

SINGING NEW JERSEY ART & CULTURE PRAISES

Written by Kevin Kraemer

Hi, my name is Kevin and I have a music problem. No, seriously—I think I love music too much. Ever since middle school I have listened to music daily, collected albums of all genres, and have watched countless live performances. I can't imagine starting my day without listening to at least 30 minutes of music while getting ready in the morning or on my commute to work. There is an incomparable rush when singing along to relatable songs either at home or in an intimate backroom venue. Those are my music industry credentials, no more and no less. That being said, I have always been proud and a bit envious of friends who get to perform, record and be professionally involved in the music industry.

I am happy to share an alma mater with Pamela Flores, singer/songwriter, and Danny Giovenco, vocalist for Hudson Heights Band. Both have made a name for themselves in the New Jersey music scene. Since the age of five, Flores always aspired to be a singer. She started voice lessons at age 12 and perfected her style at a performing arts college in New York City. Even as a seasoned performer with four years in Asbury Park, she still considers herself a newbie here. "I have never experienced something as magical as the Asbury Park music scene," Flores gushed. "I was warmly welcomed from the get go. It took one person to believe in me and push me to record my first EP and the rest is history!" This comes as no surprise, considering Asbury Park receives artists with open arms whether they are musicians performing on stages broken in by Springsteen and Bon Jovi or handmade artisans showcasing their pride and joy at markets like Shop the Shore hosted by Marketspace Vendor Events, Asbury Fresh, or Asbury Park Bazaar.

Giovenco got his start singing in public when he was 17 years old. "I was a late bloomer! After performing a Bon Jovi song at a high school talent show, I was hooked," he shared. He began lending his voice to acoustic duos, joined an a cappella group in college and hasn't stopped singing since. Fast forward to 2017, after five years of performing nearly every weekend in the New Jersey and New York bar and club scene, Giovenco and co-lead singer Eden Mendez decided to start their own band. "We recruited incredibly talented and experienced musicians in the area," he explained, "and officially formed Hudson Heights. [The band] now provides entertainment for weddings, parties, corporate events and charity functions all over the tri-state area."

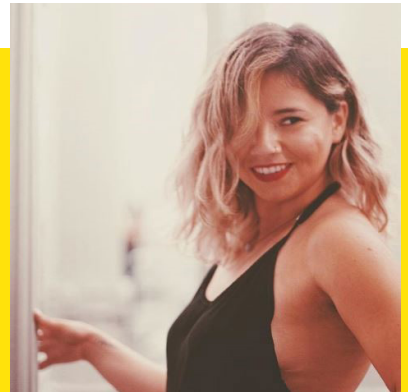
After catching up with both of my high school friends, I found they had more in common than I suspected. Both Flores

and Giovenco have immersed themselves in local music. Flores is connected to Asbury Park and loves that "you can truly see original music is alive and well in Asbury Park every single night of the week. It's incredible how people support it!" Not too far up the coast in Jersey City, Giovenco reiterates, "one of the things I love about living in Jersey City is that live bands perform almost daily at local bars, parks, or even on the streets. The talent level of these musicians is insane! Hearing so many amazing performers right in our backyard pushes our group to work harder and perfect our sound."

The similarities of their experiences are not confined to the music industry. There are parallels between musicians and other

New Jersey artists that paint, write or make. Both Flores and Giovenco are driven by their passion for the creative process. "Like most artists, Hudson Heights is passionate about our craft. We strive to stand out and we feel immense satisfaction making clients happy," Giovenco points out. He is providing a customized experience to an audience looking for a one-of-a-kind product, not unlike a painter or silversmith via commissioned work. Flores echoes a similar view of the maker movement: "We all hustle. Being an artist is not all romantic and sunshine and rainbows. It is hard work 24/7. I'm constantly finding ways to improve my craft yet stay true to what represents me as an artist. There is so much blood, sweat and tears that is put into real local artistry and it is so important to support and appreciate all aspects of it."

Hudson Heights performs publicly at least once a month in the Jersey City and surrounding areas, while the rest of their schedule is packed with private events. Pamela Flores frequently plays The Stone Pony and The Saint in Asbury Park, but has recently rocked the California coast and performed at the CBGB Lab Mockingbird Summer Series in Newark Airport's Terminal C. I think Flores speaks for all of us saying: "The arts are what make this world more manageable and beautiful, so why not support them in any way you can?"



Pamela Flores



Pamela Flores (center) with bandmates playing a gig at The Saint in Asbury Park, NJ



Danny Giovenco (center) alongside Eden Mendez and Hudson Heights at Balic Winery. 'Makers in the Vines Festival'



Hudson Heights

Please check out their sweet sounds here:

Pamela Flores

pamelaflores.bandcamp.com

 **pammiflo**

Hudson Heights Band

www.hudsonheightsband.com

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