

## 20-ish Questions with Tanya Elise Kos

May 8, 2009 by: George L. Stewart [www.thewomblog.com](http://www.thewomblog.com)



*Tanya Elise Kos at the Hi-Fi Concert Club*

I want to do a little something different today. Rather than discussing one of the ten thousand things wrong with the world and the Powers-That-Be, I thought it would be fun to take a minute to focus on something positive. Sometime further back than I can actually remember (I figure that puts it somewhere around a month ago), I mentioned that my mind's eye picture of Lorain is focused more on the negative image of the city than on the accomplishments of the citizens that compose it. While there have been a great number of talented and driven individuals in the past that have made successful lives for themselves beyond Lorain's borders, let's not forget that there are people traveling on the same road that still reside within her.

I had the great fortune of bumping into just such a person a few weeks back.

Ms. Tanya Elise Kos.

Tanya's an old friend of mine, one I hadn't seen her in nearly 16 years. We were helping another friend move a ridiculously heavy pool table and of course when we were done we played a little pool, had a few drinks and chatted. Then Tanya pulled out her guitar and I sat mesmerized for the next 2 hours by the soulfulness in her voice and the honesty and vulnerability in her lyrics.

I decided then and there that every one should have the pleasure of making her acquaintance. Since she has an upcoming show May 16 at The Cove Nite Club in Geneva on the Lake, a website ([www.tanyaelisekos.com](http://www.tanyaelisekos.com)) where you can sample her music, and a studio session with Ted Riser (who has performed with artists such as David Allen Coe, Kentucky Head-hunters, Greg Allman and Marshall Tucker Band and also performed at places such as Bethel Music Festival in Woodstock, New York; The Broken Spoke Saloon at Sturgis, South Dakota, and Blossom Music Center) next month, you'll certainly have the opportunity to hear something from her very soon. However, for those of you who don't want to wait, I asked her to answer a few questions about herself, her influences, her thoughts on the northeast Ohio music scene, etc. and – thankfully- she agreed to it. So with no further ado, I present to you

20-ish Questions with Tanya Elise Kos

### **Section 1: about her**

1. Where are you from/ where'd you grow up/ where'd you go to school?

**I was born and raised in Lorain, OH... Attended Meister Rd. Elementary, Masson Jr. High, and graduated from Admiral King 1993.**

2. Who were your musical influences/ what got you interested in music?

**Growing up, I listened to my parents' records... Elvis Presley, Pasty Cline, Beatles, Jim Croce, Gene**

**Pitney, various 60's doo-wop artist as well as some classical music.**

**Music was always being played in the house, that got me into it... and at the age of 6, I saw the MTV (when it first aired) and saw my first rock video. I realized, at that early age, that's what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.**

3. What instruments do you play/ where'd you learn to play?

**I play acoustic guitar, a little bass guitar, some piano....back in school I used to play trumpet and violin.**

**I learned the basics of guitar at Ron Zehels Guitar Center (when I was 11 yrs old) my instructor was Ron Renick.**

4. How long have you been performing?

**I have been performing since my teens to present.**

5. How much of your self/ life experiences are in your songs?

**All my songs are about myself and the experiences I have had**

Section 2: about the band and her music

6. Tell me a little about the band/ who are the other members?

**I have Richard Adler on bass guitar and Vince Martin on drums.**

7. What other projects have the members been involved in?

**They, both, have worked with various other bands, etc... They are seasoned pros.**

8. How'd you meet?

**I met Vince Martin through a local musician's ad. (Cleveland Scene back page). Richard Adler just happened to be a good friend of Vince's... so, it came together nicely.**

9. How long have you been playing together?

**We have been together for about a year now.**

10. How have they influenced the music you write/play now (as opposed to your solo work)?

**I am the sole writer of the group, but these guys keep me very motivated... and my writings have become more powerful, more soulful, and more aggressive.**

Section 3: about the Ohio music scene

11. What style of music is big in Ohio right now?

**What's big in Ohio now? Well, I'd have to say Alternative Rock... there's still a lot of cover bands doing classic rock, heavy metal, etc...**

12. How is it different from when you first started out?

**Well, the music scene used to be a lot simpler... you'd hear bands that played songs that were simple with the groove; lyrics... fun and laid-back (kinda like the 80's). Now, it seems like it's an "in your face" kinda thing. A lot more aggressive in the music and lyrics. Back in the day, it was also easier to get gigs, bookings... with our economy the way it is, you better have a following. Business owners want to make sure they're getting profits.**

