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# contents

## FEATURES

### 34 Our Lady Peace

by Chris Taylor-Munro

OLP returns with their new album, *Healthy In Paranoid Times*, which was recorded in numerous studios across North America with producer Bob Rock.

### 38 Buck 65

by Karen Bliss

Recording artist Buck 65 talks to *CM* about his recording and writing process for the release of his latest album, *Secret House Against The World*.

### 42 Ridley Bent

by Kevin Young

BC-based artist Ridley Bent discusses his unique songwriting techniques that he uses to produce what he calls "hick-hop," on his recent release *BLAM*, produced by Chin Injeti.

### 49 Home Recording

by Kevin Young

Help make your recording sound the best you can, with advice from Nickelback's Chad Kroeger, and producer/engineers Paul Northfield, Warne Livesey and Mike Turner.

September/October 2005, Vol. XXVII, NO. 5



## DEPARTMENTS

- 9 Feedback
- 10 Indie Insider
- 12 Changes
- 19 Events
- 20 Road Test
- 65 Hot Gear
- 69 Free Product Information
- 76 Marketplace
- 77 Classifieds
- 78 Showcase

## COLUMNS

- 25 Guitar – Vivian Clement
- 26 Keyboards – Kevin Young
- 27 Bass – Rich Priske
- 28 Percussion – Jeff Salem
- 29 Woodwinds – Alex Dean
- 30 Brass – Chase Sanborn
- 31 Digital Music – Alec Watson
- 32 Vocals – Diana Yampolsky
- 58 Writing – Tim Elmy
- 59 Recording – Brian Minato
- 60 Live Sound – Jim Yakabuski
- 62 Business – Chris Taylor

Cover photo by Ashley Maile.



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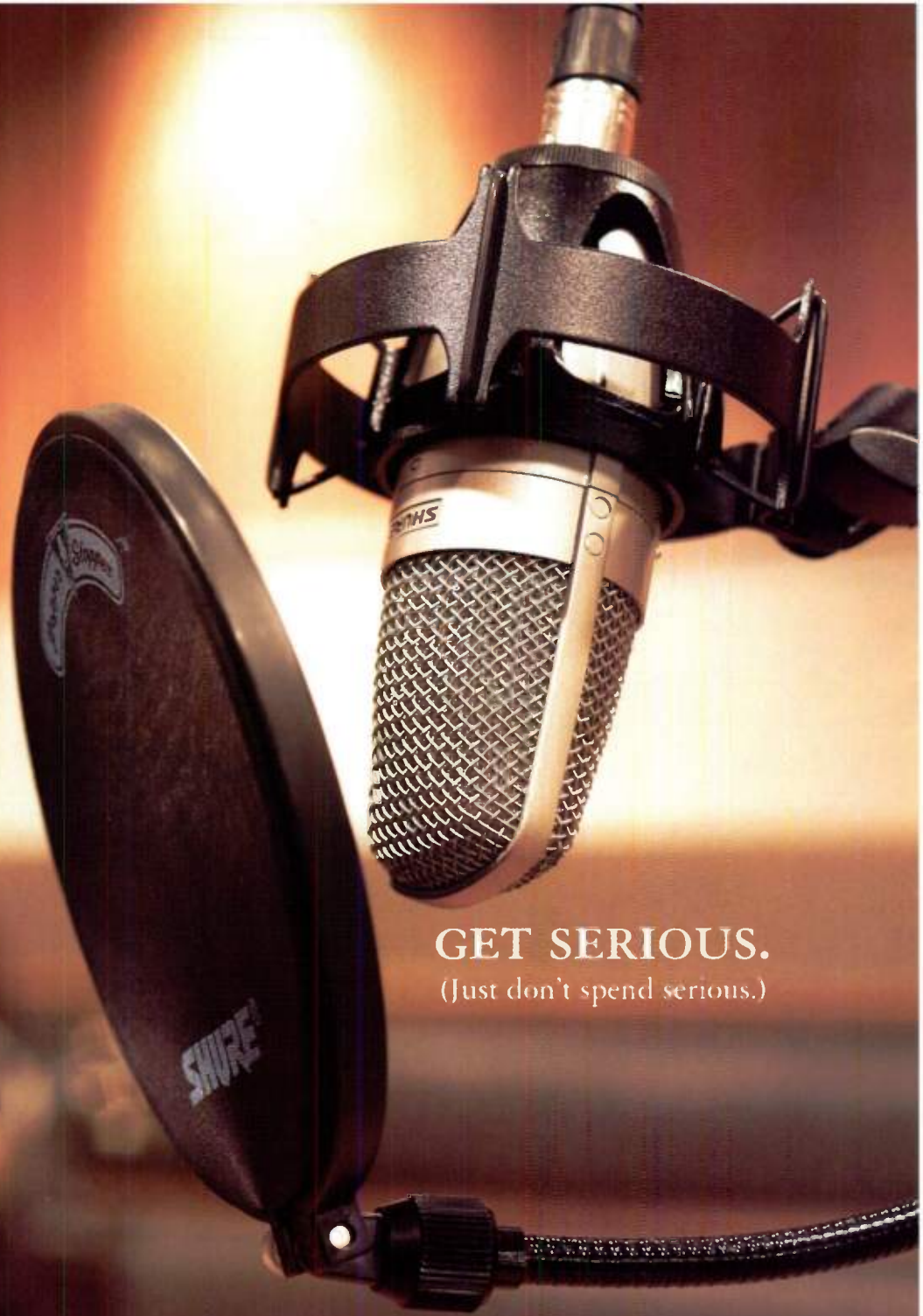
John Jorgenson,  
 Frets Magazine Fall 2004

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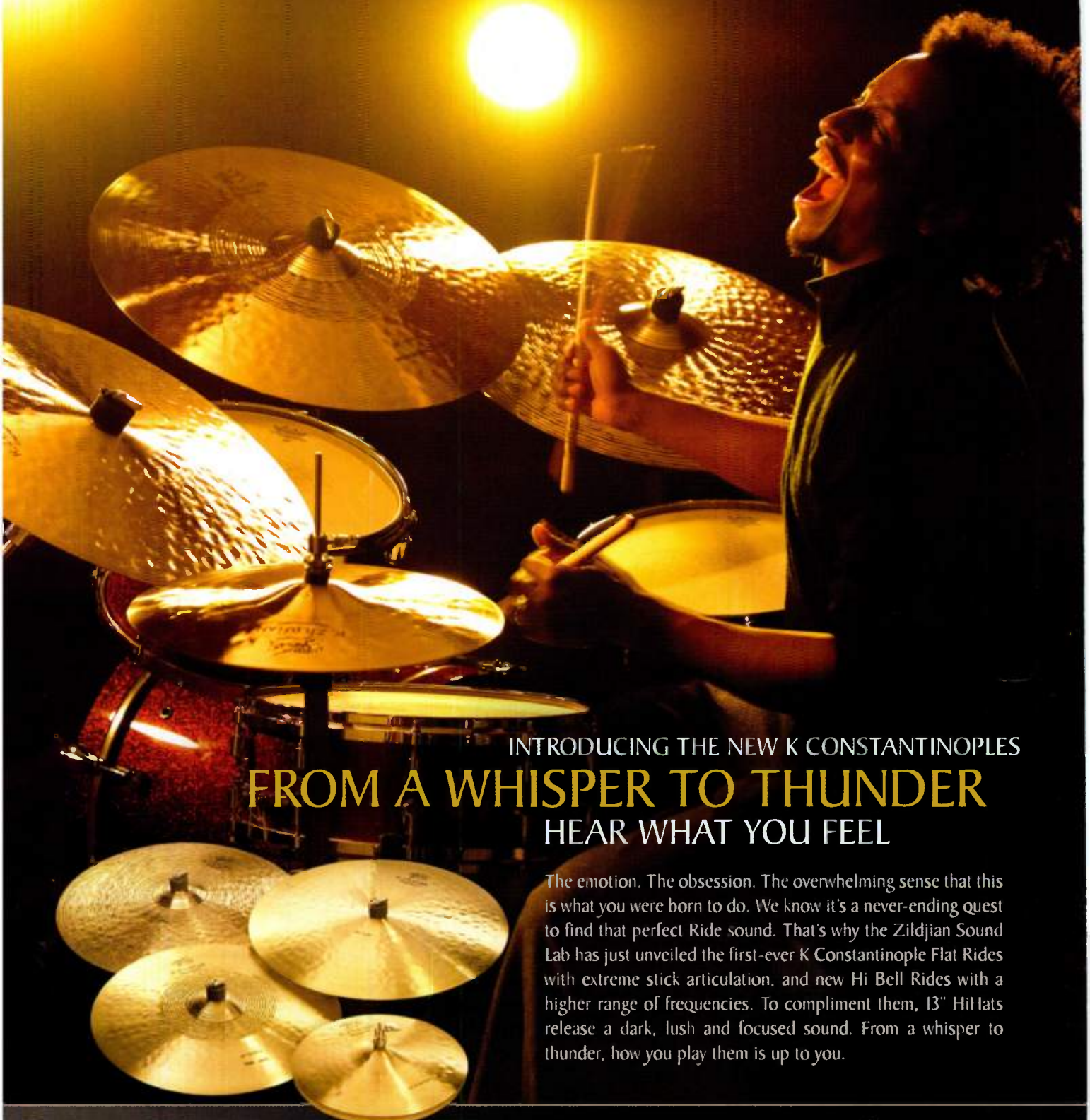
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## Metronome Speaks Out

Dear CM,

We are disappointed that the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS) plans to locate its hall of fame at Dundas & Yonge. We had proposed that Metronome Canada's dramatic waterfront location and its award-winning design by Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg present an extraordinary opportunity for the creation of an iconic symbol of Canada's contributions to the world of music.

Councillor Kyle Rae previously proposed that Metronome be located at the Dundas and Yonge location. It continues to be our view that the challenges of creating an identity for a major attraction are insurmountable in a shopping plaza or office complex. The clutter at this location has subsequently exceeded our expectations and it is now home to numerous struggling endeavours. We believe the transformation of a majestic heritage monument on Toronto's waterfront into a one-of-a-kind integrated "music city" will create a unique new tourist destination for Toronto and an international symbol of Canada's cultural self determination. We also believe Metronome will be a unique catalyst for our city's waterfront renewal.

At Metronome's inception, the proposed major exhibit was to be The Canadian Music Hall of Fame. Unfortunately, Hall of Fame attractions across North America have experienced declining interest for some time and we had hoped CARAS would see the wisdom of being a feature in a broad-based exhibit that celebrates Canada, its regions and multicultural heritage and its musical accomplishments. Many of its hall of fame members have been long-term supporters and participants in Metronome and the founding presidents of both CARAS (Mel Shaw) and the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame (Frank Davies) have been long standing strong supporters of the project.

Support continues to build for Metronome and we have recently launched a Web site previewing the interpretive plan for M3 - Metronome Music Museum inside the historic 1928 silos at the foot of Bathurst. The plan incorporates dynamic multi-disciplinary interactive exhibits designed to attract both Canadian and international visitors. The first two countries participating in the international component of M3 (Festival of Nations) will be announced this summer. We invite Torontonians and Canadians from all regions to review the plan at [www.m3prelude.ca](http://www.m3prelude.ca) and to respond on the "Comments and Suggestions" page. We also invite CARAS and its members to reconsider its choice of location.

John Harris, President  
Metronome Canada Foundation  
[www.metronomecanada.com/illustrations](http://www.metronomecanada.com/illustrations)

## What's On Your Mind?

Address your letters to:  
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[www.canadianmusician.com](http://www.canadianmusician.com) to write electronically.

## A New Reader

Dear CM,

For the first time in my life I have found a magazine that I have read from back to front. I recently bought your magazine at a bookstore and was immediately fascinated with the amount of information your magazine had. I am so happy that there is a magazine specifically for Canadian musicians because I got tired of buying American magazines that could not help me as much with contacts, contests, etc. Even though I mainly play piano I gained knowledge in reading your other articles on woodwinds and bass. I also found it coincidental that you had your article of software and computers because I am in the process of buying both materials and your magazine helped me with making that decision. Thank you for all your dedication to Canadian musicians and the industry. I will be 100 per cent sure to buy more of your magazine.

Melissa  
Brampton, ON

## 40 Years Of Self Instruction...

Dear CM,

Dear Vivian, I read the article last night that you wrote for the recent publication of *Canadian Musician* (July/August 2005, Vol. XXVII, No. 4). I want to thank you for the tips on learning the notes. I've been trying to teach myself to play guitar for about 40 years! Although due to a lack of discipline, motivation and/or direction, I finally decided last November to begin formal lessons. Nine months later and I'm still bumbling and fumbling when my teacher (Gunther) tells me to play a C then an F and at times, needing to guide my fingers to the right position. I don't know if it's performance anxiety or if my brain quits working and takes a holiday or just a stroll down the street. It's very frustrating. I can't imagine how it is for Gunther! (He's blessed with the patience, which surpasses all understanding.)

Funny thing is, I come from a musical family. My mother sang in the church choir for as long as I can remember. She would come home and play her part on the piano in order to learn it. My sister played viola in "All State" orchestras all three years of high school. My older brother played professional jazz in San Francisco for 30 years. My younger brother played piano for about two years. I tried learning violin when I was in fifth grade. but quit after one year. What I'm saying is, is that the desire to learn an instrument is still present. I would hate to think that the fruition of that desire may now be quashed due to an inability to learn the names of the notes.

Thank you so much for the tips that might give me the technique I need to overcome this stumbling block. Or am I expecting too much?

Michael McArdle  
St. Catharines, ON

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# GETTING

by Katie VanSlack



When making music is your passion, making money for your music is a dream. There are many different ways an artist can get paid, so make sure you get recognized for your work and know what your possibilities are when your signed or independent.

The first thing to understand is that you could get paid in two different ways: recoupment and royalties. Recoupment is when the artist earns money through sales and pays back the cash advance to the record company. When a contract is first signed, the label will usually provide funds to record an album, buy gear, tour and for you to support yourself. Once enough income has been made from sales to pay off the label's advance, the artist will start to gain profit. According to [www.musicians.about.com](http://www.musicians.about.com), less than 10 per cent of signed artists recoup their advance and become financially successful.

Any income that is made from a song and is paid to the copyright owner is a royalty. A publishing company, who usually charges a percentage of the profits, often manages the royalties. There are three types of royalties, mechanical royalty, performance royalty and synchronization royalty.

A mechanical royalty is earned from any sale of a manufactured and distributed phonorecord (records, tapes, CDs). Whether the phonorecord is sold or given away, a mechanical royalty is due to the copyright holder.

Performance royalty is due to the copyright holder whenever his or her song is aired on the radio, TV, in bars, restaurants, malls, etc. This even includes hold music on the telephone.

Synchronization royalty is profited when the song is in commercials, TV shows or films. In many cases, when someone wants to use your song they would require a license.

Canadian Musical Reproduction Rights Agency Ltd. (CMRRA) is a non-profit organization that represents copyright owners and provides music licensing to users. A mechanical license needs to be obtained for each song that the user wishes to reproduce. It's considered copyright infringement if the user reproduces a copyrighted song without the license. The maximum fine can be up to \$1 million. Also, anyone who handles infringing materials, such as distributors and retailers, are considered guilty of infringement as well.

Synchronization licensing is needed when your copyrighted song is incorporated into a film, TV show, or any other audio/visual production.

Rates are negotiated between CMRRA and the record industry. This company represents copyright owners and issues licenses for users to use the copyrighted material. Licenses are issued at a rate of 8.5 cents per song sold or distributed that is under five minutes long. For every additional minute 1.7 cents is added.

CMRRA was founded in 1975 and is funded by a commission of the proceeds of the licenses issued. Membership is open to any copyright owner who wishes to give permission for others to reproduce their work for the Canadian market. CMRRA represents over 30,000 copyright owners and issues licenses to over 8,800 users.

Performance royalties are collected from a performance rights society who collects the income from broadcasters and whoever else publicly performed the music. Canada's performance rights society is the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN).

After SOCAN collects the fees they are distributed to the copyright owner on a quarterly basis. As all of the performance data is collected, there is a 7 to 10-month delay in the royalty payments.

One of the biggest income sources for musicians can be in concert. Some have built careers from touring and encourage their fans to record and trade their music with other fans. The standard payment for concerts is a percentage of the gross ticket sales, and is a minimum payment of \$20. Fees are provided to signers, musicians, dancers, conductors and other performers during the concerts.

Another great resource to tap into is endorsement. You could support musical gear like guitars, strings, drumsticks, pedals and anything else a rocker would need from different companies. You would just need to mention the products on the album or in interviews, endorse the product at trade shows, give clinics and/or appear in ads. Try to do this with a product you already love, because by endorsing it you're saying that you recommend it.

Setting up a Web site for your band is essential. Include a bio, a discography, sound clips and upcoming gigs. Also sell your CD, T-shirts, posters, etc., on your site.

Profits can come from online advertisements as well. Often the revenues from the ads are split between the site and the copyright holder. Sites such as Music Link and Amazon Honour System allow an online tip jar. Here, musicians can ask for donations and fans can directly contribute to their favourite rocker.

Another great new online source is [www.magnatune.com](http://www.magnatune.com). This innovative site allows legal Internet distribution that won't violate any copyright laws. The site advises that the big money is in synchronization licensing, and they promote the music for this use.

You would sign a contract with Magnatune and split any profits that they find for you 50/50. The contract is limited only to the music that you submit and they recommend that you continue to promote your music yourself. Feel free to record your own CDs and even sign with a label, there are no strings attached. If you decide to part ways

with the company all together, the site suggests to just stop sending in material. They will still continue to sell your songs you already provided, you would still receive your royalties and you can do anything you like with the songs you submitted. Take note it would be your responsibility to get a good quality recording to submit, this will help promote the sale of licenses.

The site says that the future belongs to MP3s. Often, a CD burner can be about \$70, if not higher and blank CDs are usually less than a quarter. With these rates it's cheaper to go with MP3s and post your work on the Net.

Although there are companies out there like Magnatune who support honest online sharing, there are still many consumers who are taking advantage of the online material. Due to this, a new tax in Canada called the Private Copying Tariff tax has been implemented.

This tax is designed to compensate musicians for the income that was lost due to music piracy and CD burning. It has been expected that the prices for products that most businesses use will rise. A levy would be implied on the CDs of 59 cents, memory cards would be taxed eight cents per megabyte of storage and the manufacturers would pay an additional \$2.27 per disk.

Quoted on the site, [www.wired.com](http://www.wired.com), a corporate law attorney, Joseph McCormick says, "It's unfair to Canadian consumers and it's unfair to businesses. Not everyone with a CD burner, a PDA or an external hard drive is a thief."

Manufacturers and importers of digital media will grant the compensation that will be paid to musicians through the Canadian Private Copyright Collective (CPCC). The CPCC would collect the administration fees then distribute the funds to the copyright owners.

Some record companies have a larger budget than others and may be able to offer their musicians perks. When you are negotiating fees take into account the size of the company you're working with, the size of the venue you'll be performing at and the length of the tour that you will be performing. Occasionally they will offer you a flat salary for the year to take care of any services.

If you're an independent artist you already have the benefit of bargaining power. You already have experience of playing and writing songs, releasing CDs and probably have read about the business of music. Once you've established sales figures, a business attitude, a known name and fans, you'll be more likely to attract a major label deal. Use the skills you have when negotiating.

If you're with a company that has a larger budget they may compensate you for the time you spend rehearsing. It's common for the minimum amount to be \$90 for a two-and-a-half hour rehearsal.

When on tour there is usually a per diem that is negotiated for the musicians. This is basically



a daily food allowance and ranges from \$50 to \$200 per day.

If the concert promoter does not make sure that all of the details are met that were outlined on his or her contractual obligation a buy out could take place where the promoter will provide funds to the band. Be it the food and drink weren't provided backstage, lighting and sound requirements weren't met or the proper dressing room accommodations or security was not adequate, a buy out is supposed to compensate for this. Varying from situation to situation, a buy out is usually \$15 to \$50 per buy out.

So you've climbed your way to the top of the charts, you just finished your first national tour and you're ready to take a break before the next record. Clarify with your record company if they provide temporary unemployment as a benefit. This will allow you to maintain an income until your next gig. In this case you would be expected to be on call and would be restricted from pursuing other projects. Usually you would be provided with 50 per cent of your usual weekly salary.

So make sure you discuss all of the ins and outs with your record company and get the funds that you've earned. If you're not signed, make sure you build a killer Web site, play live gigs, learn about the business, set your own pace and advertise your ass off.

For more information, visit [www.cmrra.ca](http://www.cmrra.ca), [www.socan.ca](http://www.socan.ca), [www.magnatune.com](http://www.magnatune.com), [www.wired.com](http://www.wired.com), [www.benmclane.com](http://www.benmclane.com) or [www.la-musicproductions.com](http://www.la-musicproductions.com).

## Copyright Protection Music-Reg.com

So you and your band have just finished composing your greatest song yet and you're psyched. You poured your dreams and sorrows into the piece so obviously you want to keep the copyright. By law you automatically have the copyright the moment you compose the song, but if a record company never released it, you won't be able to prove that it's yours if it's stolen. That's where Music-Reg.com comes in.

Created by File-Reg International, Music-Reg.com is a Web site where musicians can legally prove in court the origin of their music within seconds. Any lyrics or composition can be registered to the site as long as it's in a digital format (MP3, AV, wav, etc.).

The system uses encryption, digital fingerprinting and secure time stamps to register the music. No content of the registered material is uploaded to the registration servers, only the fingerprint of the file and the digital ID of whoever registered the work. It's perfectly safe because it is not possible to see or reassemble the original music from the fingerprint.

Verification of the registration can be made at anytime and if a conflict does arise, Music-Reg.com says they will present the evidence of a registration in court, anywhere, for free. This site was designed to adhere to the US ESIGN law and European Union law governing Digital Signatures. The majority of countries have adopted these laws, creating a system that can be used in court worldwide.

For more information, visit [www.music-reg.com](http://www.music-reg.com).



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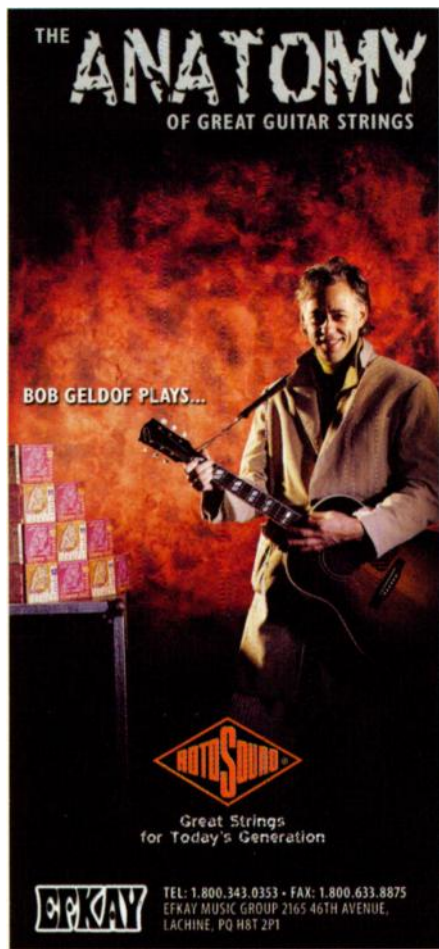
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## Musicians ... Important Dates You Should Know About!



Summer is over and it's time to get your musical talents noticed by getting your submissions into the following:

- Canadian Music Week (CMW) is now accepting applications for the 2006 festival. The deadline for the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual CMW festival for Canadian bands is October 31, 2005 and for international bands it is November 30, 2005. For more information visit, [www.cmw.net](http://www.cmw.net).
- The International Songwriting Competition (ISC) is open to all amateur and professional songwriters. The cost is \$30 per entry and all applications must be postmarked on or before October 14, 2005. The quality of performance and production will not be considered. Finalist are to be announced January 2006 and winners in March 2006. For more information visit, [www.songwritingcompetition.com](http://www.songwritingcompetition.com).
- The John Lennon Songwriting Contest (JLSC) is now accepting submissions for Session II. The JLSC began in 1997 and is open to amateur and professional songwriters. The contest opened September 1, 2005 and closes December 15, 2005. Make sure you get your applications in before December 15<sup>th</sup>. The winner will be announced on March 1, 2006. There are 12 categories. One grand prize winner and three finalists, from each category, will be selected. For more information visit, [www.jlsc.com](http://www.jlsc.com).
- The Domenic Troiano Scholarship deadline is fast approaching. The \$1,500 scholarship in Troiano's honour will be presented to one Canadian guitarist who will be pursuing a post-secondary guitar education in Canada or elsewhere. The due date for applications is October 31, 2005. The recipient will be notified by January 1, 2006. For more information visit, [www.domenictroiano.com](http://www.domenictroiano.com).
- The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual North By Northeast 2006 is running June 8-10<sup>th</sup> in Toronto, ON. Submissions will be open on November 1, 2005 and will close mid-January. There is an early-bird price break, so get your submissions in before New Year's Eve. For more information visit, [www.nxne.com](http://www.nxne.com).
- The Canada Council For the Arts 2005-2006 has various music grants and program deadlines:
  - Music Touring Program – December 15, 2005
  - Residencies and Commissioning of Canadian Compositions – January 15, 2006
  - Music Festivals Programming Project Grants for festivals running between June 1, 2006 and November 30, 2006 – February 15, 2006
  - Music Festival Travel Grants for festivals running between June 1, 2006 and November 30, 2006 – February 15, 2006
  - Career Development Program – October 1, 2005
  - Grants to Professional Musicians (individuals) – November 1, 2005 and March 1, 2006
  - Opera/Music Theatre Program – December 1, 2005
  - Professional Orchestra Program – February 1, 2006
  - Aboriginal Peoples Music Program – March 1, 2006

For more information, visit [www.canadacouncil.ca](http://www.canadacouncil.ca).

