



## The 'Long Road' Leads To New Album for "Six-String Siren" Diana Rein

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Get ready to meet your fate when "The Six-String Siren," guitarist [Diana Rein](#), releases her highly-anticipated sophomore album *Long Road* (Street Date: Wednesday, May 18). Written, recorded and produced by Diana Rein, the disc features twelve original tracks on which Rein sings, plays lead, bass, and rhythm guitar. *Long Road* was mixed and mastered by Peter Duff at Grey Brick Studios in San Diego, CA. On *Long Road*, Diana Rein displays a sharp tongue, driving blues-based guitar, and melodic solos. It won't take long before you fall under her spell.



**Of all the careers and vocations out there, Diana Rein chose to become a musician. Why is that?**

Well, what's funny is that since I was born I had an affinity for music, always singing in my crib, then later recording myself incessantly on a little tape recorder I had when I was four. Every toy I had became a microphone for me and any time someone was watching me was a moment to perform. When I was eleven, I ended up booking a role in the movie *Home Alone* as Sondra, Kevin's cousin and that derailed me in a sense.

Being on the set was so captivating and interesting that I thought my destiny was to be an actress. I would still sing in school and was a musical theater major in high school. But in my head, music shifted to second place. I teeter-tottered between acting and music for most of my life but what is interesting is that no matter what I was doing acting wise, I always made sure that music was involved.

It wasn't until three years ago that I decided the "knock-knock" from music was way too strong and it needed my full attention. I suppose music allows me the most freedom to be myself, to express what I am feeling and have it end up as this beautiful piece of art.

### **Let's discuss your Chicago roots, and how that influenced your decision to play the blues?**

I lived in Chicago since the age of three and had no idea about the Blues until the age of eight. Up until that point, I idolized my Aunt Zoe who was a famous singer in Romania, she sang traditional Romanian songs. I also ran around the house singing Madonna, Lionel Richie, Prince, Michael Jackson and Whitney Houston. One day my uncle who was a drummer invited me and my family to one of his gigs at The Back Room in Chicago on Rush Street. He asked me to have a song ready just in case and I prepared "I Just Called To Say I Love You" by Stevie Wonder.

So they called me up to sing the song as a duet with the lead singer Cheryl and I thought that would be it. But Cheryl told me to stay on stage and she invited an older blues man named Oliver to the stage. We all sat at the foot of the stage and the band started playing a blues progression and before I knew it we were improvising the Blues! I had so much fun, I will never forget that night and luckily enough I don't have to because I have video proof of it on my YouTube channel. I can always go back to that video to see my first attraction for the Blues light a fire in me.

At the end of the song the crowd was clapping and Oliver said "Diana, I think you were born a little too soon or a little late, however that goes, cuz you're ahead of your time.....I believe what has happened is her parents slipped a midget in on us." It was an amazing night to say the least and it made a huge impression on me.

### **What guitars do you play, and why?**

I play two Fender Stratocasters. I have a Red Cali Series Strat that is almost twenty years old and it was a gift from my Father back in 2005. Then I have a '62 Vintage Hot Rod Reissue Sunburst Strat that was a gift from my husband three years ago. The reason I love Strats? Stevie Ray Vaughan. When I first saw a DVD of his in 2005, I was in awe of his tone and playing/command of his #1 guitar and I have been obsessed with him ever since and obsessed with Strats ever since.

My guitars just fit me, I love their bell like tones. They are just beautiful. I have yet to go to the Fender compound in Corona, CA but I am planning a trip there soon because I can just stare at guitars for hours. I actually bought another brand of guitar to possibly get another tone for my album and it was really tough for me. Whenever I would play it I would feel super guilty like I was cheating on my Stratocasters. It didn't feel right so I sold it. And I am much happier. I don't need a million guitars.

I have my two....one tuned to Standard E and one tuned to Eb. They each do their job very well for what I need. Now, if I got a chance to play a real '62 Vintage Strat...I definitely wouldn't turn it down. I have never had the chance to play a real vintage guitar.

**We all know about the “blues/rock” divide. On which side of this musical fence does Diana Rein’s music fall on, and what’s your take on the whole Blues vs. Rock debate?**

I like to call my music Blues Rock or Electric Blues. It is blues-based music that is charged up a bit more and doesn't always follow the I IV V pattern as traditional blues does. That gives me more freedom with my vocal melodies while still playing some stinging blues guitar. I have always been partial to the electric side of the Blues. We could probably blame Stevie Ray Vaughan for that! But I can also thank Stevie Ray Vaughan for that because he opened up my world to the blues greats like Buddy Guy, Freddie King, Albert King, BB King, Muddy Waters, T-Bone Walker.

I don't believe in divisiveness. I feel that Blues Rock serves a purpose. Other than being a powerful form of music, it opens up the world of the Blues to younger people. Some people might think that encouraging Blues Rock will water down traditional Blues or eradicate it. But that will never be the case. Blues is the foundation of all popular music. And if you are going to see a Blues Rock artist perform live, I can guarantee that there will be older Blues tunes interjected into the set list.

The thing about Blues Rock artists is that we know where our music comes from and we seem to be proactive about paying homage to those that respectfully came before us. We know what's up! And we know what our job is : to expose people to the world of the blues from a different angle and open that door to allow the listeners to slide down that amazing rabbit hole of great music.