13. What other bands/performers have you worked with?

**I have worked with bassist Edward Edwards, (my talented oldest brother) Andrew Kos (piano), Ted**

**Riser (singer-songwriter.... he and I will be doing some studio work soon).**

14. Any interesting/embarrassing stories you'd like to share?

**Embarrassing stories... one comes to mind. Doing a show at the Hi-Fi Club back in Oct.2008. First song of the night, I started playing it in the wrong key and said" Oh, sh#t... WRONG KEY "(I was right next to the mic... I'm sure they all heard me). But it was a great show!  
Another was when we played at The Cove (Geneva-On-The-Lake)...it was winter, and the heater in the van broke. It was 6 degrees outside and we had to kill time and keep warm by going into fast food places, and stores before the show ( we had no choice because we had to leave our hotel at 11am )... the 2 hour drive home ( that night ) was horrible!!!!**

Section 4: about Lorain and its music scene

15. What venues are in Lorain right now?

**We are not currently playing Lorain venues (waiting for responses from local business owners)**

16. Which festivals do you attend/ would you like to perform at?

**I love the Lorain County Festival... we hope one day to play that venue. We do have 2 shows booked for Lake County Fairgrounds July 25th and 26th 2009.**

17. Do you think the popularity of music styles influence socio-economic behavior or vice versa?

**Yes... and I like tater-tots (LOL)**

18. And your thoughts on the music programs in Lorain City Schools:

**Music programs in Lorain City Schools should expand more... I think music is a great release for these kids. Not to mention that music teaches people to work together (it takes more than one person to make a song a song)... and there's a great sense of accomplishment afterwards. It's more than lyrics and music, it's a feeling.**

Section 5: about the future (performances, recording, what have you)

19. Tell me a little bit about your upcoming shows

**Check out [www.tanyaelisekos.com](http://www.tanyaelisekos.com) for upcoming shows**

20. Will you be releasing anything soon?

**We will be in the studio next month working on 7 new songs (with Ted Riser).**

21. Your thoughts on promotion via MySpace, youtube, etc

**Youtube and MySpace have been wonderful tools for musicians!!! It really helps to promote our material.**

22. What would you tell someone thinking of getting into the music business?

**You probably have heard this before, "it's tough to break into this business "... that is exactly right! But if your heart is truly into it... go for it! If everyone gave-up because it just seems too hard, then we wouldn't have Madonna or Elvis, Garth Brooks, Bon Jovi (to name a few). These people were told "you'll never make it "... so, I say to everyone "Dream Big "!**

23. Finally, the biggest question: Who would win in a fight - Cavemen or Astronauts?

**Cavemen would win! They have an old school; animalistic way about them... it's a no-brainer.**

Reader's Comments:

1. scott bakalar says:

May 8, 2009 at 8:51 am

Great Idea.

Great talent.

Great Interview.

You're always thinkin' George.

2. Brian says:

May 8, 2009 at 9:23 am

Great interview George.

One thing I noticed at the bands web site is almost every picture of Tanya has a big ol microphone in the middle of it. The one photo that was picked for the WOM is one of the few that doesn't have the mike in the middle of her face, but jusu about every other one does.

3. lalala.lorain says:

May 8, 2009 at 8:33 pm

I remember Tonya from way back too. Remember a show at the old Corner on Broadway when Tonya was soooo nervous to perform an entire set during the break of Tim Blake. She brought the house down and I knew right then she had a special gift. Her brother Andy played piano and sang with an old band too. I think they were called Detour and then I don't know what ever happened to them.

o scott bakalar says:

May 8, 2009 at 10:41 pm

Is Tonya of the "Kos Family Band" family?

They were always my favorites when the International Festival was in the inner courtyard of the Sheffield Plaza.

### **Music Morsels**

January 2004 by: Mark E. Waterbury [www.musicmorselsonline.com](http://www.musicmorselsonline.com)

### **Tanya Elise Kos - Demo**

This solo singer/songwriter from the Cleveland area has a strong voice that seems to have a more rock influence. This adds an extra emotional jolt to the folk, semi country and unplugged rock vibe of the music. The lyrics are passionate, lending the music a very honest and appealing quality. Primarily accompanied by flavorful acoustic guitar strumming and light instrumentation, this music is very enjoyable and a cut above your average singer/songwriter.

URL: [www.tanyaelisekos.com](http://www.tanyaelisekos.com)

Email: [tanya@tanyaelisekos.com](mailto:tanya@tanyaelisekos.com)

<http://www.funcoast.com/music/tanya-elise-kos>

### **Tanya Elise Kos**

Never Again

Written By:

Right One, Wrong Time

Written By:

Right One, Wrong Time

Take Me Back (Picture Book)

Written By:

Members:

Tanya Elise Kos - Vocals & Guitar

Vince Martin - Drummer & Backup Vocals

Rich Adler - Bass Player

Links:

Tanya Elise Kos' Website

Tanya Elise Kos' MySpace

Tanya Elise Kos was born February 15 in Lorain, Ohio, a small suburb of Cleveland. As a child, she took root to many different styles of music. In her early years, she enjoyed listening to her parent's records -- artists such as Elvis Presley, Patsy Cline, Jim Croce, 60's doo-wop and classical as well. Having developed a strong admiration for music, Tanya wanted nothing more than to pursue the art of singing and songwriting.

