

G.R.L. — Bio

Girls rock life.

In a world where bullying runs rampant and society places seemingly impossible pressures on women to be everyday superheroes, G.R.L. is geared up to greet the masses with a fun, fresh spin on pop music that speaks to today's generation. Rising from a soft whisper to a deafening roar, the newly formed dance-pop quintet possesses an undeniable vocal chemistry reminiscent of a modern-day Supremes. Blend their naturally melodic harmonization with show-stopping dance moves and an unbreakable bond, and you're left with a refreshingly timeless combo that can only result in true pop music domination.

Comprised of Lauren Bennett, Paula Van Oppen, Natasha Slayton, Simone Battle and Emmalyn Estrada, G.R.L. is the longtime brainchild of music industry executive Robin Antin. As individuals, these five bright twentysomethings are multi-talented musicians, but together, they form a pop music powerhouse with the uncanny ability to bring positive vibes to every project that presents itself.

With their feel-good debut single, "Vacation," set for release in the summer blockbuster, *The Smurfs 2*, the GRLs are hard at work on a full-length album. Featuring famed songwriters and producers like Dr. Luke, Max Martin and Bonnie McKee, the pop record promises to incorporate relatable lyrics with a vast array of musical interests, including urban-infused rock and R&B. "We're working with the best of the best," Simone says. "With this album, we hope to inspire unity, strength, independence and self-esteem in GRLs all over the world." Emmalyn adds, "Just like the saying goes, 'There is no 'I' in 'team,' and there is no 'I' in G.R.L.'"

Lauren Bennett (The Funny GRL)

Don't let Lauren Bennett's strikingly supermodel good looks deceive you. A small-town girl from the outskirts of London, Lauren grew up with the singing chops needed to make a star, but performing onstage was a whole other battle. She admits, "I've always struggled with being shy, so when I would perform at a young age, I'd just stand there all awkward."

The influence of strong, confident GRLs like Gwen Stefani and Beyoncé helped draw Lauren out of her shell, and soon she was performing with the all-girl group, Paradiso Girls under Interscope Records. After a three-year run and a hit dance single, Lauren then pursued a solo career, working with hip-hop talents will.i.am, LMFAO and Cee Lo Green.

One of the original members of G.R.L., Lauren finally feels more at home than ever. Forming such a solid bond with Paula, Natasha, Simone and Emmalyn has

paved the way for Lauren to bring out her silly side, often the one to make the other girls laugh during exhausting dance rehearsals. “We absolutely love, respect and inspire each other and all know that’s what it takes to keep this group together,” Lauren says.

Paula Van Oppen (The Free Spirit)

A dancer since the age of three, Paula Van Oppen has devoted nearly her entire life to the art of dance — but becoming one of the industry’s hottest dancers didn’t happen overnight for the Orange County native. “I started out an underdog,” she says. “No one wanted to be my duet partner. I wasn’t good enough, and that sparked a fire in me. I practiced obsessively and poured everything into dance.”

Paula’s hard work paid off, and she has since landed numerous gigs, including movies, commercials, music videos, television (*So You Think You Can Dance*) and onstage performances with such artists as Usher, Katy Perry and Lady Gaga.

Not only does Paula bring her fierce moves to G.R.L., she also conveys a carefree, zen-like attitude. “The girls call me a hippie because I’m a vegan and drink green juice,” she admits. “But I love my heels and dressing up, too!” When she’s not on stage or in rehearsal, Paula can be found playing her bass, writing songs and spinning the 1s and 2s. “I love the connection and freedom of expression one can achieve through music and dance,” she says.

Natasha Slayton (The Wild Card)

Daughter of comedian Bobby Slayton, Natasha was singing and dancing from the moment she could speak and walk. An only child with a well-suited knack for being the center of attention, the Los Angeles powerhouse has pursued acting in addition to music but feels most at ease writing songs on her guitar.

Citing personal inspiration from soulful voices like Diana Ross, Janis Joplin and Christina Aguilera, Natasha has high hopes for the breadth of talent that lies within G.R.L. “Our chemistry is idyllic,” she says. “It’s almost as if the stars aligned to create this perfect dynamic.”

Natasha’s bubbly, positive vibe is definitely contagious when all five girls are together, as Emmalyn sums up, “Natasha is crazy, beautiful and fun, all wrapped up in a sparkly bow.”

Simone Battle (The Sassy Intellectual)

Touched by music at an early age, Los Angeles native Simone Battle recalls falling in love with the idea of singing when her father played Whitney Houston’s

“I Will Always Love You” on the stereo. “I played that tape over and over until it unwound,” she remembers.

Before long, Simone was taking dance lessons and singing solos in her church choir. She dabbled in acting, toured with the Black Eyed Peas and began playing guitar and songwriting in her spare time. After studying music at USC, Simone auditioned for *The X Factor* where she became a Top 16 finalist.

The resident counselor of the group, Simone is smart, witty and will be there for her fellow GRLs no matter what. “Simone is super brainy,” Lauren confides. “I can go to her if I need advice, and she always has amazing ideas.”

Emmalyn Estrada (The Sweetheart)

Dubbed most likely to be the designated driver by Simone, Emmalyn Estrada has a sweet, soft-spoken nature to match a singing voice the other GRLs can only describe as “angelic.”

Self-taught on guitar and piano, Emmalyn embraced her comfort zone in all things music at an early age. After having won the 2009 Beat Music Awards in her hometown of Vancouver, the Asian-Canadian singer released her debut single on radio stations in Canada and landed several television acting roles. During her down time, Emmalyn recorded numerous covers (Adele and Beyoncé being two of her favorites) and posted them on YouTube, which were soon discovered by the creator of G.R.L., Robin Antin.

As the fifth and final member to join the group, Emmalyn was initially nervous, but that quickly dissipated. “When I first met the girls, I was honestly intimidated,” she says. “But once we got to know each other, it was almost instantly that we became best friends.”