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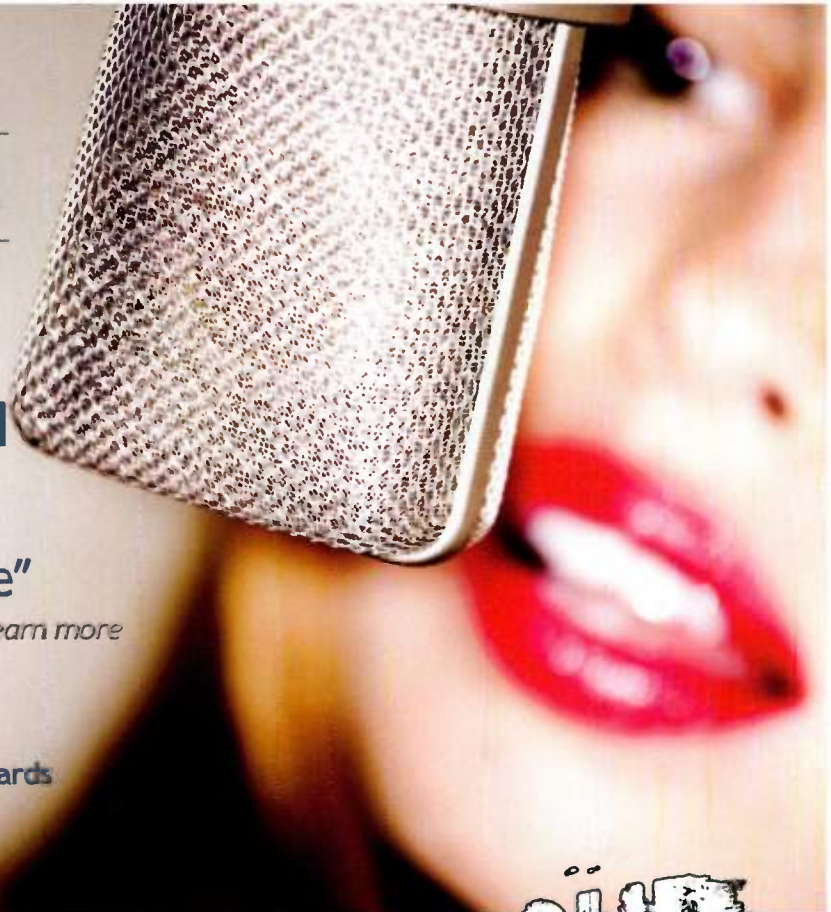


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by Levon Ichkhanian

Canadian Musician brings you its annual focus on guitar. This year we talked to guitarist who have played with other artists for years... Sting, Oscar Peterson, James Brown, etc. Find out what it takes to keep on gigging with the stars!

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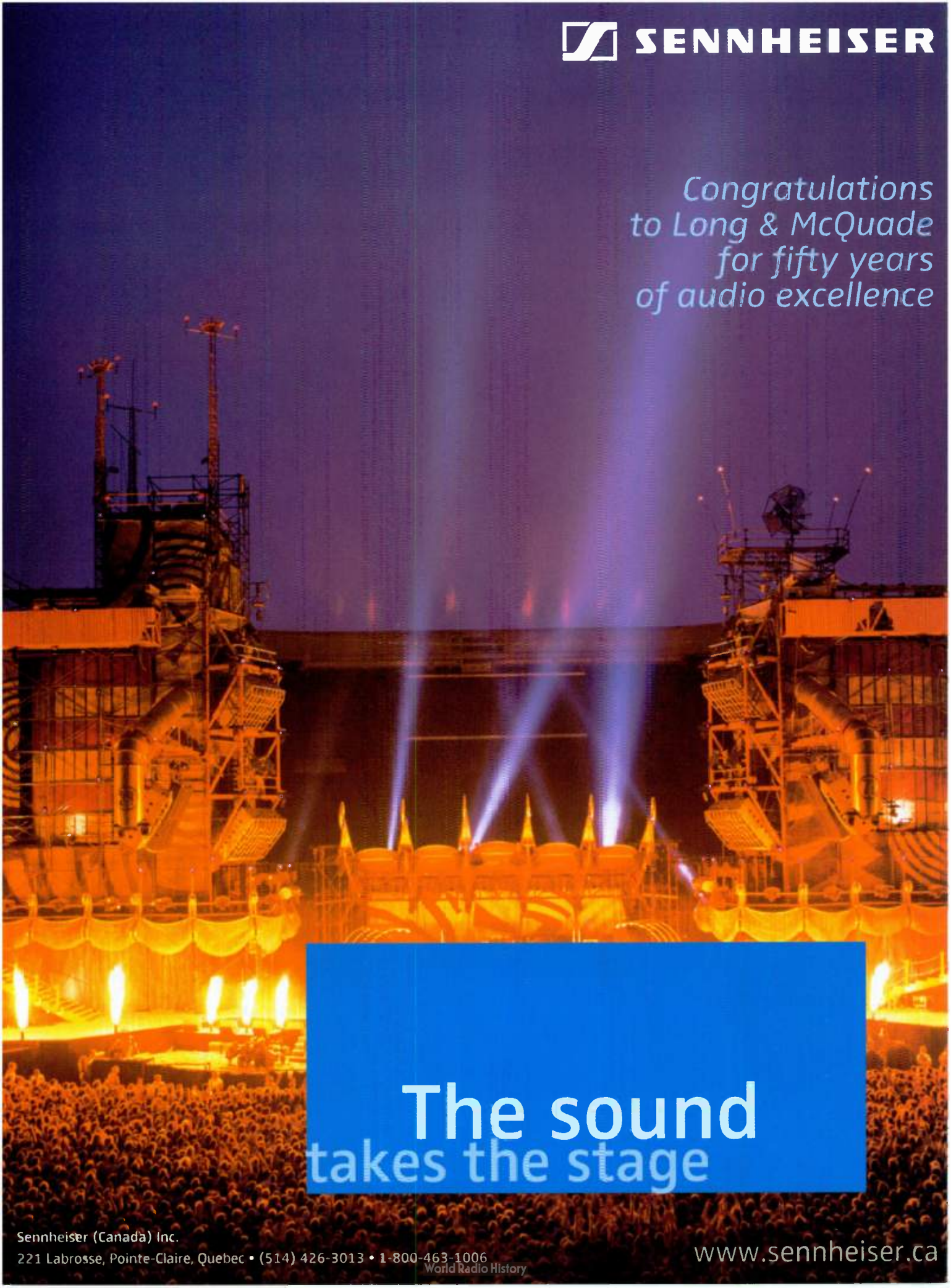
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Guitarist Seeking Education

Dear CM,
I read with much interest your information about Music Education. I did not find much of help in there for my own situation and maybe you can help me...

I am nearing age 50. I LOVE the guitar, and am trying to learn, and wishing I could do just that. My values have changed somewhat. It is no longer so important to try and earn a big salary. What I am thinking about is going to a university or college program to study music, especially to learn about guitar. In order for this to work, I must get into a full-time college or university program that is recognized by the Canadian and/or Quebec government.

How can I get into such a program? Some say that one has to do a live performance in front of the application committee or whatever. Sure I can strum some chords, or pick a few melodies, but what else do I have to know to get into a college or university program. How scary would that be? (I already have a post-graduate education.)

This is something I hope to do for personal development rather than to get a better job. I know some might say take private lessons, or whatever, but this is something I want to do full-time. Not just as a hobby in my spare time. And financially, if I can get into a recognized college or university program I can make it work. (Sorry I did not give my home address. Can you please publish my inquiry as there might be a reader out there who can help me.)

Sincerely,
Bobby Edmunds
Northern Quebec

Anti-Hero Signs A Deal

Dear CM,
Hey there Jeff, I just wanted to thank you again for the great exposure in your publication two issues in a row! So many people have gotten in touch with me as a result. Just also wanted to let you in on some exciting news. Not only do we have our first ever US tour coming up in May, but just last week we got signed to Addictive Records/Fontana North/Universal Music. Thanks again!

Rose Perry of Anti-Hero
London, ON

*Ed. You're welcome Rose. Great news!
www.canadianmusician.com

CM Responsible For Killing Bassist Careers?

Dear CM,
After reading your current issue, and especially the review of the "Virtual Bassist", I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of myself and other bassists everywhere, to thank you for helping put even more of us out of work. Have you considered changing your name to *Canadian Anti-Musician*?

R.J. "Dusty" Woods
Lacombe, AB

*Ed. I guess you must not be overly confident in your abilities as a bassist Dusty? I'm not sure of your age, but you may recall a time when everyone said that drum machines would put drummers out of work. Never happened. Same thing was said about synthesizers replacing strings and horn sections. Again, never happened. There are still plenty of gigs for musicians that play stringed or wind instruments. Frankly, I have to disagree with your comment about being put out of work. A computer will never replace a musician. Take a look at Nine Inch Nails... true, Trent Reznor plays/generates everything in the studio, but he still assembles a live band for touring purposes. Do you own a drum machine? A metronome? I guess you're putting drummers out of work if you own one of these tools. I mentioned your letter to the person who reviewed the software, and same thing. He totally disagreed with your comments. Jeff Pearce is a rock bassist. He recently recorded a track that required a Samba-styled bass. With the program he was able to track a part he normally wouldn't have been able to. Did this put a bassist out of work? No. It simply helped him to create a new song in a style he's not overly familiar with. Why don't you embrace new technology and apply it to your own career? If you viewed it as a chance to improve yourself as a musician instead of suggesting it's a problem, maybe you would be more employable as a musician?

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2006 MidPoint Music Festival

In 2005, 50,000 people came out to see the 300 bands perform in clubs in downtown Cincinnati, OH for the three-day MidPoint Music Festival. Artists now have the chance to sign up to perform at this year's festival being held from September 20-23. Don't miss the deadline for band registration on May 15.

The MidPoint Music Festival features indie artists from all genres including pop, hip-hop, soul, rock, funk, metal, punk, electronica, singer-songwriter, altcountry, blues and jazz. Bill Donabedian, President and Co-founder of MidPoint Music LLC says that this is an international festival. "We've had bands from Canada ... the UK, Europe, Australia and Japan."

The band registration opened on Feb. 1, and closed April 30. The late band registration opens on May 1, and closes May 15. In early June the band invitations will be sent out and early July the showcase schedule will be posted. Note: only online registrations will be accepted; any press kits sent by mail will not be considered. The three days will also be filled with speakers, panels, workshops, mentor sessions and exhibitors.

For more information, visit www.mpmf.com.



2nd Distillery Blues Festival



Fathead

After drawing an audience of over 100,000 in its first year, the 2nd Annual Distillery Blues Festival is coming back to Toronto, ON.

The festival will be held from June 9-11, at the Historic Distillery District in Toronto. It's a free event and the only celebration of blues in Metro Toronto, mixing Canadian and international talent. Guests scheduled for this year's festival include W.C. Handy Award nominees Deborah Coleman and Michael Powers; piano masters Curley Bridges and Julian Fauth; Juno Award winners, Fathead; Maple Blues Award winner, David Rotundo; Mississippi Hippies and Diana Braithwaite.

For more information, visit www.distilleryblues.com.