**Being a woman who plays guitar, do you feel there’s any sort of gender inequality in the comments you receive, as opposed to your fellow male guitarists?**

I belong to a few guitar groups on social media where I post about guitars, or do improvs, watch other people play, or just look at their guitar photos! And it's pretty safe to say I am in the minority. I'd have to say that I have had a good experience and mostly have gotten supportive comments. There have maybe been a handful of times where I either read crude stuff just in passing on posts that are not mine or when there might be a troll or something just being mean.

If someone were to be offensive towards me there would be a whole bunch more people sticking up for me. It's part of putting yourself out there. But most of my fans are men. Probably because the nature of what I love to do is more male-dominated and I don't know too many women that are just obsessed with guitars like me.....so the demographic is a bit more substantial on the male side. But I have received a lot of encouragement from both men and women.



**Your new album, “Long Road,” seems to be a bit of a departure from your earlier recordings. What is new and different here?**

DR: When I first started songwriting, I had taught myself how to play acoustic rhythm guitar so the songs weren't as driven by blues lead guitar. After my first album came out I was mainly doing solo acoustic shows and it didn't take long for me to get bogged down with the fact that I wasn't playing lead guitar which was my real dream. That feeling kept gnawing at me until I basically said “forget this. I don't want to play if I can't play what I want to hear.” And I stepped away from it all. It wasn't until three years ago that I made a pact with myself to do this once and for all and I spent any free time that I had practicing my butt off.

Listening to my influences. just obsessed with guitar and embodying the music that I wanted to play. And little by little it came together. On January 1, 2015 I said “you're ready now, open up that channel again and start writing.” I wrote 12 songs in 11 days. I taught myself how to record. I recorded all of the instruments on the album and recorded at my home by myself. For the drums I programmed them which most people might find controversial but I did what I had to do to get the music I was hearing out of my head and I am a better musician for it.

I learned so much about how the pieces fit together and I can more eloquently communicate with other musicians because of it. I didn't have the funds to record in a studio and my son was 2 years old at the time and was more dependent on me. So any way I could get the music out was the right way. These songs on Long Road are guitar-driven all the way. I start with the guitar and everything else comes after. I love it.

**What brings you more enjoyment – being in a studio recording, or playing in front of a live audience?**

I love being in a studio because it feels like I am in a cave and I enjoy solitary exploration of creativity. But the songs don't feel like they have fulfilled their purpose until the sound waves get to reach other people's ears. And not just ears. Shows are not just auditory experiences, but visual and emotional experiences.

The only way for me to feel that connection and that I am on purpose is by connecting with the eyes and souls of the audience. My purpose is to share a message. Music is transformative and I want to change people's lives and give them moments that they will always remember as being feel-good moments or that something changed in them, inspired them by hearing my music live. I love experiencing that exchange of energy.

**Which past or present-day musicians do you cite as your main influences, and why?**

My first influence that made me realize I had an interest in electric guitar was Tom Keifer of Cinderella. When I was eleven years old the Moscow Peace Festival was on pay-per-view and he played an intro to the song "Nobody's Fool" in this huge open arena and it gave me chills. Still does to this day.

But my main influence is Stevie Ray Vaughan. He changed my life forever the day that I heard him play. He made me feel as if he had a message that needed to be continued and he was looking for people to recruit from up in the Heavens. I remember buying a book about him shortly after I learned about him in 2005. I got to the part about the helicopter crash and I had nightmares for a few nights in a row about it. But then while on the phone with my Grandfather, I was talking about starting guitar lessons to finally learn how to play lead guitar and I gasped as I looked in the corner of my room where there was a ray of light shining and it created a V shape that resembled the V on his Number One guitar.

I just felt him. I have had many experiences like that. Another was when I was very scared because I had to get vocal surgery in 2011. I had a vocal polyp for many years and it just needed to go because it was giving me trouble. But I was worried about the possible risks. I was meditating on it and during the middle of my meditation I heard SRV's version of "Little Wing" loud and clear coming from a car passing in front of my apartment.

I knew I would be okay after hearing that. I get little signs from him and I know people might think I might be delusional but there are just too many instances to ignore. So I just honor those little blessings and carry on.

As far as other people that have made an impression on me I'd have to say my former guitar teacher Kelly Richey is at the top of that list. She is a mentor and a female Blues Rock trailblazer. I would also have to say my brothers in Blues Rock Anthony Gomes and Philip Sayce are pretty high up on my list as well. I also identify a lot with David Gilmour and his beautiful soaring melodic lines.

**With the state of the music industry as a whole today, what do you feel are reasonable goals for an independent musician to achieve?**

I feel that it is reasonable to say that there are plenty of opportunities right now. So you can work at creating a fan base with social media, you can record your own music, you can distribute it through many avenues. You can build your own website easily. You can do online concerts now which is wild. Knowledge is at our fingertips with the Internet.

If you take the right steps, you can make a dent whether it's locally to begin and then building out from there. You have to start somewhere but at least now I feel that independent musicians have more of a chance of being heard because of all the tools we have at our disposal and that is a great thing!

**Any parting thoughts and/or words of guidance to any youngsters who aspire to become musicians?**

With any and all technology that exists today, none of it will matter if you don't work on your music. So you have the choice to turn the technology off most of the time and just create, practice, keep getting better, never stop, have a vision and work towards it, be specific about where you want to end up and work your way backwards with the steps you will take to get there.

Never stop asking questions about what more you could learn. Make sure that the music you write gives you a visceral feeling that is undeniable. That is when you know you've got something. Without good music, you don't have much. So work at the music and I truly believe that the rest falls into place.

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