

## Sunset Sessions 2014: Rising Rock 'n' Rollers

June 13, 2014 | Filed under: Community, Featured | Posted by: Liz Tarnof

by Liz Tarnof

If you are an up and coming artist, a label company, music manager, booking agent, VJ or possibly some combination of all these, Sunset Sessions is where you want to be. Sunset Sessions is a huge industry event, bringing together amazing talent coupled with every kind of industry person you can think of. This event was created by Michele Clark, whom I had the pleasure to speak with about the event. She basically said that Sunset Sessions



was created to make an optimal opportunity to bring everyone within the industry together, to see new bands or to reunite with Sunset Sessions Alumni. Michele was very clear when she said "Sunset Sessions is creating humble people, the bands are real and down to earth." This mantra shows as everyone I met was extremely nice, open and willing to talk about (nearly) anything. I had this idea that I was going to be surrounded by stuffy industry people, but man was I wrong!

This year, Sunset Sessions was held at the Hilton Carlsbad Oceanfront Resort and Spa, merely a skip and a hop away from the beach. It lasted three days, allowing everyone to mingle, get to know each other and create bonds through the love of music. It was thrilling to be able to walk through the hotel hallways and brush shoulders with passing musical artists. Thursday, the first day of Sunset Sessions, was my day to really shine. I had two interviews scheduled with featured artist Kathryn Dean and Florida native Ryan Aderrey. Kathryn Dean is a San Diego native herself, which was refreshing since I figured that I was the only person NOT from Los Angeles there. Not only was Kathryn Dean super sweet and open minded, but she had a lot to say. It was quite apparent that she had a long upbringing of musical talent.

On Friday, it was time for the performances. Lisardo Nava, a friend and business partner of mine who owns a screen printing and sign shop called Big Media Prints, also attended the show. The performances were at the Belly Up Tavern in Solana Beach. The Belly Up Tavern is a large bar with ample room for performers, the audience and plenty of places to sit. The ambiance in the tavern was that of excitement... performers were in the back getting ready and industry people were milling about. Lisardo and I explored the Belly Up, as this was my first time at the tavern. We stopped at the green room, which was the designated area for performers to get ready. Kathryn Dean was there, pumping herself up for her performance. We chatted for a bit, and then we positioned ourselves at an optimal angle from the stage. Lisardo and I enjoyed many different bands... Hero The Band, an eclectic group of four brothers which their manager proudly boasted "has the same mom and dad!", The Young Presidents, a fresh young and talented band with far reaching goals, Scott Weiland and the Wildabouts, a very iconic alumni, and former lead singer of Velvet Revolver and Stone Temple Pilots. In addition, there was also Heartist, a metal rock band with strong vocals and rippling electric guitars, and many more. After each performance, the artists came to the back area where a Sunset Sessions backdrop was set up for photos. Each performer had something different to show and they definitely gave it their all.



I had the pleasure of speaking with Tim Pyles from local radio station 94.9, as well as Matt Pinfield, legendary VJ and show host on MTV 2. Matt discussed how he's attended many Sunset Sessions and had the pleasure of watching so many "baby bands" as they are so aptly dubbed, rise and become great stars. These are words coming from someone who has worked with the likes of Marilyn Manson, Blink 182, Chevelle and more. He was very refreshing and inspired me.

Sunset Sessions truly unites the new, the old, the experienced and the novice. What a fantastic idea for everyone; each band gets an equal opportunity to perform,

and all of the important industry people agree to stay for each performance. Not only as a courtesy to the band, but to everyone else in attendance as well. Sunset Sessions philosophy is that everyone deserves an opportunity, no matter how big or small. We were all new to this at one time or another, and look where we are now.

For information on Sunset Sessions, please visit <http://sunsetsessions.org/>.