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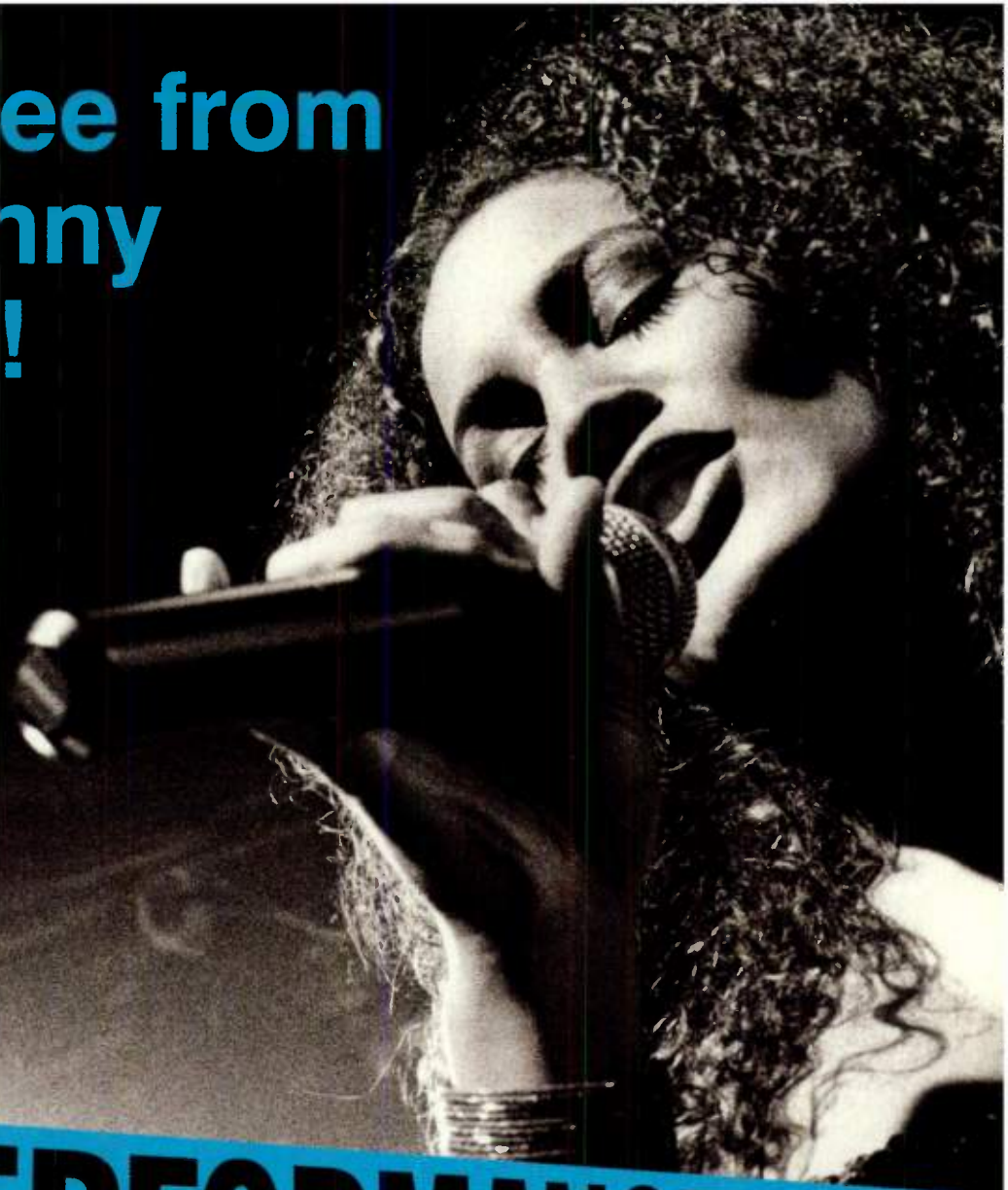
ProMark.com Browse-n-Win

Manufacturer of drumsticks, mallets and percussion accessories, Pro-Mark Corporation, has recently launched a new Web-based feature that has viewers winning, Browse-n-Win.

This on-going feature allows anyone who visits the Web site to win drumsticks and other percussion products. "It's really very simple. Just log onto www.promark.com. That's it. We've created a random selection program that runs automatically every time any page on our site is viewed. The more pages viewed, the better the chance of winning. And no purchase is necessary," says Pat Brown, Director of Sales and Marketing for Pro-Mark. "The lucky winners will be asked to provide us with their name and mailing address. Once that happens, the package will be shipped immediately. And the prize package will be changed periodically, so there's a continued incentive to come back and visit."

For more information, visit www.promark.com.

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Musicians! Check Out These Deadlines...

Getting a record deal may be challenging, but opportunities to perform and expose you and your band are always available. Take a look at these upcoming deadlines to get your band in the spotlight. For even more events and deadlines, visit www.sonicbids.com.

- May 12, is the deadline for the 20th Annual Ontario Council of Folk Festivals (OCFF) Conference and Showcase, which will be held from October 12-15, in Ottawa, ON. There are 24 spots available and it is open to folk, roots, blues, traditional, world, aboriginal and francophone genres. For more information, visit www.ocff.ca.
- May 12, is also the performance deadline for CINARS 2006. Artists from all countries will present performances in dance, music, theatre and multidisciplinary arts. For more information, visit www.cinars.org.
- May 15, is the deadline for artists to submit to perform at the Atlantis Music Conference & Festival. The festival will be held from October 4-7, in Atlanta, GA. Artists can submit through Sonicbids or by filling out the information that is available on the site. For more information, visit www.atlantismusic.com.
- May 15, is also the deadline for artists to apply for the 5th Annual MidPoint Music Festival (MPMF). The MPMF will be held from September 20-23. For more information, visit www.mpmf.com.
- May 20, is the deadline for the Apple Beam Studios 2005/06 Singing and Songwriting Competition. The categories to compete in include Songwriting, Singing and Lyric Writing in rock, pop, R&B, hip-hop, country, dance, etc. Winners will get a mixed and mastered single or EP, radio promotions and earn money. For more information, visit www.applebeam.co.uk.
- May 31, is the deadline for the Amplified Summer Camp Tour 2006. Perform your music inform of teens at summer camps from July 2-August 18. There are six performance dates available to Sonicbids artists to participate. The locations are TBA. For more information, visit www.amplified.com.
- May 31, is also the deadline for the Affiliated Records Rap CD Compilation Contest. Sonicbids rap and hip-hop artists will be included on a CD compilation and the winner will receive 10 free copies and a percentage of the CD sales. For more information, visit www.affiliatedrecords.com.
- May 31, is also the deadline for the Roots Roadhouse Showcase, which will be held during Country Music Week 2006 in Saint John, NB. Applicants must be a Canadian Citizen or Landed Immigrant and a member of the CCMA. Applicants can join the CCMA on their site. For more information, visit www.ccma.org.
- June 1, is the deadline for The WRA Song Competition (Round 3). Themed: *Peace Through Music*, judges will look for songs that

promote peace, love, community and/or speak out against violence, war or hate. Genres include rock, heavy metal, pop, top 40, country, acoustic, folk, hip-hop and R&B. Six winners will receive a marketing package that includes the WRA Song Competition Compilation CD, the WRA Song Competition Tip-Sheet, a Customized Press Release and will be Featured Artists on their Web site. For more information, visit www.songwinners.com.

- June 2, is the deadline for artists to sign up to perform at the 2006 Midwest Music Summit, which will be held from August 10-12, in Indianapolis, IN. All genres of music are accepted, including indie rock, bluegrass, metal, punk, hip-hop, experimental, singer/songwriter, electronic, ambient and roots. There are 50 slots reserved for Sonicbids artists. For more information, visit www.midwest-musicsummit.com.
- June 10, is the deadline for the 3rd Annual Great Waters Songwriting Contest. Five finalists will perform their songs at the 5th Annual Great Waters Folk Festival, which will be held from July 28-30, in Wolfeboro, NH. Cash prizes will be awarded. For more information, visit www.greatwaters.org.
- June 11, is the deadline for Songs For A Better Planet – Volume II. Ten selected submissions will be included on the compilation CD *Songs for a Better Planet*. All proceeds for this CD will be donated to Earth Day. For more information, visit www.abetterworld.ca.
- June 15, is the deadline for the 2006 Mountain Stage NewSong Festival Contest. This songwriter contest is open to all genres including rock, blues, Americana, folk, world, Christian, country, hip-hop, jazz, pop, alternative, children's and other. Cash prizes will be awarded. This will be held from August 25-27, in Shepherdstown, WV. For more information, visit www.newsongfestival.com/contest.
- June 15, is also the deadline for the 2006 John Lennon Songwriting Contest (session – I). This international songwriting contest features 12 categories and applicants do not need a professional recording to be considered. Genres include rock, country, jazz, pop, world, rhythm & blues, hip-hop, gospel/inspirational, Latin, electronic, folk, children's and instrumental compositions. Winners must be Sonicbids members and will win EMI Publishing contracts, studio equipment, 1,000 CDs, gift certificates, a chance to tour and perform for one week on Warped Tour '07, have their song be named "Maxell Song of the Year" and \$20,000 in cash. For more information, visit www.jlsc.com.
- June 30, is the deadline for the 2006 Singer/Songwriter Awards. Winners will get an all expenses-paid trip to London to record their entry in a state-of-the-art recording facility, as well as be promoted. For more information, visit www.wearlistening.org.

Ultimate Ears All Access Contest & Artist Sponsorship Program

Supplier of in-ear monitors, custom molded earphones and off-the-shelf Super.fi products for professional musicians, Ultimate Ears (UE) holds quarterly draws for All Access Members and announced a new Artist Sponsorship Program that brings fans closer to their favourite UE artists.

All Access Members can now enter once every quarter for a chance to win their own set of Ultimate Ears. Just choose any UE product or a combination

of products that doesn't exceed \$900. Visitors can become an All Access Member online while entering for this draw. After entering, visitors will automatically receive the newest UE product information, technical support data and industry news via e-mail. They will also receive special offers and opportunities that are only offered to All Access Members. The winners are announced at the end of each quarter.

The new Artist Sponsor-

ship Program is an alternate to the traditional print campaign and brand associations for artist endorsement. UE makes connections between sponsored musicians and their fans by setting up backstage meet-and-greets.

"We support artists and musical creativity. By enabling artists to deliver stronger stage performances, we make concerts better for all the fans," says Mindy Harvey, President and Founder of UE. "We are

all about taking care of music fans – nothing gives me more joy than to see a fan backstage at one of our sponsored artist's shows. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity."

To qualify for these contests log onto www.ultimateears.com/superfi/All-Access-Registration.htm, and register as an All Access member. Your name will then go into a pool for a chance to be drawn and win.

For more information, visit www.ultimateears.com.

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World Radio History

Goldfinger Drummer Launches Record Label

Darrin Pfeiffer, drummer for rock band, Goldfinger, has recently launched a new record label, High 4 Records.

High 4 Records is based in Toronto, ON and is distributed by Fontana North Distribution/Universal Music Canada. "Starting a label was not an easy decision," says Pfeiffer, "but after being a recording and touring musician for 15 years and having seen the artist perspective of the music business, I wanted

to start a label which has a real passion for what we are signing and wanting to give young bands a fair shot at success."