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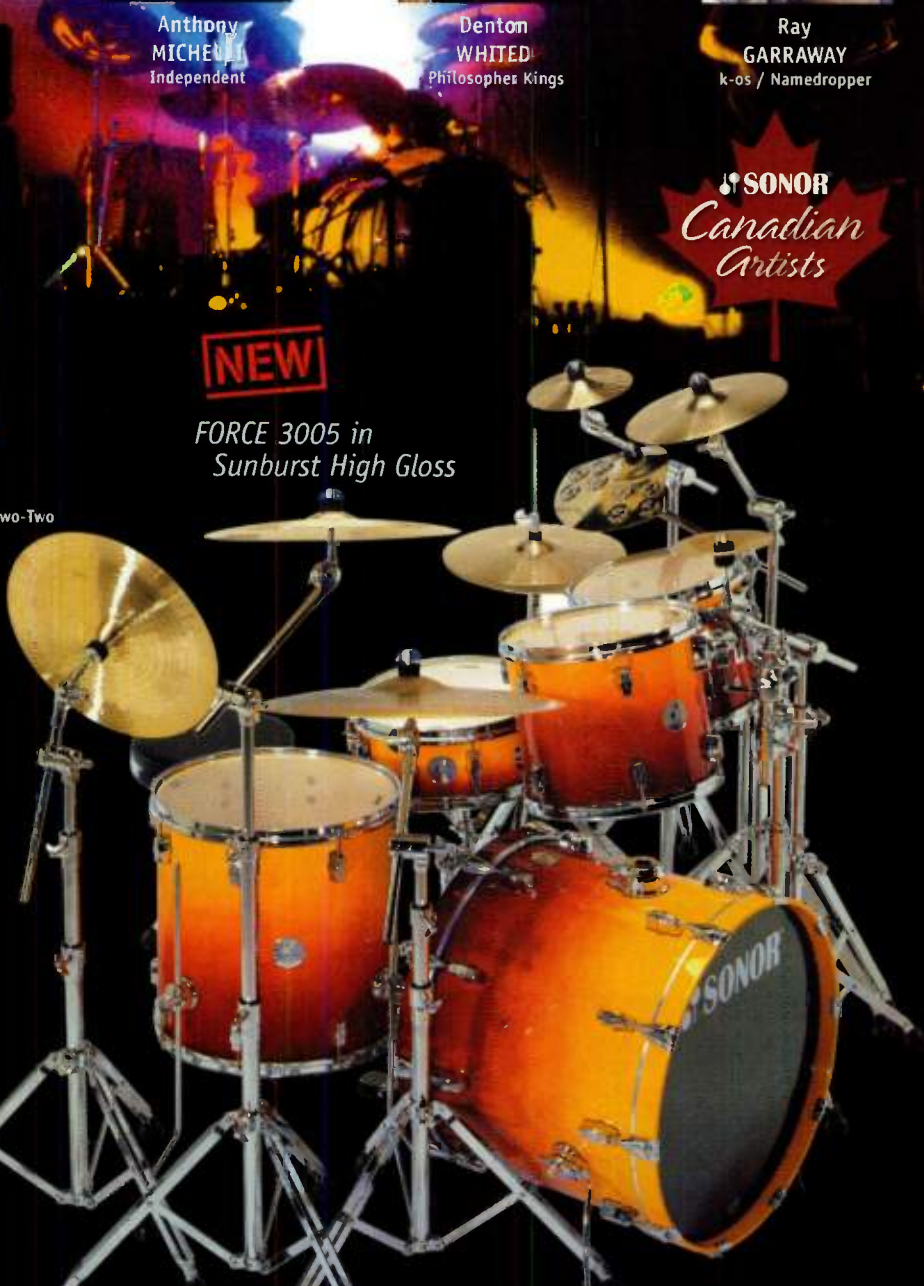


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World Radio History



## New Buffalo Signed By Arts & Crafts

Arts & Crafts recently signed New Buffalo, their first international artist. New Buffalo is Sally Seltmann, a singer/songwriter/performer who lives and records in Melbourne, Australia.

New Buffalo's debut album, *The Last Beautiful*, hit the stands in both Canada and the US on August 23, 2005.

Seltmann wrote, arranged and produced *The Last Beautiful* in a home studio that her husband Darren Seltmann of the Avalanches built. The studio is called the Lonely Studio. Almost all of the parts were played by Seltmann, including guitar, bass, piano, keys and programming. Guest musicians like Beth Orton lent her laid-back vocals to the track "Inside" and the Dirty Three's Jim White played drums on three of the album's tracks.

*The Last Beautiful* is an album like no other. It is like a delightful but an unexpected snowfall in the summer, very refreshing.

Dates for the North American Tour will be in September and October 2005.

For more information, visit [www.newbuffalo.net](http://www.newbuffalo.net).

## Colin James Set To Release Ninth Album



MapleMusic Recordings recently announced the release of Colin James' ninth album *Limelight*, scheduled to be released September 13, 2005.

His self-titled debut album for Virgin America had success worldwide and went multi-platinum in Canada. Now in his second decade of fame, James' fame is still strong and his success continues.

Over the years, James' career has encompassed musically many flavours including: blues, rock, big band and R&B. Nevertheless, he has remained true to the authenticity and the highest level of musicianship throughout his career.

Produced by Colin Linden, the album features Jim Keltner on drums, Van Morrison alumnus Reggie McBride and Bonnie Raitt sideman Hutch Hutchinson sharing the bass.

The 14 tracks on *Limelight* are a mix of co-written originals and carefully chosen covers, resonate with tasteful playing, soul and groove. Tracks such as Van Morrison's "Into the Mystic" and Bob Dylan's "Watchin' The River Flow" play alongside the first single "Far Away Like a Radio" which is co-written by James, Craig Northey, and Tom Wilson.

James' *Limelight* tour will begin at Massey Hall in Toronto, ON. The first show is scheduled for February 4, 2006. Tickets went on sale August 22, 2005 through the Massey Hall box office.

Colin is managed by Paul Mercs for Paul Mercs Concerts and booked by S. Feldman & Associates.

For more information, visit [www.maplemusic-recordings.com](http://www.maplemusic-recordings.com).

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## Musiccrypt's DMDS Delivers Nickelback's "Photograph"



by incorporating biometrics, high-value encryption and watermarking. The first application of DMDS replaces the physical distribution of new musical recordings by record companies from the studio, internally, and to radio stations with more secure, more effective and less costly digital distribution of broadcast quality media via the Internet.

For more information, visit [www.musiccrypt.com](http://www.musiccrypt.com) or [www.emimusic.ca](http://www.emimusic.ca).

Roadrunner Records in the US and EMI Music Canada exclusively used Musiccrypt's Digital Media Distribution System (DMDS) to deliver Nickelback's single "Photograph".

The process began on July 27<sup>th</sup> at 6 a.m. when a 20-second promo of the song was made available for download to selected radio stations across North America. Likewise, on August 3<sup>rd</sup> the full song was made available at 7 a.m.

Two separate file types were made available, giving broadcasters the choice of file format and quality. A watermarked uncompressed linear file and a broadcast quality file. The full linear file allows all High Definition and Satellite Broadcasters to deliver their listeners the best quality audio file. The watermarking DMDS helps keep individual users accountable for the track to Nickelback, Roadrunner and EMI.

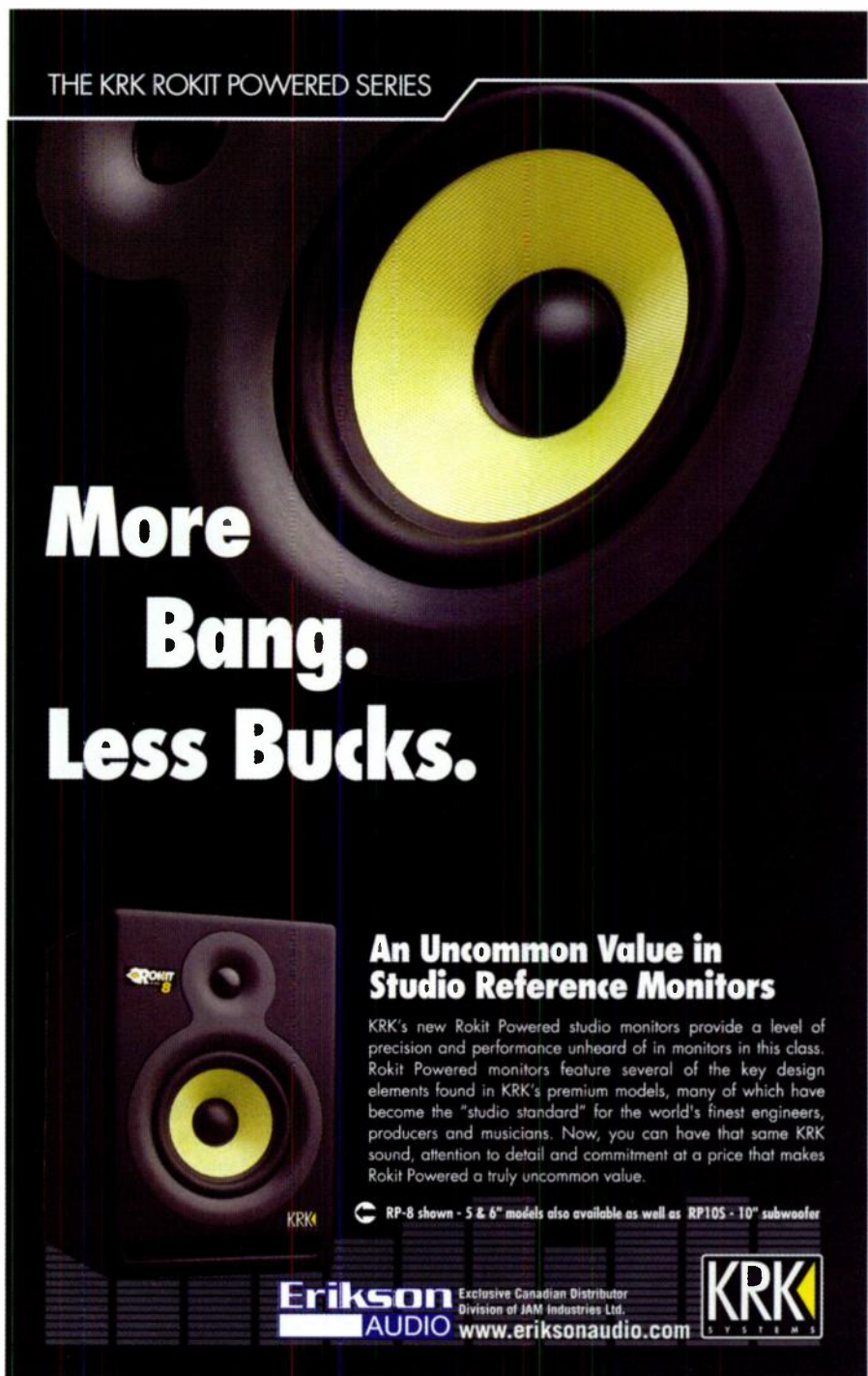
"It was over two years ago, that we delivered Nickelback's chart breaking hit "Someday" via DMDS to radio across Canada," said Derrick Ross, Vice-President, National Promotion, EMI Music Canada. "Since then, we have delivered almost every Nickelback single to radio in this country exclusively via DMDS. DMDS is now the standard way of delivering music securely and simultaneously to broadcasters and this is how they'll be receiving this great new track from Nickelback."

Currently, DMDS is used by 100 per cent of all chart-monitored radio stations, including Canada's three largest broadcasters, Corus Radio, Rogers Media Broadcasting and Standard Radio." In addition, over 85 per cent of Canada's music industry is currently using Musiccrypt's DMDS, including all four major labels.

Founded in 1999, DMDS has delivered over 1,100 tracks to over 450,000 destinations. Musiccrypt's DMDS is the leading secure B2B digital delivery solution for the music industry. DMDS is a Web-based delivery system that pioneers secure digital file distribution

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## CIRAA Takes Over Government Relations and Public Awareness for Indie Pool

Indie Pool recently launched the Canadian Independent Recording Artists' Association (CIRAA) as a non-profit organization to take over government relations and public awareness for Indie Pool.

CIRAA is a non-profit political organization that advocates independent Canadian artists' development through improved conditions. Currently, over 95 per cent of artists in Canada are independent. This means that these artists are not signed to a record company. They get to decide what music they play and what they wear. Indie bands play music of all genres.

Up until recently, there was no representation for unsigned indie artists. Both major and major indie companies have had good representation, however this has not been the case for unsigned artists, until now with the creation of CIRAA.

Membership to join the CIRAA is free for this first year, and registration is available on their Web site.

The first project CIRAA is lobbying for is changes to Canada's artist development system (the star system). CIRAA is campaigning to increase public awareness on the issues confronting Canadian independent recording artists, and hopes to draw attention to the unsigned artists who can be neglected by the music industry and government.

Currently, CIRAA describes the state of the music industry as the perfect storm. Presently, there are more independent artists in Canada than ever before. Canadian radio stations are playing the lowest amount of independent music ever. Moreover, funding is going to other musicians because of the successful campaigning by other groups, and not to the unsigned musicians.

CIRAA wants to fix Canadian content (CANCON). They want to encourage Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to revise regulations placed by CANCON on Canadian terrestrial radio broadcasters (AM/FM).

Originally, the goal of CANCON was to give radio play to Canadian artists, and consequently increase the number of musicians, instrument sales, labels, record stores ... basically it was designed to improve the Canadian music industry. However, Canadian radio is not playing Canadian indie artists, but instead they are mostly playing international and national Canadian stars.

The main goal is to create CANCON incentives for Canadian radio stations, so they have encouragement to play unsigned developing Canadian artists. CIRAA wants to see CANCON keep the CRTC's level at 40 per cent, but also provide radio stations with incentives to promote Canada's indie artists.

For instance, when a radio station plays a Canadian international artist, such as Celine Dion or Avril Lavigne, they would receive a credit of 0.75 CANCON song. Likewise, for playing a Canadian established artist they would receive a credit of 1.00 CANCON song. For playing a Canadian national artist they would receive a credit of 1.25 CANCON song. Finally, for playing a Canadian independent artist they would receive a credit of 1.50 CANCON song.

Currently, there is a petition available on the Let's Fix CANCON Web site.

For more information, visit [www.ciraa.ca](http://www.ciraa.ca) or [www.letsfixcancon.ca](http://www.letsfixcancon.ca).

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Sennheiser E 865 condenser vocal microphone

**GRAND PRIZE**

The national winner will receive a prize package of:

- \$10,000.00 in cash (first runner up receives \$2,500.00 cash)
- Complete 16 Track Digital Home Studio Package Courtesy of AxeMusic.com includes: ZOOM MRS1608 CD Digital 16 Track Recorder, Samson Rubicon R6A 6.5" Professional Active Studio Monitors, ZOOM UI802 USB Interface Card, Samson C-Valve Professional Studio Tube Mic Preamp, ZOOM RFX2200 Rackmount Digital Effects Signal Processor
- NEUMANN TLM 127 Studio Tube Professional Microphone
- 30 hours of mixing and mastering time from METALWORKS, Canada's #1 Recording Studio
- Copy of MASTERWRITER - a complete collection of writing tools for the modern songwriter
- \$2,500.00 National Radio Promotion Package courtesy of dB PROMOTIONS & PUBLICITY INC.

**REGIONAL PRIZES**

Each regional winner will receive a prize package of:

- Garrison AG-500-CE Acoustic/Electric Cutaway Guitar with Solid Spruce Top & 4 Band EQ
- Sennheiser Studio/Live package including: E 865 condenser vocal microphone, stand, cable, and HD 280 professional headphones
- An all-expense paid weekend at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel Toronto - March 2-4, 2006
- Delegate passes to Canadian Music Week Conference & Festival
- A private seminar with some of Canada's most successful songwriters
- Opportunity to perform at the INTERNATIONAL SONGWRITERS' FESTIVAL - March 3-4, 2006 in Toronto
- All regional winners will be featured on a CMW 2006 Promotional Compilation CD - courtesy of DBS Duplication - to be distributed to all Canadian Music Week 2006 Delegates, VIPs and Media
- All entrants receive a one-year subscription to Canadian Musician Magazine

**WHO CAN ENTER**

Aspiring or proficient songwriters - self-published or unpublished - who are looking for a chance to get their material recorded and/or published.

**HOW TO ENTER**

For complete contest details pick up an application at participating radio stations and music stores nationwide or visit [www.radiostar.ca](http://www.radiostar.ca).

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# TMX Packs Everything Music Under One Roof

The first ever Toronto Music Expo (TMX) is taking place November 19-20, 2005, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in Hall C.

Produced by one of Canada's leading media companies, Dynamic Publishing and Events Management, which is part of Torstar, the show will feature professional workshops and seminars, the latest instruments and gear, a stage for up-and-coming artists, and special guest speakers and artists.

This event is the first true music consumer show in Toronto. With a wide range of musical topics under one roof, there is something for every music lover. Musicians young and old, amateur or professional will find something to love.

There will be hundreds of exhibitors showcasing their products and services. Exhibitor application forms are available online at [www.torontomusicexpo.com](http://www.torontomusicexpo.com). In addition, two stages will be showcasing live talent and speakers throughout the expo.

The Professional Development Seminars are available to up-and-comers in the music industry. A wide array of seminars will be available. Seminars about Music and Technology, the Music Biz and Musicianship will all be offered. Seminar costs include general admission to the show floor. Space is limited, so be sure to book your space in advance. Online booking is available. For a complete listing of seminars and prices visit the Web site.

The centrally located Hall C, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, is on the TTC line making it easy for everyone in the entire GTA to check out this premier event.

There are a number of ways to take part of this first ever TMX consumer show. For more information, visit [www.torontomusicexpo.com](http://www.torontomusicexpo.com).



## 2005 Hamilton Music Awards and Scene Festival

The eighth annual Hamilton Music Scene and the second annual Hamilton Music Awards and Hamilton Music Industry Awards is set to take place November 18-20, 2005 in downtown Hamilton, ON.

The awards are to take notice of the music makers, movers and shakers in Hamilton. Included at this year's Hamilton Music Scene festival is a compilation CD and a music industry conference. September Seventh Entertainment, Dofasco and Barry's Jewellers are pleased to be presenting the second annual "Hammys."

"Last year was a great show and we plan to build on the strengths of last year's production and deliver an even better and exciting show for this year," said Executive Producer, Jean-Paul Gauthier. "We are fortunate to have Dofasco as our presenting sponsor again in 2005. Their support has been key to the growth of this event and we are very thankful to them. Our new partnership with Barry's Jewellers is very exciting and enables us to further improve our program."

The Hamilton Music Awards are scheduled for November 20, 2005, at the Dofasco Centre for the Arts (formerly Theatre Aquarius). There are 32 award categories being introduced, and the award show will be televised. Nomination forms are available on the Web site and the deadline is September 30, 2005 at 5 p.m.

In addition, the submission deadline for the festival and CD applications is September 30, 2005. Information is available on the Web site.

For more information, visit [www.hamiltonmusicscene.com](http://www.hamiltonmusicscene.com).

## MapleNationwide Signs Four New Labels

MapleNationwide recently announced the expansion of its roster to include four new independent labels: Domo Records, Kanpai Records, Grow-op Records and Quango Records.

Domo Records is based in Los Angeles. Best known for their expertise in new age and world music genres, they are the home to Grammy and Golden Globe winner and new age icon, Kitaro.

Also under Domo Music Group is its latest imprint, Manpai Records. The label focuses on electronic and indie rock hybrids and on putting out music that encompasses the best of all worlds.

Grow-op Records operates out of Vancouver, BC, and is primarily in the urban market.

Finally, Quango Records has developed a tastemaker brand with a cult following, championing emerging electronic sounds from around the globe. Based in Los Angeles, CA, the label has also positioned itself in the non-traditional retail markets, developing exclusive compilations for US retail chains.

"We're very excited to be working with these great labels. MapleNationwide continued to strive for diversity when presenting our product lines to retailers and the end consumer," says Matt Smallwood, Director of Sales and Acquisitions.

For more information, visit [www.maplenationwide.com](http://www.maplenationwide.com).



# EVENTS

## Canadian Country Music Week

Calgary, AB  
September 9-12, 2005  
(905) 850-1114, FAX (905) 850-1330  
country@ccma.org, www.ccma.org

## The San Francisco Blues Festival

San Francisco, CA  
September 24-25, 2005  
(415) 979-5588  
www.sfbblues.com

## NEMO Music Showcase and Conference

Boston, MA  
September 30-October 1, 2005  
(617) 348-2899  
info@nemoboston.com,  
www.nemoboston.com

## The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Western Canadian Music Awards

Vancouver, BC  
October 20-23, 2005  
(204) 943-8485, FAX (204) 453-1594  
info@wcma.ca, www.wcmw.ca

## Celtic Colours 2005 International Festival

Cape Breton Island, NS  
October 7-15, 2005  
(902) 562-6700  
info@celtic-colours.com,  
www.celtic-colours.com

## Ontario Council of Folk Festivals Conference

Kingston, ON  
October 13-16, 2005  
(866) 292-6233  
info@ocff.ca, www.ocff.ca

## Western Canadian Music Awards and Conference and Festival

Vancouver, BC  
October 20-23, 2005  
(204) 943-8485, FAX (204) 453-1594  
info@wcmw.ca,  
www.westerncanadianmusicawards.ca

## Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC)

Columbus, OH  
November 2-5, 2005  
(580) 353-1455, FAX (580) 353-1456  
percarts@pas.org, www.pasic.org

## The College Music Society Annual Meeting

Quebec City, PQ  
November 3-6, 2005  
(406) 721-9616, FAX (406) 721-9419  
cms@music.org, www.music.org

## Montreal Drum Fest 2005

Montreal, PQ  
November 11-13, 2005  
(450) 928-1726, FAX (450) 670-8683  
info@montrealdrumfest.com,  
www.montrealdrumfest.com

## Montreal Music Show 2005

Montreal, PQ  
November 11-13, 2005  
(450) 651-4257, FAX (450) 670-8683  
info@montrealmusicshow.com,  
www.montrealmusicshow.com

## CINARS 2005

Montreal, PQ  
November 14-18, 2005  
(514) 842-5866, FAX (514) 843-3168  
arts@cinars.org, www.cinars.org

## Toronto Music Expo

Toronto, ON  
November 19-20, 2005  
(905) 426-4676 ext.222,  
FAX (905) 426-6598  
info@torontomusicexpo.com,  
www.torontomusicexpo.com

## Midwest Clinic 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

Chicago, IL  
December 13-17, 2005  
(847) 424-4163, FAX (847) 424-5185  
info@midwestclinic.org,  
www.midwestclinic.org

## International Association for Jazz Education Conference

New York, NY  
January 11-14, 2006  
(785) 776-8744, FAX (785) 776-6190  
info@iaje.org, www.iaje.org

## Midem: 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Music Market

Cannes, France  
January 22-26, 2006  
+33 (0) 1 4190 4460,  
FAX +33 (0) 1 4190 4450  
info.midem@reedmidem.com,  
www.midem.com

## 18<sup>th</sup> Annual International Folk Alliance Conference

Austin, TX  
February 16-19, 2006  
(301) 588-8185, FAX (301) 588-8186  
fa@folk.org, www.folk.org

## Canadian Music Week

Toronto, ON  
March 1-4, 2006  
(905) 858-4747, FAX (905) 858-4848  
info@cmw.net, www.cmw.net

## South by Southwest (SXSW) 2006

Austin, TX  
March 11-20, 2006  
(512) 467-7979, FAX (512) 451-0754  
sxsw@sxsw.com, www.sxsw.com

## North By Northeast

Toronto, ON  
June 8-10, 2006  
(416) 863-6963, FAX (416) 863-0828  
info@nxne.com, www.nxne.com



## Damage Control Womanizer & Demonizer

by Mike Turner



Damage Control is a new player in the stomp box market but is made up of a group of engineers who learned their craft at Line 6 who are, without a doubt, the creator of some of the most innovative guitar technology of the last several years. The first releases from DC are a pair of distortion pedals, The Womanizer and The Demonizer. Both are described as a "Dual Vacuum Tube Pre-amplifier" featuring "Pure Class A Distortion". One is designed to emulate more boutique and vintage tones and the other is aimed at replicating the high gain/big stack sounds of modern rock/metal.

