

While in Hawaii these past few years, Babel Entertainment discovered more than just sweet beaches, fresh pineapples, coconuts, and late night bars, we found a thriving talented rock scene. One band in particular that caught our eyes was the young quartet called EMKE. This young rock group has shared the same stages and opened with some amazing artist that include Nobuo Uematsu of Final Fantasy fame Earthbound Papas, Kansas, & Neal Schon of Journey to name a few. They are currently working on their new album since their last release in 2012 “Promises and Expectations”, and took some time out of their busy recording schedule and preparations for the up coming NAMM 2015 show in Anaheim, CA to talk with us.



EMKE IS LETTING THE WORLD KNOW THAT ROCK N ROLL IS ALIVE AND WELL IN PARADISE

Babel: You are currently working on your next album since 2012, how would you compare this one to your previous release “Promises and Expectations”?

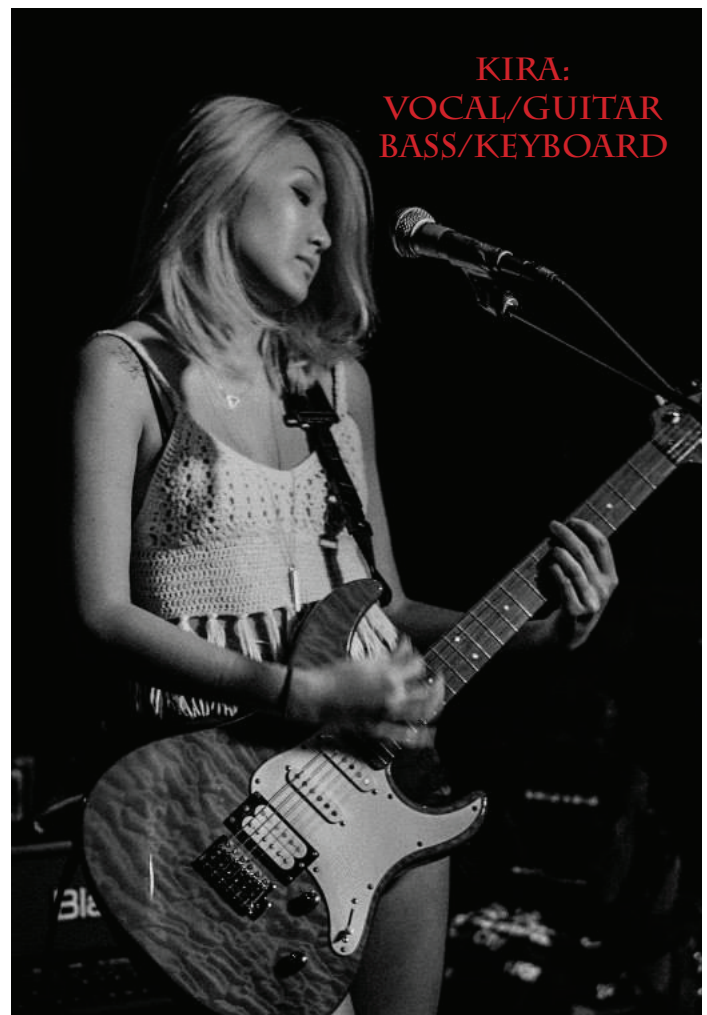
EMKE: *We definitely would say this is a more mature album, given the fact we are now a few years older. I mean the lyrics are more mature from just growing up and facing personal experiences. It's also a much heavier sound then our first album as well.*

Babel: Now all of the ladies of the group share main vocal parts. How do you decide who sings which song?

EMKE: *We all actually try singing the song that we have put together, and we basically decide who sounds best singing it.*

Babel: You've all been performing together since you were very young. Now the oldest being 19. When did you seriously decide to make music your career choice?

EMKE: In 2007 we performed at NAMM for the first time, and it was our first time ever performing on the main land. We were very nervous, but after our performance we received a standing ovation from the crowd. We were the youngest to play on that stage,





EZRI:
VOCAL/BASS/KEYBOARD

EMKE cont.- , and found out afterwards, we were the first band to ever get a standing ovation. It was there we felt we were doing something right. To get reassurance from an audience of musicians really opened our eyes. After that show, we started rehearsing much more, and basically our social life completely disappeared.

Babel: Do your parents support your musical career decision?

EMKE: All our parents are completely supportive, and we are very lucky and thankful to have their support.

Babel: In previous interviews around your first debut album "Promises and Expectations" you had cited your influences being a lot of classic rock bands such as Bon Jovi, Def Leppard, etc . Now as time has gone by since then, have your influences changed?

**"WE WERE THE FIRST
BAND TO EVER
GET A STANDING
OVATION"**
on first live at NAMM



MARI:
VOCALS / GUITAR
KEYBOARD / BASS

EMKE

EMKE: *We started with classic rock, and that's why our influences were classic rock based when we were younger. Before we listened to what our parents played and listened to, but now we listen to our own interest. We still love classic rock, but have now expanded our influences to our personal taste, and really found what we wanted to sound like as a band. All of us use to listen to the same music, but now we've all gone our separate ways as far as musical taste. Which we think helps us creating songs together.*

Babel: Who now are your personal influences?