Darrin was born in Buffalo, NY and achieved Gold Status twice in the US and Canada with Goldfinger. He lived in Los Angeles before marrying his Canadian wife and moved to Toronto. "Canada is my home," he says, "and I couldn't think of a better place to launch my label. The Canadian music scene

is the best in the world."

High 4 Records already has two bands signed. Cauterize, a "power pop" band from Oshawa, ON released their second album *Paper Wings* in late April. Crush Luther of Toronto is set to release their album in June. Previews of these bands are available at www.high4records.com/preview.

For more information, visit www.high4records.com.

14th Annual Vintage Guitar Show



Ed McDonald of Tundra Music

Calling all vintage guitar collectors, players and dealers! Be sure to check out the 14th Annual Vintage Guitar Show on June 3 and 4. This year's show also features a first-time event: an aerial photo of people with their Gibson Les Paul guitars!

As vintage guitars are constantly going up in value, enthusiasts realize that there are less of them everyday. Come find hidden treasures at this year's show, such as guitars played by the Rolling Stones, Eddie Van Halen and Rick Nielsen of Cheap Trick. There are also rare vintage guitars on display in The Roots of Rock Collection, which can be viewed, online at www.therootsofrock.com. Toney Melman, of Toronto, donated his vintage guitar collection that was appraised at \$4 million US, to POGO, a childhood cancer charity. The balance of the collection is being offered for sale at the show.

Take the opportunity to get your vintage guitar appraised, for free at the Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave., Thornhill, ON. Author of *The Gibson Super 400: Art of the Fine Guitar*, Dr. Tom Van Hoose, will hold a book signing and will be available to answer questions about the Roots of Rock Collection with Ray Kopko, the curator of the collection.

Organizers are inviting all Les Paul guitar owners to come to the Thornhill Community Centre on June 3, at 11 a.m. to take part in an aerial photograph. Thousands will gather with their guitar for the Get Well and Happy Birthday message to Mr. Les Paul himself. Paul will be 91 on June 9. The photo will be submitted to the Guinness Book Of World Records for the largest gathering of Les Paul guitars in one place. Those who cannot attend the photo event in person are encouraged to submit a photo with their Les Paul guitar on the Web at www.tundramusic.com.

"Anyone that works in a recording studio or records on any multi-track recording format owes a lot to Les," said Ed McDonald, Founder and President of Tundra Music. "I have met hundreds of Les Paul guitar owners over the years whose love for this guitar is profound. This is a unique opportunity to direct some of that love back at the legend that is Les Paul."

Doors open on Saturday, June 3, from 1-7 p.m. and on Sunday, June 4, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Attendees can come to the show for free to buy, sell and trade guitars. They are encouraged to bring in their vintage guitars to have them appraised. They will be able to go into the express line and will have the option of getting a written appraisal for a fee.

For more information, visit www.tundramusic.com/guitarshow.

Loudspeaker Designer Turns Mastering Engineer

David Vanderploeg has been a loudspeaker designer for 16 years with Paradigm Electronics and has recently left to pursue his audio services at Naturally Digital as a Mastering Engineer.

Brampton, ON-based Naturally Digital focuses on mixing and mastering for independent musicians and offers a range of services such as recording, consulting, project management and assistance for artists, engineers and producers. This is definitely a step forward for the company as their focus was on location recording and full-length CD production for the past 10 years. Now they have moved to a 1,000 square-foot studio and shifted their focus to the final stages of music production.

Vanderploeg has a background as a musician, computer programmer, recording engineer and loudspeaker designer. He designed the new studio himself and created the mastering room, editing suite, workshop and dedicated server room. There are custom acoustic treatments that line the walls and ceilings while a floating floor offers isolation and damps resonances. Monitoring is through custom-modified speakers that Vanderploeg designed while working at Paradigm.

"Obviously I know these speakers very well," he says. "There's absolutely no guesswork on my part. I know precisely how these speakers measure in an anechoic environment and I'm familiar with every little nuance of their performance."

For more information, contact: Naturally Digital, 18 Strathearn Ave., Building B-South, #8, Brampton, ON L6T 4X8 (905) 654-5872, dave@naturallydigital.ca, www.naturallydigital.ca.



EVENTS

Spring Music Festival

Hamilton, ON
May 17-21, 2006
info@springmusicfestival.com,
www.springmusicfestival.com

Montreal International Musical Competition (MIMC) Violin 2006

Montreal, PQ
May 24-June 2, 2006
(514) 845-4108, FAX (514) 845-8241
info@jeunessesmusicales.com,
www.jeunessesmusicales.com

14th Annual Vintage Guitar Show

Toronto, ON
June 3-4, 2006
(905) 837-6666
vintage@tundramusic.com,
www.tundramusic.com/guitarshow

North By Northeast (NXNE) 2006

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

2nd Distillery Blues Festival

Toronto, ON
June 9-11, 2006
(416) 698-2152, FAX (416) 698-2064
info@distilleryblues.com,
www.distilleryblues.com

2006 COCA National Conference

Edmonton, AB
June 15-19, 2006
(519) 690-0207, FAX (519) 681-4328
www.coca.org

Montreal International Jazz Festival

Montreal, PQ
June 29-July 9, 2006
commentaires_jazz@equipespectra.ca,
www.montrealjazzfest.com

Montreal Musician & Musical Instrument Show (MMMIS)

Montreal, PQ
July 6-9, 2006
(514) 871-1881, toll-free (888) 515-0515
info_simmm@equipespectra.ca, www.mmmis.ca

29th Vancouver Folk Music Festival

Vancouver, BC
July 14-16, 2006
(604) 602-9798, toll-free (800) 883-3655,
FAX (604) 602-9790
info@thefestival.bc.ca, www.thefestival.bc.ca

Guitar Workshop Plus

Toronto, ON
July 16-21, 2006
(905) 897-8397, FAX (905) 785-2831
info@guitarworkshopplus.com,
www.guitarworkshopplus.com

18th Annual Beaches International Jazz Festival

Toronto, ON
July 21-30, 2006
(416) 698-2152, FAX (416) 698-2064
info@beachesjazz@rogers.com,
www.beachesjazz.com

Guitar Workshop Plus

Toronto, ON
July 23-28, 2006
(905) 897-8397, FAX (905) 785-2831
info@guitarworkshopplus.com,
www.guitarworkshopplus.com

2006 National Flute Association Convention

Pittsburgh, PA
August 10-13, 2006
(661) 299-6680, FAX (661) 299-6681
nfaconvention@aol.com, www.nfaonline.org

Guitar Workshop Plus

Vancouver, BC
August 14-19, 2006
(905) 897-8397, FAX (905) 785-2831
info@guitarworkshopplus.com,
www.guitarworkshopplus.com

Canadian Country Music Week 2006

Saint John, NB
September 8-11, 2006
(416) 947-1331, FAX (416) 947-5924
country@ccma.org, www.ccma.org

Toronto Music Expo

Toronto, ON
September 30-October 1, 2006
(416) 782-4072, FAX (416) 782-2266
info@torontomusicexpo.com,
www.torontomusicexpo.com

Atlantis Music Conference & Festival

Atlanta, GA
October 4-7, 2006
(770) 499-8600, FAX (770) 499-8650
atlantis@atlantismusic.com,
www.atlantismusic.com

Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC)

Austin, TX
November 8-11, 2006
(580) 353-1455, FAX (580) 353-1456
percarts@pas.org, www.pas.org

CINARS 2006

Montreal, PQ
November 14-18, 2006
(514) 842-5866, FAX (514) 843-3168
arts@cinars.org, www.cinars.org

Canadian Music Week

Toronto, ON
March 7-10, 2007
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info@cmw.net, www.cmw.net

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Landmine Guitar Pedal

by Bernie LaBarge

No Ban On *This* Landmine

Hold on to your ears, all you thrashers out there in guitar land ... there's a new kid on the block. It's a distortion pedal called The Landmine, invented by ex-Supergarage guitarist Mike Palermo, and handmade in Canada. If you're looking for the utmost in grunge and metal sounds, buy this pedal immediately! It is absolutely awesome. I have never heard a more powerful-sounding pedal in my life. In fact, I can't imagine *anything* heavier than this. It's not built for blues. It's built for angst.

First of all, The Landmine's aesthetics are perfect. It's army green, and it's round. It's about five inches in diameter (a bit smaller than a Fuzz Face). It has a nice hefty feel to it. I'm certain that it doesn't require any delicate handling. It's very solid. I'm also told it looks like a real landmine. I'll take your word for it.

Here's how I tried it out: I plugged my trusty Tele Plus into The Landmine and hooked it up to my blackface Fender Princeton Reverb II. I set the amp volume and tone knobs on 5. That setting gives me a fairly standard Tele-through-a-Fender amp sound. Then I kicked in The Landmine. The level boost is immediately apparent. I found the control pots to be very smooth and responsive. The pedal has four knobs; Level, Low, Mid and High. Of course, these are the volume and tone settings for the pedal, and they work like a charm. Adding more bottom end doesn't mean that you're taking away the top end ... you're actually adding more bottom. The same goes for the Mid and High knobs. The Level control is accurate, and by that I mean loud, louder, and Oh My God.

My favourite feature is the Mix jack. It's a speaker cabinet emulator, which means you can plug the pedal directly into the board and still deliver true-to-life heavy-osity. I went directly from my old Yamaha board into my computer software and it was a beautiful thing.

I should also mention the silent footswitch and the LED off/on indicator, as well as the 9 V adapter jack (adapter not included).

Caution: This Thing Rocks!

Pantera, Motorhead, Metallica ... all of these huge sounds are at your toe-tips. As a matter of fact, it's nearly impossible to *not get* an incredibly massive sound from The Landmine, but isn't that why you're playing it in the first place?

Instead of me repeating myself (I'll save that for an echo unit review), I'm going to supply you with a random selection of Landmine owners' quotes. I'll begin by listing The Landmine's features:

Features

- Solid Steel Military Housing
- Recording "Mix" out for direct recording
- The heaviest analog sounding distortion available today
- Built like ... well, a landmine!
- Level, Low, Mid and High knobs
- 9 V negative-centre adapter jack or 9 V battery
- Quick-release battery compartment on bottom
- LED On/Off Indicator Built with quality parts and electronics
- Size: 5" diameter x 2" high (127 x 51 mm)

"The best settings for me (I play metal) are with the low at about 4 o'clock and the mid at about 9 o'clock and the high at about 2 o'clock. I also use the mix



out instead of the actual out. It has a lower output and I can control my sound better. I love this option. The dealer told me that I could actually use both outs into two separate amps or use the mix out when I record as a direct out. The Landmine Web site has sound samples so you can hear for yourself. I use an ESP Viper 2005 with a Marshall Valvestate 100 Head and 4 x 12 Cab."

"The pedal is made from heavy steel. I took it apart and it is built like a rock."

"I play metal. The Landmine is a great sounding pedal. It is the heaviest pedal ever, both in weight and sound."

