

Laura Branigan
OTHER HALF
ENTERTAINMENT

and
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present



The 2013 Laura Branigan
Spirit Of Love
Memorial Gathering

Long Island, NY
August 16-18, 2013

Event Itinerary

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16th

2:00 PM - 2:30 PM	Registration & Greeting
2:30 PM - 4:00 PM	Laura video footage
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Dinner on your own
6:00 PM	Leave hotel for beach (FIRM)
6:45 PM	Arrive at beach
7:00 PM - 7:45 PM	Beach Memorial / Private reflection on beach
7:45 PM	Return trip to hotel
9:00 PM - 9:30 PM	Laura Video Footage
9:30 PM - 10:30 PM	<u>Hold Me</u> tour choreography and band rehearsal

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17th

prior to 10:00 AM	Breakfast on your own
10:00 AM - 10:45 AM	Memorabilia Display
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Laura Trivia Contest with Video
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Lunch on your own
2:00 PM - 4:30 PM	Laura video footage Final band performance, Mohegan Sun, January 2004
4:30 PM - 6:45 PM	Dinner on your own
6:45 PM - 7:30 PM	Candlelight Memorial
7:30 PM - 8:00 PM	Group/Individual Photo session
8:00 PM - 8:45 PM	Laura Q & A Session "Fan Forum": share your thoughts on Laura
8:45 PM - 9:30 PM	Specialty Records Corp. 40th Anniversary Celebration
9:30 PM - 10:30 PM	Meadowlands, NJ concert, 1998

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18th

prior to 9:00 AM	Breakfast on your own
9:00 AM	Gather in lobby for casual Sunday outing in the Hamptons, including Westhampton Beach, East Quogue, Southampton, and Montauk

Timeless

By Kathy and Vince Golik

How often have we been stopped in our tracks by something from out of our past that hits us in our present; a person we pass on the street whom we haven't connected with in years; the wafting aroma of a certain comfort food from our younger days; or even the sounds of a special song that brought us through a difficult time or that still evokes certain memories and feelings.

Laura's music is a lot like that. It's a comforting feeling when one of her CDs spins up in the car stereo on the way to work. Songs still evoke memories many years after we first heard "Gloria" on the radio. The words of a song penned years ago still stir, haunt, and carry us through.

Not every song can do that. Some songs we've heard in years past hardly touch us at all, even if we remember them played over again. Is it us? Is it the song that just didn't seem to reach in and do something for us? Or maybe it's the industry in general?



In the music business today, it seems the driving force is the proverbial "fast buck." Gone are the days when most artists could

rely solely on their talents providing a steady income for them, just by regular album releases and tour dates.

When Laura broke on the Atlantic Records scene in the early 1980's, she and her contemporaries faced a music industry that largely took care of those who stuck around. Certainly there were a number of "one-hit wonders" who caught us with a gnawing riff in our ears for a while, whether for a quick bit of fame or in the fallen hope that they would "make it." Ask about these artists, and only that one song comes to mind, if anyone remembers at all.

However, for many years, artists who showed the greatest ability to touch people's hearts and lives were the ones who made more than one or two albums; and the longer they stayed in the business, the more we were able to see their inner spirit come out in their music. Laura is certainly in this distinctive class of artists who have a "hook" song for which they are instantly recognizable, but also have a large quiver full of music that shows an outpouring of their true heart and soul, and a level of musical maturity that reaches fans of all ages around the world.

But it's not just the music that we remember, and that still touches us many years after we may have first heard it. It's the person behind the music that truly makes the difference between artist and diva (in the traditional sense), between someone

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remembered for some great songs and one who is thought of as timeless, remembered for the person they are.

Over the years, even before Laura's passing, we've heard many stories from fans telling how Laura's music touched their lives in very special, unique ways. But we also love hearing the stories of people who have encountered Laura personally, and have found her the complete opposite of the off-standing, conceited type of person that we usually expect a music star or celebrity to be in "real life."

Laura's genuine, selfless, and humble attitude toward life gave many a pause the first time they would meet her. While on stage, she was the epitome of the musical perfectionist, offstage she was the "simple country girl", whose passions included cooking, gardening, reading, and spending time with friends, and taking care of her elderly mother. After nearly every show, she deliberately (occasionally to the consternation of security or road staff) held a meet-and-greet, during which she would make every fan feel like they were the only one there, remembering many from earlier times, and recalling stories and events in fan's lives. This wasn't just a put-on of some snooty mega-star who felt an "obligation" to meet fans and sign autographs; this was a reflection of the kind of person Laura was, the genuine person who cared about others and what mattered to them.

There are few people in life who achieve a level of worldwide acclaim, yet can retain an open, simple, down-to-earth approach to their personal life. There are even less who can touch people both professionally and personally. Laura was more than just a musical diva, more than just a great person to get to know. She was both. She is... timeless.