Can you guess which is which?

Physically they are quite similar in that they look alike and feature the same control layouts but the functions of the controls differ slightly. The build quality is great – really robust with an included power supply and you are ready to go right away. Both feature a pair of visible 12AX7 tubes in "tube stasis chambers" on either side of the unit. The lighting of the chambers indicate the status of the two footswitches on the pedal, either on/off and regular/nuclear mode. Further visual feedback is provided by the "Magic Eye Bio-Feedback Meter", which is in the centre of the unit. The harder you play, the redder the eye gets – just like in real life! The controls that are in common with the two units are the expected level and gain knobs common to every distortion unit in addition to the unique and very useful Opto-Compression.

The Opto-Compression control is a single knob that increases the amount and ratio of compression as you increase it, very useful indeed! You may not have the usual complement of controls (threshold, ratio, make up gain, etc.) but in this situation you won't really miss them. The compression is smooth and non-invasive to the attack of notes while adding a decent amount of body. The other controls are the EQ section, featuring two sets of concentric pots one offering pre- and one offering post-distortion equalization resulting in powerful tone shaping capabilities. As you would expect, the needs of a vintage tone purist and a modern tone explorer are different and herein lies the differences between these two units.

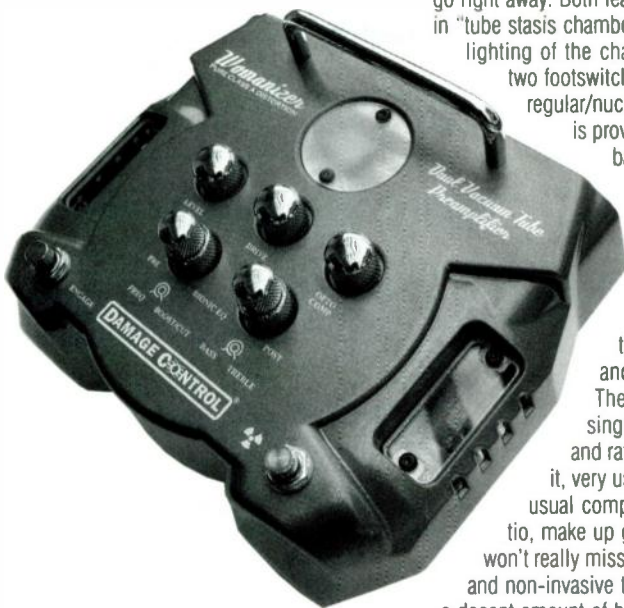
The Demonizer features a speaker simulation based on a professionally miked 4 x 12 cabinet. In use I have to confess a preference for the Demonizer. I found the Womanizer a bit "grainy" sounding and lacking some detail, although I found its direct recording line better than its amp output. The Demonizer sounds huge and tight and the EQ was well placed in terms of the scoop feature and really easy to get usable tones out of. My main criticism would be the lack of easy visual details on the controls, especially when so much effort was gone into the light show that lives on the top. In addition, I can't help but hear the voice of the drag strip when describing some of the features. I might be getting old, but I have to think that the effort that went into the all of the extra lighting in the "Stasis Chambers" and the "Magic Eye" could have been better spent.

The Womanizer is the vintage version of the two (did you guess right?). This is reflected in the fact that the direct recording output features speaker emulation based on a professionally miked, single 12-inch, open backed cabinet most like what you might find with a boutique amp in the Fender tradition. In addition, the pre distortion control features  $\pm 20$ dB of gain at 200-800 Hz. The post distortion control offers  $\pm 20$ dB of bass and treble control. Unfortunately there is no centre detent on these controls and the markings are a little difficult to see so recalling settings on stage might be a bit of a drag. At this point I should explain the "nuclear" option. When you engage the nuclear option you get an additional stage of gain. On the Womanizer you get 14dB more gain after the initial distortion stage. The "Bionic EQ" on the Demonizer offers a pre-control, and its concentric controls boost and cut frequency in the same way a parametric EQ does. The inner knob ranges from -6dB to +20dB while the outer one chooses a frequency from 200-1,200 Hz. The post control is a little different. The outer control selects where a pre-set mid scoop is applied, from 500-2,200 Hz. The inner control is an active treble control that offers 15dB of boost and 20dB of cut. As you might expect the nuclear option is even more robust than the Womanizer offering an additional 20dB of gain after the initial distortion stage. Once again the difference in the needs of the Demonizer user are reflected in the direct recording output. In contrast to the Womanizer, the Demonizer features a speaker simulation based on a professionally miked 4 x 12 cabinet.

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The manufacturer's suggested retail price for both the Womanizer and the Demonizer is \$629.99.

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# Cakewalk: Project5 Version 2

by Chris Taylor-Munro

New generation music software, in this case recording, arranging, sampling (does everything but the laundry) is powerful stuff considering \$450 (MSRP) can buy you Cakewalk's second version of Project5. The new and improved version is on DVD (CD format available for additional fee) and now comes with the ability to record real-time audio where as the first version does not, but the fun's just getting started.

The graphic interface layout has been updated and provides a nice work surface showing the pertinent information all at once without overloading



your senses and causing your own system to shut down and want to crash on the couch. The screen is mapped out in five separate sections or "panes" that can reveal more information by opening or re-sizing the window you wish to work in.

The first window is the "Track" pane that enables you to create, mix, perform and of course record your instruments. You can fly in your own audio, samples, etc. or use the multitude of included synths, patterns and Sony Acid-format loops that'll keep you trying new combinations for hours. You can even go online to download free stuff to expand your library of sounds and grooves. Mute and solo

buttons, MIDI record, arm function, bypass buttons and finally your pan slider complete this section in a clutter free layout.

The second pane is the Track Inspector or "Tweak" section as you have a more detailed section of whatever track you have selected in the patch window. You can apply effects directly to an instrument track and/or use Auxiliary Sends to cut down on CPU load. Another cool feature is the Device Chain Presets that you can save and not only apply to a section or track later in the project you're currently working on, but keep in a "favourites" folder, saving considerable amounts of time when recreating a signature sound or effect. This pane has lots more to offer but we must move on.

The third section is the "Editor" or the chop shop if you will. You can view and edit patterns, loops and draw in automation to sound waves and even finely tune your arpeggios in a graphical format to become the most anal of perfectionists down to the microscopic level and then send them to the "Groove Matrix" (4<sup>th</sup> pane) or the "Arrange" pane (5<sup>th</sup> pane) to work on something else. It also shows a keyboard and gives you the note value of the depressed keys that correspond to your piano or MIDI controller.

The "Groove Matrix" allows you to stack loops and patterns to create your own grooves and then spontaneously arrange your songs. You can then send them to the "Arrange" pane for on-the-fly sequencing and editing and transform them into songs. I like the feature that enables you to grab the end of a pattern and drag it out for the number of bars you want without having to select a drop down menu. It saves time when mapping out a song.

The work surface is intuitive and a breeze to navigate even if Project5 is your first foray into the world of computer based music software. With the user-friendly factor nicely accomplished the next important question is "Does it sound good?" Or will your friends and fans cringe at the crappy instrument selection and uninspiring library of loops? I am happy to report even the demo songs used for the tutorials are better than most dance compilations with some impressive synths and rack effects. The extras include Roland's Groove Synth, a Classic Phaser, Compressor/Gate, Tempo Delay, High Frequency Exciter, Modfilter, Para-Q (used to boost the high or low bands of a signal), Studioverb 2 (32-bit, but uses half the CPU load of other premium reverb plug-ins), Spectral Transformer, Alias Factor

(manipulates the sampling rate for a broad range of effects including emulating older classic samplers) and finally the aforementioned Arpeggiator.

Project5 mates with Rewire as both a host and a client and can integrate with Reason, SONAR, Pro Tools and even allows you to use your own MIDI control surface as a remote. The system requirements are a minimum 1.2 GHz processor, 512 MB RAM, 2.5 GB hard-disk space, (if you can double each respectively you will be better off for it) a decent-sized monitor and respectable graphics card will help. Supported industry standard and proprietary sample formats include ACID WAV, .aif, Akai S5000/6000, Kurzweil, LM4, Ogg Vorbis, Sound Fonts 2, SFZ, and finally .wav.

If you've ever fancied becoming a hot DJ/Programmer with some, albeit limited, audio recording abilities at your disposal, Cakewalk makes it that much easier and raises the bar to a new level with Project5 Version 2.

For more product information, contact: Thinkware Canada, 109 Woodbine Downs Blvd., #2, Etobicoke, ON M9W 6Y1 (416) 798-4293, FAX (416) 798-1755, information@thinkware.com, www.thinkware.com.

*Chris Taylor-Munro is a Toronto-based freelance writer who is best known as drummer for Hydrofoil, Moist and David Usher.*

## Manufacturer's Comments

Let's not forget about Project5's new synth, Dimension! Dimension is a sampling synthesizer that combines sampling with waveguide and wavetable synthesis. Sounds range from extremely realistic acoustic instruments (Dimension even employs physical modelling such as piano body/damper simulation). Drawable EGs, tempo-sync LFOs, filters, insert and send effects and vector mixing round out some of its amazing synthesis capabilities. The sound library has over 1,000 programs, including guitars, grand pianos, basses, synth basses, pads, atmospheres, electric pianos, strings, production-ready drums and even grooves programs, which can be dragged into the host application as a MIDI file.

— Steve Thomas, Cakewalk



# Beyerdynamic Drum Microphone Kit

by Ron Skinner

It has always been the goal of microphone manufacturers to try to convince audio professionals that their brand of microphones is the only good one. Now we all know that this just isn't the case. You might really like a certain microphone manufacturer but you would never think of using just that one manufacturer's microphones for all of your audio applications.

A recent development has been the marketing of all-in-one microphone kits that are made up of a variety of a single manufacturer's microphones in a handy carrying case. Often these kits sell for a considerable discount when compared to buying all the microphones in the kit at the individual price. Beyerdynamic has released a drum microphone kit that is designed to meet your every demand.

The kit that I was asked to review consists of enough microphones to cover an average sized drum kit: kick, snare, hi-hat, three toms and overheads. While I won't have the space in this review to go over all the details of every one of these microphones, I will give you the basics.

The Opus 99 dynamic microphone was provided as the bass drum or kick drum microphone. It is similar in design to many other kick drum microphones in that it is quite large and robust looking. In practice the Opus 99 sounded great with a nice tight bottom and clean crisp high frequencies for that snap you like to get from a kick drum. All in all, this microphone would easily outperform any number of popular kick drum microphones that are on the market.

Next up are the Opus 87 and Opus 88 cardioid condenser microphones. These are designed as snare and tom microphones. Both the Opus 87 and 88 come equipped with the same capsule and have the exact same audio characteristics. The only difference in the microphone is the gooseneck. Unlike other clamp on drum microphones that come packaged with a separate clamp or mount, the Opus 87 and Opus 88 each have an integrated clamp/mount system. The microphone itself is at the end of a gooseneck. At the other end of the gooseneck is the XLR connector and the microphone's preamp. Attached to the preamp/XLR barrel is the clamp. The clamp easily connects to any standard tom or snare drum and uses a pair of heavy-duty springs to keep it firmly in place. As I said earlier the only difference between the Opus 87 and Opus 88 is the gooseneck. In the case of the Opus 87 the gooseneck extends straight from the clamp. The Opus 88 has a 90-degree bend in the gooseneck and can also rotate from side to side. For my money, the Opus 88 has the better gooseneck as it is much easier to manipulate. I found the straight gooseneck design of the Opus 87 to be a bit harder to fit in tight spaces and would get in the way of the drumstick, which is never a good thing. In terms of sound, the Opus 87 and Opus 88 are spectacular. In fact I would say they are among the best sounding tom microphones I have ever heard.

The next microphone in the drum kit is the Opus 53, which is a cardioid condenser pencil microphone. As there was only one supplied in the drum kit I was provided for review I suspect that Beyerdynamic feels that the Opus 53

would make a good hi-hat microphone. If that is the case, they were correct. The Opus 53 is perfect for hi-hat. It has a smooth top end and the bottom drops off a bit around 100 Hz. While it is hard to go wrong when getting a hi-hat sound you definitely can't go wrong if you choose the Opus 53. In addition to hi-hat I also

tried the Opus 53 on snare and found it to work quite well. I found it to work especially well in a jazz setting where the attack that a SM-57 delivers is not always what you are looking for.

A pair of MC930s was provided as drum overheads and I found them to work quite nicely. I generally try to get the sound of the entire drum kit from my overhead microphones and not use them merely as cymbal microphones. When the overhead microphones sound great then you can use your other microphones to simply fill in what might be missing from the overhead sound. So, for me overhead microphones are the most important microphones on the drum kit. While I didn't find the MC930 to work as well as my favourite overhead microphone, the DPA-4011, I did find them to be quite pleasing. Like the Opus 53, the high end was very smooth and I was able to get a fairly warm and full drum sound from the MC930s. I also had a chance to try the MC930 on an acoustic guitar and the results were great.

So, all in all I think that Beyerdynamic has done a great job with their all-in-one drum microphone kit. For someone who needs a really great all purpose set of drum microphones you can't go wrong if you choose this set of Beyerdynamic microphones. I could also see bars, nightclubs and touring sound systems gravitating towards this set of microphones. They seem very robust and will provide a consistently great sound. For me the highlight of this set of microphones was the Opus 88. Its 90-degree angled gooseneck and heavy duty clamp combined with one of the best sounding tom microphones I have heard, would make this a great addition to any microphone collection. As far as buying the entire kit, I still feel that variety is the spice of life and I will always gravitate towards my favourite microphones from various manufacturers. Having said this, if you are looking for an all-in-one solution the Beyerdynamic kit is a great one.

The manufacturer's suggested retail price for the Beyerdynamic drum microphone kit is \$2,499.

For more production information, contact: White Radio, 940 Gateway Dr., Burlington, ON L7L 5K7 (905) 632-6894, FAX (905) 632-6981, sales@whiteradio.com, www.whiteradio.com.





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# So You Want To Be A Studio Guitarist

by Vivian Clement

*Vivian Clement is a jazz/blues guitarist performing in the Toronto area and recording in her studio "Exodus Studios" in Mississauga, ON. Her Web site is [www.vivianclement.com](http://www.vivianclement.com) or [www.exodusstudio.ca](http://www.exodusstudio.ca). This article was adopted from The Complete Studio Guitarist, by Vivian Clement, Copyright MMIV by Alfred Publishing Co.*



Although being a studio guitarist can earn you huge cash and provide a more pleasant working environment than being on the road or playing in smoky rooms, it does require quite a bit of skill and diversification. Top session gigs seem to be reserved for the elite veterans who possess superior chops, sight-reading skills and years of experience. In big name studios where artists' careers are at stake, large overhead and big budgets don't allow for unknown newcomers. The same thing pertains to national jingles and movie soundtracks. Producers are not willing to take chances on the new kid on the block, and seasoned players are inclined to protect their positions in the business.

But there is no need to despair. There is still a lot of work available on a smaller scale for local jingles, songwriting demos, independent films as well as corporate videos. Thankfully the vast majority of session work is in this arena. Image, which is an important aspect of performance on a gig, is replaced by good sight-reading skills as well as access to a broad palette of sounds and styles. Having the appropriate gear, a good attitude and being a team player, are all important elements of being a successful and employable guitarist.

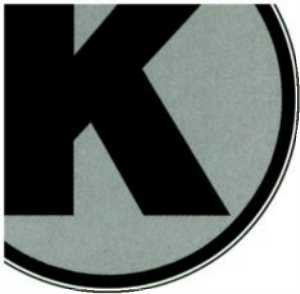
If you are considering becoming a studio guitarist there are a few things you will need to consider. The first is obvious and that is your gear. You will need to have a few good guitars at your disposal since studios require variety. A quality acoustic and electric (preferably with both single and double-coil pickups) are mandatory as well as a good amplifier. Many studios will supply amps but most guitarists like to be able to tweak their own amps in order to get the sounds

they are familiar with. You will also need to have some basic foot pedals or processors so you have access to a variety of modern and vintage sounds. As you build your reputation as a studio musician you can invest in more equipment, but to start with it's more important to have good sounding dependable equipment.

Another aspect of recording which is very important is your chops. You may be able to get away with sloppy licks drenched in effects while playing live, but you won't make the grade in the studio unless your playing is clean. It's much better to be a tasteful and clean player when it comes to recording, then the person with all the chops who has a messy execution. Studio mics are quite sophisticated and will pick up bad technique (remember once something is recorded it's permanent and can come to haunt you later on). Along with that is the ability to play all types of music. If you have the attitude that you only want to play alternative or punk, your recording career will be short lived. Aim for learning as many styles as you can, even if they are not your favourite. You'd be surprised at how many great guitarists have a lot of styles under their belts even though when they play their own material they focus on one particular genre. Also, don't be surprised if you go to a session and the producer hands you a chart of music to read. Although, some studios don't necessarily need you to read music, a large majority do, and the better sessions go to the guitarists who have good reading chops.

As always, being professional, courteous and on time are basic business chops that you must adopt. Being a studio musician is all about creating great music for someone else to enjoy, but it can be just as enjoyable as creating music for yourself.





by Kevin Young

# Faking It

As a keyboard player, somewhere along the line you're going to be asked to stand in for a lone string player, a brass section, a drummer/percussionist, a full orchestra, or all of the above -- hopefully not at all at the same time, but you never know.

Replacing real players, or reproducing orchestral arrangements, extra percussion or the odd bell and whistle live isn't necessarily any easier than doing so in the studio, but live performance is generally a slightly more forgiving environment than the studio...

No matter how good your sounds are, they're still not quite as good as the real thing. And coming close to the feel and character of the original instruments isn't just a matter of great sounds. There's some intangible quality that sets real players playing real instruments apart from even the most clever fakery -- having said that, generally people are more willing to accept clever fakery than to foot the bill for the real thing.

Regardless of whether you're mocking up a string quartet or a Balinese Gamelan ensemble, there are a few things to keep in mind when trying to nail an accurate facsimile to tape...

Choose your instruments carefully -- avoid using ensemble patches exclusively. For multi-instrumental textures, ideally, you should be using a variety of sounds to truly reflect the depth of the real thing. If time is an issue, or the instruments in question are fulfilling a supporting role, try mixing one or two different ensemble patches with a couple of individual patches to imply depth.

Keep in mind the limitations of the acoustic instruments you're mimicking -- nothing calls attention to the fact you're not using the real thing than impossible leaps between registers and playing well out of the original instrument's range.

While we're at it, give serious thought to the limitations of your sound -- if the real instrument doesn't encompass, or doesn't sound great in a certain range, you can bet your patch or sample won't either. Often the usable and sonically believable range or the average keyboard patch is a fair bit smaller than the real thing's range.

Listen critically -- nothing detracts from an arrangement like one terrible sound sticking out when the instrumentation thins out. Each time you add a sound, audition it a little higher in the mix than you think it will actually end up. If it passes muster there it should be fine in a supporting role. If something is dragging your composition down, ditch it.

Do your research -- the best place to start is to have a clear understanding of the instruments you're mimicking, how they fit into an arrangement in terms of traditional dynamics, playing techniques, and movement. Listen to various examples in the specific style you're going for. Practice, imitating the subtleties of the original as closely as possible on the keyboard. This is important in both large and small orchestral arrangements: pay attention to the melodic, harmonic, movement of various instruments against each other, as well as the rhythmic role of various sections within the orchestra.

Use particular care when recording feature/solo elements -- if you're using only one or a few instruments you want them to sound as organic as possible. Also, if you want them to sound like they're playing together, at the same time, in the same place, make sure they sound like that to begin with, and continue to when you're placing them spatially in the mix and adding effects.

Finally, admit defeat if you have to -- in some cases a true acoustic presence is a necessity. You may not be able to afford, let alone record even a small ensemble, but springing for one or two good players will liven up the dullest arrangement, give you a better and more immediate idea of the possibilities available to you, and provide a sonic lynchpin to hang the believability of the rest of the arrangement on.

There are, as always, no hard, fast rules that say you can't do exactly what you want. You don't want to use stock sounds, tired loops and the obvious factory presets, but try to balance sounds with unique character with ones that capture as many qualities of the real thing as possible. If you grasp the conventional role of the original instruments in various styles you can imitate them more convincingly.



Kevin Young is best known as keyboardist for David Usher and Moist.



# The Many Faces Of A Bass Player

by Rich Priske

Today, I thought I would take some time and talk about the different roles of a bass player and how these roles apply to working situations.

Basically, there are two ways to go.

Let's say you and a bunch of buddies start meeting after school to jam out the first eight bars of all your favorite songs in your step mom's basement. This slowly evolves into making up your own songs. You all agree that "The Granny Punters" is a great name for your band. Next, you get a gig at your high school, then a 2 p.m. slot at the annual community festival. You save the money you made, agreeing to use part of it for a demo and the rest for your friend's uncle's old Econoline van.

Congratulations, you are a TEAM PLAYER. (hp: 16 ac: 7 int: 5 dex: 11)

So what is a Team Player? Well basically you have an equal share in your involvement/investment in "The Granny Punters." You have a voice in important decisions, like T-shirt designs, tour dates, whether or not to accept that beer money sponsorship, which manager to sign with, which studio to record in and with whom (this of course can change with pressure from the record company that you agreed to sign with) basically, all decisions that have to do with the health and well being of "The Granny Punters." Be prepared to do interviews, attend photo shoots and video shoots, as you are now part of the "image of the band."

In the studio, whether or not you are a writing partner (that is another column ... just ask Andy Summers) you are generally able to "really explore the studio space," at least as far as your partners will allow. Take your time, try stuff out, and get it right. After all, it IS your money. At least part of it is.

So let's say that after a few years, you are left with a couple of bad deals, a record that went nowhere,

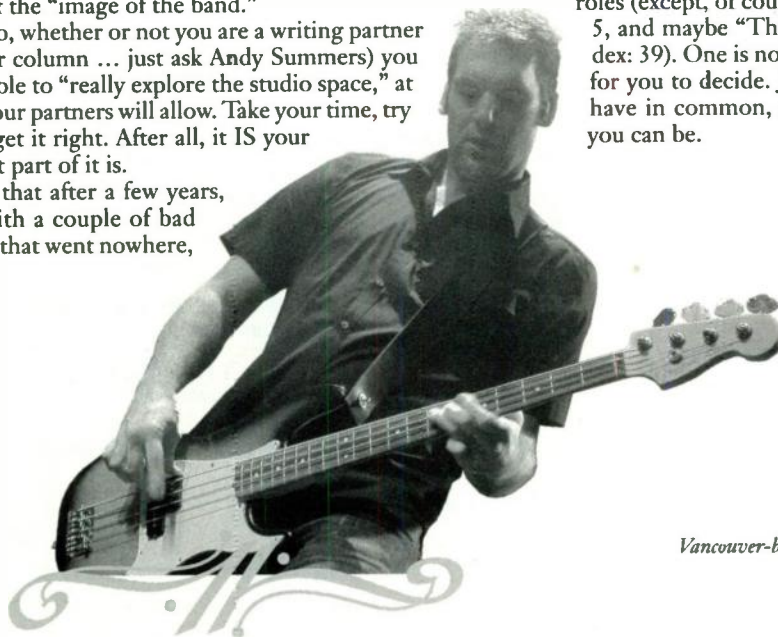
and a singer who disappears with his girlfriend to "find himself" in Tibet. You are broke, in debt and out of a job. Then, out of the blue, that "Geeky Guy" who was always strumming his guitar on the quad, surrounded by chicks, approaches you and asks if you would mind playing on his demo. He has even offered to give you money, buy you pizza and all the beer you can drink. You say yes.

Congratulations, you are now a RENT-A-GUY. (hp: 5 ac: 22 int: 11 dex: 17)

So what is a Rent-A-Guy? Pretty much the opposite of a team player. You share no financial burden in the "Geeky Guy Project." You show up, on time and in tune, rock your bit, and leave. No moronic interviews asking the same questions over and over, no long and arduous photo shoots, no boring video shoots. What should you wear? Don't worry; someone will let you know.

In the studio, the most common place to find the Rent-A-Guy, is where you really shine. People bring you in for your exceptional talents and skills because they lack them themselves. You hear it once, play it once, maybe twice, and all involved in the "Geeky Guy Project" heartily slap you on the back, pass you a cheque and tell you how great you are as they usher you out of the studio.

Of course, these are pretty broad, basic examples. Over the years I have come across and even fulfilled both these and many more roles (except, of course, the "Hot Chick" Hp: 3 ac: 2 int: 1 dex: 5, and maybe "That Funky Slapper Guy" Hp: 11 ac: 6 int: 5 dex: 39). One is not necessarily "better" than the other, that is for you to decide. Just remember the one thing that all types have in common, a love of rocking and being the best that you can be.



Vancouver-based Rich "Rock" Priske is bassist for Matthew Good.

# P

# Melodic Drumming

by Jeff Salem



Greetings fellow drummers. In this article we are going to explore a unique way of playing melodic guitar riffs on the drums as well as keeping a groove to support it.