"I play an Epiphone Les Paul Custom through a Marshall JCM900 Head and 4 x 12 Cab. I put the Landmine in front of the amp and I get one of the heaviest sounds I have ever heard. It sounds like my amp has a subwoofer. If you are looking for a Slayer or Lamb of God sound but BIGGER, this pedal will do it. It is a big, heavy and thick sounding distortion."

What more can I say? The people have spoken. I couldn't hear them, though, because I was playing the Landmine at the time. Enjoy!

The manufacturer's suggested retail price for the Landmine is \$249.

For more product information, contact: The Landmine Pedal Co., 9 Pine St., Thorold, ON L2V 3Z9 (905) 227-7941, FAX (905) 227-7941, mike@landminepedals.com, www.landminepedals.com.

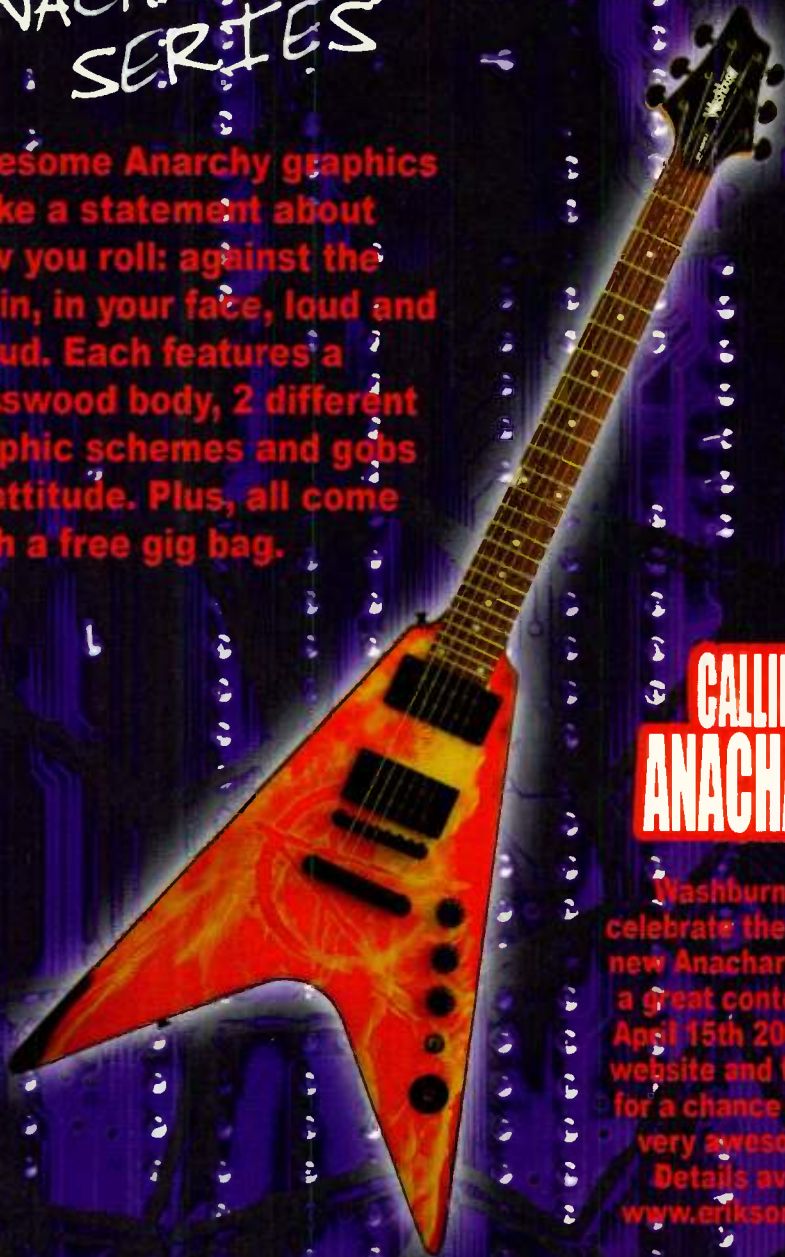
Bernie LaBarge started playing guitar at age 11. He was the frontman and/or guitarist for many popular bands in Ontario, including Bond, Rain, Sweet Blindness, Zwol, Stem and Stingaree. He has also worked with Kim Mitchell, Long John Baldry, Cassandra Vasik, The Irish Rovers, Doug Riley, Frank Byner of Tower of Power, John Sebastian, Joel Feeney and Sass Jordan. He has also composed and performed on many North American and worldwide jingles including Coke, Pepsi, GM, Ford and Nissan. Bernie is currently lead guitarist for The Dexters, The Stickmen and Sass Jordan.

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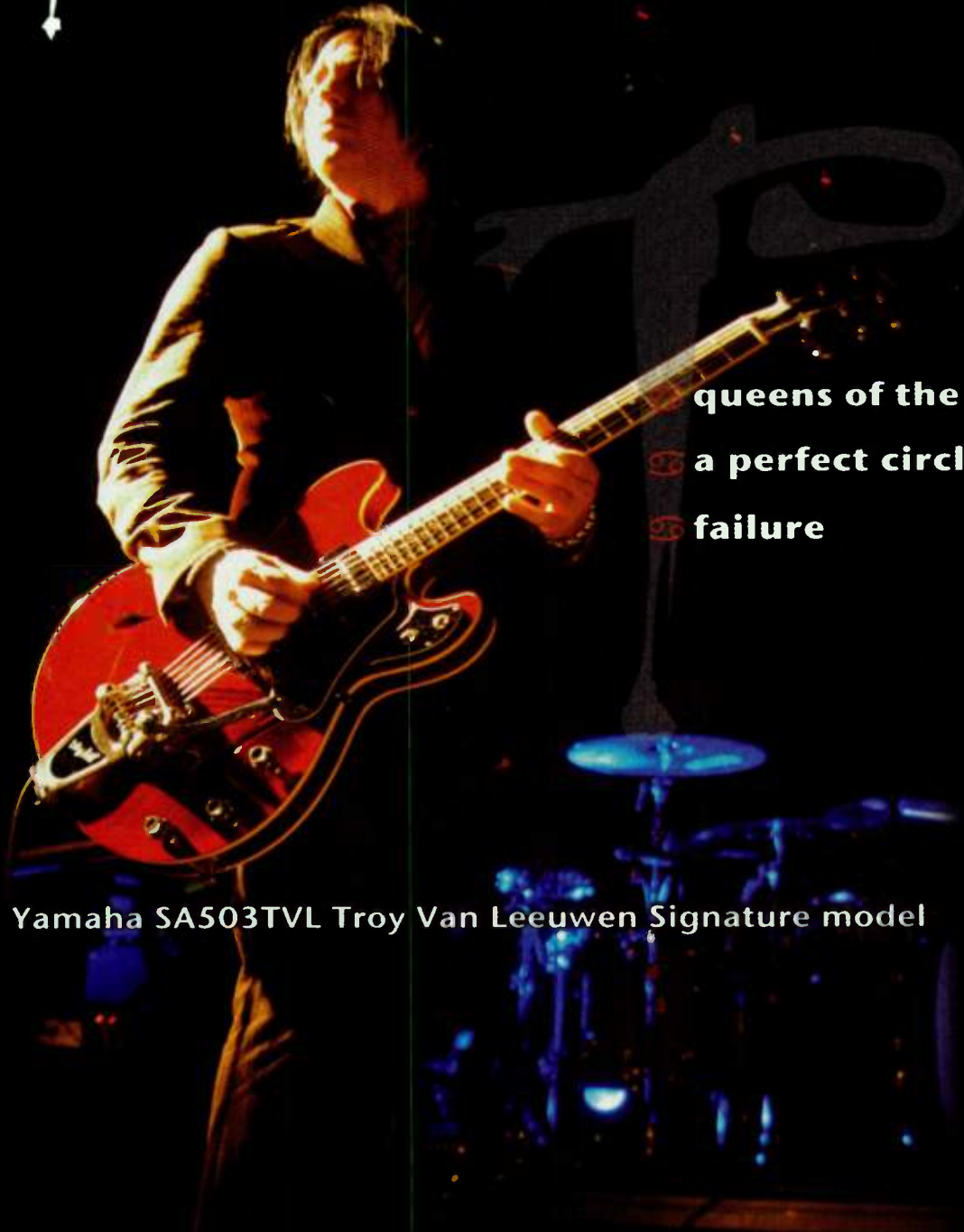
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Apex Microphones

by Michael Saracino

The home studio is definitely a growing phenomenon thanks to low-cost computer-based recording solutions. So what does this mean for microphone manufacturers? It means that they have to cater to a new and very large market: the home studio engineer/producer/musician. While too many companies are cranking out featureless fixed-pattern large diaphragm condensers in the interest of preserving the bottom line, Apex has decided to introduce a wealth of feature rich microphones and packages including the 460 multi-pattern (nine all together) tube condenser microphone which retails for \$379 and the SP3 studio microphone package including a ribbon microphone, large diaphragm condenser microphone with three switchable patterns and a small diaphragm condenser microphone, retailing at \$469. Initially, these low prices had me concerned that the performance of these mics would suffer and that the necessary accessories wouldn't be included. I am happy to say that, after putting these mics to practical use in the studio, they performed well beyond my expectations and that all necessary accessories were included along with very handy, foam insulated carrying cases.

The first test I ran was an A/B comparison involving the Apex 460 nine pattern tube microphone and another mic in my arsenal that lists for three times the price. I set them both up in a tuned isolation booth, running into identical mic preamps and shielded by identical windscreens. I decided to first run a multitude of vocal tests involving singing and narration. The Apex 460 lent itself well to both male and female vocals. The 460 did a good job at capturing a detailed lead vocal in the cardioid position, as well as ambient background vocals in the omni-directional position. It also proved well suited for capturing a narrative male and female vocal. The microphone did not match the clarity of the comparison mic in terms of detail in the high and low frequencies but it came very close. Next I tried the mic on a solid body acoustic guitar that I keep in the studio. It did a fabulous job in the second position between cardioid and omni with the guitar when I positioned it about 10" away and aimed at the twelfth fret. This is the same position and pattern I regularly use with the comparison mic and the Apex 460 delivered a pleasing result that was almost on par with a microphone three times the price. The only criticism I can give this microphone can also be given to the comparison mic and that is a lack of a 10dB pad and a highpass filter. A pad helps to lower the input volume when you notice that your preamps are peaking when miking a loud sound source and a highpass filter cuts very low frequencies reducing rumble and the proximity effect (exaggeration of low frequencies as the microphone as a condenser microphone is moved closer to sound source). As a tech tip for those who purchase this microphone (my

apologies in advance to anybody who doesn't speak audio geek language), an equalizer with a 2dB bell curve boost at 150 Hz and high shelf at 10 kHz will definitely enhance this microphone. In conclusion, this is a great entry-level tube microphone that puts the versatility and warmth of a multi-pattern tube mic in reach of the average musician and/or home studio owner.

