



The Drops Are Back, in Full-Length Form

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Knockout Drops have been knocked down - but not out.

Despite a nearly five-year absence from recording, the Manhattan-based, Huntington-bred **Knockout Drops have returned with a triumphant new disc, "Killed by the Lights," the band's first full length.** Its dark-hued songs are about disillusionment and loss, but also about perseverance.

"What's done is done," Chris Campion sings on the track "Hellride." "Shake it up real good again and glide/On this hellride."

Last Saturday, Campion and his guitarist, Tom Licameli, played an acoustic set at the Sam Goody store at Roosevelt Field. In the somewhat sterile surroundings, Campion's raspy voice and boozy songs - think The Replacements and Soul Asylum - begged the question: Whatever happened to American rock and roll?

The last Drops album was the 1997 EP "Nowadays." The band later went through more than one music-industry fiasco, including a brief stint on Madonna's Maverick label. "We never went away," says Campion. "We went back to work."

In spring 2002, The Drops took up residency at Manhattan's notorious dive bar Siberia, playing every other Thursday for almost a year. "We gained this great, late-night crowd of artists, performance artists, comedians, guys who would sit in with the band," says Campion. "It looked like the intergalactic bar in 'Star Wars.' They would let in anybody."

That ended when Campion's brother, Bill (aka rock singer Vic Thrill), signed the Drops to his own label, Circus Clone. The Drops hope to tour in the fall and already are sending songs to rock radio stations that appeal to listeners in their 20s and 30s.

"I'm not making music for 17- year-olds," says Campion. "What's important to me is just poetry and melodies and irreverent commentary, all the things that I love."

WHERE&WHEN: Knockout Drops, with Edwin McCain, at a benefit concert for St. Christopher-Ottillie children's home, 5:30 p.m. Sunday at Mulcahy's, 3232 Railroad Ave., Wantagh. Tickets are \$25. Call 631-888-9000 or go to www.ticketmaster.com. Also 10 p.m. Thursday at Bowery Ballroom, 6 Delancey St., Manhattan. Tickets are \$12. Call 866-468-7619 or go to www.ticketweb.com.