

## Sister Funk



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Where the ladies at? Ever find yourself on the dance floor, just wishing that the DJ would spin a song by an all-girl group that is not The Pussycat Dolls? Tell the DJ about Sister Funk, the five-piece, all lezzy (that's right, 100%), contemporary pop-rock band with a *Saturday Night Fever* flare. You may have seen them rocking out at the Key West Womyn's Music Festival, the Emergenza

Music Festival or on an Olivia Cruise. Provocative, high energy, and entertaining, these women put on a hot show and are now touring the Northeast to promote their latest album, *Gossip*.

Denise Troy sings lead vocals and plays the keys and Kristina Jean also sings lead vocals, as well as playing the saxophone and guitar. Amy Blaze keeps everything under control on percussion, Sara & Kathy are the lead guitarists and Row twists out funky bass lines. We recently got a chance to chat with all five ladies on their rise to fame and upcoming projects.

### How did the five of you initially get together?

**Denise Troy:** In 1998, [Amy] Blaze, Peepa [Kristina], and Troy [Denise] answered an ad posted in the Village Voice stating "NY Producer looking for female musicians for a touring cabaret act." All three of us were selected, and there we met Vange and Wendy [original Sister Funk members]. One night after a Philly performance, we were discussing how incredible our vibe was... We decided upon close of the tour that we would begin on our original project, hence, the birth of Sister Funk. From 2000-2004 we wrote and released two CDS and toured over the United States. In 2005, the band went through a re-org and we found ourselves in search for not only a talented guitar and bass player, but a female — and preferably, a lesbian.

We put out a national search and auditioned women as far as California (our home base is the East Coast). Unfortunately, it was more difficult than expected. Although there are many talented musicians out there, we wanted and needed the right fit for us. Being in a band is a huge commitment — like being in a marriage with four others but never getting laid.

As irony would have it, Sister Funk won best funk and best pop band in a New England contest and we performed on one of the main outdoor stages. Vange was playing one of her last shows with us and had gone to the wrong stage and was escorted to our performance area by no other than Sara (our current guitar player)... Sara mentioned that Row (her band mate at the time) played bass and would love to try out for the band. Luck? Coincidence? Call it what you will, but that guitar player who went to the wrong stage found our missing

it what you will, but that guitar player who went to the wrong stage found our missing synergy.

**Amy Blaze:** We have become a family in a sense, and that kind of camaraderie has maintained itself over a period of ten years.

**How would you describe your overall style and sound?**

**DT:** I would describe it as a potpourri of styles mainly in the pop vein with a rock influence. Our latest CD, *Gossip* tends to define our song more so than the previous discs. We have been compared to artists such as Scissor Sisters and Maroon 5.

**Kathy :** Pop Rock with an “edge.”

**AB:** For color, add a sprig of non-traditional funk served with a radio-friendly twist of Latin.

**Two of the tracks on your most recent CD are entitled “Bad Reputation” and “Gossip.” It seems like ideas regarding public image and slander are a big focus on this album. Where does that come from?**

**Kristina Jean:** *Gossip* specifically focuses on the relationship I have with the people in my life ... not my relationship with the public. It’s an examination of my own behavior and others around me. It’s an awakening to the kind of person I want to be; I’ve realized that it’s better to be talked about, than allowing and participating in gossip out of fear. The other eight songs on the CD are about everyday life: keeping a long-term relationship spicy, trying to hang on in this crazy world, having faith, being saved, coming out, leaving unhealthy relationships and just having fun on the dance floor!

**As an all female band, do you find that your fan base is primarily female?**

**AB:** Our fan base is diverse; however, we generally cater to a women’s crowd. We have been called “the band that cares” by local agencies on the East Coast for our regular support of women’s charities, breast cancer events and of course, our gay and lesbian community. It is our hope to reach out to new listeners across varied age groups, cultures, genders, etc ... inspiring new fans whoever and wherever they may be!

**KJ:** A particularly poignant moment occurred last year, when an older woman came to me in tears. She explained that she was very involved in the women’s movements in the 70s; she continued to tell me how truly happy she was to see an all female band playing their music.

**In what direction would you like to see your music evolve?**

**K.J.:** I would like to see us sharing our musical style and spirit with the world through TV, movies and world tours.

**AB:** Record deal?...Yes, please.

**DT:** Yes, a record deal would be nice but it’s more important to me to be able to continue to write, perform and entertain without the threat of losing creative integrity. I want as many people as possible to hear and support our music and would hope that there is always room for the independent artist to hit it big time!