

# GUITAR WORLD

## Guitar Girl'd: Interview with The Fabulous Miss Wendy, Kicking Ass with Kickstarter

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What happens when you want to record an album and you don't have the funds or the deal to make it happen? Do you give up?

Not if you're The Fabulous Miss Wendy! The shredalicious Wendy Jacobson turned to Kickstarter and is now in the recording studio with Tim Patalan and Vinnie Dombroski from Sponge.

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But let's take a step back. Voted "The Most Likely to Be a Rock Star" in high school, The FMW picked up a guitar at age 10 and never put it down. Inspired by old-school punk acts like the Misfits, The Dead Kennedys and The Ramones, Miss Wendy's no-holds-barred guitar assault will leave you panting.

She's opened for Slash, Green Jello and Nashville Pussy and even took her rock and roll message to the American troops stationed overseas in Bagdad on two "musical tours of duty." Her tracks have appeared on reality television shows *The Pick-Up Artist* and *Tough Love*.

Here the fearless Fabulous Miss W gives us the scoop on how she's prepared to break down any barriers come her way in the pursuit of the right to shred...and shred hard!

**GUITAR WORLD: You're recording now, right?**

Yes, right now I am in the studio with Tim and Vinnie from Sponge over at The Loft in Ann Arbor, Michigan. And I'm very excited to be here, working on the record. It's about three-quarters of the way done. We're just finishing it up right now.

**Are these songs that you've been playing live already or some are brand new?**

Yes, yes I've been playing them live already. These songs so far, I've only demo'ed them, but I've not released any versions of these songs yet. So I'm very excited to bring these songs into the world. I wrote over 100 songs to get ready for the record. I write every day. I write sometimes more than one song a day, two or three. I feel the 10 songs that Tim and I picked are some of the best work I've ever done, so I'm really thrilled about that. Also, it's my first time having a co-writer. Vinnie co-wrote two of the songs, too.

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**How was that for you?**

Oh, it's great. It's wonderful! I've written all my stuff before, I've never had a co-writer, so it's a new experience. I like it a lot. I like what Vinnie brought to the table, so it's very exciting. I respect Vinnie, a lot and I think both Tim and Vinnie are absolutely brilliant.

**Let's talk about how you got started with guitar. What made you want to pick one up?**

Well, I think I got into making rock and roll music because of my older brother. He's a big influence on me. He was a rocker. My family is pretty straight. My parents are very, very like straight-laced, right out of the 1950s. Track homes, all that stuff. So I'm very lucky to have had an older brother that influenced me at such a young age, and that's really what made me pick up the guitar.

**That's funny. You know, now that you said that I'm realizing a few women I've interviewed have said the same thing. So who knew those older brothers could be so important.**

Older brothers, yeah they can influence you. I feel very fortunate to have an older brother that influenced me in music!

**So tell me about this whole Kickstarter thing. How did you get this idea to raise money?**

Oh, a bunch of people told me I should do it. And I was actually kind of like nervous to do it, because I didn't know ... it's just one of those things where you put yourself out on a limb and you might fall, you know what I mean? And Kickstarter is one of those things. If you don't make your goal, then you don't get funded. I was so nervous about it. I was like, "Oh my god, what if I don't get funded?" I wouldn't know what to do with myself. I was really nervous, but I did it.

**So you post up what your goal is, and then did you let all your fans know about it? Is that basically how it works?**

Oh, yeah. I pretty much let everyone I have ever met in my entire life know about it, I think, as much as I could.

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**And even people that you've never met ...**

Yeah, well actually, about 50 percent of the people that gave to me online, I actually don't know them. I don't even know who they are at all.

**I looked on your Kickstarter site. One of the items you offer includes an original song. So now you have to write original songs for 29 people, right?**

Yes, absolutely!