Getting the guitar sounds out of the toms: This is something I discovered in tuning accidentally. One day tuning my toms, I was able to play the melody of "Mary Had A Little Lamb" on my toms and thought why not do the same with classic guitar riffs that only have three or four notes in them? I will tune my toms in thirds to mimic these notes. Let's say the floor tom is tuned to a C, then the second lowest tom could be an E, the next, a G and the first tom, a B. (This is just an example of using C as my root note, you can start on any note, just go up in thirds.) If you only have three toms to work with, don't worry as the riff will sound close enough just using the one tom to cover the highest note and the second highest note. If you are right-handed, play the tom parts with the right hand and vice versa if left-handed. Start off by just getting this part down and try and listen for the riff on the toms. (Note: you might have to make some tuning adjustments to get the right tone for the song.) Next is to work on the drumbeat with your left hand, use your right hand if you are a lefty. (Note: I had to make some slight adjustments with the groove from the original part to be able to play it with one hand.)

Once you can play them separately, bring both parts together very SLOWLY, and I mean SLOWLY, there is some independence involved that will take some time. All these examples are in 4/4 time. Here are some of my favourites including "Peter Gun" by the Ventures, "Louie Louie" by the Kinks, "Satisfaction" by The Rolling Stones, "Walk This Way" by Aerosmith, "Whole Lotta Love" by Led Zeppelin and "Smoke on the Water" by Deep Purple. (This one is written with both parts together for easier reading and performance application.)

There are hundreds of more great classic tunes with only three or four notes for you to experiment with. Now if you ever need to hire a guitarist for a gig, think twice because you might not need to. Enjoy!

*Jeff Salem is a freelance artist who performs with various bands and conducts drum clinics at local schools sponsored by Yamaha, SABLAN, Vic Firth, Latin Percussion (LP), Mountain Rhythym, Evans Drums Heads, Real Feel Pads and the music store Drummer's Choice. Jeff is currently busy with his own teaching school titled TIPS (Total Integrated Percussion Studies) and can be heard on Kalan Porter's debut CD. For more information, visit his Web site at [www.salemdrum.com](http://www.salemdrum.com) or e-mail him at [jsalem@sympatico.ca](mailto:jsalem@sympatico.ca).*

## KEY TO NOTATION

### "PETER GUN"

### "LOUIE LOUIE"

### "SATISFACTION"

### "WALK THIS WAY"

### "WHOLE LOTTA LOVE"

### "SMOKE ON THE WATER"

DRUM BEAT AND GUITAR RIFF WRITTEN TOGETHER



# My Lunch with Moody

by Alex Dean

One of the great things about a jazz festival is the opportunity to meet some of the best musicians in the world and the Toronto Jazz Festival is no exception. For the general public you get to hear some great jazz, but for those of us that perform at the festival it's almost like a convention where you get to meet people you always wanted to meet and play with some musicians you always wanted to play with. This festival, thanks to the Music Group and Kielwerth Saxophones, I was able to spend some time with the great James Moody. Moody (He says, "Call me Moody ... everybody does!") was in town to play with the Dizzy Gillespie All-Stars and having reached the exalted age of 80 was given a Kielwerth saxophone called "Shadow" for his 80th birthday. Colin Murray of The Music Group called me up and asked if I'd like to invite some local musicians, talk shop and have lunch with Moody. I called Big

Dave Neill, Kelly Jefferson, a student of mine, Mike Ruby, and grabbed a friend of mine from New York, Tim Ries. Tim plays saxophone with the Stones and was in town at the Senator with his own group.

We were all going to meet at the Pilot Tavern around 12, have lunch and hang until 2:30 or so.

Colin and I dropped by the hotel to pick up Moody and Tim a little before noon and had a heck of a time getting out of the Hotel Lobby – every musician in the festival was there and they all know and love James Moody. As soon as anyone saw him it was "Hey Moody, what's going on? How you doin'?" We managed to get out after about 45 minutes and worked our way up to the Pilot Tavern.

Moody talked a lot about how much he liked Toronto and that he lived in Hamilton for four years before he moved to San Diego about 17 years ago. We talked about instruments, I mentioned that I had about four tenor saxes and a couple of altos and that I seem to collect horns. Moody said he likes to collect books. He loves to read and in particular got started on various theories on how people came to the planet.

When we started to talk about music Moody said he gets his best stuff "through the walls." When he's at a hotel and he hears guys practicing in their rooms he listens and writes what they're practicing down in a little notebook he carries with him. After lunch he played me something that he'd heard that morning, it was a little triad line that moved in intervals of a fourth. He wanted to teach it to me so I could add to it and the next time I see him to play it back for him. He said, "You've got to pass it on." It's a lot like the African Talking drum idea where you learn a beat, add to it, then the next drummer adds to that and so on. I played a little overtone exercise I had picked up. It's an exercise that involves playing an F scale using just the overtones of B $\flat$  and C. He really liked that and as I showed it to him I could see how excited he was to

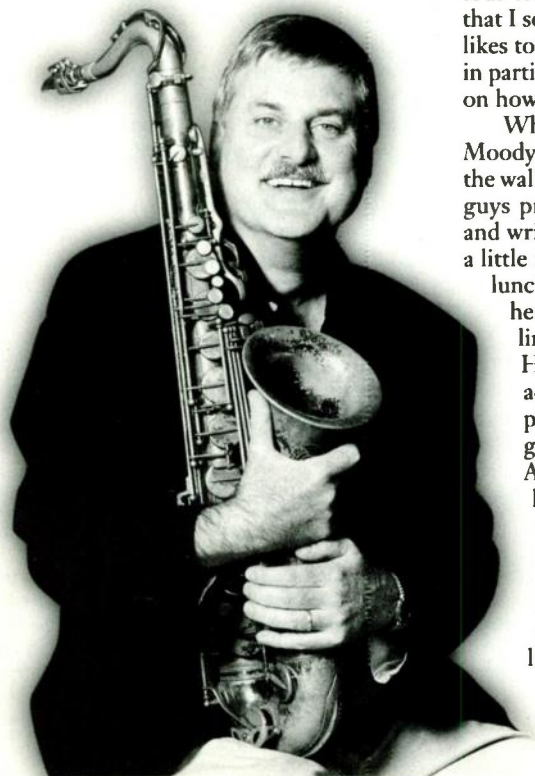
learn something new. I guess that's what keeps him young – and playing so great is that he loves to learn. He gets really excited over new things in music.

He was playing his new Kielwerth Shadow Tenor sax with his name Moody in big silver letters across the top of the bell and a fairly new metal Otto link mouthpiece. He also had a François Louis Ligation. Tim Reis said he was using François Louis ligatures and wooden mouthpieces on both his tenor and soprano saxophones.

We wrapped up by getting a bunch of pictures taken of Moody with everybody and of my Kielwerth nickel-silver tenor next to his new horn.

If I take anything away from my lunch with Moody it has to be what a warm person he is. No wonder it took us a while to get out of the hotel lobby he's the nicest guy you'll ever meet. He also loves to learn things, whether it's about music or life in general. I hope I can have his kind of energy and be as inquisitive as he is at 80 years old. I also hope I can play as well.

*Reedman, Alex Dean has been described as "one of Canada's foremost Jazz Saxophonists," has been a mainstay of the Canadian music scene for many years. He has played with Gil Evans, Kenny Wheeler, Dave Liebman, Ernie Watts, Mel Torme, Ray Charles, Pat Labarbera, Nick Brignola, and the Toronto Symphony. Alex is a member of Rob McConnell's 'Tenet'. He also holds the tenor saxophone chair with Rob McConnell's "Grammy award winning" BOSS Brass. His numerous recordings include Grammy and Juno award winners and he is the bandleader of the explosive Tenor Madness, Alex Dean Quintet, and "power trio", DEW East. Alex is the Canadian Artist Representative and clinician for Boosey & Hawkes, promoting Keikworth Saxophones and Rico Reeds. He is also the Artistic Director of the highly regarded Kincardine Summer Jazz Program on Lake Huron, ON. Alex is a member of the Jazz Faculty at the University of Toronto and Humber College. He is a widely respected clinician/adjudicator in Canada and the US.*



# To Tuner Or Not To Tuner?

by Chase Sanborn

In my last column, I discussed intonation and the difficulties facing the brass player who hopes to play in tune. In this column, I want to delve a little further into the use of an electronic tuner to improve your intonation. There is some controversy surrounding the use of an electronic tuner for brass instruments. The objections focus on two main points:

- 1) You should concentrate on what you hear, not what you see.
- 2) Tuners are based on equal temperament; brass instruments are based on "just" intonation.

Both points are valid, but the proper use of a tuner can help develop your sense of pitch and teach you about the intonation tendencies of your instrument. It is not the final word when it comes to intonation, but simply a guide.

Think of a tuner as a tool to train your ear, not a replacement for it. As your eye watches the tuner, your ear hears and your body feels what you must do to move the pitch in the proper direction. Your sense of pitch will improve as you absorb the sound and sensations of accurate intonation. Perhaps more important, you will develop a sense of confidence about your pitch, which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy – you play confidently and you play more in tune!

Though it is true that a brass instrument is based on just intonation, we are often playing with instruments that are based on equal temperament, and we have to make that work. The fine-tuning of individual notes will vary depending on their position in the chord and on the other instruments playing with you. For example, a note played as the 3<sup>rd</sup> of a chord will sound better if it is tuned a little lower than if it is the 5<sup>th</sup> of a chord. The tuner teaches you which notes on your instrument are out-of-whack with equal temperament, and by how much. You will develop an instinctive feeling for which way each note is likely to go; your ear tells you how much to adjust in each unique situation.



Here are a few suggestions for the use of a tuner:

- The tuner is a tool, not a crutch. Use it to train your ear, not replace it.
- Use the tuner primarily in the practice room, not on the gig.
- As you practice, don't stare at the tuner continuously or try to tune every note. Close your eyes and listen, establish the best sound, then open your eyes and take note of the reading on the tuner. Learn which notes are consistently sharp or flat, and watch for overall pitch tendencies (everything is sharp or flat).
- Use the tuner to help you find the best compromise position for the tuning slide, where some notes are a little flat, some are a little sharp, and some are right on.

This is the best you can hope for from the instrument, beyond that it is up to you.

- See how your intonation changes during the various stages of the practice period (warming up, cold horn, fully warmed-up, starting to tire, etc.)
- Learn to utilize slides and false fingerings to fine tune pitch. Try to avoid lipping very far away from the centre of the note; your tone will suffer.
- When using a tuner that allows players to get a reading of only their own pitch even while playing with other instruments, work with another player to tune unisons, 3<sup>rds</sup>, 5<sup>ths</sup> and other intervals. Experiment with playing intervals a little sharper or flatter than the tuner suggests, and see what sounds the most right to your ear. This is also a very effective way to learn the sound of various intervals.

*Chase Sanborn is the author of Brass Tactics and Jazz Tactics, books that have garnered worldwide praise for their insightful yet light-hearted and humorous look at the worlds of brass playing and jazz improvisation. Chase is a trumpet player based in Toronto, and a member of the jazz faculty at the University of Toronto. For more information on Chase's books and other products, including the CenterPitch Universal Intonation Tool and the just-released Jazz Tactics DVD, visit [www.chasesanborn.com](http://www.chasesanborn.com).*





digital music

# What's All The Noise About Dither?

by Alec Watson

**A** s one peruses the spec sheets of the latest digital audio workstations and computer software there seems to be a lot of noise regarding "Dither". Dither has become more of an issue in the last couple of years as the systems we record on are (generally) somewhat higher in quality than the systems on which consumers play back our recordings. Historically this isn't all that unusual. When I started engineering, apart from having to watch out for carnivorous dinosaurs on the way to the studio, we (engineers) spent many hours aligning and tuning very expensive analog tape decks so that the consumer could enjoy the highest quality when they played back our recordings, at the wrong speed, on their cassette decks. CDs, even though they are only a 44.1 kHz 16-bit medium sound pretty darned good, especially when compared to that old walkman stuff and, of course, that new ear bud (neigh scotch) MP3 crap!

So what the heck is this dither stuff? Well let's talk math; you hated it in high school and it's not much better now, but math is what dither has to do with. A 16-bit binary "word" looks a lot like: 1011010010011101. Stay with me here, there won't be a test, but you will delight and amaze your friends when you can actually give them some informed opinion on dithering. Unlike our lowly silicon beasts of burden (computers) we prefer our math to be in base 10. To us, that 16-bit "word" or number above is actually 46237. This number, or "word," arrives at the digital audio converter (DAC) chip and is assigned a voltage. This tiny little voltage is then amplified and moves your speakers. When 44100 of these little numbers arrive at the DAC per second, our speakers end up being moved fast enough to supply our ears with quite good audio fidelity.

Most of our recording gear now records in 24 bits. A 24-bit "word" looks a lot like 110101101000110110011010. In base-10 this can represent any number between 0 and 16777215. Here is the catch. 16777215 doesn't represent a LOUDER sound. We

are not adding "dynamic range" when we record in 24 bits. We are actually adding more resolution. Think about it in terms of the page you are reading right now. If we think of this page as being a finite size, by increasing the dots per inch of the printing, we see a higher resolution; a more realistic page. That is the difference between 24 and 16 bits.

The problem with recording in 24 bits and then reducing the recording to 16 bits isn't a change in dynamic range (or loudness), it is how best to reduce the resolution from very good to good. If you have a nice digital camera and take pride in your pictures, there is usually a disappointment when you click the "e-mail my picture" button. The result is often good, but sometimes that reduction in size and resolution makes your picture look grainy or jagged. This is VERY similar to the bit-depth problem found in reducing 24-bit recordings to 16-bit. Now just like certain pictures don't reduce well and others do, some audio reduces well while other audio doesn't. It gets worse! The audio that doesn't reduce well is the audio that looks "spiky". It is the sharp transients – drums that suffer most; especially cymbals! If you think about audio as being like a "dot to dot" drawing, when you have a whole bunch of tightly spaced dots (like there are in 24-bit audio) when you take dots out periodically (to reduce the data as you would going from 24 bits to 16 bits) how do you take the right ones out in order to keep the same shape? This is the "big deal" about dithering.

How do you choose a dithering option? Well this is where (as an engineer) you get to be like a wine connoisseur. You know that "uncomfortable" moment you can feel at a fancy restaurant when you are presented with the wine and you have to "taste" it properly? This is not all that dissimilar. You *can* actually use your ears to decide on dithering provided you know what to listen for. Don't listen to the bass; you *can* listen to the top end, the little tweeters do respond quick

enough to actually show a difference in resolution, but the real place you are going to "hear" dithering (if at all) is going to be found in the punchiness. No, it is not necessarily going to make your mix "punchier", rather, dithering will show up as maintaining the realism of the snare or cymbals. The "crack" of a snare drum is simply more realistic in 24 bits than it is when captured by 16 bits. Once you catch on to the difference, it will become fairly obvious which choice you should make. If you're recording acoustic drums or instruments, dithering can be quite important. I will end this by saying, as usual, that these differences are pretty small; the biggest differences you can make in a recording are by getting good players to give you good tones. The most impressive recordings capture performances. The correct dithering can maximize the tonal quality of the performance, but it is not going to fix (at all) a poor sounding recording. A crappy 24-bit 192 kHz recording is still crap ... it's just high-resolution crap!

*Alec Watson is a Producer/Engineer that works from his destination studio on Vancouver Island.*





# Voice Repair: Get Excited! We Have the Tools!

by Diana Yampolsky

vocalists

As much as I wish it wasn't the case, most untrained singers put unnecessary strain on their vocal cords and will as a result damage their voices. This is especially true for rock 'n' roll singers who often strain to hit high notes to cut through the sound of distorted guitars and heavy drums. I don't know how many times I've heard amateur singers say that their throat is sore for quite a few days after a practice. And the problem is actually worse for professional but untrained singers; they go on long tours and have to sing every night in a smoky environment. These are the singers that you hear about having to cancel tour dates because their voices are giving out and hurting to the degree that they simply cannot perform.

The fact of the matter is that your voice should never feel sore the day after a performance or any time due to the act of singing. You should be able to sing for at least 4-5 hours every night seven days a week and never feel even a slight discomfort in your throat. God forbid you have damaged your voice, but if that's the case, the first thing you need to be aware of is that in most instances your voice can be cured with special vocal exercises and specific herbal remedies. Only in the very most serious instances should surgery even be considered!

Firstly, I recommend the use of natural herbs to counter the damage that has already been done to a singer's vocal anatomy. I have tested a large number of herbs over the years and have developed an understanding of which ones will benefit the voice. IGS 2 is an herb that will strengthen and repair your entire vocal anatomy: larynx, vocal chords, vocal box, etc. Echinacea and Golden Seal coats the voice and softens the vocal box tissues. Licorice Root is an herb that is

widely used by many cultures around the world; it works to restore the voice AND helps an individual's emotional state, as it works on the adrenal glands, which are responsible for the emotional state of a human being. This is a very important point. Most people assume that vocal problems are the result of straining the voice to the point of physical damage and they often are, but, vocal problems can also be related to emotions as well. As I mentioned in my first book, *Vocal Science - Flight to the Universe*, when I work



with my students, quite a lot of my time is spent dealing with repressed emotions and hurts which inhibit the voice and prevent the singer from reaching their full potential. For this reason, I often offer my clients special herbal remedies which will help them put their emotions in balance and, thus, free their voices. Both KCX and Kelp are herbs that nurture the thyroid, which plays a major role in voice delivery. Furthermore, as I have said time and time

again, your voice is your instrument. Therefore, I also often recommend herbs such as Stress Formula and IMM-C, which boost and strengthen the immune system. Also, as I mentioned before, diet is very important to the recovery and general performance of your voice. For this reason, I suggest to my clientele that they try not to eat any of the following types of food: spicy, sour, salty, acidic and consume as little dairy as possible.

The other main part of the vocal repair equation are special voice repair exercises. I usually start out with speech exercises. After the client has mastered them, we move on to low pitch singing exercises, which I have found to be very therapeutic and healing.

Once the voice has been repaired the next step is to teach the singer correct vocal technique to prevent damage from reoccurring again in the future. After all, you would not get a tire patched up and then go park on the same broken glass that caused the hole in the first place would you? This *always* has the pleasant side effect of improving the quality of singing as well.

## Total Voice Repair

Most people always assume that voice repair is only about removing nodes and fixing the vocal chords, but what I call 'Total Voice Repair' means repairing your *entire* anatomy. Essentially, many of the things that the modern world presents us with - fast food, pollution, lack of physical exercise - have a detrimental effect on our bodies and thus on our voices. For example, recently a client contacted me about my voice repair services. When I first met her three things were obvious to me - she had done serious damage to her vocal box, her body was extremely "polluted" and, at least in part, the latter was responsible for the former. When I talk about someone being "polluted" what I am saying is that their body is essentially full of garbage. The colon is full of waste. The sinus cavity is clogged with mucous. In the case of this person she was also extremely overweight. The result of all this "pollution" is that the person's immune system is weak and their energy level is low; which results in the vocal anatomy being even more susceptible to damage due to incorrect vocal technique. Therefore, in the case of this client, voice repair did not begin with her voice but with her body. A complete holistic body repair was required before we could even start on her voice. Again, the first thing I did was give her a lot of herbs, but not only the herbs related to the voice but also quite a few herbs that would cleanse her body of the toxins in her system. As I have mentioned in other articles, great and safe singing is the result of an integration and synergy between a healthy overall body, a healthy vocal box and correct vocal technique.

In conclusion, I would like to express my hope that you would never require any voice repair and will learn to speak and sing correctly before even attempting to make it through that long, nasty tour.

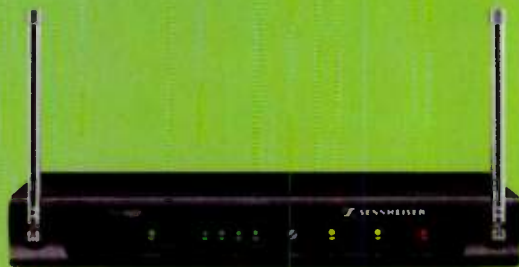
*Diana Yampolsky is a vocal instructor based in Toronto at the Royans School for the Musical Performing Arts, located online at [www.vocalscience.com](http://www.vocalscience.com). Her second book, Vocal Science II - Flight from the Virtual Music to Reality, will be available soon.*



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# PEACE

**O**ur Lady Peace sends out press release officially announcing the break up of one of Canada's most prominent rock bands of the '90s and into the new millennium." Relax OLP fans. It never quite came to that point, but according to bass player Duncan Coutts the multi-platinum artists narrowly averted having to do so on a few occasions during the recording of the group's sixth release, *Healthy In Paranoid Times*. "We fought and essentially broke up a couple of times, but it was all about music and making the best record we could. In a way there's a connection to the first record in the sense that when you're a band and you make your first record you don't have anything to worry about but music. There are no timelines, worries about interviews coming up, etc. There are no worries about what tour you're going to miss if you don't get the record out – all that kind of crap. So, that's what we did! We just wrote music and recorded, took some time off and I am really, really excited about it. It is definitely the thing that I am most proud of that we've done so far."

The first single hit the airwaves early summer at about the same time OLP performed in Barrie, Ontario for the monumental Live 8 concert (more on this later) marking a departure song and production-wise from the previous release, *Gravity* (2002). "Where Are You", the lead single, possesses an aggressive eighth note guitar riff grinds off the top with an edge that will bring back the OLP of *Naveed* days. The up-tempo feel is refreshing compared to the more mid tempo songs and hooky ballads the radio waves just loved on the previous release. And let's not forget the million plus albums sold on both sides of the border for *Gravity* alone. "We took the gloves off," says Coutts. "We started out in May of 2003 to do a very quick record. Twelve songs live off the floor. Essentially no overdubs except for one or two guitar parts and say maybe a harmony. And then we said 'Screw it!' and took some time off." With just 14 months between *Spiritual Machines* and *Gravity* one would agree whether it be for reasons such as Raine Maida's involvement with War Child that has him in some of the most war and poverty stricken, (equals dangerous), places on earth. Or! Had they at the very least just earned some well-deserved time off?

Coutts continues about the recording process, "Let's live with the songs and see if we still feel the same way about them a month from now. So we ended up going back and treating the first sessions as demo sessions. Then we kind of fell into a rhythm of recording and re-recording anywhere from three to six weeks and then taking anywhere from three weeks to three months off." I asked Coutts to describe the band's rationale for recording in such a manner for what would become *Healthy In Paranoid Times*. "Living with

## BEHIND THE SCENES CREATING "HEALTHY IN PARANOID TIMES"

by Chris Taylor-Munro  
Photos by Chapman Baehler



the stuff that we'd done ... and just getting away from it, not listening to it for a few months and then going back and saying 'Are we still really feeling this?' If we're so lucky to have a career in 10 years will we still want to be playing *this* song live on stage? Lyrically, will Raine still mean what he's saying? Musically will we still *feel* it? Does it hit you emotionally? We just waited until every song felt like that. And it took us two years to get there." The guys and producer Bob Rock recorded 45 songs (Ughhh!) and then went head-to-head in scrupulous debates over which songs made the cut and which just got plain cut. A quote from Raine

were expecting. "From a recording standpoint it was like any way necessary to capture the song. 'Will The Future Blame Us?' was an early demo we reworked. The version on the record is the first take trying it a new way for bass and drums. Some of the songs, at least a good portion of them, are live off the floor the first or second time through." I asked Coutts in what specific order the instruments were recorded if any. "You know what? It really didn't matter and I know that sounds like a cop out answer. We recorded so many songs that there was not one rule. Whatever worked for the song. The song 'Apology' for example was from

the first demo sessions. We tried that song a year later completely differently ... way more up-tempo and it just didn't feel right. It didn't serve the song and what Raine was saying and how he was singing dictated how we were playing. I love all the songs on the record, but that was a very magical, musical moment because it was so organic the way that happened."

The guys take some liberties stylistically and show a true versatility on the back half of the album this time around with the new tones, song tempos and feel in general. For instance the first single, "Where Are You" is a departure from the OLP as of late. Coutts comments, "You know you have to grow. As a musician you have to grow. You stagnate ... then you repeat yourself and you don't push. Really, what's the

point of doing anything if you're not putting your heart into it? I think it's offensive to music fans. If you keep putting the same record out over and over with the same lick and the same drum fill then you're not treating anyone with respect including yourself. You have to grow. Because, all my favourite bands grew and they take you on a journey. Selfishly we did that for ourselves."

Unselfishly OLP performed in June for Bob Geldof's "Live 8" concert in Barrie, ON, to eradicate worldwide poverty. Coutts highlights the many reasons for relishing that special day. "Awesome! We were privileged to be part of it. Regardless as to whether anything happened at the G8 summit, musically speaking, it was great to get out and play. Politically speaking I think it's important. I wouldn't say we are a politically motivated band, but we are certainly socially conscious and if you can change people's attitudes and open people's eyes as to what's going on so they don't change the channel when they see unpleasant images on television. Hopefully we've added to the day."

The star factor of that memorable concert in history was not lost on Coutts either. "To be on stage with Neil Young at the end of the night, regardless as to whether it was a bit of a train wreck or not, was very, very cool."

