

SASHA VALLELY

Growing up in Birmingham, England, Sasha Vallely idolized the American West from afar, falling for the romanticized mythos of the desert. As an adult, she found another love—music—and spent time in Birmingham bands as well as a few Aussie projects after a move down under. But that Western allure kept calling, and she soon packed her bags for Los Angeles, where she became enmeshed in the city's psychedelic scene.

Her previous and current duties in **Spindrift** and **The Silver Chords** are extensions of that first love. Across a host of instruments, she helps her current musical projects—soon to include an all-girl group—blend rock psychedelia with Western motifs, folk and roots music, pop, and even baroque influences. Saddle up.

Growing up in the UK, what attracted you to the sounds and history of the American West?

I have always had a fascination with America ever since I was a small child. My dad was always really into Westerns, so I grew up watching them. He always wanted to be a cowboy; he even took us to some of the old movie sets out in Spain. I always wanted to be a Native American girl, and when my mother moved out to Las Cruces [New Mexico] when I was 17 and took me to a pow-wow, I became even more obsessed.

How important are aesthetics (both musically and visually) to your bands?

I think they are very important. I'm a musician, but I have always loved art and theatrics, and I think it's great to have all your senses stimulated when you listen to a record or go to see a performance. I also have a short attention span, which is why I like things to be interesting visually and musically.

What makes psychedelic rock music such a good foundation for adding Western, folk, and other influences?

"Everything sounds better on psychedelics."

What pros and cons have you experienced about being a woman in a rock band?

It has taken a long time for me to be taken seriously as a musician. I would have started out sooner, but I felt very intimidated by the guys. In my town, I was the only girl I knew who wanted to be in a band. Even now when I turn up to shows, I often get asked if I'm the merch girl, or they assume I'm a groupie or don't know how to plug in a cable. I guess the pros would be now that I have established myself somewhat, I get a lot of respect from my peers.

LOCATION:
Los Angeles, CA

BANDS:
Spindrift,
The Silver Chords

GENRES:
psychedelic rock,
American Western,
folk, pop

INSTRUMENTS:
vocal cords,
bass, keyboard,
percussion, flute,
harmonica