The next test I ran was a real world application that was somewhat of a risk. I opened up the Apex SP3 studio microphone package and took out the Apex 205 ribbon microphone and hooked it up in the booth right before a client was coming in. I asked him to try a few lead vocal takes with the 205 and to my surprise it performed very well and sat very nicely in the track. His band members were very impressed with the clarity and detail of the vocals. I am still in the mixing stages of the track as I write this but so far I have not had to EQ the lead vocal whatsoever, which is very nice! I then decided to track some of my own music with the remaining microphones, including the Apex 185 small diaphragm condenser mic and the Apex 415 large diaphragm, three-pattern condenser mic. The first test involved a bunch of percussion including a 14" Remo djembe and a set of LP congas. I noticed that the 415 was a bit dull, but it captured a pretty rich sounding low end and that the 185 was bright enough for the attack of the large percussion instruments but not large enough in diameter to capture the very low frequencies. I decided to combine the two microphones for their strengths and got great sounds by miking the cavity of the percussive instruments with the 415 and the skins with the 185. I gave these mics a few tests on acoustic instruments such as the guitar and mandolin and the results with each microphone was of acceptable quality but I have other mics in my collection that I would go to first. That having been said, it never hurts to have extra condensers in the studio, especially when tracking multiple instruments and the inclusion of the 205 ribbon microphone alone justifies the retail price of \$469 for this package.

Of course, none of these microphones are on par with Neumann or high-end AKG mics but at roughly 10 per cent of the cost they definitely provide the user with value for the dollar. If you're a recording enthusiast looking for a wealth of microphone options, the Apex-SP-3 studio microphone package is a great place to start. If you're a musician or home studio owner looking for the options and warm detail provided by a multi-pattern tube microphone on a budget then the Apex 460 may be just what you need.

For more product information, contact: Apex Electronics, c/o Yorkville Sound, 550 Granite Ct., Pickering, ON L1W 3Y8 (905) 837-8481, FAX (905) 839-5776, canada@apexelectronics.com, www.apexelectronics.com.



Apex 460

Apex 205

Apex 185

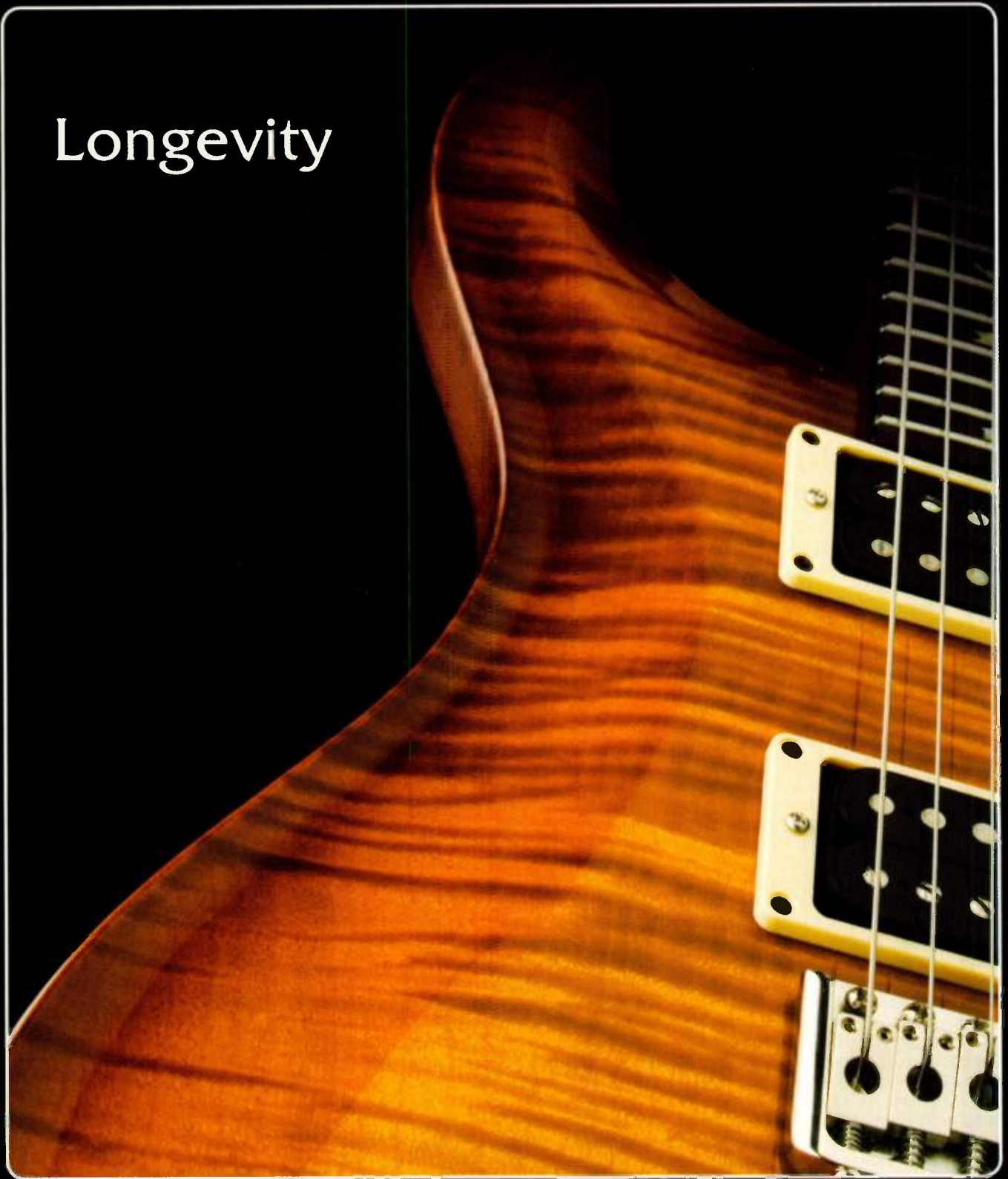
Michael Saracino is a songwriter and producer, having done sound design and engineering work for Disney's Aladdin Junior in Niagara Falls, ON; as well as being a Staff Composer for Tangerine Broadcast Music Logos.

Distributor's Comments

It should be noted that in reviews, all microphones are often compared to other well-established industry standard mics such as the Neumann and AKG models mentioned here. While Apex Electronics strives to offer microphones that perform exceptionally well for the dollar, those microphones are considered industry standards for a reason, and their cost bears that out. Apex Electronics delivers the best of all worlds to the home recording enthusiast and project studio engineer. We offer classic microphone designs, including tube models, ribbon microphones and a full catalog of special application and studio microphones that provide exceptional value, and incredible performance for the dollar.

—Tim Marshall, Marketing & Communications, Apex Electronics

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The Affair With The Other Instrument

by Vivian Clement

When I was in high school, I was fortunate enough to be able to learn to play several instruments. Although I considered guitar my weapon of choice, the instruments being offered in the course were wind or percussion. Since music was an easy credit and I had a general interest in other instruments, I succumbed to studying the flute. This choice in fact turned out to be a good one, since most of the musical arrangements for school bands have lead parts for the flute. This allowed me to actually learn to read music. Not only did music class give me the opportunity to play with other musicians, in our orchestra, it also taught me how to follow a conductor. In my second year, I had enough of flute and wanted to play a “cooler” instrument (I was only 15) so I decided to play sax. My music teacher at the time instructed me to first learn clarinet, which he promised would make me a better saxophonist. The reasoning was that since clarinet and sax are kissing cousins, and the clarinet is more difficult to play, it would make learning the sax that much easier to master once I decided to switch over. Even though the cool factor was not really in the clarinet, I took his advice. At the same time, I was teaching myself to play piano in the auditorium during my lunches. I had no idea what I was doing so I purchased a few piano songbooks and attempted to read the music, which was way above my head at the time. (I could hardly read the treble clef let alone the bass clef and on top of that read them simultaneously). Either way I felt inspired to tackle the piano, and over the course of time learned to play a few tunes. At some point during my musical development, I realized that being a jack-of-all-trades was probably not going to get me very far, so I made the decision to make the guitar my primary instrument. It was a turning point in my musical journey, since the guitar was the instrument that seemed to fit my musical personality.

Even though I haven't touched any of these instruments since, with the exception of the piano, I recently came to the realization that some important lessons had been ingrained into my musical psyche. The most important one being that familiarity with only one instrument can leave your musical understanding too narrow. I'm not an advocate of being a jack-of-all-trades, but I do believe that experimenting – if only superficially – with other instruments allowed me to

broaden my musical perspective, but it also imparted an appreciation and understanding of the various mindsets needed to master these instruments. Inadvertently, knowledge of various instruments also helped me to become more sympathetic with the many challenges other musicians face.



With every instrument I studied, I noticed there was a different approach to learning and a different set of physical skills that needed to be mastered in order to be competent. For example, proper breathing is vital for all wind instruments. The music written for them always takes this into consideration. Recently, I was talking to a musician friend who told me he worked with this great piano player who wrote parts for the horn section but wrote them like a piano player would play them – just tons of notes with no place to breathe. He said the gigs were exhausting since you felt like you were going to pass out before you got to the end of a phrase. The piano player was great, but was obviously clued out to the limitations of other instruments.

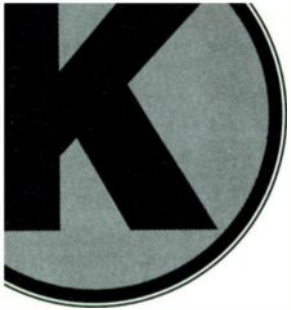
While we're on the subject of the piano, if you've ever played one you will undoubtedly appreciate what a great instrument it is. The piano is visually laid out before you. Its entire range is from left (low) to right (high) and all the sharp/flat notes are black. It's easy to learn to play chords and playing with both hands independently doesn't take

too much work. Of course mastering the piano is a whole different story. The interesting thing about it though, from a guitarist's perspective is that it is so much more logical than the guitar. Every note on the piano is laid out sequentially. Not so with the guitar, since each string is four intervals apart (except for the G and B of course). If you play a C7 chord on the piano you have one position plus a few inversions. The guitar, in contrast, has so many positions to play a C7 you practically need an encyclopedia to guide you (thus the reason for so many guitar books). My main point is that the approach to the piano is completely different – your left hand plays bass, while your right hand plays chords and melody; When changing positions, it's simply to play a chord an octave higher/lower. The guitar on the other hand (pardon the pun), has a more sparse approach. Sometimes you are playing rhythm, other times lead. You may at times only need to play parts of chords, sometimes copying horn parts, or playing a portion of a bass part. Guitarists are all over the place. Pianists are generally good readers; guitarists ... typically read like a kindergarten kid (There are exceptions!). We depend more on our ear.

Take a close look at drummers and you will find a whole other mindset and physical skills that are obviously quite demanding. Regardless of all the jokes made about drummers, mastering independence in your arms and legs is kind of like riding a bike, chewing gum, reading a book and combing your hair at the same time. (Hats off to the drummer who also sings.) A drummer's focus is more on rhythmic concepts and developing independence of arms and legs rather than on music itself. I must add that the best drummers I have performed with many times played a melodic instrument as well as the drums. That's not to say that drummers who don't play another instrument can't be great, but playing other instruments seemed to broaden their understanding of musical concepts.

So my hope is that you won't shy away from throwing yourself into the arms of another instrument. Just keep in mind that by studying a minor instrument, you will find that the lessons learned will filter into your musical subconscious. This will not only cause you to be a better guitarist but also build a more holistic approach to all of your future performances.