Payton: *Travis Barker (Blink 182) is my favorite drummer. I've been listening to Blink 182 since I was like 4 or 5 years old. Till this day he has been my go to drummer for everything.*

Ezri: *I don't have a favorite bassist, even though I love the bass and it's my favorite instrument to play, but for vocals it would be Jenna McDougall a singer for Tonight Alive from Australia which is a Pop-Punk band. She has been my idol for the past 3 years. She has an amazing back story and I love her voice and song writing.*

Kira: *I listen to Jason Lancaster (Go Radio) who is my number one. I look up to more male vocalist than female. Although I like a lot of female singers I don't really have one who has influenced me. I find myself trying to have a manlier sound because I think it sounds harder. One female vocalist I do look up to is Lzzy Hale of Halestorm. If I had to pick a favorite female vocalist it would be her. Maybe cause she sounds like a man (laughs). Because I'm a small Asian girl, I want to sound different with a deeper, stronger rock voice that would set me apart from other female singers. I also enjoy country music such as Rascal Flatts. I listen to them for song arrangements. When I'm writing I pull from them.*

Mari: *When I was growing I really liked Paramore, especially their early sound and albums. Hayley Williams is definitely an influence to me.*

Babel: Usually when you think of bands in America choosing rock music as their career path, people tend to picture places like Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, etc. Not so much Hawaii when it comes to Rock

Babel cont: music. Being in such a remote place as Hawaii, do you find it difficult to be successful in your music career?

EMKE: *At times it seems like it, but now people are making so much use out of social media so I really feel we are at an advantage especially cause we are from Hawaii. When people come here for vacation they are surprised to see a local Hawaiian rock band. With social media sites such as YouTube, you see many bands from all over are making it now. It doesn't matter where are you from these days as long as you utilize all the social media platforms. In the beginning we never really worked on our social media, but now its something we are focusing on and it's great connecting with our fans. It's definitely helped us. We wish we worked on it earlier cause there was a time we did wish we were somewhere else when we were not utilizing social media. So, yeah we feel it is an advantage to live in Hawaii. People are always saying "WOW, you live in Hawaii?? That's so cool!" stuff like that.*

Babel: Being so young and even starting out very young together, how do you balance your everyday teenager lives and not compromise the band?

EMKE: *We really don't have a social life anymore. We are either in the studio, rehearsal, or gigging. We pretty much are our own best friends. We hang out all the time together. (Ezri) It's hard for me to concentrate on my school work cause all I can think of is going to rehearsal and playing. We really don't have many friends, but we are ok with that. We are definitely not complaining, it's something we just gotten use to. Since we started so long ago, it's just become natural for us. I think if we started now, it would be much harder cause we would want to go out and party and do other things not associated with music. We see some people that we went to music school with no longer play (music) as much cause they want a more outside social life, which there is nothing wrong with that, but with us we would get asked to out to a party on the weekends, but we'd say "sorry I got rehearsal" then they would ask if we could skip it, and the answer would always be "no, it's important" We are very serious about this, and we do have a few friends outside of the band, but pretty much we 4 hang out all the time and we are all best friends.*

EMKE cont. : This is our job and we love it. Even though it doesn't feel like a job cause we love it so much. In essence this band is our social life. We also love meeting our fans which many become our friends, and see them at our lives.

Babel: Because you spend so much time together, when something does go wrong how do you all handle it? Do you have a mediator that kind of looks over the 4 of you?

EMKE: We look at this as a family, and you talk to family differently then you would talk to someone else. We all are very understanding of each other and can be completely open without offending anyone personally.



(Kira) because Ezri and I are real sisters, I feel bad during rehearsals cause they have to hear us argue at times (laughs). But the main thing is that what ever is argued about or discussed its all about getting the job done for the band. As far as a mediator, our father (Kira & Ezri) who is our manager use to be the one to kind of mediate any situation has kind of just let us do our thing now since we are a bit older.

Babel: For you next album, do you plan to try and tour the mainland or anywhere off the island more to support it?

EMKE: We'd love to perform and promote our band in general everywhere. With this new album we feel it definitely shows who we are as a band. We also taken a few songs off "Promises and Expectations" and rearranged them for this album as well.

Babel: Can we expect a music video with this release?

EMKE: We'd like to, but we are pretty awkward in front of the camera (laughs) but yeah we are first focusing on releasing this album. We are also preparing for NAMM in Anaheim, CA where we will be help promoting Yamaha gear. But yeah I'm sure we'll do something for the new album

Babel: When you search Youtube for EMKE you find man live video's of you performing cover songs. How do you decide which songs you cover for a show?

EMKE: *We mainly cover songs that are maybe popular at the time, even though we may not like them (laughs), however we rearrange it to our style. We like to rearrange the songs we cover cause if someone likes the original song, they can always just listen to it anytime by themselves. That's why we think it is important to rearrange it. Many times songs we hate to cover, we end up liking our version of it (laughs).*

Babel: Can you give our readers a closing message?

EMKE: *Keep an eye out for our upcoming album! Hope to see you in Hawaii! If not, we'll see you on the road someday!*



Official EMKE Sites:

<https://www.facebook.com/emke.hawaii>

<https://www.facebook.com/emke.hawaii.fanpage>

<http://instagram.com/emkehawaii>

<https://twitter.com/emkehawaii>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/emkehawaii>