Moving from studio to studio can sometimes disrupt the flow of making an album, but sonically this album has a remarkable cohesiveness to which Coutts credits producer, Rock. "We recorded at a little place called Satellite Park in Malibu ... which is very funny," as he begins to laugh. "We made a very small room sound very big. It was a testament to Bob and Eric's (Helmkamp, Mixing Engineer) skill and Raine's for that matter." Coutts continues to list the studios "The Village in Santa Monica, CA. Royaltone Studios in the Valley, Metalworks back in Mississauga, The Boat in Silverlake, CA, and I know I'm forgetting some," he admits reluctantly. I asked if any one particular studio stood out above the others. Coutts is quick to respond, "Whenever the days were good. It didn't matter. Great things happened in most of those studios. And bad things happened in those studios. It was pretty cool being at The Village and seeing Steven Stills (CSNY) walking into the next studio or Robbie Robertson going up to his writing/rehearsal room each morning."

To say this album has many potential singles is a given. How does a band decide to choose the first single and why OLP's decision for "Where Are You"? Coutts explains, "It was sort of a fight. That was a song that came near the end and I always felt it was an important song to us because it was different. The song's got balls and it's like nothing we've done. I wasn't sure if people were going to hear it as the first single. We actually had an original chorus that was different. Because it was the last song recorded we didn't get to treat it like the other songs and get away from it, but we got the record company to sign off on it anyway. Then afterwards, Raine said 'I'm not happy with the chorus and I don't want to sing it anymore.'" Coutts says in good humour. The band's response, "Okay! No problem." Raine decided to take the tracks to his home studio and rework the vocals only. The band later agreed the new chorus was stronger and encouraged Maida to "Go with it." Coutts continues, "So then we had to re-approve the song as the first single so we really put the record company through the ringer on this one."

I asked Coutts to explain the dynamics recording this latest album as compared to *Gravity*. "When we made *Gravity* it was a new relationship with Bob. When you're in a new relationship, it's like everything's rosy. You overlook some of the things that may be gnawing at you. Are we going too fast? Is this the right direction? I am not discrediting *Gravity* - it's a great album - but this time we just got into it more. 'Let's fight for what we believe in and find out who everybody is in this room,' and that made the biggest difference this time. Not just being complacent with the first idea that comes around. There were lots of ideas flying around the room and they weren't all good, but it takes time to figure that out."

Lyrically, Maida is not candy coating the content and obscuring it in imagery. Coutts agrees, "He really stepped it up on this one. When I hear his lyrics I feel he is speaking from the heart. To me that's the most important thing." Maida touches on topics such as the current state of Western society and its effects on the less fortunate regions of the world and its future with cause for caution. "Wipe That Smile Off Your Face" knocks that point home with just one of the hookier vocal lines on the album, but also has a hip-hop shuffle groove,



in the latest band bio further confirms the heated moments, "I fired Bob Rock at one point and I think he quit at another. It was a very emotional process because we were fighting to not compromise our artistic vision and bring as much artistry as possible back into our music." Often when trying to whittle the many songs down to the chosen few, band members become attached to certain songs and chopping one is like giving away your dog, or worse! Wondering if it's the "big hit" that will never get the chance to become the big hit? "I remember Raine once stormed out and walked up a hill and I thought that was it for him," says Coutts. "We were having an impromptu discussion about our future on the side of a canyon in Malibu overlooking a cliff. It was kind of metaphorical. Is the band going to fall over the cliff? Is the band going to keep going?" But ultimately cooler heads prevailed.

The making of this album was done bouncing between Pro Tools and then hitting tape and vice versa in different studios including Bob Rock's own Plantation in Maui, Hawaii, Metalworks in Mississauga, Ontario and another half dozen studios in California, so Raine could be close to home as he and his wife, singer/songwriter Chantal Kreviazuk



OUR LADY PEACE

HEALTHY  
IN  
PARANOID  
TIMES



not commonly heard until now between Coutts and drummer, Jeremy Taggart. Coutts elaborates, "That's from the first batch. It's an old one and again it's just different for us. I think when you can get to a point where you can just play and not think about mapping out the song inherently your personality comes out. Even if the songs are different, for example, a quiet shuffle or a loud rock tune, it's still the personality of the people in the band coming out and I think that's what makes it cohesive."

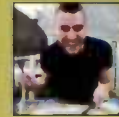
Steve Mazur's guitar textures range from crunchy tones to ethereal sounds that at times sound as if they were paying homage to The Edge from U2. In fact the later half of the album does have qualities reminiscent of the better guitar treatments from the '80s, '90s and today. The sound is balanced with thick power chords and haunting arpeggios and "the more hooks the better" seems to be the consensus.

Jeremy's drumming takes the same approach with some nice punk driven tempos, layered snare grooves and even some Samba moments such as the bridge on the first album track, "Angels Losing Sleep", no doubt to be a radio single and the best chorus on the album in my humble opinion. I love the fun factor of "World On A String", the album's second shuffle tune punctuated by a prominent flanged bass line complete with the rowdiness of a pub full of soccer hooligans for background vocals.

Over all the production is made to seem low-fi at times compared to *Gravity*, but done so in a clever way. Cymbals and drums are loud and compressed, guitars overdubs galore, vocals somewhat raw and very much in your face mix-wise, backed by solid and diverse bass tones that pack plenty of low-end punch. I think we have solid rock album here that breaks things up nicely the longer you let the tracks play on.

Not wanting to let the fans down with regards to offering something extra in this day of ripping/burning music OLP is making *Healthy In Paranoid Times* a dual disc; one side music the other a DVD archiving some of the different versions of songs, how the songs morphed through their progressions, and of course commentary from the band. Coutts describes the thought behind the dual disc. "For me I look at it and ask 'As a fan would I want to see this?' and the answer is 'Yes! I would.' It should give more insight to the last two years in the life of OLP."

And so another chapter begins for OLP on August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005, marking the release of the album that caused the break up of the band ... twice. The summer should have the guys gearing up with lots of promo shows in anticipation of the release some of which they will be opening up, once again, for The Rolling Stones for dates across Canada. I finished off by asking Coutts his feelings about that. "If we get to meet them this time I'll feel a little better," he states, laughing out loud. "We've played with them before at Le Colisee in Quebec City. I was walking up a cement ramp and literally had to jump out of the way of this black Mercedes. It stopped about 60 metres past me and Mick and Charlie got out of the car and that was the closest I came to meeting any of them. Maybe if we can get a picture this time that would be cool!"



Chris Taylor-Munro is a Toronto-based freelance writer who is best known as drummer for Hydrofoil, Moist and David Usher.

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*A Vampire Of  
His Own Soul*

by Karen Bliss





**I**t's been a long road for Rich Terfry, a.k.a. Buck 65, but this unique wordsmith with the kitchen sink approach to music is finally getting worldwide acclaim, including from the likes of Radiohead and Vincent Gallo. He tours like a madman and counts France as his most responsive market, tied closely for second by Australia and the UK. The Nova Scotia native who now makes Paris home had been toiling away for some 15 years, making music independently, before signing with Warner Music Canada for the world, except for America where he is on V2.

This afternoon in Toronto, a few days before he shoots the video for the single "Kennedy Killed The Hat" from his latest album, *Secret House Against The World*, Terfry sits at a corner table in the lobby restaurant of a downtown hotel. By his side is his fiancée, Claire Berest, a native of France who sings on a handful of the new songs. Anything goes for Buck 65. His creativity and creations know no boundaries or limitations – except his own. His throaty, spoken-word vocal delivery is akin to an emcee Tom Waits, and he pulls from an eclectic range of styles including hip hop, folk, jazz, and rock to an enchanting, complex, arty-cool end.

While the album may be a mish-mash of sounds, there are no samples; only real strings, piano, banjo, marimba, Moog, violin and other live instruments. It was recorded in several locations, mainly with the backing of Chicago-based band Tortoise after multi-instrumentalist John Herndon caught his show in Ann Arbor, MI, last December and broached the subject. "A couple of weeks later, we were in the studio and

went hog wild," says Terfry, who mostly tracked in Chicago, and did other studio work in Halifax and Paris.

Terfry co-produced the 13 songs with his Halifax friends, Graeme Campbell and Charles Austin, both of whom worked on Terfry's 2003 album, *Honky Tonk Blues*. Additional production was done by Berest, as well as another Paris-based Canadian transplant, Gonzales (a.k.a. Jason Beck, who released two albums on Warner Music Canada as Son and went on to work with Peaches and Feist). The whole shebang was mixed by Head, PJ Harvey's producer.

Over lunch, Terfry talks about his trip-off-the-tongue tales and approach to songwriting. "I'm a vampire of my own soul," he says.

See sidebar for production notes from Campbell.

**To Terfry: Did you know Claire has a beautiful voice?**

"No, not when I met her, but as soon as I heard it for the first time, even though I knew she didn't think of it that way and had no aspirations in that way, I knew she had something that I wanted."

**Berest:** "When I worked on a part, it was for him, but I had to show it, had to sing it to the music, and say, 'Okay, you do it.' So it was random."

**Adding Claire gives a whole different vibe to the record.**

"Bringing a female voice into what I'm doing was important and conscious from the planning stage of the record and the French part too. So that's her dual contribution because the francophone market in Quebec and in France has been very good to me, surprisingly, inexplicably, but I want to meet them half-way on that."

**It's not quite half-way.**

"No, it's not, but at least I wanted to make some kind of gesture."

**Do you have an all-French record in the works?**

"It's been a thought for a long time. What I've seen in France the last few years living there is that a little goes a long way, especially as a foreigner. It really seems to be appreciated and we recorded a lot of this record in Paris. There's one song that's completely in French ['Devil's Eyes (Piano Version)']; there's two or three that are bilingual ('Le 65isme', 'Drawing Curtains'). Claire worked really long and hard on a complete French translation of all the lyrics, which is available to everyone, and in particular, readily available to the French, which was really important."

**To Claire: Do you have your own recording career or is this the first time your voice is released on something internationally?**

"It's the first time."

**Is your brain ticking now to do your own thing?**

"I want to be a writer, so to write some lyrics is just to use another form to do what I want. And accompanying the singing part was a bit random at the beginning, but I can take an interest in every kind of art and it's interesting to do it. It was a really good experience. I will see."

**Terfry:** "I hope there's more. She's been great. Claire has a couple of songwriting credits and a production credit. She had to produce the French version (of 'Devil's Eyes') because she's the only person around who speaks French and knows if the performance is right or not so she had to get a (vocal) producer credit."

**Berest:** "We are a good team for work, actually."

**Have you given her an MC name?**

"We thought about that. I give her a different nickname every day. Maybe one day, one will stick. When we were in Indianapolis a while ago,



buck 65

she signed her first autograph and she's like, 'What do I write?' so she just put 'Claire.'

**Berest:** "I was embarrassed, actually."

**Terfry:** "More and more I'm thinking of Buck 65 as the band name because there are so many very important people involved like my right hand man, Charles Austin. We write all these songs together. He came to Paris. Lyrics are just me, but music we write together (Graeme Campell also contributes)."

**Speaking of lyrics, yours are intriguing, often so dense and rhythmic, crazy trip-off-the-tongue tales. Are they poems and if so, when do they cross the line from poem to rap?**

"I think you could argue that the majority of the stuff here and the majority of stuff I've done before had a loose musical structure, just in terms of the rhythmic aspect, how the words were put together. So they would work with

measure of music and where the rhymes fall, but all in all it was more poetry set to music. There are one or two cases on this record where it's the first time I made more of a song, like, for example, 'Kennedy Killed The Hat'. It's mostly kind of nonsense."

**Is it? There are tons of references to real cities.**

"Yes, and there are references to my life. I just mentioned the cities I've lived in, in the last three years - London, Paris and New York, places that have had an influence (on me) and places that I didn't want to forget meant something to me. So there's personal stuff, but all in all there's not much of a message to this song."

**And it's the first single.**

"[Laughs] Yeah, and we debated, 'Do we even put the lyrics to this song inside because there's not a whole lot going on there. [laughs again]'"

**Of all the songs on *Secret House Against The World*, "The Floor" stands out because the lyric sounds exceedingly personal. Was your dad abusive? Your mom a lovely person? Fact or fiction?**

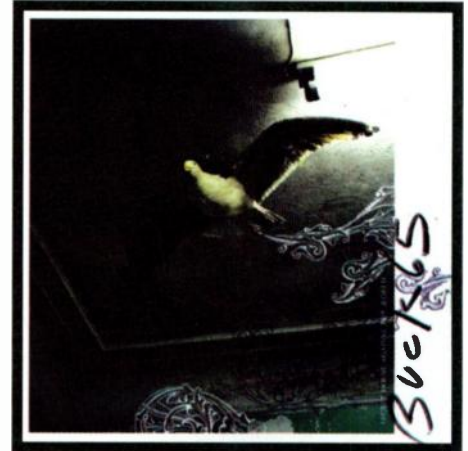
"It's actually fiction and it might surprise some people who take it at face value considering there's a song ('Roses And Bluejays') on my last album singing my dad's praises and that was a very personal song. I actually called him and said, 'You need to know that there's a song on this album about an abusive father' because I was worried about it on his behalf. Now, this is something I've seen in my life and it was originally inspired by something that I read somewhere. It got me thinking. It's a tragic thing and I've seen way too much of it with other people in my life and I wanted to address this. There are parts of my mother in there (too) because I do remember my mother telling me to smile more and wanting us to be happy. There was not abuse in my home, but there were real hard times and struggles to try to be strong through. So there is some of that spirit in there. And my mom's gone. She died a couple of years ago."

**Other songs are more personal, like "Rough House Blues", which seems to be about the weariness of road life.**

"There's two things going on in 'Rough House Blues'. First of all, I'm a bit enthusiastic about a lot of old American folk and blues music. And there's just a lot of references and homage to that in this song. But it also draws on my experience being the 'rambling man' in the last several years of my life - not having a home, travelling around, pretty much singing for my supper, feeling rootless and feeling pretty lonely at times, and just struggling with it and struggling with issues of confidence and self-esteem and self-image and all these kind of thing - 'going down the road feelin' bad.'"

**You've had a taste of success with *Honky Tonk Blues*. One would expect this album will get a bigger push. How will you handle that if it does become a circus life?**

*"It's not about having aspirations of selling millions and millions of records and making tons and tons of money and being really super-famous."*



"I don't know. I try to brace myself for that and prepare for it because it's already insane now."

**You could stop it.**

"Of course I could. I could. And I think about it a lot because for me to hold onto a real life and not surrender completely to this, to let it become a monster that eats me, is really important to me because if it does, then how am I ever going to write songs again if I really don't have a life? What will I write about if no stories are allowed to be born? So it's really just a question of drawing lines and where I let them be for me and how much of a job I'm going to give to other people. There's really only so much that I will take on for myself and so much time that I'm going to keep for myself and things that I'm going to keep as a priority at all costs, and then other parts where I'm just going to say, 'I'm sorry, that's going to have to be your job.'"

**Are you still going to play 300-some odd dates, like you did behind the last album?**

"There's a part of me that hates to say it, but I hope not. I hope not because that's tough. I've talked with a lot of people around me about my wishes and intentions and hopes and dreams with all this stuff, and it seems like everyone is on my side with them and they understand what I want and where I want to go."

**The type of artist that you are, you have Warner and V2, major companies behind you, but they're likely not expecting a huge hit single. Do you feel a responsibility to give back in that way, by touring, to sell records?**

"Yeah, that's what it comes down to and there's some expectation I suppose on the other side of it, but mostly that comes from me and my own expectations and just being realistic about what kind of career I'm going to have with the music that I make."

**Which is what?**

"Well, it's not about having aspirations of selling millions and millions of records and making tons and tons of money and being really super-famous. It's more about making, hopefully some day, some valuable contribution to music. I just want to write that one great song. The place where I'm at right now, I actually really like it and I think there's a way to allow that to grow without having to cross certain lines. There are just certain areas that I don't really care to go."

**In "The Suffering Machine" you say, "Poor boy, feels like - I ain't got no friends. I wake up nervous/Sunday is gloomy ... The isolation makes me want to set myself on fire." Is this how you feel?**

"You're talking about the story of the travelling encyclopedia salesman. I was always a lyrics first guy; I would write the lyrics first and then put music around it, but something I've tried a little more recently is to actually come up with the music first and write to that, which was the case with this song. It just came out on a mood on this one particular day and feeling isolated and feeling like I didn't have friends and no one understood where I was coming from, and estranged from this thing and that thing and the other. And then stopping and saying, 'Well, why the hell had this happened and what did I do? This is my fault. I've done this,' and I've kind of done it consciously for reasons that made sense to me at the time, and then, sometimes, I stop and say, 'That might've been a mistake. Look what I've done.' I've kind of given life





to this one thing, which might be kind of great but look what had to get sacrificed in the process. It's good to focus on where you're going and your intentions for these things and forget about everything else, but that can be really reckless. It can cause trouble and it can come back to kick you in the butt or just make you feel real bad some day. I can't forget those things and I can't ignore that side of life and they feed each other. There's the focus part, the *me* that's barely even a person, who is out there working, almost like a robot and every day routine – get up, get on the next plane, go to the next city, do the next show, go to sleep and then repeat the next day – and then there's that side of me that mostly exists in the 30 minutes that it takes me to fall asleep every night that says, 'Christ Almighty, I haven't called Andrew and Fiona (Sloan drummer and his wife) in a year. What have I done? What is this going to mean a couple of years from now? Where am I going to be left? I'm just going to be alone and half the time I'm alone now and I'm just way too antisocial and I've given too much to this. I don't know what I'm doing. Maybe I'm making mistakes here.'

**There are a lot of songs in you.**

"Yeah, there is."

**Laughs. Working it all out in a song.**

"And in a strange kind of way that almost feels sick to me. I have to embrace these kinds of struggles and use them a little bit. Someone striped me as a vampire once and it really upset me because I don't like people thinking about me that way."

**But that implies that you're sucking from other people, as opposed to sucking from yourself?**

"Right, and that's the upsetting thing. I don't want people to think that I'm only interested in talking to you so I can get a song out of you. But I am a vampire of my own soul, I suppose. One minute I think, 'Why the heck am I doing this? And the other side is saying, 'I have to do this because this is where all my songs are.'"

## Producer's Perspective

Graeme Campbell, co-producer on *Secret House Against The World*, talks about the recording process for the album... "Initial pre-production, plus some additional recording (including violin and pedal steel guitar) took place using Logic Pro running on an Apple G5 with a Lynx L22 PCI audio card at Ultramagnetic Recording in Halifax, NS (this is where previous Buck 65 records *Square* and *Talkin' Honky Blues* were recorded. It also serves as home base for producers Charles Austin and Graeme Campbell); however, most of the material for the basic tracks was recorded at Engine Music Studios and Soma Electronic Music Studios by engineer Tim Eisler who works mainly at Soma with Tortoise's producer/engineer, John McEntire. "Tracking at Engine took place using their vintage



Trident Series 80B console in Studio B; the recording medium was Pro Tools HD using the Digi 192 converters at 48 kHz for most of the songs. Engine has a great sounding live room complimented by a fantastic array of well-maintained vintage microphones, including many highly sought after (and great sounding) Neumann models. Most of the 'live' sounding drums were recorded here, as well as a lot of organ, marimba, guitars, and bass.

"The recordings at Soma included strings, vibes, and keys, as well as the "tighter" sounding drums, which were recorded in their ISO booth with a minimalist mic setup. The centerpiece of the studio is their vintage Trident A-Range console; however the sheer variety of outboard gear packed into the control room is staggering, including vintage mic-pres, compression, effects and modular synths (see [www.somastudios.com](http://www.somastudios.com) for a comprehensive list) a fair bit of which was employed in tracking here (It would have been nice to spend a lot longer messing around here). The musicians (including members of the Chicago post-rock instrumental band Tortoise) and their instruments obviously played a huge role in the sounds that were captured in these sessions.

"After tracking in Chicago, the tracks were consolidated in Pro Tools to be brought into Logic for editing and additional production. Rich and Claire's vocals were recorded in Paris, France at Studio CALM, which is more of a dedicated production and overdubbing studio than a full-scale facility (and has a great laid-back vibe as a result; more akin to the type of environment where Buck 65 records of the past have been made (but with nicer gear), based around a Pro Tools HD rig with Logic Pro running as the front-end. Gonzales' piano parts were done here as well. Rich's vocal was recorded with a Neumann tube U67, and Claire's with a U89 using Focusrite Red mic-pres. Also, most of the material for the tracks 'Rough House Blues' and 'Corrugated Tin Façade' was recorded here, making heavy use of API & D.W. Fearn mic-pres.

"Tara White's vocals were recorded by Chris Shreenan-Dyck at the Woodshed in Toronto.

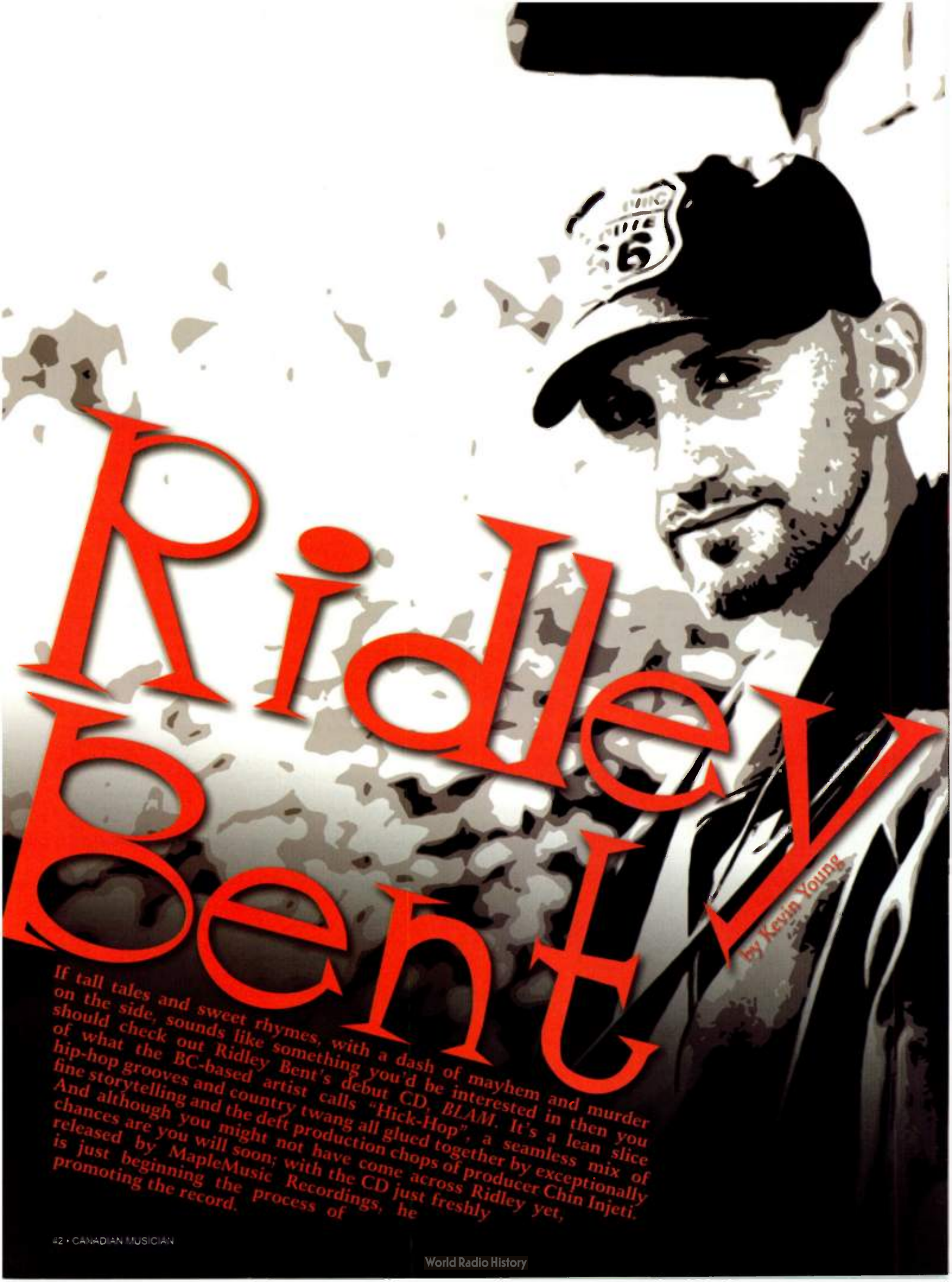
"After some additional editing back in Halifax, the tracks were bounced out of Logic to bring back into Pro Tools for mixing, which took place in Bristol, UK, at Studio Sin Cabaza. This is actually the newly created personal studio of the U.K. band Massive Attack, and this was its first use by an outside project; the mix engineer was Head, whose main gig is producer and engineer for PJ Harvey. The mix room itself was fairly standard, designed by the Munro Acoustics, and based around an SSL 4000 G+ with a Pro Tools Mix system employed for playback. Mixes and stems were printed back into the originating Pro Tools sessions using an Apogee Trak2 as the A/D converter. (No analog tape was used in the entire process.) There was also a fine selection of outboard equipment at our disposal, including gear from Focusrite, Alan Smart, GML, Neve and TubeTech, in addition to Head's portable rack. The scratches, which were done by DJ D-Styles, actually had to be integrated with the mixed songs after the fact due to the tight timeline, but this actually worked out surprisingly well. The record was mastered by Joao Carvalho at Joao Carvalho Mastering in Toronto; aside from being visually stunning, this is also one of the finest acoustic spaces I've yet to encounter."