In her early teen years, she began playing guitar and writing her own songs that reflected herself and the world around her. Over the years, Tanya has accomplished what she set out to do, which was to become a singer, songwriter and entertainer. Her songs speak of life's ups and downs, happiness and heartaches and

experiences in general.

Today, Tanya continues to perform and share her gift of writing with others.

"For everyone and everything in life, there's a song," and she's here to sing it.

Article below appears in the Northcoast Voice magazine Vol.9 - Issue 22 • December 2 - 16, 2009



**Tanya Elise Kos**

*American Girl*

BY Sage Satori  
PHOTOS BY David Kemp

In her early teen years, she began playing guitar and writing her own songs.

...continue. The songs speak of life's ups and downs, inspirations and heartaches and experiences in general.

In speaking with Tanya we found out a little more about her roots and her inspiration.

NCV: What genre would you consider your music to be?

Tanya: I have no exact definition, music influences of various genres. The ones I would have a hard time placing are usually in and around genres. My music is definitely country, some of my ballads however are really full into the country genre. I have all types of music. I grew up listening to a lot of my parents' music, and my dad is a Prairie Fire Club. My choice, I'll always love the blue line and even classical. I like a lot of the 60's and the 70's. I would love to see you on the radio.

NCV: Will the Wiggins What show inspire more holiday music?

Tanya: We are overlooking the idea of some Christmas music, however the quantity will have to come to the show to find out for themselves.

NCV: Did playing guitar come naturally to you or was it a big challenge to me beginning?

Tanya: I was 11 years old when I got my first guitar. I had to read music, but I was able to play it before I could read music because I had a natural talent. I was able to play it before I could read music because I had a natural talent. I was able to play it before I could read music because I had a natural talent.

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**Fri. Dec. 18 ... Burnt River Band**

Beck  
Your Holiday  
Party Next!



this release. What listeners can expect is my strongest material to date and I'm currently writing new material at this time so check out the website [www.tanyaelisekos.com](http://www.tanyaelisekos.com) for updates.

3. Will the Wagon Wheel show include some Holiday music?

We are entertaining the idea of some Christmas music, however the readers will have to come to the show to find out for themselves.

4. Did playing guitar come naturally to you or was it big challenge in the beginning?

I was 6 years old when I fell in love with the guitar. My father handed down to me an old acoustic which was his from when he was a teen. I had to wait until my arms grew long enough before I could take lessons because back then they did not have small customized guitars designed for children. Even though I had to wait for several years, I never lost the desire to learn the instrument. I started playing at the age of 11 and it came naturally. In fact, it's the one thing I never struggled with (LOL!)

5. Would you like to mention any of your past band experiences?

Actually, all through my teens and up until my late 20's I was doing solo/acoustic shows. It wasn't until these last 3 years or so that started working with other musicians. It was very difficult to find others in the area that were career-minded and strong willed and willing to do original music. Fortunately, I found two musicians that believe in my material and share the same goals.

6. Did you sing or perform in front of an audience in High School ?

Yes, I did several talent shows in high school and some other local talent events in the community. Although I'd lost the high school events it never discouraged me, if anything it made me more determined to pursue my dream. To me, music shouldn't be a "contest". Music is a feeling, an expression, also an art form.

7. Is your current live band - drummer Vince Martin and bassist Glen Armstrong?

Is there anything you would like to say about either of them and their accomplishments before joining you?

Yes, and these are two of the finest musicians you'll ever hear. They are extremely talented, very dedicated and success driven. They both play with such emotion and passion and their greatest attribute is playing with heart and soul. Vince Martin has been in many area local bands through the years. The most notable band he'd been involved in was a band called Lost Nation back in the late '90's. In fact, right before his audition for me he's just gotten back from Alaska with an original band there. After the band's demise he came back home to Ohio.

Glenn Armstrong was born into a musical family. In 1995 Glenn established Strongarm Entertainment and began playing bass guitar and Drums/Percussion, focusing on co-writing and arranging original music, as well as performing with a numerous variety and local and national acts. Glenn has worked with Ray Walker legendary bass singer of the Jordanares, Vegas Show Band legend Glenn Williams, The Original Comets, the Four Lads, Lawrence Blind, Firelands Symphony Orchestra, Towne and Country Players Orchestra and many more.

8. Are you playing piano on "Just Like the Rain"? If so, do you ever play keyboard on stage?

No, I did not play piano on that recording. Martin Frenesi played on that track. In fact, I don't really play the piano at all but I have been know to sit behind the keys as I come up with song ideas.

9. What would most people be surprised to know about Tanya Elise Kos?

When I'm not sitting up at night watching re-runs of Scooby-Doo I enjoy abstract painting. If I weren't a musician, I would probably pursue stand up comedy, acting or any other another performing art. Oh, and I have an ever-growing Elvis collection!