



GayC/DC

Alex Solca

GayC/DC Say, Let There Be Cock

BRETT CALLWOOD | JULY 2, 2018 | 6:00AM



While the music of AC/DC is undeniably freaking awesome (and that's a carefully considered critical opinion, by the way), it's also undeniably dripping in the sort of machismo that helped make rock & roll a less than welcome place for female artists, particularly in the 1970s and '80s.

There was no spandex and makeup from these lads. Just jeans, t-shirts and one school uniform, plus construction worker-catcall humor in the form of bar room boogie/party rock. It's all incredibly heterosexual, so what better way to pay tribute to the Aussie hard rock icons than to gather a group of gay men and reinterpret the music in as flamboyant a fashion as possible? That's what erstwhile Pansy Division man Chris Freeman did. Enter GayC/DC.



“Around 2003, a bunch of us got together and formed an all-gay tribute to The Go-Go’s called The Gay-Gay’s,” Freeman says. “We ended up playing Jane Wiedlin’s afterparty when they played at the Greek for their last show. But that started to trail off, and several of us said, ‘Well, what else could we do? What other all-gay tributes could we come up with?’ Our guitar player Karl [Rumpf] threw out GayC/DC. All of us were AC/DC fans, but grew up with the feeling that they’re extremely heterosexual. What could we bring to that to turn it on its ear, and also remain faithful to the music that we love?”



What they did was play around with the lyrics. “Whole Lotta Rosie” became “Whole Lotta Jose.” “Let There Be Rock” became “Let There Be Cock.” And “Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap” became “Dirty Dudes Done Dirt Cheap.”

“In some cases, like in the song ‘Big Balls,’ we didn’t have to change the lyrics at all,” Freeman says. “It’s just the fact that somebody up there in a dress and tiara rather than in a t-shirt and jeans, the whole context makes the song have a different meaning. That’s what I loved about it. That precedent came from another band I was in called Pansy Division, also still together. A band like Pansy Division doing the song changes the context. So that was something that we knew going in, that we could easily do something with this.”



While GayC/DC performs music from all eras of the AC/DC catalog, Freeman personally prefers the Bon Scott years to Brian Johnson’s later reign. That’s partly because of the fact that he was turned onto the band back in 1976.



“At the time, they were almost considered punk,” he says. “They were getting thrown in with punk because of their attitude, and the fact that they were doing songs that were fast. Name another song as fast as ‘Let There Be Rock’ in 1977. I thought they were more fun back then. I think that once Brian Johnson took over, they were less fun. *Back In Black* is not a fun album. It’s a great album, but the essence is not having a joke and getting drunk. It’s very somber. They’re tongue-in-cheek sometimes, but not as much fun in the same way. We do stuff from the Brian Johnson era, but we’re more selective. The lion’s share of the material that we’re doing is from the Bon Scott era.”



One might think that a band called GayC/DC would attract a largely gay audience, but Freeman says that's not the case, as gay people don't tend to enjoy rock music. If that sounds like a massive blanket statement, it is but hey, *he* said it.



“The thing that I learned in Pansy Division is that most gay people are not interested in rock, no matter what it is,” he says. “They don’t want to know about it. They want their EDM, their disco or their showtunes. They really don’t want to be bothered with rock. It just doesn’t fit. For me, as a young kid growing up, liking rock and really loathing disco, that music resonated with me, whereas for a lot of gay people it does not. I don’t think our audience is a specifically gay audience. I think there are gay people who appreciate it like we do, and that’s going to be part of our audience. But I would say the lion’s share of who we play to are straight people. I think if they have an open mind, it’s hilarious for them. It’s like a bachelorette party gone crazy. Men can get off on it, because they like talking about their dicks too. Women love it, because we’re saying things that they would love to say, and talking about things that they love too. So I would say the audience is anyone who wants to have a good time and has an open mind.”

Freeman says that he’s gotten word that AC/DC have heard of his tribute, but there has been no contact as yet. That’s a real shame – it would be fascinating to know what Angus Young makes of all this.



“I think if they heard about us, they would realize that we’re going for the spirit of thing, and that we try to make sure that the music is number one,”



Freeman says. “That is the main focus. We’ve got to sound good. We take that part of it very seriously. The context and the lyrics are the thing that make us, and I think they would get it. I think they’d like it.”



This week, GayC/DC plays at Alex’s Bar in Long Beach with ‘80s karaoke band Miyagi, which promises to be a rowdy, singalong night.



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“We’re going to have a bit more interaction with the audience for a few of the songs, to get people riled up for Miyagi,” Freeman says. “We’ll do some of the favorites that we play

at every show – we can't not play 'Highway to Hell' or 'You Shook Me All Night Long.' But other than that, we can play around with the set. So some songs that we haven't played for a while, for sure."

After that, GayC/DC has shows lined up all over the country as they look to take this glorious idea to as many people as possible.

"So far it's been great," Freeman says. "People really get it, and I'm happy about that."

GayC/DC plays with Miyagi at 9 p.m. on Saturday, July 7 at [Alex's Bar](#).
