

Singer's extraordinary style hits John Henry's on Sunday

Self-described 'indie/pop/punk' artist Inara George brings musical background to her first solo project

BY AMY LICHTY
PULSE EDITOR

"Will you take me as your mistress?" asks singer Inara George in the opening track of her solo debut "All Rise." Sure, it isn't your typical love song, but then again, George is not your typical singer-songwriter. Luckily for Eugene, she'll be making an appearance Sunday at John Henry's.

Growing up in a home full of music in Topanga Canyon, Calif., George had decided early on to not take the road set out in front of her. Her dad Lowell George, the late legendary front man for the rock band Little Feat, had set a path for her that could have easily been taken, but she decided to explore her love of classical theater instead.

"(Because of my dad), there was a bit of me that didn't feel like going that route because it almost seemed that the path had already been forged for

me," George said. "So that was my resistance, and I wanted to take the road where there was least resistance."

So George packed her bags and headed across the country to Boston, where she focused her studies on classical theater, having been influenced by her own performances in Shakespearean plays at Topanga Canyon's Theatrum Botanicum. But one summer home was all it took for George's life to completely change. On a whim, she and some friends from high school decided to start a band, which they called Lode. They were quickly picked up by Geffen Records and spent the next two years touring. That was twelve years ago, and that's when George realized that music was simply in her blood.

"I kind of just found myself in this scenario," George said. "When I was 18, I joined a band, and I had never played in a band before. I wasn't real-

ly completely 100 percent excited about it. And then, when time went by and I had better experiences and more fun, it sort of seemed like the thing that I might be better at than other things, so I sort of just stuck to it."

After the implosion of Lode, George found herself tangled in another band, Merrick, with which she put out two CDs. When Merrick called it quits in 2002, George decided it was time for her to do things on her own.

With the help of producer/guitarist Michael Andrews, who has composed scores for Donnie Darko and Freaky Geeks, George found herself back in the studio. This time, she was doing it on her own, but she had a team of musicians to back her up every step of the way. That team included keyboardist Greg Kurstin, who has played with the likes of Beck and Ben Harper, Greyboy Allstar bassist Chris Stillwell, former Cake drummer Pete McNeal and of course Andrews backing her on the guitar.

Although George's home life provided many different avenues of

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Lichty: InTouch ranks last

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it's almost impossible not to be at least somewhat curious about the private lives of stars. Celebrities are everywhere. From the movies to TV to advertisements, they put their two cents in on what we wear, what we smell like and what we use on our hair. Although celebrities surprisingly don't influence me on any of those things, I am in constant need of knowing who's dating whom and who's fighting with whom. Luckily for people like me, there's a steady supply of tabloids to feed my hunger. Just go to the nearest grocery store and you'll find plenty of choices.

We'll start with my favorite, my personal Bible. I am one of Us Weekly's million subscribers, and Us Weekly is definitely the glossy that I trust the most. Although it has gotten a few things wrong — they reported "exclusively" that Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie adopted her second baby, Zahara, together, which was quickly proved wrong by paperwork — it scoops a lot of stories, like Britney Spears giving birth and Moore and Kutcher's wedding. But a major problem with Us Weekly is that it tends to play favorites. I mean — how many times are they going to kiss Jessica Simpson's ass by plastering her all over the best-dressed list? Did you see her at the MTV Music Awards? She looked — as she usually does in my opinion — like a wad of crap.

People is my second-ranked glossy, but it definitely takes the cake when it comes to subscription numbers, boasting a whopping 3,350,000 paid subscribers. My only beef with People is that it isn't as sassy as Us Weekly and I enjoy the sass. People tends to get

more exclusives, like Spears' wedding and baby shower, but that is a title quickly being taken away by the newest celeb rag out there: OK! magazine.

OK! magazine has its roots in the UK (Brits tend to be just as celeb-happy as Americans). They just launched their U.S. edition this summer, which focuses on exclusive celebrity interviews, with the likes of Simpson, Hilary Duff and Nicole Richie posing on the covers — all eager to get their mugs spread across as many magazines as they possibly can. OK! claimed to have the first pictures of the Spears/Federline collaboration, reportedly paying close to \$2 million for the pics, but when I snatched up the latest issue, baby Sean/Preston/Christian (what the hell is that baby's name already?) was nowhere to be seen. So, I'll believe it when I see it.

There is one magazine that I refuse to buy and that is InTouch Weekly. I will tell anyone I know that InTouch has gotten so many things wrong, it's not even funny anymore. Even Oprah pointed it out when she said that a tabloid had reported that she was giving Pitt and Jennifer Aniston marriage counseling, a claim that she firmly denied. It's the cheapest, and you really get what you pay for.

There are even more celebrity glossies out there, such as Life and Style and Inside TV, but I prefer to stick to those I can really trust. But don't take my word for it. You've got to choose which celebrity tabloid magazine is your personal guilty pleasure. After all, they say "don't believe everything you read," but sometimes life's just more fun if you do.

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Inara George is currently touring for her first solo album, "All Rise." She hits John Henry's on Sunday.

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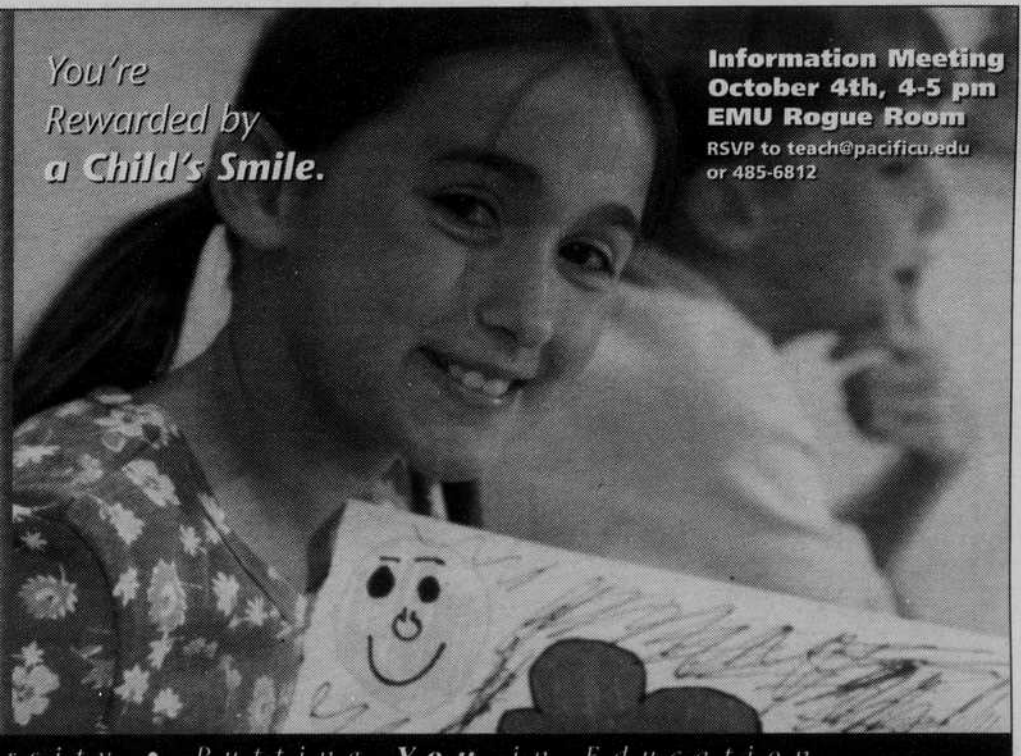
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