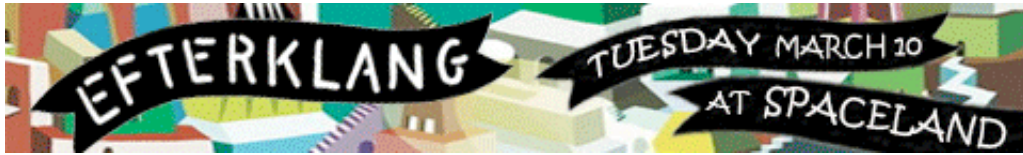


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Where is My Mind?: Meeting Prince



A monthly Web in Front column by [KROQ Locals Only](#) DJ Kat Corbett, Where is My Mind? features Kat's musings about, rants on, and love letters to music—local, national, world, whatever.

By Kat Corbett

So, there I was, trapped in Prince's bathroom while the sound of his band kicking into "I Want You Back" by The Jackson 5 pumped through the space between the door and the floor. I frantically twisted the lock and turned the knob trying to get out in time to witness the magic but the door wouldn't budge. I checked my cell phone—no service—no chance for a 911 rescue call. What would I say anyway? "Um, yeah hi, I'm trapped in Prince's bathroom on the bottom floor of his house and I'm going to miss him sing one of my favorite Jackson 5 songs, so could you bring a crowbar to Beverly Park?" Another minute of twisting the door handle only lead to red fingers and I pictured myself stuck in his bathroom for days surviving on gobs of cherry lip-gloss and two sticks of Juicy Fruit. I pounded my fists on the door and shouted for help but the music was too loud and I realized that no one could hear my screams. This was not a dream, this was really happening. Last Saturday night at 1am I was being held captive by Prince's bathroom.



Let me start at the beginning and please forgive me if this entry sounds like a twelve-year writing in her diary but what do you expect after spending a night at Prince's house?

It all started with a cryptic email inviting me to Prince's pad to witness the launch of his new website www.lotusflow3r.com with a live performance to follow. I had heard whispers of these Prince gatherings before, but I was suspicious of the email as it wasn't from prince.com. I replied saying, "Is this legit? If so, I'm in." I was instructed to wait for further instructions—very hush hush. At that point, I assumed I was actually going to Prince's house or being shipped off to Russia and sold into the sex trade—either way it was important to shave my legs.

At 9:45 pm I stood at Prince's front door, an hour and a half late and couldn't find the doorbell. I thought of knocking but with a house of that size, who would hear my puny knuckles hitting the glass? I took a deep breath, opened the door and walked inside. I expected everything to be purple but there wasn't even a hint of plum in the grand space that seemed to go on for miles. I entered a spacious kitchen busy with a small group eating hors d'oeuvres and enjoying cocktails. One of the first people I met was Steve Appleford, a writer for *Rolling Stone*—confirmation that I was in fact in Prince's house and not headed to the Ukraine. I ordered a whiskey and immediately locked eyes on Prince's black Schimmel piano just steps away from the kitchen island. This gorgeous instrument was just sitting there in the middle of the room. It should have been behind a velvet rope on a revolving stage under a spotlight but there it was by the bathroom and I touched it. My hands were on the black lacquer before I could stop myself and I ran my fingers over the keys where he probably works out new songs during breakfast. The top of the grand piano was flipped open with a gold Prince symbol hood ornament. It looked like a spaceship and I didn't know whether to play it or drive it. As the others snacked, I fantasized about eating Cheerios in the morning by the kitchen island while Prince played "When You Were Mine" and "I Want to Be Your Lover."

(an example of the Schimmel Pegasus)



A little after ten we were instructed to go to the screening room. I was the first to leave the room and landed in the vast hallway clueless as to where to go next when out of nowhere *HE* appeared.

“Hi,” he said. “Are you looking for the screening room?”

“Hi,” I said. “Yes.”

Pointing, “Just go down those stairs and go left. I’ll see you in a bit,” Prince said.

“Thanks,” I said as if an usher at the Arclight had just shown me to my seat.

“Holy moly!” I said to Steve. “Prince just gave us directions!”