**Have you already gotten those done? Do they get to give you input on what they want the song to be about?**

Yeah, I let them do that if they want to. If they don't specify what they want, I kind of just write a little theme song for them, which everybody loves. I think that's why so many people gave \$100 on Kickstarter. I got a little bit over 100 donations, and 30 of them were for \$100. I think people want a song.

**Have you had any challenges being a female shredder?**

Yeah. I think women are really discouraged from doing music. Just the amount of belittling and blatant crap that you have to deal with as a woman. It's amazing. People's perceptions really mark what they absorb, if that makes any sense. I just get talked down to so much as a female. It's amazing, and by guys that don't even know what they're doing. Or people will be like, "Who's that playing the guitar on the record?" "Oh, that's me." "Oh, that's you?" "Yeah, that's me." "Who wrote the songs?" "I wrote them." "You wrote them? All by yourself?" Like, "Yes! Of course I wrote them. Who's going to write for me? Who's going to play the guitar for me?"

It's just unbelievable, and it happens day after day after day. I toured for a year and a half, I played all over the country, I did 200 shows, like 48 states, and it was just amazing just day after day dealing with it. It was like Groundhog's Day.

**Why don't you tell me about your gear?**

I play a GMP Cheetah custom guitar. I like having custom gear. I don't like being able to go to Guitar Center and get what I'm playing. I like having something special just for me, you know what I mean? So my guitar is mahogany wood, it's painted like a cheetah, and it also has custom pickups. They're kind of like EMG active pickups, but they're actually passive, and they're super, super hot. The guy over at GMP makes them.

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## **Cool! What about your amp? What do you play through?**

I play with a Roccaforte amp, which is really good. He's an amp-making genius, brilliant. I started to tell him what I wanted, and he stopped me mid-sentence and goes, "I know what you're looking for." I was like, "Yeah, I want something like a Peavey 5150, like super duper heavy. La di dah." And he was like, "Say no more." And I was like, "But-..." And he's like, "Nope, I got it." And he modded my amp, and it was just unbelievable. And it's pink, and it's sparkly, and it's freakin' cool. I feel proud every time I walk onto stage.

## **And what about effects? Are there any pedals that are musts for you?**

You know, at this point, I try to do everything with my hands for the most part. I keep it under control with gain or I have a volume pedal in case I wanna do swells and stuff like that. The Gain on my amp is ridiculous. It can go from 0 to a million in like one second flat. It's brutal, and I love that it's hot pink.

It just freaks people out all the time, 'cause they never expect anything like that to come out of that amp. I think people always assume that I want a clean tone. I like to do those Eddie Van Halen tricks and harmonics and all that stuff. And I really like to work with the distortion, I really like to have an overly distorted sound.

## **How did you get the moniker "The Fabulous Miss Wendy"?**

I was over at Musicians Institute, and I was being called up to sing in one of my classes and the teacher was like, "The Fabulous Miss Wendy, ladies and gentleman!" It was just so natural and it just rolled right off his tongue, and I thought it was just rad. I was like, "I'm going to call my band that!" And he's like, "That's cool, good for you!" Then the next person comes up, "The Fabulous Miss Veronica, ladies and gentleman!" He just said for everybody, but for me it just kind of stuck. I was just like, "Wow!" You know? I think a rock show should be fun and exciting and interesting. It shouldn't just be a bunch of dudes just standing there, looking at their feet.

## **Do you have a piece of touring advice for other ladies that might be getting ready to go on the road?**

Ha! A piece of touring advice for other ladies that are going on the road? If you like guys, then you'll probably have a lot to choose from because you're going to be playing with a lot of them at the clubs every night. And if you're a girl, hit me up, because I'm always down for supporting other females. We girls have gotta to stick together!

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Find out more at [thefabulousmisswendy.com](http://thefabulousmisswendy.com).

Check out The Fabulous Miss Wendy shredding at the GMP Guitars booth at NAMM 2012:



Here's Wendy's [Kickstarter page](#). Check out the video!

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