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news

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A Strange Conversation

**"anti-cool" girl emily is
newest epi signature
artist and...one bad kitty**

By Michelle Nikolai

Meet Emily the Strange, a 13-year old trickster whose dark features and penchant for mischief have spread from her Internet origins out into the world of clothing, accessories and now Epiphone guitars. She really didn't want to talk to us, but after much cajoling, she consented - as long as we didn't ask her any



"annoyingly stupid" questions. Don't get her started.

Think "Morticia" from the "Addams Family" in her angst-ridden, teenaged years and you have Emily - she is the "anti-Hello Kitty" for Generation Y. Miss Strange runs with four black cats (the Emily the Strange Posse) and is into all kinds of misadventures - she has her own fan club, lives and breathes alternative rock (stream Rasputina's latest album on her web site "radio station") and has her own Hideout (a secret link for die-hard fans). Her posse members send her dark poetry and veg out while playing her spooky online games.

Right now, Posse members can enter to win an [Epiphone Emily the Strange Limited Edition G-310](http://www.epiphone.com/limited-edition-guitar-310). Send in a creatively strange song about Emily on video, tape or CD by June 13. For details go to: <http://www.emilystrange.com/beware/contests/16EmilyGuitar.cfm>.

Emily's first book, *Emily the Strange*, is in its seventh printing, and *Emily's Secret Book of Strange* came out in March. There's also talk of her own half-hour cartoon series on cable (but it won't be pretty). To find out more about this spooky, nihilistic little girl, read on.

Michelle: Hi, Emily. Tell us a bit about your four black cats. Where did you get them?

Emily: sabbath i found behind the donut shop early one sunday morning. nee chee came to me in a dream of twisted words and reality. miles i met during a particularly intense 'bitches brew' session. and mystery has somehow always been with me...

Michelle: You have a new signature Epiphone G-310, and Sabbath's eyes are inlaid at the 12th fret. What were you thinking about when you designed the guitar? Did you have some ideas about the way it should look? How about the sound?

Emily: i needed the eyes on the fret board for sure (i would have liked them on the 13th fret, but i guess that would have messed up all those people that look at their guitar when they play it.) i wanted to design a guitar that would inspire you as you played it. the knobs have swirls on them so you can adjust your sound to what ever 'feeling' you want. my initial proposal here was to make them go to 13 (instead of 10) ... but we heard that the guy's guitar in *Spinal Tap* went to 11 and it ruined all his gear it was so loud! i'm not one to ruin another person's gear...unless they deserve it!

Michelle: What was your first guitar, and how did get it? Do you play other instruments?

Emily: my first guitar-type instrument was my mom's ukulele. i later rigged it up with some old parts from a telephone and re-strung it with bass strings. It's got a pretty low-end rumble now - Don Ho, watch out!

Michelle: Do you have a particular setup you like to use?

Emily: i use Super Slinky strings made from REAL Slinkys, Butterfinger string enhancer, dual swashbuckling pickups, all with anti-poetic cable engineering to make sure the sound isn't too pretty. i prefer full-tilt noise, noise, noise to a lullaby any day.



Michelle: Will you release an album in the future?

Emily: yes. we are working on a kick-ass compilation with a bunch of the strangest bands on earth! It's going to be called *Strange Music for Strange People*.

Michelle: Is Strange a family name?

Emily: it is now!

Michelle: Where do you live? And what is your secret Hideout?

Emily: nowhere is home = now here is home.

Michelle: Who are your fave girl bands?

Emily: the Loners, the Lost, the Psychedelic Purrs, Agent Strange, the Donnas. i like Siouxsie's band the Creatures. you know i like the Damned - and you don't have to have ALL girls to rock, you know ...

Michelle: What do the boys think about girls playing guitars, do they ever pick on you?

Emily: if they ever do, i just let them know that if they ever spent as much time picking their guitars as they do picking their noses or on girls, maybe then they could write a decent song!

Michelle: You have an interview with Iggy Pop on your web site. Is he pretty strange? He bleeds all over the stage, you know, when he performs.

Emily: he's one of the strangest ... in fact, the 'Stooges' were originally called the 'Strangers.'

Michelle: What/who's your favorite book/author?

Emily: right now I'm reading Edgar Allen Poe's *Black Cats and Other Short Stories*. I love Dr. Seuss, and my favorite book was compiled by me, *The Book of Strange*.

Michelle: Who's your strangest fan? You must have legions of them.

Emily: we are Strange when we are alone, we are Stranger when alone in a crowd, and Strangerous when we're all together.

Michelle: Is it true that there will be an Emily the Strange movie?

Emily: true. that got my fingers double crossed, black cats crossing my path, and been breaking mirrors- Superstitious is Nutritious, ya know?

Michelle: What do you want to be when you grow up?

Emily: i will always be all that i can't be.

Michelle: If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be?

Emily: i can change all kinds of things- why just one? AND, since we're on the subject, i don't change... i'm always strange (or so they tell me!)

