knew we wanted to do a show together but didn’t quite have a real vision for the event in early planning,” said Jess. “The idea was brought forward by both band’s drummer, Becca Spurrell. They suggested having the city’s hottest

Show just snowballed.”



Jordan Young (Photo by Richie Perez)

The principal idea for the show stems from the stereotype of the LGBTQ+ community, in a music sense, is based all around the thought that it revolves around one type of music. Jess wanted to make sure that there is a wide range of LGBTQ+ music on display, to let people know that this is not the case. “We are a bunch of amazing, talented human beings. For

Especially our performers, we can rock and roll too, It's not just drag and EDM!" By showing off their talent and passion for music, these bands make way for a more centralized idea of the LGBTQ+ community's role in music, and especially the music community downtown.



Eda Kumquat; a fiery, electric performer who just received the title of 'Queen of the Night' from none other than New York City's legendary drag queen, Lady Bunny was asked to host and perform. (Photo by Richie Perez).

Jess noted that while the music industry and the St. John's music scene are heavily dominated by the white cis male, she believes that people can encourage minorities who are interested in the arts to press

deserves to be showcased and represented by all the talented people here while showcasing our diverse pallet of color, race, gender and sexuality. It is important to me to vocally and visibly represent women and the LGBTQ+ community in the music industry.”

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