

Deep Pocket breaks it down for Pop Asheville

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The up-and-coming soulful funk rockers Laura Reed and Deep Pocket are working hard to spread their music and positivity to the musically-inclined masses. They played amongst 33 other bands in this year's Pop Asheville music festival.

Reed is a name that many music lovers have come to know over the years.

Once a one-woman band, Reed hooked up with her band mates in 2006 and created the soulful foursome known today as Laura Reed and Deep Pocket.

"We don't stop. We're working hard," Reed said. "Everyone in the band eats, sleeps, breathes and makes love to this shit. This is what we do. This music has become a part of us and I think that is why things are happening so fast. We don't take any time to be slack."

Born in South Africa, Reed moved to the states at the age of six to live with her father and soon found herself in Chatham County, N.C.

It is there, she said, that she began to realize her musical skills and learned to express them, incorporating influences from her African history as well as American blues and jazz.

"I can articulate things better singing than I can speaking," Reed said. "When I'm digging somebody I'll write a song about them and I'll invite them to the show and sing it and just hope they understand that I'm singing about them. This is how I communicate with the world."

Reed's percussive unit includes



Laura Reed, left, and Bebrisfa McKinney, right, perform as one of 34 bands in Pop Asheville. Laura Reed and Deep Pocket, in just two years, released their first album and are about to begin a national tour.

CELESTE SHADOAN - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ben Diddelot on bass, Barrett Helms on drums, Silas Buropher on guitar and newest member Bebrisfa McKinney on backup vocals.

Throughout their two year career, they have shared the stage with the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Sam Bush, Sydney Barnes and Yo Mamas Big Fat Booty Band.

They recently finished recording their first album this October here in Asheville with a short tour to support it.

Their music switches from blues to funk then flows into a soft R&B

groove or reggae beat. The band says it's soul music.

"We've been together two years and it has kind of blown up," Diddelot said. "We're making a lot of good decisions and I think having the right people behind you helps. Our manager Katherine Powell is definitely a lot of the fuel in our bus and the driver."

The band is traveling to Jamaica in two weeks to perform and will be coming back shortly to begin work on their next album.

After that, they are headed out on their first national tour.

"This is folk music. It's personal shit and it's being packaged and delivered the best way we know how," Reed said. "We're doing it sustainably and consciously by working with our communities and respecting all of the other artists and incorporating them as much as possible."

This past weekend, Reed and Deep Pocket came out with all of their respect and appreciation by performing at West Asheville's new venue, the Rocket Club, as a part of this year's music festival, Pop Asheville.



CELESTE SHADOAN - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Silas Buropher sets the rhythm for Laura Reed and Deep Pocket on the guitar while performing at the Rocket Club in West Asheville for this year's Pop Asheville music festival, formerly known as Idfest.

"This is the sixth year of the festival which was formerly Idfest," said Susan Hackett, festival coordinator. "It started as a one night festival for the band Stephanie's Id to pay back gig swaps that they had made with other bands and it's expanded each year since."

Pop Asheville is the first venue-based music festival ever held in Asheville.

Venues included Stella Blue, The Grey Eagle and Rocket Club. Additional entertainers performed on the LaZoom shuttle bus.

"The venues have all been extremely supportive and involved throughout this process," Hackett said. "The owners of The Grey Eagle and the Rocket Club have even been involved with the committee meetings leading up to the festival."

Pop Asheville is a two day event featuring 34 bands spanning all music genres from folk to indie to punk and electronic.

The bands performed both Saturday and Sunday from 8 p.m. until 2 a.m. at all three locations.

The LaZoom tour bus not only shuttled attendees to their musical destination but also included live performances on it as well.

"The voices of these musicians are very loud," Hackett said. "I think this area of Western North Carolina is typically known for the bluegrass music but those who are involved and interested in live music here know that you can go out any night of the week and hear anything from hip hop to pop music to jazz."

Pop Asheville helps to serve an important function in the community to encourage the artists and help to lend them support, according to Hackett.

"Pop Asheville was put together to both support and pay tribute to the wide variety of music in this area," Hackett said. "Also, musicians in this town are extremely supportive of each other and many of the members of local bands are friends. I think that is what really comes through with this festival. Everyone has come together from the bands to the committee to the venues to the volunteers to continue the energy of the community of music in Asheville."

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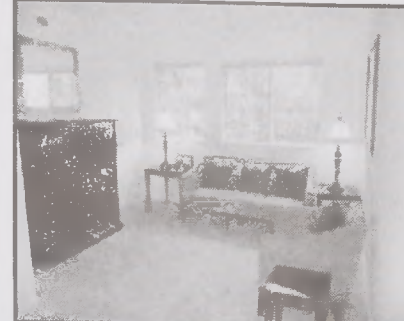
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