Toronto-based music journalist Karen Bliss is the Canadian news correspondent for *RollingStone.com*, and operates a Canadian music industry news column, *Lowdown*, at <http://jam.canoe.ca/JamColumnBliss/home.html>. She also contributes to *Elle Canada*, *Audience*, *Tribute*, *Words & Music* and others.







# Ridley Bent

by Kevin Young

If tall tales and sweet rhymes, with a dash of mayhem and murder on the side, sounds like something you'd be interested in then you should check out Ridley Bent's debut CD, *BLAM*. It's a lean slice of what the BC-based artist calls "Hick-Hop", a seamless mix of hip-hop grooves and country twang all glued together by exceptionally fine storytelling and the deft production chops of producer Chin Injeti. And although you might not have come across Ridley yet, chances are you will soon; with the CD just freshly released by MapleMusic Recordings, he is just beginning the process of promoting the record.



**W**hen we sat to talk, Ridley was having himself a heaping helping of Quebec hospitality following a show with Buck 65 at Montreal's Main Hall. Not surprisingly, he's having a great time. It's jazz fest time in the city and there's plenty of music to satisfy even the most eclectic of tastes. Which, judging from the unique stylistic mix on *BLAM!*, might be a fairly reasonable way to describe Ridley's tastes. Quite possibly the best summation of Ridley's style is his own, from the track "Suicidewinder".

"I'm Johnny Cash when I'm drinkin', I'm the Clash when I'm thinkin', I'm Mad Max when I'm drivin', I'm Mike Diamond when I'm rhymin', I'm Humphrey Bogart when I'm smoking, I'm Bob Marley when I'm tokin'. And in bed when I'm dreamin' I'm a guitar slingin' demon."

Well put, but although there are elements of rap, folk, heavy rock, country and blues, *BLAM!* is by no means a patchwork of styles. It's a dynamic collection of strong songs that sounds the way a collection of short stories reads. The pace may change, but Ridley's storytelling sucks you in on every track.

**"I had a roommate that had a guitar. I just wanted to play a couple of**

Bent comes by his folksy roots honestly. He describes his father as "the world's greatest country music lover." Of course, Ridley only accepted his parent's taste in music to a point; "I guess I was into that, until I got my own taste, then I wasn't into it at all." Eventually though, he took a renewed interest in his father's tastes and now the spirit of old style country greats like George Jones and Hank Williams haunt the corners of Ridley's stories.

An army brat, born in Halifax, he relocated to West Germany for many years before heading back to Canada, to Cold Lake, Chilliwack, Calgary, Whistler, and now Vancouver. After a couple of years of university in Calgary he'd had enough, relocated to Whistler, found a job, took up skiing and began loving life on the hill. Still, he didn't exactly give up on education. He did, however, change majors. Although he'd picked up the guitar many times when he was younger, it wasn't until he got to Whistler that he really started to learn. "I had a roommate

that had a guitar. I just wanted to play a couple of songs so if the guitar came to me around the campfire I'd be able to crank one out. I used to love this band, Buffalo Tom, and I was just learning a whole bunch of Buffalo Tom songs - that's kind of how I taught myself to play."

It wasn't until after moving to Vancouver and taking a job as a security guard that he started to develop his unique style of wordplay. To kill time on the job he read John Steinbeck and old Westerns, steeping himself in the language and characters and then spinning his own tales with just his guitar or some fat beats for company. "At one point I read 50 Louis L'Amour novels in a row - I could read one per day at work. It was almost like research; all the western lingo."

He had other sources as well, citing John Steinbeck's, *In Dubious Battle* as a direct inspiration for the record's second track, "Fruit Pickers



(*In Dubious Battle*), an ode to depression era workers, and the men who fought and died to build unions. "It was kind of an experiment. I wanted to see if I could take a story that was already written and just do it." He can. Ridley makes the story his own on the track, and shows that, in addition to laying down clever word play, the man can sing.

Most of the material on *BLAM!* came later, he says. "With most of my stories I don't even know how they're going to end. Whatever the best rhyme is; that's where it goes." And where it goes is all over. *BLAM!* covers a lot of territory geographically as well. Taking you for a series of wild rides that twist and turns through California, Dallas, Mexico and New York and keeps you on the run all the way from the Suicidewinder Saloon to the Old West and back. You might not always know where you'll end up, but you'll have a hell of a good time getting there.

Above and beyond being good yarns, his characters are impossible to ignore and whether he's playing the hero, the villain, or sometimes a mix of the two, he does with equal enthusiasm. These aren't the bland denizens of everyday love songs, or your garden variety, bitch-slapping, suburban "wannabe" gangsters. They're larger than life, comic book cool, and at times, meaner than a snake on fire. Whether he's fighting "The Devil as Coltrane Henry", heading to El Paso as the son of an unpredictable drug running cop, or sitting back and singing gently about the simple living creatures in "Pastures of Heaven", his characters kick ass, live free, and love hard, every step of the way. Thankfully, he doesn't completely rule out some of them returning in other songs, and although he's yet to write a sequel ... "You never know," he says.

What really stands out about this record is Bent's ability to hook you within a few lines, every time, and keep you there. At the core of great songwriting is the ability to tell a story and put it across in

**songs so if the guitar came to me around the campfire I'd be able to crank one out."**

a way that allows listeners to either see themselves in the song, or wish they were there. Ridley does that and more, often dropping the listener somewhere they'd might never imagine: ringside for a running high speed food fight between a dirty cop the Mexican chapter of the Kiss Army, for instance; or giving them a fly on wall's eye view of an amateurish kidnapping gone hilariously awry. The choice between telling the tale from the outside, or getting right in there and playing a part is something that is dictated by the song itself, he says. It's a matter of what the most effective way to tell the story is.

Midway through "David Harley's Son" it should be abundantly clear that humour is a big part of the equation. There is nothing specifically autobiographical about the songs. Having said that, there are common threads underlying the gun and wordplay. It's hard for him to define a specific trait, but, he says, "If you don't listen to it as a story, but you kind of listen to the whole set. You will hear my own character come out, in between the lines."

Between the lines, you can also hear the musical partnership that grew between



Ridley and Chin in the studio. The two met at the BC Festival Of The Arts where Chin was one of the mentors. During the first break after Ridley played a song, Chin approached him and invited him to record with him. Finding common ground while demoing "Pastures of Heaven" and "Suicidewinder" they kept both tracks – the demo sessions on the strength of which they decided to continue to work together and make a full record. "We didn't have any money, so we were doing everything on spec and recording at a really great studio, Hipposonic (with engineer and mixer Paul Silveira). In total it took three years."

he seems quite happy to use the record as a blueprint and let the live show grow according to the strengths of the players he's with at the time. "I wouldn't say I have a fixed band. I have a rotating cast. I just did Ottawa and North Bay with a band that Chin put together – all those players are really from the school of funk. My whole philosophy is to get talented players and I'll sound good. If I play with good country players they make it sound country, and if I play with good funk players they make it sound funky. It's a very cool dynamic. My favourite lineup is a five piece with keys, guitar, bass and drums."

of which Ridley is fully aware and doesn't mince words about it – "I'm getting really mixed reviews," he says candidly. "I think people who are really hardcore hip-hop fans or really hardcore country fans. Both of them may, kind of, not like my stuff just on principle."

Purist fans of hip-hop or country may not get it at first listen, but they can't fault Ridley's storytelling chops, or his ability to slip so convincingly into the skin of the various characters that populate *BLAM* one after the other. The trick is to just sit back, listen, and let the man take you where he's going. Even with all the brawling and tires squealing it won't hurt a bit. "The violent characters are very comic book. It's comic book violence – very Quentin Tarantino. I've always liked that humour/violent adventure story and I like the fact that people are getting it, that it is characters."

It's not all dark alleys and gunfights though – there are some genuinely



**"A lot of work goes into making the flow of the lines and the story work together. There is a lot of editing."**

The philosophy behind the recording was to keep the arrangements transparent and the instrumentation spare over compelling grooves and live beats courtesy of drummer Jamie Kaufman. "Chin has a lot of old school hip-hop influences so he went with that vein." Essentially a delivery system for Bent's storytelling, the music helps underline the lyrics and give additional momentum to record. Like the short westerns that inspired Ridley, the idea behind Chin's production makes dead certain nothing gets in the way of Ridley's delivery.

The spare style leaves plenty of room for Ridley to reinterpret the tunes live, whether he's playing solo or with a band. He's opened for Sam Roberts at the Commodore and toured around BC with a full band, played solo opening slots for the likes of Buck 65 and Martha Wainright, picked up a couple of Eastern based players for shows in Ontario. All in all,

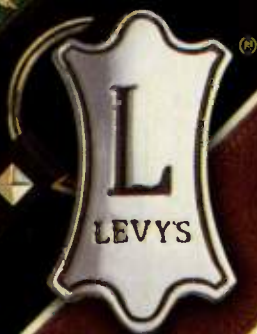
With the full band, his favourite song to play live is "In the Trunk of A Black Lexus". It's the story of two less than brilliant criminals getting their just desserts courtesy of a foul mouthed, dope smoking kid with a pellet gun. Simply put, it just rocks, telling it straight up and unloading a double-barreled onslaught of huge guitars at each chorus. "I just dig that song," he says. "A lot of people actually say it's their least favourite song on the record, but with a band that song just wails. I think it would make a great, dark, sort of *Sin City* video."

For Ridley the main thing that makes a show successful is the audience following the whole story. Regardless of the tune the band swings to on a given night, some people of course, still won't get it. A fact



poignant moments, notably "Pastures of Heaven" and "Fruit Pickers". But even though Ridley's rhymes take a more serious turn occasionally, *BLAM* remains infused with a wicked sense of humour. On "Bad Day", Ridley takes a whack at the age old, traditional country, "somebody done me wrong" song, but with a unique spin. Waking before dawn, his character finds his woman has not only left him, but that, as a parting shot, she's also told the





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law about the content of his illicit hydroponics garden and let his mother know that he's a chronic pot smoker. From there the story goes from bad to very worse, taking hilarious turns for the worse along the way. That said, now seems a perfect time to ask if Ridley's humour is at all a product of the big green smile that comes with a fistful of BC bud...

What takes a fair bit of time and effort in his songwriting process is editing – taking his raw material and turning it into the kind of story that rolls off the tongue and comes off almost as effortlessly as a favourite story that's told well, and often. "A lot of work goes into making



the flow of the lines and the story work together. There is a lot of editing." Ridley's characters have different ways of dealing with the hand he deals them – but one thing a great many have in common is that along the way they smoke a hell of a lot pot. "Weed does show up a lot on this album. I think a lot of it is because when I'm writing, I smoke weed a lot. It's not like I write all my songs when I'm stoned," he adds. Even if I write a lot of it sober I'll go home, smoke a little fatty, and edit it."

Though Ridley says he's not writing a great deal right at the moment, he has a fair bit of material in his back pocket, enough material for two full records. He also has a number of co-writes on other soon to be released album projects. "There are two other records my co-writes are all over. There's a fellow from The Seams – Cameron Latimer – he's doing a solo project. I believe he's going to call it Gin Train, which is the name of a song he and I wrote on New Year's Day. His voice is just incredible, kind of like Elliot Smith, it's got this really hurtful side to it." He also gets to indulge another musical influence with an unsigned artist named Jagua; "We write together and we're doing a fun project called Two Tall Trees – it gets my love for Reggae out – my need for that kind of creation."

Though Ridley has a wide spectrum of influences and has had the luxury of being able to write in a variety of styles with different people, right now there's a lot of work to do on his own project. "I really want to concentrate on the live act and getting it to be a really solid show." He'll get the chance over the next few months. Currently he's on tour and will be hitting folk fests in Vancouver and Guelph in between dates with Buck 65. Though most shows will be solo gigs for now – he's kicking around the idea of bringing a lap steel player out to join him in Vancouver. I'm still piecing together bands," he says. Even though he's unsure what musical direction the live show will take, that's not to say his shows aren't focused. He may want to fine-tune them with a band, but if his solo NXNE show at the Mod Club was any indication the most important elements are already in place. Whatever the instrumentation here isn't a lot of clutter to get in the way of his telling a good yarn, and the stories that will draw in the chattiest of audiences and make them listen.

Curious listeners can check out Ridley Bent at [www.ridleybent.com](http://www.ridleybent.com) or [www.tractorgrease.com](http://www.tractorgrease.com). The latter, designed by friends from his former home of Chilliwack, the site provides plenty of sample material. Originally intended as a venue to showcase their video editing chops and cool music, it offers some video clips of Ridley in concert as well as a number of other acts – including cult favourite, *The Lockout Song* by Relic's Jet Boat.



Kevin Young is a Toronto-based freelance writer.

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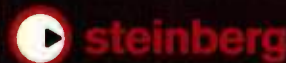
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Chad Kroeger

Photo by Ashley Maile

# HOME RECORDING

No Limits But  
Your Own

by Kevin Young

**T**hese days, given what's possible with a small home recording rig, the similarities between what you can achieve at home vs. in a full studio probably outweigh the differences. Depending on your needs (and how much soundproofing you've done) the only differences could be measured in the strength and frequency of violent thoughts being directed at you from your neighbours. That's okay, violent thoughts are pretty much par for the course in the studio – musicians love to argue about what makes a great recording. There's more to making great records than expensive gear and an impressive resume, there are things that can't be done outside a professional studio. Preparation and attention to detail at every step of the process are essential, because the studio – *any studio* – is like a microscope, and your playing, songwriting, and recording chops are going to be front and center like nowhere else.

The current trend in modern rock seems to lean towards a much rawer sound than it has in some time, but the rawer the sound, the more important to capture the quality and energy of the music accurately. Here we speak to four veteran engineer/producers and songwriter/producers, all of whom have embraced new technology gladly, but have deep roots in the analog world. Over the years, their process has changed as they incorporated the latest and greatest advances in recording technology and between them they have worked on some extremely significant Canadian records.



Nickelback's Chad Kroeger needs little introduction. He's a prolific and successful songwriter and producer, co-founder of Vancouver-based 604 Records and boasts co-writes with the likes of Santana...

"There is no excuse for bad home recordings," says Chad. "People get lazy and want to hear what the song sounds like when it's finished." His point is that close is not close enough when it comes to tuning and timing. Even after a fair bit of pre-production, he says, issues and conflicts inevitably pop up in the studio. "You realize how small every little thing is, everything you're doing with your wrist on the guitar, every single accent becomes very painfully apparent."



Paul Northfield

Getting the best performance you can every time is key – paying close attention to detail lessens the chances of blowing what could be a potentially great take, even if you're recording in less than ideal circumstances. "I sang the vocal take for the Santana song on a bus, rolling down a highway, through a pair of panties wrapped around a coat hanger as a screen, and Clive Davis wouldn't let me change them. I wanted to, but he's like, 'nope, the vocal take is great, there's something rhythmic about it, some magical quality to it.'" The bottom line is that sometimes you can't replace that magic no matter how much you revisit and retry.

I should probably clarify one thing from the outset. We're not going to talk all that much about gear here. For those of you with a fair bit of experience in the studio, you know what you like. For those of you whose experience falls into the "little to none" range and you're considering putting together a home studio to make that brilliant debut record you've been meaning to get to, you'll need to do a fair bit of research and legwork to discover just exactly what

*"I've got a Dual G5  
and quite a lot old,  
analog, outboard gear;  
1176s and API EQs  
and the like. I've got  
about 10 compressors  
of different kinds. I'm  
a Logic user, but I use  
Pro Tools when I'm out  
and about in different  
studios, especially if I'm  
tracking large sessions.  
My favourite software  
is Logic and when  
I'm working at home,  
invariably, I'm recording  
one or two tracks at a  
time, so I don't really  
need a big dedicated Pro  
Tools system."*

*– Paul Northfield*

setup will suit your needs and giving some serious thought to sorting out exactly what is a good place to start.

## THE WORKSPACE

There are obvious differences between working in a world-class studio facility and working out of your kitchen, basement, or shed, but there are similarities as well. Over the course of the past 10 years, what you can accomplish in a relatively small home studio has changed dramatically, but regardless of how easy it is to achieve professional sounding results, certain intangible qualities can be equally elusive no matter where you record.

When I phoned Paul Northfield, the beginning of our conversation centres on the fact that I'm recording the interview using an old speaker phone and a micro-cassette recorder – very old school recording – not in a cool, retro sort of way so much as an "I'm too lazy to update my interview process sort of way." Paul has extensive experience engineering, mixing, and/or producing in a variety of rooms and situations and has worked with a diverse assortment of Canadian and International artists including Hole, Rush, and Suicidal Tendencies. Beyond the fact that we sound a bit like we're talking to each other from the bottom of matching wells, and knowing Paul has a fondness for quirky analog gear from the former Soviet Bloc, I'm sure he'll forgive me for not going straight to disk.

"I've got a Dual G5 and quite a lot old, analog, outboard gear; 1176s and API EQs and the like. I've got about 10 compressors of different kinds. I'm a Logic user, but I use Pro Tools when I'm out and about in different studios, especially if I'm tracking large sessions. My favourite software is Logic and when I'm working at home, invariably, I'm recording one or two tracks at a time, so I don't really need a big dedicated Pro Tools system."

For Paul, it's the "very musical interface of Logic," that keeps him loyal to the software. "When I first started doing a lot of hard-disk recording I didn't use plug-ins at all. I tended to be doing a lot of guitar-oriented recording. At that time, it was 'get a great drum sound and guitars up front, so they sound like they're actually in the room with you.' In the early days," he continues, "I wasn't considering mixing in the computer because it wasn't something anybody was considering at the time. But my philosophy has always been to go with the musical aspect."

"The last project I did was a band called Pure Reason Revolution in England. Even though the majority of the record we worked in studios in London, the entire project, monitor mixing and final mixing was done in Logic. I did experiment with Tape Saturation as certain points on the guitars, but at the end of the day I didn't end up using it, which surprised me. I had fun doing it, but I was finding the results I needed I was getting directly with the (digital) system."

When Chad Kroeger called me, he and the band were working on the follow up to



*The Long Road* in the Mountain View Studios, a facility he built roughly two and a half years ago. Aside from the commute – 80 steps from Chad's home – "It's not really what I would call a home recording studio," he says. "We've got one of the SSL's out of Greenhouse that used to be in Little Mountain, that Bruce Fairbairn and Bob Rock did all those huge bands in the '80s on; the magical board. We really wanted to make it a world-class studio. It's fully open to the public."

Part of the inspiration to build the studio came from a desire to be able to walk out into a more desirable setting than your average industrial area. "I live 45 minutes out of the city and halfway through *The Long Road* we were talking about moving out to the country and doing stuff there. Now we look out of the window cut in the side of the second story, where the control room is, and we're looking at water and rolling hills and trees and mountains."

Obviously, having a facility of this type in your backyard is a luxury few people could afford, or would have the drive to attempt to make into a profitable business venture, particularly when many people are content to make their records in their own basement or bedroom. The key, Chad explains, is to "have somebody who gets out there and hustles and finds bands to record." He credits the efforts of business partner and engineer, Joey Moi. "When I'm out on the road, he's bringing in bands and recording them. So it's rare that anyone can even get in here if they just call and say, hey, can we book your studio? Which is really nice, because most people say don't open a recording studio because they'll lose money."

Chances are that you don't have the resources on hand to build something like Mountain View, but regardless of the type of studio you intend to put together, there's going to be a learning curve and you have to have the drive and determination to master your gear. "It's no different than anything else you're going to build. If you don't know what you're doing, you don't know what you're doing. The first thing to do is take a crash course and figure out what you're doing. Take the leap." It's a trial and error process from the get go, a process of recording things and just trying to make them sound as great as you can, Chad says. "I myself didn't know anything about it and I grabbed an M-Box – they're not expensive and they do 90 per cent of what a full size Pro Tools rig will do – then grab yourself a Mac laptop and away you go. I was out on the road on the bus and I ripped out the bunks, built me a little studio there and just went to work."

From the back of the bus to the basement to a world-class facility, whether you've sold a hundred records, or a million, it all comes down to capturing the best sounding and most magical performances you can. Part of the capturing that magic is process, part of it is skill, and part of it is pure dumb luck. As a starting point, you should make certain your environment is as comfortable as possible to work in. "There's a magic about being comfortable," Chad says. "Some studios are very sterile and there's not a lot of vibe to them. If you're in your home and you're comfortable there then you're probably going to be able to sing better in that type of setting."

Both the space you're working in and the intended use of the recording will dictate certain elements of the process. Former OLP guitarist, Mike Turner, now calls Toronto's Pocket Studios his working home, but he's no stranger to guerrilla recording with his mobile studio.

"It hasn't been appropriate to me lately, but I still have it. I did club level stuff with it. Having gotten tired of hearing people fix everything, I thought that a good representation of what you can actually do live would be more compelling."

The limits of the quality recording aren't based entirely on gear and never have been. It's important to have the best possible gear you can afford, but if you lose sight of the human element while recording you won't get great results. "How many times have you had to coach someone through red light fever in a studio, especially a vocalist? Tension in a vocalist will obliterate the chances of a good performance. You need to relax to sing well. I was very much a fly on the wall with the mobile rig – stay out of the FOH guy's way, stay out of the monitor guy's way, make sure you've got what you need and then keep an eye on things. If you're attempting to capture live performance, you can't become part of it. That will alter the band's normal approach to things. The less they're aware and the more they just perform the way they're supposed to perform the more effective you're being."

Distractions can derail a recording session very quickly. In the big studio it might be as simple as the stress that you're not getting what you need and are going to run out of time and money. It doesn't matter whether you're at Mountain View or in your basement, close to home is close to home and home issues can pull you away from work at inopportune times. Ultimately you have to know yourself. It may seem like a no brainer, but there's little point in spending the time, money, and effort building a home studio if you're unable to be productive in it. No matter what system you're working on, there are more than enough distractions inside the box to consume your time...

When we contacted Vancouver-based Producer, Warne Livesey, (The The, Midnight Oil, Mathew Good, 54-40) to comment for this article he was about to start building a new studio in his newly purchased house on Vancouver Island. As much as advances in computer-based digital recording have changed recording, "It has made a lot of things a lot easier and some



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find a solution and then come together and choose what's best for the song. When the Nickelback recording process stalls, "Everybody starts heading off to their own little Pro Tools station and then comes back with three or four ideas. If there's nothing good, we don't pull punches. We don't say 'Okay, let's try it.' If it's not good, it's not good and we can't use it. Sometimes it takes a long time and you get frustrated, but we try not to switch gears too often because you won't get anything done. If you just continue to procrastinate every time you get stuck, you'll never get through it."

*"What does this part do? Is it valid and vibrant? Does it add something to the track or is it just yet another part."*

— Mike Turner

## CHOICES

When you're sitting in an expensive destination studio with an A-list producer and the bands imploding you have to suck it up, find your focus and get through it. There's too much at stake financially to do anything else. Of course, if you've built a styling little home studio and aren't pouring money into the huge studio with the fantastic cappuccino machine and pool table, maybe you don't have to worry so much about losing time. Hell, you may not even have to worry about other performers, particularly if it's all you, multi-talented, multi-instrumentalist, genius, you...

You do, however, have to worry about losing your perspective. As integral to the process as it is to have strong material, it's equally important to be able to plot a path to bettering it and have "long ears": Long enough to maintain that ability for long sessions, to be neither your worst, or most forgiving critic, but your most constructive one. "Home recording has a lot greater risk, because you have all the tracks and all the options in the world that sometimes you don't listen to the part." You have to ask yourself, Mike Turner says, "What does this part do? Is it valid and vibrant? Does it add something to the track or is it just yet another part."

Sure, your music is wildly original, but there is a possibility that you might let something slip by – something that might make a perfectly good and current sounding song sound less than original. The differences between retro cred and cheesy imitation are a matter of timing as well as knowing where to draw the line. Granted, losing perspective is

a danger in any setting. Multiple opinions can derail a productive session quickly, but so can one, lone, ever-changing or inflexible opinion. "So you've got 75 tracks of three good ideas and whoever is sitting in the producer's chair, or the band itself, have to be really hard on each other and say, 'Yeah – it's not the wrong notes, or the wrong time, but it really doesn't float my boat.'"

Now that the technology is so accessible there's very little to stop anyone who wants to from recording at home. That said, just because so many people can do something doesn't necessarily mean that it's all going to be brilliant. "If you don't have a good song, you can make a good recording of it, but that really won't change the fact that it's not *that* good a song," Mike continues. The same goes for becoming a good engineer. "That takes time and effort – that takes years. It would be a great disservice for someone to walk into a music store, drop five grand on recording equipment and say, okay, now I'm an engineer." That's not meant to be at all discouraging, going back to Chad's comment: the best thing to do is just to take the leap and learn.

