

Belle Liao of The Cryers

By Helen Marketti

Recently seeing *The Cryers* at The Winchester in Lakewood, the crowd was treated to original material as well as cover songs. Later in the evening, they were also the band for Denny Laine (Moody Blues, Wings). If only one word could be used to describe The Cryers, it would be: rockin'.

The Cryers, a New Jersey based band, have been together since 1991. In addition to writing and recording their own material, they also perform with classic rock artists such as Denny Laine, Terry Sylvester (The Hollies), Joey Molland (Badfinger), Ian Mitchell (The Bay City

Rollers) and many more.

Band members are Joe Orlando (bassist/vocalist), Jeff Brown (guitarist/vocals), Tommy



Seesellberg (drummer) and Belle Liao (keyboardist/vocalist). Belle is the only

female in the four-piece band. Classically trained in piano, Belle joined *The Cryers* in 1993. Joe suggested she join the group. "Joe and I have been friends for a long time," said Belle. "He asked me if I would like to join and I said "yes" but give me some time first. I needed to learn the rock and roll because I was more into classical presentations."

Belle's father was a civil engineer so she lived in several places while growing up. "I was born in Taiwan then we moved to North Africa," she said. "I also lived in Salzburg, Austria where I spent four years studying music. Then I graduated from New York City High School in Manhattan."

While living in various geographical locations Belle still maintained her interest in music and playing. When asked if she had a particular favorite artist or more specific, any other females in the music industry that may have inspired her Belle said, "Music itself is all wonderful. I like to play more than anything else." She added that each artist is different so it is important to appreciate what everyone does.

What is it like to be the only female in the band? "I am like one of the guys. I feel very free. We are all close friends," Belle said thoughtfully. "We are together a lot so things work out smoothly and naturally. We take care of each other. The guys treat me well."

The Cryers have a new CD, *Rock n' Roll Holiday* that is currently being recorded in the studio and will tentatively be released in January of 2010. "Joe and Jeff usually write the songs but they welcome input from all of us," said Belle. The new CD will consist of all original tracks.

In addition to writing, recording and performing on their own and with various music legends, Joe and Belle are also co-owners of Monmouth Academy of Musical Arts located in Morganville, New Jersey. The academy is a learning mecca of music education for young people and for those interested in honing their skills a bit more. It has a recording studio, rehearsal studio, instructional classrooms and a retail store that carries sheet music of all genres. Joe,



Belle and Jeff also teach at the academy. The professional staff also expands to those who

have been on the road with many artists of rock's notables such as Blood, Sweat & Tears, Cyndi Lauper and Bruce Springsteen as well as graduates from various music schools across the country such as Julliard and Berklee College of Music.

Offering her view on the philosophy of life and pursuing dreams, Belle said, "No matter what - keep going, keep doing what you're doing and enjoy it. I really enjoy what I do. It's a lot of fun."

For more information about *The Cryers*, please check out: www.myspace.com/thecryersrockon

Their first CD *The Cryers* has 12 tracks with a combination of cover songs and original material. For a preview, you can listen to a snippet of each track and purchase through: <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/cryers>

The Cryers are planning a CD Release Party/ Concert for their new CD *Rock n' Roll Holiday* at The Record Collector in Bordentown, New Jersey sometime in January 2010.

(<http://www.the-record-collector.com/>)

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