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## THE TEEN ROCKER LYDIA NIGHT

**L**ydia Night is only 17 years old, but The Regrettes' lead singer-guitarist has already inspired a legion of passionate fans who look up to her as a role model and hang on her every word at concerts.

Her L.A. band—which includes lead guitarist Genessa Gariano and bassist Sage Chavis—plays unusually catchy pop songs driven by a thrilling punk-rock ferocity. But much of the growing fascination with The Regrettes centers on Night's bold lyrics. Whether she's reveling in the sheer exuberance of a new romance in "Hey Now" or rejecting society's assumptions about women in the feminist anthem "Ladylike/Whatta Bitch" ("Be insecure, be a wife, cater to a man for the rest of your life," she purrs sarcastically), Night writes with a wit and wisdom that belie her young age.

"Most of our songs are written right after something happens in my life," Night explains by phone from a tour van driving the band to San Francisco. Of her juiced-up remake of Dion & the Belmonts' 1959 eternal lamentation "A Teenager in Love," from The Regrettes' recent EP *Attention Seeker*, Night says, "It's always been one of my favorite songs—Oh my God! We just drove by a lot of cows—I'm a teenager, I'm in love, I can relate.

"I feel lucky to have my life. I don't feel like I've had a typical miserable high school time but I've gone through a lot of shit—classic teenage miseries—but I'm happy now. That cover touches on the more intimate sides of being a teenager," she adds. "That's what's cool about our music. It's written as a personal diary entry. It's not a skewed memory."

Night, who splits her time between Eagle Rock and Century City, was born in New Orleans but spent her early years in Santa Monica before her family moved to L.A. At age 7, she started performing with LILA (Little Independent Loving Artists) at the school carnival and even McCabe's; she later was half of the duo Pretty Little Demons with early Regrettes drummer Madly Murphy.

"I grew up listening to a lot of Britney Spears. And also Gwen Stefani, when she does pop. Spice Girls, of course. I like Beyoncé; I like a lot of Rihanna's songs. ... My No. 1 influence has been The Ronettes, The Crystals and so many incredible girl groups [from the 1960s] who are timeless. My first favorite band was The Ramones. When I was 2 or 3, I'd run around singing 'Beat on the Brat' or 'Blitzkrieg Bop' because I could easily pick them up. I could remember them."

Did Night have any idea what she was singing about? "God, no!," she laughs.

Despite the anger in some of her own songs, Night always seems to be having fun onstage, joking and whispering mid-song to Chavis. "Usually, I'll say things like, 'I'm so nervous!' or 'My arm hurts!' Sometimes, I'll look at her, and I'm like, 'Is this in the key of A? What am I doing?' There's a lot of 'Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God!' There's so much adrenaline going through me."

But performing hasn't always been so care-free for Night. "The more I played shows, the more I noticed, because of my age and gender, I was more of a target. ... I know how to stand up for myself. Men are scared of us because we are so powerful. Women have [historically had] to apologize for themselves. ... When you stop giving a shit, the world is yours." —FALLING HAYES