Prince is launching a new website in March called www.lotusflow3r.com where he will share everything including the release of three new records this year—two by Prince and one by his latest protégé, Bria Valente. This website is his new venture to deliver music, downloads, concert tickets etc. to his fans. After the website demonstration we spilled out into the hall toward a modest size rec room. Area rugs absorbed sound on the floor, a drumkit sat under the mantel where a fireplace should have been, two couches and yes, there were a few purple chairs. Female vocalists, Liv Warfield, Marva King and Shelby J stood behind their microphones ready to go, a bass player, two keyboard players, Cora Dunham on drums and no more than twenty-five people in the room (I counted) and me. I often find myself in situations and ask, “How did I get in here?” This was definitely one of those times. Prince grabbed his guitar and they kicked into “Let’s Go” by The Cars. “Crimson and Clover” followed, then Prince shouted for Frederic Yonnet to bust out his harmonica and they ripped into The Stones’ “Miss You,” and I lost my mind! Prince was ten feet away playing Rolling Stones songs. “This is really happening,” I said to myself. “This is really happening.”

Every time a new song began, a woman magically appeared with laminated lyric sheets that looked like IHOP menus and placed them on Prince’s music stand. When the band kicked into “Everyday People” we

all let loose and began dancing—the small house party was in full effect. Prince put down the guitar and walked through the tiny dance floor. I felt totally high without any drugs, spinning on Prince’s carpet, under a cheapo disco ball (the kind you buy at Spencer’s) as Prince covered Sly and the Family Stone.

Then...

Out of the speakers I heard the sound of rain. “No, it can’t be,” I said, to the guy next to me.

Then...

The most identifiable first few notes of “Purple Rain” trickled out. Ah!

Then...

The room got quiet, Prince laughed, skipped past the song and went into a random jam. Ack! I was bummed for a second but then he launched into “I Feel For You,” made famous by Chaka Khan but written by Prince. How could I be mad? He was singing “I Feel For You” while we did the hustle. “Y’all done tore up my carpet!” Prince joked as we shook it. He threw out “Irresistible Bitch” and “Hot Thing” and when I thought I couldn’t handle anymore, he launched into “Controversy.” OH-MY-GOD. I was in Prince’s basement dancing to “Controversy” live. I was having my very own Co-AH-chella moment. At that point in the night I realized what a total music geek I truly am. It is a presumption to think that all of the women in the room either wanted to bag the purple one or become his new protégé but I think it’s a safe bet. Certainly, all of the men were hoping to catch a smidge of his mojo. I, however, stared at that man, watching his fingers glide effortlessly over the strings as if was an extension of his body and all I wanted was for Prince to give me a guitar lesson. Dork.

During the next jam I moved my coat from the couch so a woman could sit down. This woman turned out to be Anita Baker. I knew exactly who she was but couldn’t name one song she sang and it killed me the whole night. All I could envision was her face on a smooth jazz radio station billboard.

Sidebar: The next day I would find out from a very good source that Miss Anita was at Trashy Lingerie just hours before the Prince get together. Saucy.

The Doobie Brothers were next to get the Prince treatment and I couldn’t believe I knew most of the words to “Long Train Runnin.” Another jam session followed which was a perfect time to hit the ladies room. En route I caught sight of a motorcycle encased in glass. I was told it was THE motorcycle from *Purple Rain* and I giggled like a wee school girl as I sang “Take Me With U” all the way down the hall and that’s when I got trapped in Prince’s bathroom.

So, there I was, the lock was stuck, The Jackson 5 was pounding on the other side of the door and I was panicking that Prince would find me five days later in the fetal position wedged against the toilet clutching a bottle of Method hand soap. I took a moment and surveyed the room as if it was an elevator and seriously looked for an escape hatch. How does one get stuck in Prince’s bathroom? Am I the only one to get stuck in Prince’s bathroom? Why does this stuff always happen to me? I focused all of my energy on one last desperate twist and the door finally opened. After seven tense minutes, I was free and booked it past the dj booth, past the purple pool table with the gold prince symbol into the small room and caught Prince performing the last minute of the Jackson Five. Little did I know we were only halfway through the night.

While the band took a break, we retreated to the kitchen for desert. Pita chips, guacamole and raspberry torts, which I kept calling “Raspberry Beret” torts, lined the granite island in the kitchen. Prince did a wardrobe change and reappeared. His platform sneakers had blinking lights on the heels like runners use at night to avoid getting creamed by passing cars. Even with Prince buzzing around the room, the vibe of the kitchen was super friendly and mellow. There was no one telling me things like, “Don’t look him in the eye,” or “Stay five paces behind him at all times.” It was as normal as that situation gets. AGAIN, WHAT WAS I DOING THERE?