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 or www.exodusstudio.ca.



When Good Gigs Go Bad Part 2 – Stage Fright

by Kevin Young

keyboards

Ever get on stage and wonder why, between soundcheck and show time, you forgot how to play? Intestinal discomfort, the shakes, memory loss ... stage fright is something every musician is occasionally prone to. For some, it's a constant, and a case of pre-gig jitters is just a resource to mine for energy during a performance. For others, it's uncomfortable at least and can be a showstopper. Whatever the case, chances are it will have an effect on you at some point in your career.

For a keyboard player it's not necessarily as horrifying as for a singer, or someone playing a wind instrument to some extent we can hide a bit – shaking hands and such aren't terribly noticeable unless you're really screwing up. But when tone and accuracy depend on breath and the jitters are playing havoc with your body the results can be distressingly apparent.

Before you deal with the fear it doesn't hurt to know where it stems from and realize that it's much more common than you might think. Dr. John Chong, of The Musicians' Clinics Of Canada, is often approached about this. "I take a very narrow biological approach," he explains. "The first thing is diagnosis – what's the underlying anxiety?" Essentially, to figure out why your Amygdala, the part of your brain that sets off the fight or flight response, and can also mess up recall and muscle memory, is firing.

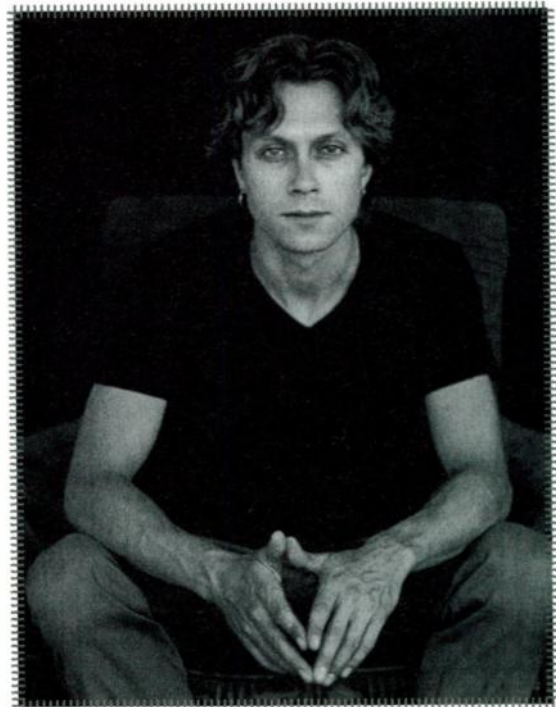
The fear can come from a lot of different places, Dr. Chong says, it can stem from childhood, from something to do with the work you do, anything. "The hippocampus is like a life data recorder. It remembers everything: especially painful memories. It's there to protect us," he says. Unfortunately it can get all fouled up and not necessarily realize that you're, theoretically, doing something you love and don't need to run screaming at the moment.

Context is everything when it comes to treatment. Dr. Chong tells me the process of therapy is like an editing process in which various techniques are part of the treatment package – meditation, relaxation, the understanding of why you're experiencing stage fright.

Often the occasional bout of the fear is just that, occasional, temporary, but when it begins to interfere with your performance regularly it's time to address the issue. Addressing the issue doesn't mean a mittful of Beta-blockers. Any real pharmacological solution should be discussed with a doctor – if the problem is serious a physician will take a comprehensive approach that's going to be more successful than self-medicating.

Everyone's different, and it's not always convenient, or realistic to rush off and book a doctor's appointment mid-tour. If you are trying to deal on your own you might try starting by developing a consistent routine that allows you to get into the best pre-performance headspace you can, wherever you are. It might include running scales, or other technique, exercising, playing through some of the music you're performing. What it's made up of depends entirely on what makes you comfortable and helps you get your game face on.

Whatever it is, try to make it relatively simple. Different venues, different types of gigs require flexibility and over time you have to get used to them all. That said some gigs stand out as more stressful than others. Live TV, industry showcases – all depends on what stresses you out. If there are commonalities between the gigs you get nervous about, isolate them. Analyze and attempt to diagnose the problem so that if something makes you uncomfortable you can change it.



To reference the first part of this column in the last issue, sometimes a perfectly good gig can go badly owing to tech issues, or just a bad night. That, alone, can bring on a case of gig jitters. No diagnosis is necessary when you start to flail around then. Remember, 9 times out of 10 few, if any audience members notice. Again, it's not a bad idea to have a point structured into your set that allows you to collect yourself and regroup individually and as a band. A place you can take control, get settled and pull the remainder of the show together.

Kevin Young is a Toronto-based freelance writer and keyboardist best known for his work with David Usher and Moist.

California Dreaming

by Chuck D

When I was asked to write an article on my dream gear I thought, "Man, this will be super fun and really easy!" All of my life I've dreamed about all of the gear I wish I had and how cool I'd be with piles of amps and flashing lights stacked behind me impressing and blowing the heads off of everyone in the crowd, even way back in the nosebleed section of Maple Leaf Gardens. These fantasies grew out of years of live Van Halen and KISS photos surrounding me at my place or at my drummer's house in his jam room. BIG was all that mattered. Every show we went to, small or large, we'd spend a lot of time discussing the band's gear and trying our best to get up close and see exactly what each player in the band had in their racks or stomp boxes on the ground. Then, during the show we'd be hypnotized by the immense sound of whoever happened to be crushing our eardrums with their BIG gear. My older brother used to poke fun at me by drawing pictures of my stage setup with "The BIG Amp Co." amps towering over me getting ready to crush me with one pluck of the string. I have fond memories of Michael J. Fox in *Back to The Future*, shiny pick in hand, and that HUGE amplifier staring him down. He turns it on ... "hummmmm" ... Get ready, and, "BOOOOM!!!" with a simple stroke of a chord he was airborne and flying backwards from the massive sound. This was *the dream*.

After all of those prepubescent years of practice and dreaming I am now a professional musician in a popular – and very loud – rock band and I am gigging all of the time. We will be going out for over a year in May to support our new release *The Big Picture*. [*Ed. Check out this very issue of CM for a feature article on *The Salads* and their kick-ass new album!]

The funny thing is, we are trying to find ways to scale down our gear because it is heavy to lift and a pain to travel with all of that big stuff. The reality is a little different than the dream. The dream gear list would have to include roadies. We didn't think of the logistics of touring when we started buying huge gear, and wound up lugging it up three flights of icy fire escape stairs in a snowstorm in Jasper, AB.

It seems that guitar companies are getting in tune with this skinny rock dude dilemma by creating amp simulators and nano-type amplifiers that promise huge, round sound. Both my guitar player and I own Line 6

Pods for at home and for travelling in the "tour bus" – our very own portable 'Big Amp Company' amps. These are great ... they're perfect for both home recording and practicing loud without bothering anybody in the condo or hotel room next door.

I always dreamed of owning an Ampeg Fridge. I was just surfing the Internet for bass player dream gear and this wishlist item is consistently at the top for almost everyone ... an 8 x 10 cab with an accompanying 2 x 15 for extra lows. Be warned though, the sound system in the club better be massive and your guitar player better have four 4 x 12 cabs with enough amp power if you are going to use an amp this monstrous. For these big bass amp dreamers you should all head on down to The Guitar Centre in Hollywood, CA on Sunset Blvd. Last time we

to create a design-friendly triangle on stage and have a bigger sound. Of course, this purchase must come equipped with a roadie and a new car it can fit in. My 6 x 10 just fits in the back seat of my Jetta. I did rent this setup for The Salads' videos "Unhappy" and "The Roth Kung Fu". King for a day...

My dream bass guitar to own was always a custom Musicman Stingray 5 from Ernie Ball. The most versatile and best looking bass guitars on the planet! Sometime around the release of our *Fold A to B* record, and our first ever Warped Tour shows, this dream became a reality. Being a travelling musician and a new father, funds were limited so my "better half" went to the fine people at Ernie Ball



played in Los Angeles we all took a trip over to give the 72 x 10, three-storey tall Ampeg with the price tag of \$40,000, a test drive. This is it! This is the one! It was made specifically for the store by Ampeg. The story goes that Michael Anthony from Van Halen once begged to purchase this dream Ampeg and offered \$40,000. They refused to sell it but they put this price tag on it anyways.

I own a 6 x 10 that kills most Ampegs I've played through probably because of its extra highs from its horn but I'd still like an 8 x 10 to lay on the ground under my 6 x 10

in San Luis Obispo, CA and explained my dream to them. They heard the band and to my luck fell in love with our music. She found an endorsement for me and I was able to design my ultimate Ernie Ball Musicman bass guitar online and then have it delivered to my front door! A day I will never forget. I am playing my dream bass and obviously my dream woman. Now, I just need another three. SR5s that is...

Chuck "Chuck D" Dailey is bassist for *The Salads*.



Double Bass *Fills*

by Jeff Salem

Greetings fellow drummers! This issue I would like to share with you a simple approach to creating double bass drum fills. Many of my students are inspired by great double bass drummers such as Mike Portnoy, (Dream Theater) Joey Jordanson (Slipknot) and the list can go on. Many of their fast and flourishing drum fills are based on combinations of A, B, C, D mixed together. In their case, most of their fills are played and written as 32nd notes. For the simplicity of reading and learning these concepts, it's much easier to start off with 16th notes. When you are comfortable you can think of a two-bar fill of 16th notes as one bar of 32nd note fills.

There are four patterns to start with. These patterns feature alternate sticking between your hands and feet. If you are right-handed lead with the right, if left-handed, lead with the left. I have listed some fills that I have created combining A-D.

Everyone will have a different approach on how they will apply these around the kit. Experiment with your own voicings. Start off first with and four patterns of A-D mixed together on the snare and bass. When you are comfortable with the fill, let your hands journey to any sound source. This is what one of my students Chris Medeiros did with pattern number 6. He had a very unique approach to the way he voiced this fill that I had to include it in this column. Many times you can play the same pattern but disguise the fill on how you voice it. Have fun and remember to start off slow, that's how the speed will come in time.

Drum Set

Crash Cymbal Hi-hat Tom 1 Tom 2 Snare Floor Tom B.D 1 (R) B.D 2 (L)

16th Note Patterns

a) b) c) d)

R L R L R L R L R L R L

One Bar Fills

1 2

3 4

5 6. By Chris Medeiros

Two Bar Fills

7

8

Jeff Salem is a freelance artist who performs with various bands and conducts drum clinics at local schools sponsored by Yamaba, SABIAN, Vic Firth, Latin Percussion (LP), Mountain Rythm, Evans Drum 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 or e-mail him at jsalem@sympatico.ca.

percussion



A Beginner's Guide To Suizen

by Daniel Schnee

It is common amongst jazz musicians to seek out new lines of thought or new philosophies to help expand on their current improvisational abilities. Many study the various raga systems of North and South India. Others find inspiration in Sufi philosophy, or study the early Taoist texts for practical ideas on expanding their personal and musical consciousness. Less known to the world though is the ancient practice of *suizen*, gleaned from an archaic sect of Zen Buddhism and kept alive today in one form or another by professional shakuhachi players all around the world. Roughly translated, it means “blowing meditation”, and was used at one point as an attempt to achieve enlightenment through musical practice. The idea was that if you practiced your flute rigorously, yet relaxed, with complete mental and physical awareness, eventually at some point you could realize the same enlightened state achieved by the Buddha. Of course I can't guarantee that you will become a Buddha by doing this, but applying the principles of *suizen* to your saxophone practice regimen might be useful in helping focus your mind and remove any mental obstructions to achieving your musical goals. Nearly a decade after learning this practice from a Shinto priest (to help me phrase more lyrically when performing *gagaku*) I still use it frequently, and I am convinced it has helped me bring my playing to much more sophisticated levels than I would have achieved without it.