Technology can be frustrating no matter what era it comes from. The invisible creatures responsible for the random application of Murphy's Law seem to have a special affinity for hanging out in recording studios. "Recording has always been littered with occasional frustrating days of doing battle with equipment," Warne says. "Getting different bits of gear to cooperate with one

another is always a good source of wasting a few hours." As glad as he is not to have to lock multi-track tape machines together and deal with the hell of getting drum machines and sequencers to sync together he does point out that computers bring their own set of frustrations.

There's no way past that except by getting through it. "Once you reach a certain level of technical proficiency then the sound is secondary to the songs, the performance," says Paul Northfield. In other words, like musical theory, you learn it, you have to think about it for a while as you play and write. Then, over time, it becomes second nature and you forget about it and focus on other aspects of craft. "Anytime anything gives you more options you tend to indulge those options. When you make records sometimes it's valuable to give yourself self imposed restrictions – allowing yourself to do anything, at any moment, all the time can be nowhere near as productive as being told you've got a schedule." The trick, it seems, is striking a balance between perfection and excess, and being able to differentiate between a take with a killer vibe and a sloppy performance. Most importantly, having a really firm idea of what you want to achieve and how to get there – without being so entrenched that there's no room to let new inspiration creep in, change things up, and maybe even blow your doors off.

"I find that if you're just going to use the same drum sound and lay down 11 drum

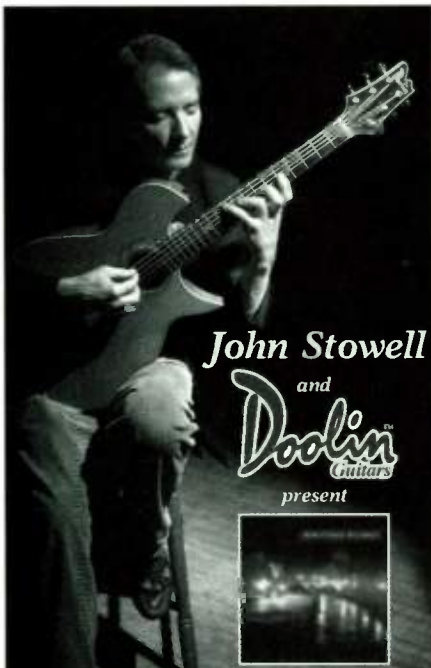
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# HOME RECORDING

takes, then get the exact same bass tone and lay down 11 bass takes, the whole record is going to sound the same." Chad says. "When the band started the building process for this record I think we spent four to five weeks on each song. Then we started realizing that if we keep going at this pace, it's going to take 11 months to make the record. So, we started taking stock and laying down a lot more ideas - all the scratch takes for a song. Then, when we were happy with it and could easily go back and reference it, we'd go on to the next. Now we're sitting here and a lot of X's are crossed off the recording graph. It's very close."



## KNOWING AND TESTING YOUR LIMITS

Regardless the platform you're working with, in order for your project to go smoothly you have to think well ahead...

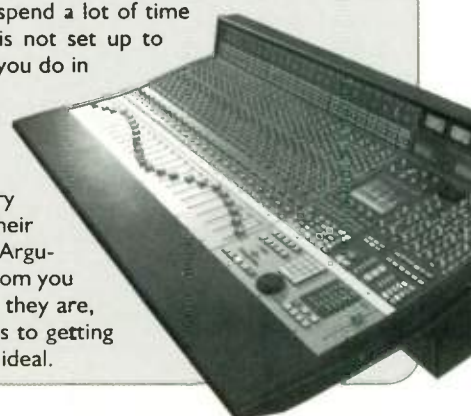
Know your limits: both in terms of your budget and the ability to master the technology you choose to use. Also, consider any problems you might have as far as your ability to get the best performance out of yourself and others. Although getting that human element is an issue regardless of where you record it's much harder when you have no one to bounce things off - when in doubt about how things are sounding you should never be afraid to ask for help and/or invite comment from others.

*"I find that if you're just going to use the same drum sound and lay down 11 drum takes, then get the exact same bass tone and lay down 11 bass takes, the whole record is going to sound the same."*

*- Chad Kroeger*

Know your project: before you go out and drop money on gear, soundproofing, or anything, weigh what you want against the needs of the project. Think about where the best place is for you to spend the money. You don't have to aim low, but you should maximize the quality of every step in the recording chain to get the best sound you can afford. Referencing other records is a good way to get some perspective on what you want to achieve, and will also give anyone you're asking for guidance a better idea of how to get you where you want to go.

Finally, know your room: "If you're going to mix at home," says Paul, "you have to either have gotten very used to getting the results you want and walking out of the house with them, or you have to spend a lot of time doing acoustic treatments. Your average house is not set up to give you balanced sound." No matter how much you do in terms of acoustic treatments and soundproofing, consider both the sounds that might find themselves into your space as those that might escape it. Speaking of which, it might not hurt to know your neighbours really, really well, and be on very good terms with them. Just on the off chance their violent thoughts might become violent actions. Arguably, there's very little you can't do in whatever room you set up in, but there are always limits. As to what they are, our panel pretty much agreed that when it comes to getting really good, live drums, most home studios aren't ideal.





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- May/June - Rush, The Kim Band, Project Wyze, Guitar 2002
- July/August - The Tragically Hip, Holly McNarland, Focus on Keyboards: The Alchemy of Music & Audio Software
- September/October - treble charger, Emm Gryner, Get Your Music Heard - A Look At Foreign Licensing Part I, Home Recording
- November/December - Sum 41, Dayna Manning, Get Your Music Heard - A Look At Foreign Licensing Part II, Percussion 2002

## 2003

- January/February - Headstones, Tegan and Sara, Brass Instruments, Music Education 2003
- March/April - Chantal Kreviazuk, Sam Roberts, How To Get A Record Deal, Secrets of Live Sound
- May/June - I Mother Earth, Damhnait Doyle, Focus On Guitar 2003, CD Duplication
- July/August - Daniel Lanois, The Dears, The Future of Keyboards, Software 2003
- September/October - Nickelback, Deterium, Home Recording, Woodwinds
- November/December - Sloan, David Usher, Video Game Music, Focus on Percussion

## 2004

- January/February - Nelly Furtado, Billy Talent, Jesse Cook, Music Education
- March/April - 25th Anniversary Issue - The Artists, The Gear, The Business
- May/June - Randy Bachman, Sarah Harmer, Guitar 2004, CD Duplication
- July/August - Alanis Morissette, Pilate, Musicians' Health, Recording Software
- September/October - The Tragically Hip, Alexisonfire, Building a Home Recording Studio, Marketing Your Music Online
- November/December - Simple Plan, Sue Foley, k-os, Drummers of the 'Almost' Lost Art

## 2005

- January/February - Ron Seismit, Projet Orange, Avoid Career Suicide, Music Education
- March/April - Producing and Marketing Your Own Record with Advice from David Usher, Emm Gryner, Alexisonfire, Closet Monster, Kathleen Edwards, Esthero

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**Mike Turner:** "If it's a band project, and you can't have the band interacting with each other, you're going to lose some of the energy. But that's a risk even in the best circumstances. I still hear records that don't do the band you're familiar with justice. In order to get the best vibe you actually have to be playing together, that's the only time you're really going to capture that, whether you're in a studio or at home, because you can manage to pull off the drums there. That's where it's going to matter. In a modern rock realm most things are so savagely compressed, sound replaced, and sample enhanced, the thing you're most interested in is the room to glue everything together."

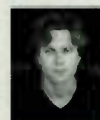
**Paul Northfield:** "It's perfectly valid to record everything at home, however, if you're trying to record a drum kit, most homes are not designed to get a decent drum sound, but then a lot of studios aren't designed to get a decent drum sound for that matter. If you go to a studio with a great drum room you can get a drum sound in a short period of time, rather than spend money on tons of mic pres and an array of expensive microphones."

**Warne Livesey:** "The only limit really, is your acoustic recording space. Certain things need good sounding rooms to record well: drums and string sections, for example. You can't get a good drum sound unless



the drums are in a good sounding room. Also, you need a lot more channels. Guitar amps need to be turned up loud to get a good tone, so if your home studio doesn't allow for that then the results are going to be limited. Mixing is also an issue; I think it's impossible to get the best out of a recording by mixing 'in the box', with the computer or digital work station or even with a digital console. The tracks need to be blended together in an analog environment and that means having a decent console. I don't think there is any way around this. You can make a completely uncompromised record if you cut your bed tracks and mix in a studio and do the rest in a reasonably well-equipped home studio."

As we mentioned off the top there are limits, particularly when it comes to drums. But there's no good reason not to test them yourself. If you can't find your way around the limitations using loops, triggering samples, or picking up and relocating as Warne suggests, you might have to go ahead and work with the space you have. Who knows, you might not necessarily hit the wall of those limits with your project at all. Working within the limits of your budget and knowledge doesn't mean you can't get inspired results. After all, you don't need the best of the best to make a record. You need what works best for you. Without imagination and passion, even the best gear you can buy won't get you far. Plenty of artists have worked with comparatively low-tech solutions and used what they had to great success: Hayden, Beck, Arcade Fire, and Sarah Harmer among them. Whether you choose to do so for financial or artistic reasons doesn't matter, if the process, performances, and material create some undeniable magic, people will hear it.



Kevin Young is a Toronto-based freelance writer.



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# You Can See A Lot Standing On The Shoulders Of Giants

by **Tim Elmy**



*Tim Elmy is a Toronto-based writer and musician. You can reach him at [timelmy@rogers.com](mailto:timelmy@rogers.com).*

God knows The Beatles don't need me to defend them. Their legacy is unassailable. Their music and social import and impact will surely still be recognized hundreds of years from now. Like Mozart and Beethoven.

And yet my friend, Bernie, doesn't like them.

Which got me thinking: why is Beatle music still the international gold standard of pop music? Why, almost 40 years after Beatle mania, after the hair and the hype and the "We're-bigger-than-Jesus," and "I buried Paul, coo-coo-ca-choo," does this catalogue of songs, about 240 in all, remain so relevant and so treasured by so many, except for Bernie?

Mostly, I think it's the songwriting. The Beatles wrote songs of such brilliance, of such expression and inventiveness – flawlessly constructed, impeccably arranged and performed – that, like the pyramids, their origin seems to lie just outside our full understanding.

Which is why, if you aspire to write great songs as I do, you might consider making a study of The Beatles. Even if you're a Fab-phobe like Bernie, you can't deny that the Lads from Liverpool captured the ears of the entire planet and, more than any other band, expanded the vocabulary of popular music far beyond its then accepted limitations.

And in the process, they created and left behind a priceless resource for songwriters, a road map, from the shimmering simplicity of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" to the time shifting and structurally sophisticated medley that closes the *Abbey Road* album.

Listen to McCartney's "Yesterday". It's timeless, as if it's always existed. How did he write it? The story goes that Paul woke up with the melody fully formed in his head. Calling it "Scrambled Eggs", he rushed to *Abbey Road* to see if anyone knew what song it was. When he realized that the melody was in fact his own, he spent weeks agonizing over the lyrics, patiently crafting what became the most popular song ever written. To appreciate the scale of that accomplishment, if "Yesterday" was the only song he ever wrote, Paul McCartney would still be a Very Rich Man. From one song. So check under your pillow. But remember, McCartney wrote songs eight days a week – he was working like a dog. He didn't wait for a friendly muse to come in through the bathroom window. He knew that inspiration falls closest to those prepared to receive it.

Listen to Lennon's "In My Life". There are two extended verses, followed by an instrumental break over the same progression (A-E-F#m-A7/G-D-Dm-A) and then a half verse outro. That's it. No chorus. No bridge. What song does *that*? But it works perfectly because he's not writing to any formula; he's not trying to write a hit. He's simply trying to express himself in an honest and sincere way.

Listen to George's "Something", his first Number One single. Sinatra called it the greatest love song ever written. Why does this song continue to touch people so deeply, all these years later? I'll leave that to you to figure out – send me an e-mail when you do. Meantime, Bernie's coming over; I think I'll throw on some *Rubber Soul*.



# Recording On The Road

by Brian Minato

I thought the attention of this month's recording column could be directed to the musician who spends a fair amount of time on the road but wants to be "in studio mode" as well. The need to record sometimes coincides with the necessity of being out on tour. This is the situation I found myself in during the first six months of 2005. Ken Harrison from the Wild Strawberries was working on a solo album of stuff under the moniker Boywonderbread and he wanted me to contribute. I live in Vancouver and he lives in Ontario. In the past, I have flown out East to play on his albums. I was about to go on the road with Sarah McLachlan for periods of up to seven weeks with only short bursts of down time from touring so a plan was put together to create a basic travelling recording studio. As it turns out I was asked to start work on a couple of other projects while on tour so the timing was perfect!

You don't need a lot of equipment to record while you are away from your home studio set up but having a few key pieces of gear can make your recording process both time and energy efficient. For the sake of this article, I'm going to assume the reader is already up to speed as far as recording goes. I am also assuming that you have whatever instrument of choice with you as well. I was mainly recording bass and an electric guitar tracks.

## Gear List

Apple G4 PowerBook 15" laptop with 1 GHz Processor and 1 GB RAM  
Logic Pro 7 software  
MOTU Traveler audio workstation  
Maxtor External hard drive 180 GB  
Radial Jensen DI  
Line 6 Bass Pod and Guitar Pod  
1 Shure SM 58 mic  
1 set Audio-Technica ATH-M40fs headphones  
Altec Lansing iMplus speakers  
Cables: ¼-inch, Firewire, USB, mini, etc.  
Power Bars, Power supplies, extension cables  
CD-Rs and DVD-Rs



My travelling rig was a fairly portable one considering the circumstances. Everything, besides my laptop and the MOTU Traveler which both lived in my computer bag, fit into a small piece of basic hand luggage, the kind you can easily carry onto an airplane. Having basically all my recording gear in one small suitcase is extremely useful when space is at a premium such as touring by van or in a car. A computer bag and one suitcase makes for a very mobile unit that is easy to set up, plug in and hit record.

## Recording Strategies

I kept in touch with Ken via e-mail and the always-handy phone card (very cheap rates no matter what part of the world you happen to find yourself) to give him updates on my progress. Once I had recorded a bunch of ideas for a song I converted my .aif audio files into MP3s, which I then posted on his .mac account. This is an Apple site where you can place audio, video, text files, jpegs etc., which is accessible remotely. He then pulled the MP3s off his site, converted them back into .aif files and loaded them into his Logic program. This was a good system as he could hear what kinds of ideas I was coming up with without too much waiting around. Having to send the uncompressed .aif files or burn CD-Rs or a DVD-R and

mail them would be too time consuming. He then was able to audition my tracks, leave them as I had arranged or chop and change them to create a new part. A rough mix MP3 would show up a day or so later in my e-mail, which I could check out to see if we were both on the same page for that particular song. At this point I could recreate any new parts which Ken had sent me thus having an uncompressed .aif copy of the new part in that song's audio folder. Once he was happy with my parts, I backed up the .aif files onto a DVD-R for safekeeping and then uploaded the files on his FTP site. An FTP site is not unlike a massive filing cabinet with plenty of space to put items such as large audio files or even a copy of your whole Web site. One thing: You will need to have access to a high-speed Internet connection. It takes about 30 minutes or longer depending on how many .aif files I had to complete the uploading process.

## Final Thoughts

As those of you who have spent large blocks of time on tour know, life on the road can become as routine and mundane as someone doing the grid locked suburban 9 to 5 grind at home. My ability to record and work on new songs kept both sides of my brain active and stopped the onset of zombie-like behaviour which can sometimes set in after long periods of straight touring (Sarah's was spread out over 17 months!).

That's about it. Good luck with any recording you might need to do while out touring the world.

*Brian Minato is the bassist for Sarah McLachlan. He is also a Vancouver-based musician/producer currently working with The Blue Alarm, The Wild Strawberries, Jennifer Campbell, Boywonderbread, Sandy Scofield and other artists. Visit these sites for more info on Brian's work: [www.thebluealarm.com](http://www.thebluealarm.com), [www.wildstrawberries.com](http://www.wildstrawberries.com), [www.sandyscofield.com](http://www.sandyscofield.com), [www.cazartrecords.com](http://www.cazartrecords.com) and [www.maplemusic.com](http://www.maplemusic.com).*





# Thinking It Through

by Jim Yakabuski

Okay, you didn't get this audio job without showing some level of cranial prowess. If you don't know what I'm talking about maybe you didn't get the job! Anyway, when all the teaching is done and all the gear is up and working, there comes a time when you're going to have to rely on good old common sense and experience to turn it all into something great.

There's a good reason most students don't come right out of the classroom and mix up a storm their first time out. It's all about the hours logged in the saddle and piles of intellectual data to draw from, the old "been there, heard that" philosophy. After a while you'll recognize that you've walked down this road before and there's a big hole over there you shouldn't step into. Read on to learn about some of the detours I've taken to avoid the potholes and make the big day a sweet drive on a freshly paved freeway.

## Do It Like You Did Last Night

A lot of times in this business, we will do more than one show in the same venue on consecutive nights. You may have discovered that during soundcheck on the afternoon of the first show things sounded one way, and then as the show started and the place was full of sweaty bodies and smoke and noise, everything sounded considerably different. This is no great revelation. Venues very seldom sound the same at show time as they did in soundcheck.

It's hard to guess what acoustic changes

are going to occur, so I've spent my career just going with the flow. By that I mean that at soundcheck I do the necessary things to make it sound right at that time, and then if I need to change things once the show has started, I make those necessary changes. I don't try to guess too much because I've guessed wrong enough times

want to come in for a soundcheck the second day. I say if that makes you happy, go for it. If I was a musician in similar situations, I'd rather play golf, but I'm a soundman and so I'll just stay out of that one. If the band does decide to come in, or if you are just line checking the instruments and vocals for a second time, be wary of making changes to compensate for the changed environment of the empty hall that second day.

Remind yourself that by the end of that first performance you probably had things sounding the best you could for that room with the crowd in it. Things might sound very different that second day with an empty room. By all means work on sounds if you weren't happy with them the night before, but if you were fairly happy with your mix last night, and the room sounds weird to you today now that it's empty, have no fear. Things will likely be back to the way they were last night once everyone is in again. Just ride out the soundcheck even if things sound a little odd. They'll probably sound just right when the show begins. And be sure to explain this to the band so you can get your game of golf in!



and have learned from my mistakes. I don't second-guess the surrounding situations. I just mix.

Having said all that, let me totally contradict myself in the instance of a second day in the same venue soundcheck. Some bands will have a great show the first night and still

*This article is excerpted from Jim Yakabuski's book entitled Professional Sound Reinforcement Techniques. The book is published by MixBooks, an imprint of www.artistpro.com. You can also find the book online at www.mixbooks.com and www.musicbooksplus.com.*





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# Got Song, Will Travel

A Short Summary On How To Make It As A Songwriter In The Music Business

by Chris Taylor, B.A., LL.B.

## Introduction

I am approached on a regular basis by aspiring songwriters searching to start or accelerate their songwriting career. Here is a summary of the advice I usually give to the aspiring songwriter.

### 1. Write It, They Will Come

A good manager, attorney or music publisher can assist you in your quest to build a career as a songwriter; however, most of these individuals will not be interested in assisting you immediately if you have not already made some *significant* steps on your own. The most significant "step" is securing song placement with major label recording artists.



Many writers are focused on securing a music publisher's interest. Music publishers will occasionally work with young, inexperienced writers; however, you will increase your worth and attractiveness significantly if you show an ability to make their job easy. Music publishers work at helping songwriters secure song placement with major label recording artists but, in my experience, it is often the songwriter that must bear the largest responsibility to secure cuts with recording artists. Do you have what it takes to do this?

Most songwriters should not expect to secure song placement with major label recording artists right out of the gate. You should be prepared to start with smaller steps to get to that ultimate goal. Some of these smaller steps are outlined below.

### 2. Genre Focus/Artist Focus

Many rock/alternative recording artists are self-contained groups. For example, The Tea Party and Pearl Jam write all of their own material and do not typically use outside writers. Seek out those artists who regularly use material from outside writers. Occasionally rock/alternative groups will use outside writers but songwriters often find more luck in the Pop, R&B and Country genres. If you look at the writer credit information on these types of albums you will notice that many outside writers are regularly used.

### 3. Produce Too

Songwriters who also produce are more apt to find themselves in co-writing scenarios. Artists are often looking to find a co-writer and producer as opposed to just one or the other. If you are weak as a producer, refine that talent. If you are a producer with minimal writing skills, focus on improving on your songwriting. Glen Ballard, Babyface, Timbaland, Desmond Child are all successful producer/writers that provide "one stop shopping" for artists looking for production and writing skills under one roof.

One producer/writer I work with, Justin Gray, attracts a wide variety of work because of his combination of writing and producing skills. The two skills work hand in hand together.

### 4. Artist Development

You will find it difficult to get your music to Celine Dion or Deborah Cox. Many successful writers get their foot in the door by successfully developing an unknown artist. Go out to clubs, talent shows and keep your ear to the ground. There are many talented, undeveloped artists who are looking for a producer/writer to help develop their artistry and they are finding it difficult to get to Glen Ballard or Babyface.

The songwriter/production team of Track and Field (Gerald Eaton and Brian West) increased their profile significantly following their work with a formerly undeveloped writer/artist: Nelly Furtado.

### 5. Networking

Once you have finalised master recordings that demonstrate your abilities you should be prepared to "pound the pavement" and "press the flesh" to start meeting record company representatives, artist managers, artists, publishing company representatives, other writers, other producers and music attorneys. Subscribe to this magazine; contact the Songwriter's Association of Canada (1-800-215-4814); and attend various music industry seminars and conferences such as New Music West (Vancouver); Canadian Music Week (Toronto) or North by Northeast (Toronto). No one will "discover" you if you stay at home.

### 6. Follow Up In A Professional Manner

Your music should do the talking but a little politicking never hurt. Be polite when approaching industry types and follow up with them at a reasonable juncture. Persistence and perseverance are admirable qualities but if people are not calling you back, or if you are getting negative feedback about your songs, you probably have to go back to the drawing board and work on new material.

### Conclusions

This country offers many opportunities for the aspiring songwriter and this country has produced some of the world's best. Even the best songwriters endured a difficult road to get to where they are. Take it one step at a time.

*Chris Taylor is a music lawyer with the law firm of Sanderson Taylor and works with Nelly Furtado, Avril Lavigne and Sam Roberts among others. Find him online at [www.sandersontaylor.com](http://www.sandersontaylor.com).*





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I was pretty sure mine was too, but I didn’t have a clue how to make great connections. I’m just not good at playing the “schmoozing” game. And even if I was, I had little chance of meeting the right people.

I needed a way to market my music, so I joined TAXI and the results were nothing short of incredible.

Now, all I have to worry about is making great music. The people at TAXI do an amazing job of hooking me up with opportunities that I would never uncover on my own.

I’ve already cut deals for more than 70 of my songs, and they’re getting used in TV shows like *Dateline*, *Law and Order SVU*, and *The Osbournes*. And yes, I’m making money.

I was kind of surprised that the recordings I make in my little home

studio were good enough. I guess size really doesn’t matter;-)

Want to know what does matter? Versatility. Being able to supply tracks in different genres makes you even more desirable for Film and TV projects. I didn’t know that until I became a TAXI member and started going to their members-only convention, the Road Rally.

If you joined TAXI and never sent in a single song, you’d still get more than your money’s worth just by going to their convention. It’s three days of incredible panels loaded with some of the most powerful people in the music



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business, and the cool part is that it’s FREE!

Unlike some of the other conventions I’ve attended, the panelists at the Rally are friendly and accessible. I’ve never been anywhere that gives you so much great information, and so many chances to meet people who can help your career.

If you’ve needed proof that a regular guy with ordinary equipment can be successful at placing music in TV shows and movies, then my story should do the trick.

Don’t let your music go to waste. Join TAXI. It’s the best service on the planet for people like you and me – they really can turn your dreams into reality if you’re making great music.

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## Seymour Duncan Trembuckers



Seymour Duncan is now offering their Trembucker pickup range in nickel and gold-plated covers.

Recommended for the bridge position, Trembuckers are wider spaced, designed to fit the string

spacing mostly used with Floyd Rose or vintage vibrato bridges. It has a string spacing of 2.070" or 52.6 mm.

The Trembuckers feature a cover material made of a nickel silver substrate that is hand-buffed and plated in either nickel or 24-karat hard gold. After the cover is installed, the pickups are vacuum wax potted to avoid a squealing performance and then hand-polished until you can see yourself. Because of its non-ferrous properties, the nickel silver material does not influence the sound of the pickup. The same material is used on Duncan's standard humbucker pickups.

If you're unsure if you need a humbucker or a Trembucker, measure from the middle of the high string to the middle of the low string over the bridge pickup. If it is greater than two inches or 50 mm, go for a Trembucker, if it's less, go for a humbucker.

For more information, contact: Erikson Music, 21000 Trans-Canada Hwy., Baie D'Urfe, PQ H9X 4B7 (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, [www.eriksonmusic.com](http://www.eriksonmusic.com).

## Gemini i-TT



In its 30<sup>th</sup> year of manufacturing DJ products, Gemini has recently released an addition to its i-Series, the i-TT Super High Torque Direct Drive Turntable.

