



Q+A: Stacy Glen Tibbetts

December 22, 2009 7:00 AM

by Rachel Polansky



Name: Stacy Glen Tibbetts

Position: Lecturer in English, College of the Liberal Arts; guitarist

Education: B.A., English (Minor in music composition), Penn State, 1989; M.A., English, UMass Amherst, 1992; Secondary Education teaching certification, Penn State, 1994; Advanced courses in Jazz Theory/Harmony/Improv, Penn State, 1999-2000

Links: www.stacyglen.com www.myspace.com/stacyglen

Tell me about your musical career.

I am a passionate and avid songwriter, guitarist, and singer. I have recorded and released two CDs of original songs (mostly folk/rock) and composed the scores (mostly swing/jazz) and written lyrics for two full-length musicals. I've produced readings of both musicals, and in 2009, I pulled together a functional swing/jazz trio for the first time, which was a lot of fun.



My performing career dates back to high school, but highlights include four years in the State College bars (Phyrst, Cafe 210, Ale House, Darkhorse, etc., 1994-97) with the acoustic folk/rock group Driftwood, three years on the Boston cafe scene as a solo singer/songwriter (Kendall Cafe, Cambridge Center, other venues), and several recent years as pit guitarist and/or music director for stage shows here in State College, including productions of Little Shop of Horrors, Dreamgirls, Hello Dolly, Bye-Bye Birdie, and satirical revues.

In addition to the bars, I've performed in all the major theatres in town, including the State Theatre, Schwab Auditorium, Eisenhower, etc. I also was a member of NOMTI, Berklee College of Music's (Boston) New Opera and Music Theatre Initiative writing workshop for two years.

My folk/rock songs are occasionally played on WPSU, and several critics have called them tuneful, catchy, and/or "melodious." Most recently, I've produced my work and/or performed in Boston and

NYC cabaret/theatre rooms. Last summer I produced two readings of "Dialing for Donna," a new full-length musical, here at SOZO and in New York City at the Dramatist's Guild in Times Square.

What is your favorite venue?

Eisenhower auditorium is incredible -- the pit is huge (I played there with a full symphony orchestra) and it can be raised and lowered on hydraulics. The backstage area contains an interesting and amazing variety of stage equipment.

Schwab Auditorium is a beautiful, great-sounding room for jazz. For soul and grit, I love Zenos, where I've sung off and on and where the crowds are intelligent. The State Theatre provides an amazing variety of entertainment for a town of this size. (I performed at a couple of benefits to raise money to open the State, and actually wrote an original swing tune for the theatre, "At The State," which was featured in a fundraiser/benefit concert there.) Will Snyder at SOZO is a friend, as is Elaine Meder at Webster's. I'm glad to have met many incredible and dedicated supporters of live music.

What was one of your proudest moments as a writer?

Teaching at Penn State makes me proud every day. It is a very humbling experience, to be sought out to help others with writing, and it easily matches any personal financial gain or temporary ego boost I've gotten from performing or publishing. I'm also very proud to be able to sing and perform with other professional musicians, of course, both locally and recently in NYC. It's a great honor to be on a stage, to try to move someone, give them an emotion or maybe even a bit of transcendence with your writing.



What are your favorite topics when writing?

I write a lot of lyrics, which often have love and romance (or some aspect of relationships) as their topic. Over the last few years, I've written lyrics and music that accompany the story and dramatic action in two librettos (plays) written by my fellow PSU instructor and longtime playwright Pam Monk. Both musicals have strong Italian themes and are set in NYC (one in a restaurant, one in a radio station), so some of the subject matter for the songs comes from that background. It's great to write with someone else.

What do you do for fun?

Ski a bit in the winter, canoe a bit in the summer. Have a drink with or cook dinner for friends. And write and compose, honestly, which is incredibly hard work but incredibly challenging and fun. I get out of bed in the morning with musical ideas running through my head that beg to be put on paper. I make financial sacrifices to be able to carve out time in my life to write, and I consider myself extraordinarily lucky to be able to do so, to be able to be a bit creative. It's such an incredible privilege, in the grand scheme of things in the world.



Rachel Polansky

Rachel is a sophomore majoring in journalism at Penn State and an intern with StateCollege.com. The views and opinions of the authors expressed therein do not necessarily state or reflect those of StateCollege.com.