Before beginning, it is important to note that this exercise is based on the Buddhist ideal of non-judgment and non-attachment to a specific outcome. *Suizen* doesn't accomplish a specific outcome, but by bringing focused awareness to your music making, important observances and new avenues of thought invariably come to one's attention. Simple, non-judgmental attention to one's actions and surroundings is a powerful spiritual tool in any faith system, and it is no less potent in music activity.

First, find a quiet place to practice and start by taking a few deep breaths. This is not an exercise with a fixed goal at the end,

so you don't have to worry about whether you are doing it “right”. Simply take out your instrument and hold it for a second. Feel the metal and/or wood. Check your posture whether sitting or standing, and make sure you are relaxed (and hopefully happy!). Then, with your eyes closed, play a single note with your instrument. It doesn't



have to be any particular length, pitch, or volume, though most people prefer softer to begin with. Let at least 10 to 30 seconds of silence go by. Then repeat the process. Listen to how the note begins. Listen to the silence afterwards. What are the qualities of the note? Is it rich in overtones? Is it tinny? What is it? Repeat again and listen to how your breath rises and fills the horn. Listen to how your breath changes when you finish the note. Then listen to the silence again that comes after the note. How does the silence relate to the previous note? Does the silence flow out from the note or is the silence just a lack of sound? Is silence another kind of note? Are your silences say-

ing something? Once again this exercise is not designed to ask questions for you to actually answer. It is merely designed for you to become more aware of everything you are doing when you play a note – especially your breath and the silences. How is your breath a part of the note? Can you breath so that the breathing is part of the music? Can your silence serve the music in the same way? Acutely observing the relationship between breath, sound and silence reveals some interesting things when done for at least 5 to 10 minutes at a time. Is silence musical? Can your breath actually be part of the musical statement? There are no official answers, just observances. We start to really hear what we are doing, and our ears adjust to this new type of awareness. And this process doesn't just stay in the practice room. After only a couple of weeks of doing *suizen* for a mere 10 minutes a day, I felt that kind of focused attention was also seeping in my daily affairs. By doing *suizen* I also got better at composing, improvising, and managing my career. Go figure!

It is vital to remember that this process requires one to stop judging what they are playing, and to play without expecting some kind of reward, probably the two biggest obstacles to performing at one's best. *Suizen* requires patience and practice over time to be practical. And if that is difficult, *suizen* can be the very thing to help fix that problem. Blowing a single note in solitude without any evaluation is the least emotionally demanding activity one can partake in on a saxophone, besides just putting the thing down and watching TV. I've yet to receive any free ice cream from Dairy Queen for nailing the chord changes to “Giant Steps”, so obviously I am not going to receive any recognition or fame for my *suizen*. Just being completely mentally present when making any musical sound is its own reward, and I encourage you to try it out. You'll be surprised at how much happens when you do “nothing”!

WOODWINDS

Daniel Schnee is an Edmonton-based saxophonist who has studied with jazz legend Ornette Coleman, Carnatic master Sri Kadri Gopalnath and Arab nay flute master Dr. Ali Racy. He has performed with a number of Juno, American and Grammy award winning artists, and regularly performs with his own ensemble around the world. He has written extensively for dance and theatre in Japan and is the founder of the Kyoto International Improvisation Ensemble. He holds an M.A. in Ethnomusicology from the University of Alberta, and is currently writing a book on contemporary saxophone technique based on his study and performance of Asian and Arabian music traditions.

Sound Ideas

by Chase Sanborn

Part I

The number one goal of all brass players is (or should be) to produce a beautiful sound. I like to think of the sound as a living thing that resides within my body, kind of like the movie *Alien*. Actually, I've heard some trumpet sounds that would be appropriate for that movie, but I digress.

Each day, particularly during the warm-up, I search for my sound and try to release it into the horn. The difference between a "good day" and a "bad day" is how easy or difficult it is to find and release the sound.

Producing sound on a brass instrument is a four-stage process:

- Hear the sound in your head.
- Set the air into motion.
- Compress the lips on the airstream, converting air to vibration.
- Transfer the vibrations to the instrument.

Hear The Sound

The most important part of any activity is to picture the end result before you start; you need to hear a sound in your head before you'll get one to come out of your horn. Before a practice session, listen to a recording of a great player to remind you of what is possible. Currently, my inspiration/despair CD is Sergei Nakariakov's *No Limit*. That is an apt title – there seems to be no limit to Sergei's ability. It should be impossible, perhaps illegal, to do what he does on the trumpet.

I am fortunate to live just up the street from Andrew McCandless, the principal trumpet with the Toronto Symphony. (It is only a two-block street, so it is rather coincidental that it is home to two professional trumpet players.) In the morning, as I walk the dog, I can often hear Andrew warming up. Listening to the way he centres every note with a beautiful sound always inspires me, and makes me anxious to get home and start practicing.

Air

Well, duh. It is a wind instrument. Much has been written on the importance of air. Some methods maintain that playing is 99 per cent air – simply blow and forget everything else. Arnold Jacobs added the all-important "sing the music in your mind." In other words, make sure the musical command from the brain is clear and focused, and that the air is flowing, and everything else will happen naturally.

Sometimes, however, the simplicity of this approach can lead to frustration. Some students actually use too much air, because they have been taught that blowing harder is the answer to all problems. (Admittedly, not using *enough* air is a more common problem.) Efficient playing demands a balance of air and embouchure compression: the setting of the embouchure primarily determines pitch, and the air (plus the tongue, which helps to control the air) largely determines volume and articulation.



If you can picture the fluid motion of a violinist's bow, that is what you are striving to achieve with your air. It should be smooth and directed, extending from the base of your lungs, flowing past your lips into the horn. Make sure the air passage is not obstructed; poor posture or a constricted throat will rob your sound of power and intensity. Hold your horn up and let the air flow freely through your throat. Control it with the tongue and the aperture between the lips, not by tensing the body or constricting the throat.

Think of your sound and your air as one intertwined entity, emanating from deep within your body. Focus your attention on the air/sound as it travels through your body and flows into the horn. Try swirling your air/sound through the cavities of your head, as a singer might, and listen to the tone changes that result. Let your notes "ride" on the column of air like ping pong balls floating on a swiftly moving stream. Maximize the power and effectiveness of your airstream – the more work your air does, the less the lips have to do.

In my next column I will talk about the role of the embouchure, and the process of transferring the vibrations to the instrument.

Footnote: While writing this column on an airplane, with the iPod set on shuffle, a song came up and I recognized the buttery-soft sound of Marvin Stamm on trumpet. I couldn't name the tune so I checked the display: it was Marvin's composition "A Rosy Tone". How appropriate!

Chase Sanborn is a jazz trumpet player based in Toronto, Canada. Chase is a veteran studio musician and a member of the jazz faculty at the University of Toronto. His teaching methods, Brass Tactics and Jazz Tactics, have earned worldwide praise for their insightful yet light-hearted and humorous look at the world of brass playing and jazz improvisation. For more information on Chase's books, DVDs, CDs and other products, visit www.chasesanborn.com.

Choosing a USB Audio Interface

by Alec Watson

Computer recording keeps getting easier and more accessible. Just a few short years ago, in order to do any “real” recording, one needed some kind of expensive internal controller card (and the guts to break open their computer to install it), a digital converter, and some good outboard microphone preamps; and we’re not even touching on the gear necessary to monitor your music. Today, there are *so many* choices for getting pretty darned good audio into your computer (at a good price) that it has once again become a little confusing when it comes to making the right choice. In fact, I was “Ebuying” last night and found a “Professional Engineer” who is willing to sell you his thoughts on purchasing the “right” USB audio interface. Not that I want to go denying dude his Ebay income, but as a little gift from CM to you, save your \$16 US, (you can apply it to your new interface) here is what you need to know...



USB or Firewire?

I am almost certain I am going to get some hate mail from some *better* informed tech guy as to why I am wrong, but the honest truth is – it doesn’t really matter. That said there *are* a few considerations. No, USB and Firewire aren’t going to sound any different, but there may be some usage differences. If you have a computer that has all sorts of USB peripherals plugged in – printers, hard drives, card readers, USB Coffee Maker ... and you have a Firewire port sitting empty, then it would probably be wise to go with a Firewire audio interface; you will never receive the dreaded “USB device not recognized” message AND you are likely to be able to achieve lower latencies due to less bus traffic ... if that sounds like a bunch of techno crap, apart from the fact that it *is* (techno crap), rest assured I will explain it later so that you too can impress your friends!

On the flip side, I would tend to go with a USB interface if I was using it with my laptop. Yes, my laptop does have a Firewire port, but it also has six USB ports. A lot of the USB interfaces run off the power supplied by the USB port and as I don’t have a lot of USB peripherals plugged into my computer *and* I don’t want to carry a wall wart (power adapter) around with me, the USB interface is likely the more robust choice when it comes to powering external devices from my laptop.

Latency – What The Heck Is It And Why Do I Care?

Between the manufacturers of the USB audio interfaces there is a *lot* of hype about latency. Latency, in practical terms, is the delay that occurs between the moment your audio enters the interface, travels to the CPU (the main processing chip in your computer), is processed (effects and/or EQ that are applied to your audio), and then returns to your USB audio interface to be played by your speakers or headphones. Some USB interfaces have lower latencies than others; for me, however, *any* latency is too much! I prefer to “direct monitor”; most interfaces achieve zero latency times through this process. Direct monitoring really means that the USB interface is really splitting the audio into two paths, one path goes to your computer, the other goes directly to your headphones; the result is zero latency. The drawback is that you won’t be able to hear your vocal or guitar, etc., with any of the cool effects that your computer can apply to them. For me, I would rather hear my voice dry than gooped up with effects and late.

What To Buy

If you really want to be able to monitor *with effects and* have zero latency (anything is possible for a price) consider the Saffire, this unit has a built-in audio processors that can add effects to the signal so that you *can* monitor them in real time. If it is not worth a few hundred dollars extra to be able to monitor with reverb you have a lot more choices. M-Audio, Tascam and Edirol all make USB mic pres that sound pretty darned good; they are compact and very easy to use. If you want incredible simplicity, you might want to consider a USB mic; Samson makes an excellent value for money microphone (I reviewed it personally last year), and RØDE has now added a USB mic to their lineup (I have always been a fan of their microphones and have a couple of favourites that I use even when given the choice of almost anything I want).

Another consideration is the bundled software; yeah they say it’s free – but it’s not; you purchased the software when you purchase the box. If you aren’t going to use the software it comes with, take a look at your other choices – you might save some money.

