



The Andrea Wolper Trio performed last year in the Live in the Lobby series at the Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts. The 2009-10 season kicks off tonight, Thursday, Sept. 17. Photo courtesy of Walter Petrule

# Another great year of local music

Fifth season of Live in the Lobby begins at Patchogue Theatre

By MARK NOLAN

Once again, the Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts is about to embark on another year of great live local music.

The annual Live in the Lobby concert series starts tonight, Thursday, Sept. 17 with *The Defibrillators* and *Lonesome Dan & The Curmudgeons* and continues through June 2010. Perhaps the biggest highlight of this year's season is the Oct. 8 Lennon in the Lobby event. In honor of what would have been John Lennon's 69th birthday, local musicians will play his songs live.

"I can't believe we're starting our fifth season," said Christopher Capobianco, a member of the theater's board of directors and curator of Live in the Lobby. "It's been an amazing ride. We're very proud of our venue. It really has become a venue within a venue. We have the 1,200 seat theater and then we set up 50 chairs inside the lobby."

Capobianco said the Lennon in the Lobby event is a departure from traditional Live in the Lobby offerings. Live in the Lobby prides itself on giving Long Island musicians a chance to play original music. Lennon in the Lobby will consist of local musicians performing Lennon's songs in tribute to him. It will enable Live in the Lobby to raise a little money desperately needed in the harsh economic climate.

"Live in the Lobby has been all about supporting local original music on Long Island who don't get a shot at a lot of clubs, restaurants and bars that feature cover music," Capobianco said. "For us to do a night of cover music is a little different and kind of against our past record. We lost most if not all of our sponsors. Despite the fact that we sell tickets, there's a cost involved and we don't necessarily make money. Part of the idea was to give cover bands a shot at playing in the lobby and at the same time use the event to raise a little money for

the whole series. The artistic side was born first, though."

The first Live in the Lobby concert for 2009 features *The Defibrillators* and *Lonesome Dan & The Curmudgeons*. Capobianco said both bands consist of "older guys who are still rocking; middle-aged rockers if you will." In November, there will be two Live in the Lobby concerts. The first is a CD release party for the *Katie Pearlman Band*, and then on Nov. 5, *Free Grass Union* with special guest *The Reinharts* will feature local bluegrass music.

"We mix it up and try to offer as much variety as we can," Capobianco said. "November is probably the most ambitious month ever for us. Every event is local groups playing original music so we give our audience a chance to hear the latest and greatest Long Island music."

On Dec. 10, *The John Brzozza Band* featuring *Jessie Haynes & Friends* will perform the 6th Annual Toys For Tots concert. Capobianco said this continues the long-standing tradition of helping underprivileged children in the area.

Capobianco said Live in the Lobby has grown to become a recognizable event on Long Island where music lovers can enjoy truly local music they wouldn't hear elsewhere. Despite the financial hardships, Live in the Lobby has already booked two shows for 2010. "It really is a labor of love," Capobianco said. "It's a lot of work for us. One key ingredient is the folks at Paraddiddle Records who donate their time and set up the sound equipment and record the shows. Then there are the people who come and set up chairs, volunteer at the door and sell T-shirts. It may seem like simple stuff, but it's a lot of work."

Live in the Lobby tickets are \$10 each. Shows are 7:30 p.m. except in special circumstances. Visit [www.patchoguethetre.com](http://www.patchoguethetre.com), [www.liveinthelobby.org](http://www.liveinthelobby.org) or call 207-1313 for more information and tickets. ■