Think of Laura

words and music by Christopher Cross

Every once in a while I'd see her smile
And she'd turn my day around
A girl with those eyes could stare through the lies
And see what your heart was saying

Think of Laura but laugh don't cry
I know she'd want it that way
When you think of Laura laugh don't cry
I know she'd want it that way

A friend of a friend a friend to the end
That's the kind of girl she was
Taken away so young taken away without a warning
I know you and you're here in every day we live
I know her and she's here I can feel her when I sing

Hey Laura, where are you now
Are you far away from here
I don't think so, I think you're here
Taking our tears away

Didn't We Almost Win It All

By Tommy Bayiokos

With the passage of time and in solace, I have reinterpreted the title and meaning of Laura's tune, as many may relate to how something so wonderful, beautiful, natural, and real can be taken away from us in an instant. Laura left us way too soon, and for many, it is a timeless wound that never fully heals as we march forward in life with its challenges, triumphs, and sorrows. I have grown with the mantra that "life is short, but love lasts forever." We are here but a short time and tomorrow is never promised.

I recall in my years with the band, Laura showing fierce promise for better days

with her joy for cooking, gardening, touring with her band, and caring for her beloved mom Kathleen. During my months with her, I found that the simplicity of life is what she adored most. We often search and search, with the treasure usually right in front of us, yet we are not ready to see it. Laura saw it, and that is what bonded us together - unplanned and deeper than deep. The exchange is uniquely wonderful with someone who knows the same lyrics to the same songs you



do. We both loved and lost in our lives, and I can tell you I experienced a profound love with her that to this day stays with me and gives me the strength to excel, to be a better man today and tomorrow. Whatever success I have had since, credit the love of Laura beside me as she was my greatest teacher of life, love, arts, and of course music. She wanted to touch everyone's soul, as she no doubt did, and continues to do so. I recently went to a dear relative's wake and the priest said something that I found really esoteric - "there is no time limit to remembering loved ones...talk to them daily and even set their plate at the table while you're eating dinner." I actually did this at our first private band memorial dinner gathering and the waiter looked at me oddly, but he is not the judge. We sat as a band, her family in effect, with the place setting, and a picture and flowers that I had set nicely. Laura was around, we all felt it.

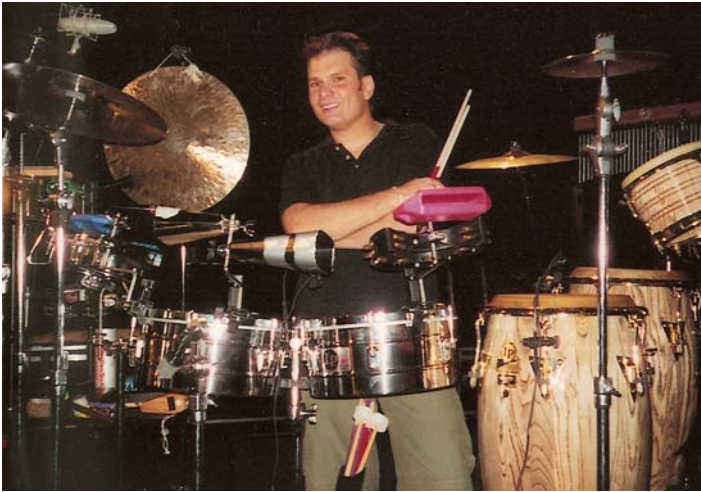
To ask "didn't we almost win it all" is a question with the answer found deep within our hearts. Although we mourn her loss, I think we all have won because she was with us those precious years, time spent, which is the greatest gift one can ever give. There is a quote by Ram Dass, "we are brought into each other's lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime." Laura left us memories of a lifetime and music for you that will live forever. Even after so many years, I remember taking my morning runs and getting lost in the beauty of East Quogue; her cook-

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ing master chef dishes; her sharing private thoughts that only years later have I



come to understand concerning life and humanity; and I remember her love for her "other half," the fans that she looked forward to seeing so much at her shows. Also, I always remember to this day Laura's instruction to me before all perform-

ances, "space, phrasing, dynamics.....come down to a whisper, Tommy."

I recall the renewed synergy that surrounded her, the excitement Laura had for doing so many great things ahead like touring, recording her new album, and publishing a cookbook. In addition, Laura and I were just starting a regimen of working out. She wanted to learn karate from me as she had some experience, exemplified by her kicks in her shows. I once told her, "you know Laura, that kicking thing you do behind the piano when you hit certain notes, I think you should keep that in." She looked at me with a very big smile and said, "Oh...what do you mean....Oh yes... I will." Years later with social media and all, I found out that she always did that knee kick technique. But you see, that was the beauty of it all. I knew her as Laura - the country girl who loved and I loved her.

Although Laura is gone from this life, as I talk to Kathy and the other few close friends of hers of those final days, we all have experienced divine signs of her presence. Call it wishful thinking or coincidence, but I believe nothing is by chance, and everything in life is for a reason as God embraces us all. She is around. Laura is with us and will always continue to be with us, as I'm sure everyone who has journeyed to this year's Spirit Of Love would agree. Just close your eyes in quietness in the ambiance of East Quogue and the Hamptons where Laura last resided, and there your answer will be. Thank you. May God continue to bless you and may God bless our Laura's eternal soul always.

Thanks to all for making this Gathering
a special time to remember and celebrate
the timeless and talented Laura Branigan!



Special Thanks

*Hilton Garden Inn Islip/MacArthur Airport
Management and Staff*

Suffolk County Parks

Tommy Bayiokos

Erika Atsumi Foreman

Jim Raboin

*James & Florence Flood & Staff
Westhampton T-Shirts*

All of Laura's faithful fans around the world who join with us to carry forth her legacy...