“Have you seen the pool yet?” Prince’s web guy, Scott, asked me. Before he hit “yet” I had pushed him out the backdoor and demanded a tour. A hot tub is the first thing you see in the grand backyard then a long pool that looks like something out of a Chanel N° 5 ad. It was clear that Prince was renting this house but he had personalized it in his own way. In the distance, at the very end of the pool stood a giant metal cut out of Prince’s symbol. “I must touch it,” I squealed and made a bee-line for it with tourguide in tow. A forest of trees lined the backyard, a volleyball court was just a few yards away and then Prince’s studio. We couldn’t go in but we could see inside through the giant windows. It’s not as elaborate as I imagined. A couple of computers, a flat screen and a keyboard were the only things in the room. I’m sure Paisley Park studios are a bit more elaborate.

Back inside, I cruised past shelves of his personal pictures—shots of Dave Chappelle and Salma Hayek. Pictures of Apollonia and Mariah. Then back to the kitchen when we heard Prince say something like, “Let’s hit it again. Come on!” Back in the music room the band kicked into “Love Bizarre” and I channeled Sheila E as I sang along under the soft lights.

Then...

Prince launched into “Erotic City.” NO, NO, NO, THIS CAN’T BE HAPPENING. He never does that song anymore—too many dirty words. There were only fifteen people in the room at this point.

Then...

He stopped the song just before the vocal would normally come in. My plea for him to “Do it” got a laugh but that’s all and he launched into another random jam. What a tease.

Two women emerged from behind and dramatically tossed two one-dollar bills at his feet. Prince slid off his guitar and in James Brown style got down on one knee, then another, collected the money, stood back up and said, “I haven’t seen George Washington in a long time.” Prince was totally messing around having a good time and I kept thinking, “He’s so normal right now...but he’s Prince? And he’s goofing around like a normal guy right now.”

“Anita, get up here,” Prince demanded and Anita Baker shimmied over in her very high heels and belted out an awesome jam. Prince jumped back in with a bite of “Love Rollercoaster” into The Commodores “Brick House,” into Rick James and I was “Super Freaking” out.

As we danced, Prince occasionally popped inside the group and all I kept thinking about was the security backstage at Co-AH-chella. It was Secret Service type of stuff but Saturday night he was standing in the mix with no security hovering. I’m sure his boys were there but I didn’t see or feel anyone and I am so thankful for that moment.

Prince's web guy, Scott, was called forth and Prince pointed to the microphone. The girl came out with the lyric pages and the band busted into "Play That Funky Music" and that white boy went for it. I could tell web dude was like, "Holy shit, I am singing on Prince's microphone and Prince is playing guitar behind me." Holy shit, indeed.

Sometime after 3 am Prince finally called it quits and did a blow out jam. I floated out of his house and through the windy turns of Mulholland. I definitely did some damage to my hearing but I don't care. I was at Princes' house watching Prince play just a few feet away from me and I don't know if anything else matters.

February 3, 2009 | Filed Under [Exclusive Features](#), [Where Is My Mind?](#)

Comments

20 Responses to "Where is My Mind?: Meeting Prince"

1. [Ted](#) on February 3rd, 2009 9:39 am

WOWWWW! Are you sure that wasn't a dream??

2. [seamus](#) on February 3rd, 2009 10:21 am

Scott's stroy in the times sounded like he as great of a time as you. That is so friggin' awesome to be in prince's bathroom even.

3. [josh](#) on February 3rd, 2009 10:37 am

FUKIN crazy youre one lucky lady!!!!

4. [rob](#) on February 3rd, 2009 11:33 am

Did he school you in basketball then make you pancakes too? Fucking incredible!

5. [Hungry](#) on February 3rd, 2009 12:28 pm

...

(that is me - speechless)

You lived my dream. excluding the bathroom part and adding the part where you knew the names of all the artists.

Wish I were you . . .

6. [John](#) on February 3rd, 2009 2:49 pm

That is absolutely amazing....

I've seen Prince once in concert and it was something to behold.

7. [John](#) on February 3rd, 2009 4:05 pm

if he reforms The Revolution and asks you to be a member will you do it? Will you say "Oh Yes,