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Dramarama keeps on rockin'

By Michelle J. Mills, Staff Writer

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Rockers Dramarama will perform at T. Boyle's Tavern in Pasadena on May 21 (Courtesy Photo)

Alternative rockers Dramarama have been touring a lot since its official reunion in 2003 and, to the delight of its flourishing fan base, many of the shows are in intimate clubs rather than large arenas. In keeping with this change, the band will be performing at T. Boyle's Tavern in Pasadena on May 21.

"There's a tremendous amount of heritage and history in the city and every time I go there, I discover something new that I never knew before," said John Easdale of Whittier, vocalist, guitar player and Dramarama founder. He will be joined on stage by guitarists Mark Englert of Van Nuys and Peter Wood of Wayne, New Jersey, Temple City bassist Michael Davis and Phillips Ranch drummer Tony Snow. The show promises fan favorites, such as "Anything Anything" and "Last Cigarette," as well as a few surprises.

Dramarama originally formed in 1982 in New Jersey and disbanded in 1994. By 1996, Easdale was performing again, often with the players who were to be in Dramarama's new incarnation in 2003. The group's revitalization was spurred when they were approached by VH1 to appear on its reality television show, "Bands Reunited."

"VH1 came and chased each of us down separately and asked if we would be willing to get back together with our pals for a night at the Roxy. I think none of us even hesitated for more than a second," Easdale said.

On the same day as the Roxy concert, radio station KROQ invited the band to play at its "Inland Invasion" concert in

Devore. Dramarama was back.

Easdale credits the band's ongoing success to kismet, perseverance and, perhaps most important, attitude. The group truly enjoys sharing its music on stage and is pleased when its sense of fun infects the crowd.

"We try every night to do the best we can," he said.

Easdale writes all of the material for Dramarama, although he is not as prolific about

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T. Bovle's Tavern

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Songwriting has "definitely changed from a deluge to a trickle," he said.

In addition to its original tunes, Dramarama plays covers of songs by Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Patti Smith, Mott the Hoople, New York Dolls and other classically popular artists.

Easdale began playing drums in the fourth grade. He took lessons for a year or so and then continued teaching himself, playing the drums in the junior high band. In high school, he would spend hours in his bedroom learning the guitar and started writing songs.

He spent a little time in college, but he feels his most important education in the music business is still ongoing.

"The demise of the record business over the last few years has changed everything, so much so that I don't even know what to do with my next set of music," Easdale said.

He would like to release an album on vinyl rather than a CD format, as it cannot be easily reproduced at home with a computer. Also, vinyl has seen a slight resurgence in popularity over the last few years. Either way, fans may have a long wait for new music.

"It's a do it yourself thing," Easdale said. "The band, our little team, we do it all ourselves, so we look for ways and means to do it and sometimes, that's half the battle, too."

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DRAMARAMA

9:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m. May 21

37 N. Catalina

Pasadena

\$15

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