This turntable features a 2.2 kg/cm high torque motor, perfect for fast starts and stable performances. It also has a height-adjustable tonearm that Gemini says is virtually unskippable. It has a high gloss pearl white body with chrome trim and red LED-lit soft touch buttons. The i-TT also features a removable white long-life LED target light, an acoustically dampened, solid aluminum platter with wide finger grooves. It has a +/-10 per cent pitch control with quartz lock, allowing for precise adjustments. It also has detachable RCA and ground cables and is suitable for both scratch and beatmixing DJs.

For more information, contact: L.C. Group, 422 Chemin des Prairies, Joliette, PQ J6E 4J8 (450) 755-6091, FAX (450) 753-5298, [info@lc-group.ca](mailto:info@lc-group.ca), [www.lc-group.ca](http://www.lc-group.ca).



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# Roland KR Series

Roland Music Canada has recently released a new line of digital pianos, the KR Series. The KR 103, 105 and 107 are complete with Keyboard Designer function, Twin Piano Mode and hammer action keyboard technology.

The Twin Piano Mode allows two players to play on the same keyboard at the same time. This is a great feature for a teacher to teach a student or for two students to practice together. The Piano Designer function allows users to adjust key touch, lid-height and resonance.

Sounds in the KR Series' library include orchestral instruments, guitars, basses, drum kits and organs. These samples make use of Roland's tonewheel-modelling technology. The digital pianos also have touch screen technology, DigiScore, New Styles, Visual Music Assistant, USB MIDI, an Expression Pedal jack and much more.

Product Manager for Roland Music Canada, Paul McCabe, was quoted in a press release, "These new KR's are a combination of quality and functionality. The authentic and detailed piano sounds, which include every nuance of a true grand, are amongst the best out there today and the new features we've added are a direct result of feedback from musicians and our dealer network."

For more information, contact: Roland Music Canada Ltd., 5480 Parkwood Way, Richmond, BC V6V 2M4 (604) 270-6626, FAX (604) 270-6552, [contact@roland.ca](mailto:contact@roland.ca), [www.roland.ca](http://www.roland.ca).



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## LP Karl Perazzo Timbales

Latin Percussion (LP) has recently released a new line of timbales, the Karl Perazzo Timbales. The durable LP Karl Perazzo Timbales feature steel shells and an antique bronze finish. The drums are the optimum weight to promote bright, full and rimshot sounds that are penetrating. For Cuban or Latin rock rhythms, these timbales are available in 14" and 15" diameters and are fitted with premium plastic heads. Included is a newly designed stand and a cowbell bracket that can hold several percussive items.

For more information, contact: B&J Music Ltd., 2360 Tedlo St., Mississauga, ON L5A 3V3 (800) 268-8147, FAX (800) 777-3265, [bjmusic-kmc@Kaman.com](mailto:bjmusic-kmc@Kaman.com).

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## Meisel 7000A Double Bass



Meisel has recently released a bass that is affordable enough for a student, but professionally crafted for the experienced player, the Meisel 7000A Double Bass.

Meisel Stringed Instruments say that they believe that all students deserve to learn on a high quality instrument, this is why the 7000A was created. It features a rich, amber finish, a laminated Spruce top, Maple sides, back and neck. The fingerboard and tailpiece are made of Ebony and the fully adjustable bridge is made of Hard Maple.

President of Meisel Stringed Instruments, Neil Li'ien, stated, "Beginning students are sometimes discouraged when their playing just doesn't sound too good. Often, this is the fault of their instrument. On the other hand, students who learn on a high-quality bass like the 7000A have a more positive attitude."

With the student in mind, the 7000A was designed for easy playing. It is available in 3/4 size and comes with D'Addario Helicore strings and a Miesel 100XT padded bag.

For more information, contact: Meisel Music, PO Box 90, Springfield, NJ 07081 (800) 634-7356, FAX (201) 362-5020, [info@meiselmusic.com](mailto:info@meiselmusic.com), [www.meiselmusic.com](http://www.meiselmusic.com).





# Phosphor Bronze Elixir Strings



Elixir Strings has recently released a new family of acoustic guitar strings, the Phosphor Bronze Elixir Strings.

Coated with Nanoweb Coating to protect the string's windings, they offer a sensitive, expressive tone. They are available in extra light, custom light, light, light-medium and medium gauges.

Product Manager for Elixir Strings, Craig Theorin, is quoted in a press release, "These new strings capture the rich, expressive tone of the finest phosphor bronze strings and extend that tone three to five times longer than ordinary strings. Phosphor bronze players, who are typically accustomed to a short-lived 'sweet spot' of tone, report to us that they experience this coveted tone consistently through the entire life of the strings."

Vice-President of First Quality Music, Jeff Sullivan, is also quoted, "Elixir Strings had a very positive impact of the profitability of my strings category when they introduced original long life strings. With the popularity of phosphor bronze acoustic strings I am expecting these new sets to grow my string department again."

Elixir Strings are available for acoustic and electric guitars, bass, banjos and mandolins and are available in two different coatings, the Nanoweb and the Polyweb coating. The Nanoweb coated strings have the bright tone and punch of non-coated strings, but keep their tone up to five times longer than ordinary strings. Because the coating is so thin, they still have that feel of traditional strings. The Polyweb coating also sounds great up to five times longer than ordinary strings, has a balanced tone with smooth response, feels smooth and reduces finger squeak.

For more information, contact: Power Group Ltd., 6415 Northwest Dr., #22, Mississauga, ON L4V 1X1 (905) 405-1229, FAX (905) 405-1885, sales@power-music.com, www.power-music.com.



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75	BREEDLOVE (GREAT WEST) .....	4561	66	RSB DISC .....	4550
46	DEAN CONTEST (INTELLIMIX).....	4303	16	SAGA - BLUERIDGE .....	4531
54	DOOLIN GUITARS.....	4553	6	SAGA - GITANE .....	4532
48	EDIROL.....	4539	33	SENNHEISER .....	4533
68	ERNIE BALL (CHARLIE ARGALL).....	4299	7	SHURE (SF MARKETING).....	4544
72	ERNIE BALL - MUSIC MAN (MOL).....	4300	37	SOCAN .....	4559
14	EVANS (D'ADDARIO CANADA).....	4367	13	SONOR (COAST).....	4441
64	FANSHAWE COLLEGE.....	4554	47	STEINBERG .....	4545
66	FENDER (PARAMOUNT).....	3113	11	STEVE'S MUSIC.....	4546
79	GENZ-BENZ (B&J MUSIC) .....	4502	11	SYNTHAX.....	4547
9	GEORGE L'S.....	4309	3	TASCAM (TEAC) .....	4548
73	HARRIS INSTITUTE.....	4449	63	TAXI.....	4385
53	INTELLITOUCH (ONBOARD).....	3831	57	THOMASTIK INFIELD.....	4444
54	JOHN PEARSE .....	4231	21	TORONTO MUSIC EXPO .....	4551
15	KRK (ERIKSON AUDIO).....	4302	2	TREBAS.....	4386
45	LEVY'S LEATHERS.....	4541	67	WARWICK (EFKAY).....	4540
4	METALWORKS.....	4555	71	YAMAHA - BBT.....	4458
70	MUSIC MANUFACTURING SERVICES .....	4085	74	YAMAHA - RGX .....	4459
17	CANADIAN RADIOSTAR .....	4556	8	ZILDJIAN.....	4549
51	ONTARIO STAGING .....	2823	80	ZOOM (OMNIMEDIA).....	4542

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# Onori Artist Collection

Onori Accessories has recently released a new line of guitar straps called The Artist Collection. The Artist Collection features the works of three artists who each bring a unique design to Onori's straps.

The first is leather artist, Daniel Thomas Chambers. With the help of his buddy, Steve Riolo, he created this collection of guitar straps. Chambers has done leatherwork for Hollywood Trading Company and South Paradiso Leather. His work has been featured in many magazines in the US and Japan. Both he and Riolo are active in the LA music scene. His collection includes straps made of 100 per cent genuine water buffalo leather. Some have hand-made embossed designs, nickel or brass rings, a variety of semi precious stones, stud designs, grommets and some are adjustable.

The second collection is by graphic artist German Arbelaez. In 1976 he qualified as one of the top 37 graphic artist at the Illinois State Fair Professional Art Show. The following year he was sponsored by The Doodle Art Co., and he began designing graphics for Dolly Parton, Glen Campbell, KC & the Sunshine Band, Captain & Tenille and other State Fair Entertainers. When he moved to LA in 1985, he began a partnership with drummer, Carmine Appice. They produced rock instructional videos and designed packages for artist such as Elliot Easton, Slim Jim Phantom, Fred Coury and Tris Imboden. Arbelaez' collection includes darcon ultra-smooth webbing with leather ends and an easy adjust system.

The last addition to The Artist Collection is Kalynn Campbell's collection. He has a roster of illustration projects for artist including Face to Face, Tom Petty, Smashing Pumpkins, Reverend Horton Heat, LIT, Megadeth, Social Distortion, Adam Ant, Mickey Hart, Steve Miller, Michael Jackson, Billy Joel and Bad Religion. He has also had his '50s influenced paintings displayed in various galleries and museums. His collection includes darcon ultra-smooth webbing with leather ends and an easy adjust system.

For more information, contact: Onori Accessories, Inc., 4785 Galendo St., Woodland Hills, CA 91364 (800) 560-2099, FAX (818) 888-9917, onorimusic@onorimusic.com, www.onorimusic.com.



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## GMS Wrap Finishes



GMS Drums has recently released a new selection of wrap finishes. Available for GMS' Grand Master Series and Special Edition Series drum kits are the Black Lightning, Blue Lighting, Black Ice, Blue Ice, Lime Green Ice and Purple Marble wraps.

GMS President, Rob Mazzella, was quoted from a press release, "Over the years we've developed a reputation for our custom, hand-rubber lacquer finishes, including fades, bursts, sparkles and faded sparkles. But for various reasons, some players still want wrap finishes. In addition to all the standard wrapped finishes available throughout the industry, we're now giving drummers and dealers some really cool colour and design choices that no other manufacturer can offer."

For more information, contact: GMS Drum Co., 855 -C Conklin St., Farmingdale, NY 11735 (631) 293-4235, info@gmsdrums.com, www.gmsdrums.com.

## Sony Hi-MD Portable Recorders

Sony Electronics Inc., has recently released two new Hi-MD portable recorders, the MZ-M100 and the MZ-M10 MiniDisc-based field recorders. Ideal for musicians, broadcast professionals and journalists, these two recorders offer great sound recording and playback features along with a massive storage capacity.

Senior Manager of Sony Electronic's Broadcast and Production Systems Division, Paul Foschino, is quoted in a press release, "Their ability to record and playback high-quality uncompressed PCM linear audio and to transfer those files directly to computers for editing represents a tremendous savings in time. These capabilities, coupled with long battery life and easy-to-read display visibility address the real-world needs of recording engineers and journalists."

The new Hi-MD recorders, with removable 1 GB MiniDiscs, allow up to 94 minutes of uncompressed recording time and up to 34 hours in ATRAC3 plus format. They also feature a USB port that is compatible with both Mac and PC formats. The Hi-MD MZ-M100 has a six-line large EL (Organic Electroluminescence) display, while the Hi-MD MZ-M10 has a large five-line LCD display.

Both recorders include an ECM-DS 70P stereo microphone, MDR-EQ931 ear bud headphones and a rechargeable internal battery. They both also support PCM linear MP3, ATRAC3 and ATRAC plus recording formats.

For more information, contact: Sony of Canada Ltd., 115 Gordon Baker Rd., Toronto, ON M2H 3R6 (416) 499-1414, FAX (416) 499-8290, www.sony.ca.



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# TC Electronic G-System

Manufacturer of audio signal processing hardware and software, TC Electronic, has recently released a new guitar processor, the G-System.

The G-System is an all-in-one solution that combines stompboxes and preamps with effect processing. It has 25 built-in studio-quality guitar effects, analog loops, amp switching and 9 V power outputs for external pedals. With a flexible and protective design, the G-System can be rack-mounted or floor-based and allows for external effects to be routed. It also has an adjustable footswitch layout and allows up to eight effects to operate simultaneously. Protected from dust and liquid, the G-System has an aluminum faceplate and 18 giant chrome switches.



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## Tanglewood Premiere Series



A new series of guitars has been released by Tanglewood Guitars, the Premiere Series. It's said to be a perfect fit between the Indiana entry-level models and the Sundance premium models.

All instruments in the Premiere Series offer solid tone wood tops of Spruce or Cedar, Grover machine heads and the Abalone headstock logo. All acoustic/electric guitars also have the B Band pickup system. The dreadnought size model, the TW115-NS, has a solid Spruce top with Mahogany sides and a satin finish. This series has a variety of sizes including the folk size, superfolk and super jumbo. Another model to note is the TW-155-AB Acoustic Bass that completes the line.

Vice President of SF Marketing's MI Division, Jeff Sazant, says that these new models are jam packed with high-end features. He is quoted in a press release, "The Premiere range of guitars is an incredibly exciting addition to the Tanglewood family. We feel that these new models offer extraordinary value and will help establish Tanglewood as one of the most complete and compelling lines of acoustic guitars to enter the North American market in some time."

For more information, contact: SF Marketing, 6161 Cypriot St., St. Laurent, PQ H4S 1R3 (514) 856-1919, FAX (514) 856-1920, info@sfm.ca, www.sfm.ca.





# Planet Waves Universal Chromatic Tuner

Planet Waves has recently released a new tuner that is compatible with any instrument, the Universal Chromatic Tuner. This new tuner has a built-in stand that can be folded and used as a bracket to hang from the soundhole of an acoustic guitar. When unfolded it can stand and tune any instrument from a mandolin to a tuba.

The Universal Chromatic Tuner tunes with either its built-in microphone or by a 1/4" input. It also has a LCD and LED display for tuning in light and dark places. It has a dual-mode operation that allows for either auto or manual tuning and can be calibrated from A335 to A445. It comes set to A440 and runs on one 9 V battery.

"We beta-tested the Universal Chromatic Tuner with 250 musicians and it received universal praise," says Planet Waves Brand Manager, Mike Bradley. "The tuner has an amazing range and can be user-calibrated to virtually any pitch a musician desires. It's a product that literally every musician should have at their disposal for fast, accurate tuning."

For more information, contact: D'Addario Canada, 50 West Willmot St., #13, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1M5 (905) 889-0116, FAX (905) 889-8998, orders@daddariocanada.com, www.daddariocanada.com.



## Novation ReMOTE LE



Manufacturer of analog modelling synthesizers and controller keyboards, Novation, has recently released a new line of USB controller keyboards, the ReMOTE LE 25-, 49- and 61-key keyboard.


Features for the ReMOTE keyboards include a X/Y Touchpad, which allows up to four parameters to be modified at the same time, a pitch bend/modulation joystick that gives performance effects and a dedicated transport control that now has the addition of a Loop button. With nine buttons and nine knobs on the surface, the Group switch allows all 18 controls to be modified with ease. The MIDI spec allows any MIDI messages to be assigned to any of the controls.

The ReMOTE LE has 16 onboard template memories for saving setups, 12 of these are factory preset. Featured on the CD-ROM, that comes with it, is a Template Editor to make constructing templates. In the box there are 10 template overlays, 7 of which are printed and 3 are blank, to help customize the ReMOTE LE for the software being controlled. The keyboard is semi-weighted and velocity-sensitive, giving the ReMOTE LE a more synthesizer feel.

This keyboard is shipped with Novation's Bass Station, a VST and Audio Unit plug-in. With the performance tools, range of MIDI controls and Soft Synth classic bundle, Novation says that the ReMOTE LE series is the number one choice for musicians who want to trigger samples, lay down bass lines or control a sequencer.

For more information, contact: Erikson Audio, 21000 Trans-Canada Hwy., Baie D'Urfe, PQ H9X 4B7 (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, info@eriksonaudio.com, www.eriksonaudio.com.

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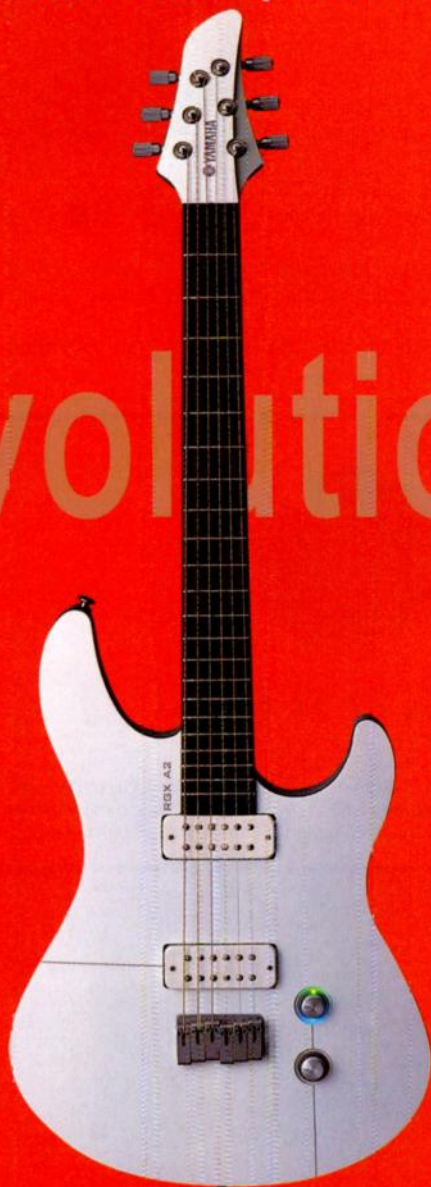
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## VirtuosoWorks NOTION

VirtuosoWorks, Inc., has recently released a new music composition and performance software, NOTION.

This software allows users to compose, playback and perform their original music in realistic, concert-quality sound. They can select from thousands of instrument samples that were performed by the London Symphony Orchestra at Abbey Road Studios.

VirtuosoWorks says that NOTION is the first completely integrated package of its kind. Compatible with both Mac and PC formats, the user can control individual notes and the tempo with the tempo triggering system, NTEMPO. This feature lets the user speed up, slow down, use rubato or vamp the tempo. It also allows live vocals to be added.

VirtuosoWorks' Vice-President of Research and Development, Dr. Jack Jarrett, is quoted in a press release, "We created NOTION to give all musicians, music students and teachers, working musicians, composers and songwriters, the means to hear their composition as they write and to perform the finished work, regardless of financial limitations or venue restrictions."

This software was designed to give musicians of all genres and skill levels the ability to hear their material as they create it. Instrument samples include strings, winds, brass, piano, harp and percussion and users can mute, solo and regulate each individual instrument. They can also add or remove instruments, enter notation and adjust a score. Other features include over 1,000 voice polyphony, note level control, MIDI entry and Music XML Import. With the NOTION mixer, users can control the volume, room ambience and decays. They can also immediately play back notes during notation.

For more information, contact: VirtuosoWorks, Inc., 201 S., Elm St., #300, Greensboro, NC 27401 (336) 275-2994, FAX (336) 275-9654, [customerservice@notionmusic.com](mailto:customerservice@notionmusic.com), [www.notionmusic.com](http://www.notionmusic.com).



## I-CubeX Wi-miniDig



I-CubeX has recently released a palm-size hardware device that allows users to create their own interactive art, responsive environment or alternate musical controller, the Wi-miniDig.

Designed for using sensors to control multimedia content, the Wi-miniDig can translate sensor signals with high resolution into MIDI encoded messages. It can encode up to eight analog voltage signals into MIDI messages with high-resolution in real-time. It will then transmit these messages using Bluetooth technology to the user's computer.

The Wi-miniDig allows for the use of multiple units to operate simultaneously, making it easy to make a wireless network. It is a firmware v4.5, hardware v5.01 version, allowing the unit to operate in stand-alone mode and host mode. Stand-alone mode is when sensor data is processed before it is transmitted, while the host mode is when raw sensor data is transmitted. This unit also has a range from 0 to 5 V and is a compact 3.15" x 1.57" x 0.79" and weighs 1.8 oz or 0.05 kg.

For more information, contact: Infusion Systems Ltd., 2033 Vendome Ave., Montreal, PQ H4A 3M4 (514) 484-5850, FAX (514) 484-5852, [pablo@I-CubeX.com](mailto:pablo@I-CubeX.com), [www.I-CubeX.com](http://www.I-CubeX.com).





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by Karen Bliss

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## Miles Above

**Who:** Miles Above  
**Where:** St. Catharines, ON  
**What:** classic melodic rock  
**Contact:** Corey Macfadyen, Lintbelly Productions, (905) 684-9874, [www.milesabove.org](http://www.milesabove.org)

Miles Above's promo package looks great (glossy paper, photo, bio, press), but is missing key details. Most importantly, the advance CD came with no track listing or contact number – vital if it gets separated from the kit. Sometimes you are too lazy to fish around on a Web site and will move on to another act. Anyway, the songs on *Move Or Be Moved*, including "Faith Unkind", "Little Miss Innocent" and power ballad "Close My Eyes", are fitting alongside anything a classic rock station would play. The band was conceived by singer Tim Hicks and producer Corey Macfadyen (Serial Joe, Ryan Dennis, Sue Foley, Brighton Rock, UYK). They write all the material then Macfadyen retreats. For 2003's *Further*, Hicks (vocals, guitar, bass, piano) was flanked by studio players to fulfill the sound. For the follow-up, *Move Or Be Moved*, brothers Anthony Mancini (guitar, banjo, back-up vocals) and Adam Mancini (drums, percussion, back-up vocals) came in and are now permanent members. The 13 songs were recorded at Fort Erie's Summit Studios, Niagara's Groundloop Studios, and Macfadyen's Lintbelly Productions in St. Catharines. It was mixed in Montreal at Planet Studios with Dan Cinelli. Both albums came out in Europe/UK on London label Escape, distributed by Sony. The band doesn't have a deal in Canada.



## Tele

**Who:** Tele  
**Where:** Winnipeg, MB  
**What:** Teletoons  
**Contact:** [www.telemusic.ca](http://www.telemusic.ca); [myspacem.com/tele](http://myspacem.com/tele), [info@telemusic.ca](mailto:info@telemusic.ca)

Managed by guitarist Glen Willows of legendary Canadian rockers Harlequin, Tele is a young band from Winnipeg clearly influenced by '80s synth acts the four members could've only heard in the womb or playpen. Produced by Dale Penner (Nickelback, Matthew Good, Holly McNarland) at Winnipeg's Unison Studios, the three-song demo is clean, big and catchy. "What I Am To You" is a synth-rock track with aggressive chorus; "Choose" is an ultra saccharin-sounding ballad with lines like "falling in love/like cocaine in my blood/with you." The third song, "Take", is more straight-ahead pop/rock, less entrenched in the past. Over the course of the three songs, singer/guitarist Matt Worobec's utilizes his wide vocal range from a strong, aggressive delivery to soaring and sweet. Worobec and songwriting partner keyboardist Zack Antel formed Tele in 2003 and finalized the line-up with bassist Brendan Berg and Reade Ollivier on drums by 2004. The band has kicked into high gear this year, having played for all the major record labels and temporarily uprooting to Toronto for the summer in order to play as much as possible and hone its live show. The songs, especially these, are radio-ready. Tele is now looking to do a full album, one way or another.



## Shelley Buffitt

**Who:** Shelley Buffitt  
**Where:** Orangeville, ON  
**What:** country of many colours  
**Contact:** SNR Music And Dash Music, Box 174 Station A, Orangeville, ON L9W 2Z8 (519) 925 6065, [shelley\\_buffitt01@hotmail.com](mailto:shelley_buffitt01@hotmail.com)

*Beyond This Woman* marks country artist Shelly Buffitt's third CD, and contains 18 songs, most of which were co-written with her producer Randy Moore, with whom she worked on 2000's *Bad Side Of Town*. Recorded at several Ontario studios – Heritage in Burlington, ON, Sound Stage Niagara in Thorold, and Grant Ave. in Hamilton – more than two dozen musicians and singers helped out on the album, including sax, banjo, fiddle, and steel guitar players. From the honky-tonk opener "Ask Me To Dance" with its playful, forward lyric to the ballad "Home Made Happiness", a story about a poor, hard-working girl and the idea of simple charity (Buffitt herself is a paramedic and involved with various causes). Born in Sarnia, ON, Buffitt started singing at age two in church and by eight had won first place in numerous vocal competitions at the Kiwanis Music Fest in London, ON. In high school, she hit the road with a top 40 and country band. Later, with the encouragement of her family, she recorded her debut CD, *My First Love*, in 1999 and followed it up with *Bad Side Of Town*. Buffitt has received numerous award nominations by the Ontario Country Music Association and Ontario Country Performers And Fans Association Awards.



Toronto-based music journalist Karen Bliss is the Canadian correspondent for *Rolling Stone.com*, and operates a Canadian music industry news column, *Lowdown*, at <http://jam.canoe.ca/Music/Lowdown/>. She also contributes to *Time*, *Canadian Musician*, *Words & Music*, *Access*, *Gasoline*, *Audience*, *Applaud!*, and others.



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