Research

I am an avid researcher when it comes to spending my money – you probably are too; the Internet is a fantastic site for misinformation. Yeah, it can work for you too. When I want to find a fairly unbiased source of choices I often go to Sweetwater.com. They are a big US firm – no I don’t buy from them, but you know that they carry almost everything; and every manufacturer has checked to see that the info is correctly posted on their site (it’s the Wal-Mart of music stores). After I narrow down my options at Sweetwater, I then go to the manufacturer’s sites so that I can be pelted with catch phrases and techno babble – but of course this information is invaluable too. Finally, I try and buy Canadian – Oh Canada!

Alec Watson is a Producer/Engineer that lives in Reno-bell Vancouver Island. He can be contacted at alec@alecwatson.com.



digital music



Vocal Casanova

by Diana Yampolsky

VOCALS

In my previous column “Vocal Impotence? In Need of Vocal Viagra” I outlined how to use your voice correctly in order to protect it from damage and avoid succumbing to “vocal impotence”. It also explained how to use “Vocal Viagra” to cure any existing voice problems and ensure the sound your voice produces is longer, fuller and stronger.

In this article, I would like to talk about how to use your newfound or recovered instrument in such a way that you will truly be able to satisfy any audience. After all, you may have taken Vocal Viagra, which solved your physical problems, but you really would have only succeeded in fixing your instrument. The question then becomes, “Do you know how to play it?” “And do you know how to play it for an audience so that they would ask for an encore?”

Essentially, the moment you went from merely singing in the shower to singing on a stage or in a recording studio, you changed from someone who is solely singing for yourself to someone who is singing for other people. There are many reasons you may have done this. It could have been a need to be the centre of attention. Maybe you want to share your musical talents with other people; or possibly a desire to communicate your thoughts and feelings to others. Regardless of the reason, you most likely want to impress the audience and leave them with a positive impression of your performance. It has been my observation that the most successful singers are the ones who know how to interact with their audiences in the same way that an accomplished lover does with his or her partner. It is for this reason that I have titled this column “Vocal Casanova”, but may have been more appropriately titled “From a Vocal Impotent to a Vocal Casanova”.

The word “Casanova” comes from the name of an 18th Century Italian writer, Gia-

como Girolamo Casanova, who was reputed to be an extremely skilled and legendary lover. He knew how to please women like no other man and always left them begging for more. Historical records note that while he was average looking, he had exceptional charm, charisma and knowledge of lovemaking. What does this have to do with singing? A lot actually. Firstly, your goal as a singer



should not only be to physically sing for the audience, but to *make love* to them through your voice! Secondly, you do not have to be the most talented singer in the world or have a five-octave range to make an impression, but you do need to know how to use what you have and infuse it with your own natural charisma and charm.

Even though I am definitely a vocal coach and not a sex therapist, I think I can safely say making love is about more than the mechanics of sex necessary to produce a climax. It involves peaks and valleys, gentle and more energetic movements, foreplay, teasing, kissing and the use of the entire body and not just the midsections. Casanova

was a great lover because he knew how to kiss women, how to touch them and talk to them. He knew how to react to the way they were feeling both physically and emotionally and respond to their needs and desires. You should approach singing the same way. Use your voice to tease the audience. Vary your voice by singing softly for some parts of the song and harder and more energetically for others. (Peaks and valleys are important because a constant high is too much for the audience and will leave them feeling exhausted rather than elated.) Build a connection with the audience and vary your singing depending on their needs.

A song that perfectly encapsulates what I am trying to say here is “Killing Me Softly” which was written by Charles Fox and Norman Gimbel and was more recently covered by the Fugees. The song was written from the perspective of a fan whom is explaining how much she is touched by the singing of a person that she does not personally know – the lyrics talk about a stranger to her eyes. She feels that he’s telling “her whole life with his words” and goes on to say that she feels flushed and embarrassed because it’s like the singer had found her “letters and read each one aloud.” That says she was able to identify with the lyrics of another singer as the message was conveyed in a very intimate and authentic manner.

You can have an incredible power over your audience and touch them very deeply if you use your voice in the right way. You can literally touch their soul and bring them to the heights of ecstasy if you really learn to use your instrument, desire to communicate with your audience and are willing to share yourself with them. In essence, anyone can become a Vocal Casanova if they approach the audience as if they are an intimate lover and openly want to share themselves vocally and emotionally. The creation of this type of performer-audience bond is what will create an enduring and truly fulfilling relationship between yourself and your fans.

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

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World Radio History

Sam Roberts has travelled for pleasure all over the world from Mexico to Morocco. So why not record his new album, now entitled *Chemical City*, in an exotic locale, one in which he's never been — like Australia?

"We wanted it to be in a rural setting, close to the ocean, lots of sunshine," says Roberts. "We were talking about a beach house. We definitely wanted to surf every day."

After meeting with Roberts in Montreal, producer Mark Howard, who has experience recording in unconventional settings with fellow Canadian Daniel Lanois, was hired to do the album and used the Internet to find the ideal place to build a makeshift studio. At first, he found a beach house, but lost the booking when he couldn't get the go-ahead in time from the record label, Universal Music Canada.

Then, with the session re-booked and everyone scheduled to leave two weeks later, Howard says he "scrambled" to find somewhere — and did, a peaceful, perfect location, a converted turn-of-the-century country church called The Old Church in Newrybar, near Byron Bay. It was surrounded by coffee and macadamia plantations and was a short drive down the hill to the Pacific Ocean. With the pews long removed, there was enough room in the chapel area to bring in recording equipment.

In the back, there were four large bedrooms where Roberts, his band — guitarist Dave Nugent, keyboardist/guitarist Eric Fares, bassist James Hall and temporary drummer Bill Anthopoulos — and everyone else could sleep.

They booked it for three months starting late February of 2005, expecting to emerge with the follow-up to Roberts' 2003's platinum-selling full-length debut, *We Were Born In A Flame*. "I think the best case scenario would have been that we would have gone and finished the record in two months and then had a month of time at the beach," laughs the Montreal-based rock singer, who plays guitar, keyboards and strings.

Instead, when the three months were up, he says all they had to show for an album was "raw pulp." He can joke about it now. At the time, he believed it was the album that they had finished.

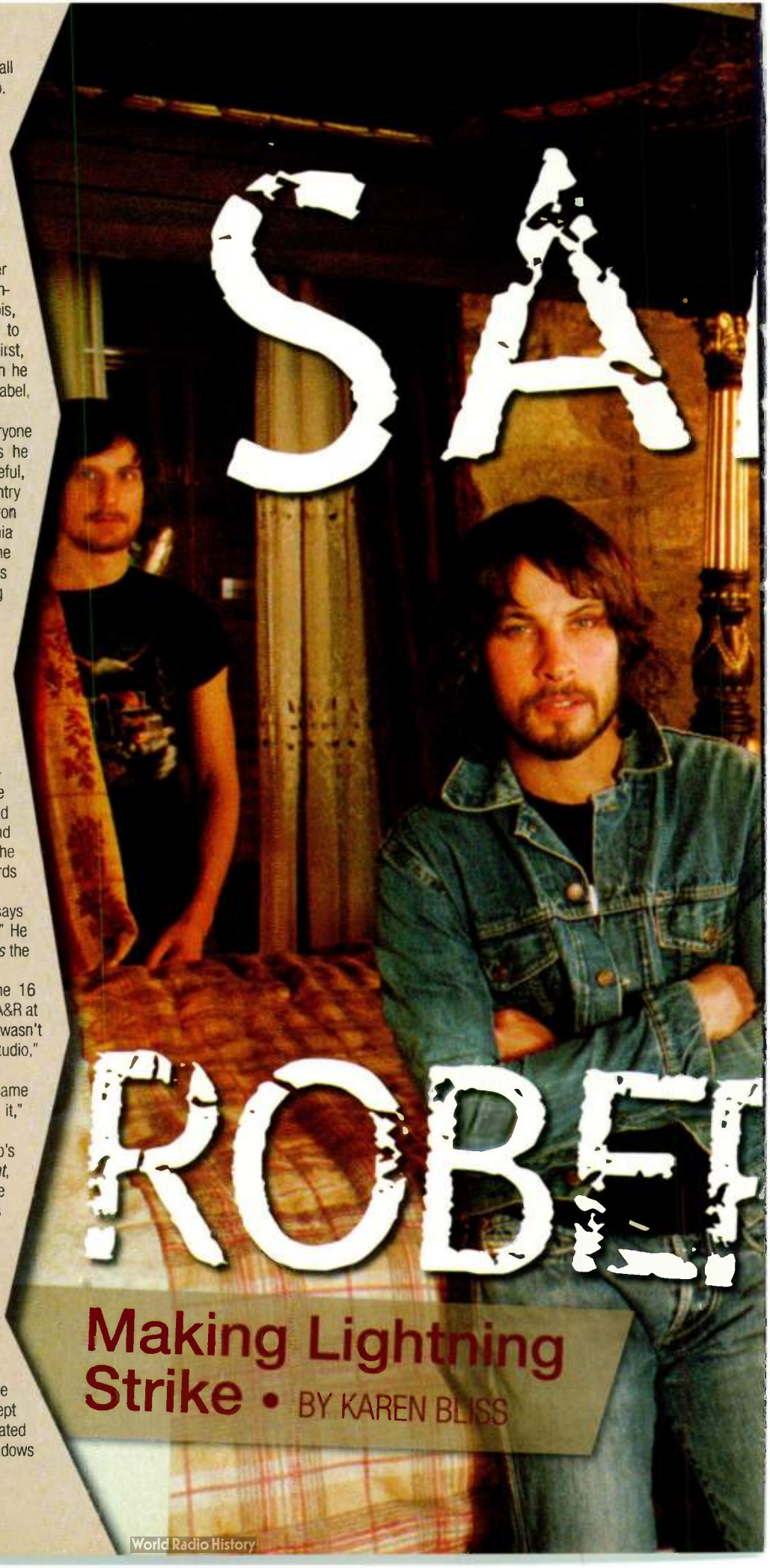
Roberts felt a "very strong connection" to the 16 songs, but when Allan Reid, senior vice-president of A&R at Universal Music Canada, flew down to hear them, he wasn't blown away. "We wanted him to go back into the studio," Reid says.

In retrospect, Roberts now says he felt the same way. "I wasn't happy with it; I just felt *protective* of it," he explains.

Howard, who produced one of The Tragically Hip's most adventurous albums, 1994's *Day For Night*, describes the album he made with Roberts as "quite psychedelic and pretty trippy sounding," and reveals it was intended to be a concept album, which is something of a dirty word in this singles-driven market.

No one at the label or management mentioned that in talking excitedly about the new album in the months before its release.

"I'd finished the record in Australia, handed it in, and it was too weird for the record company because it was more of a concept record, kind of like Pink Floyd's *The Wall*," Howard says. "It was a concept built on the *Chemical City* and all the songs are related to this *Chemical City*, 'The Gate', and all these windows looking into *Chemical City*," he says.



Making Lightning Strike • BY KAREN BLISS



BAND GEAR LIST

- 81 Ken Paul Gibson
- Wax AC20
- Linn 700 Gibson LB-S Fender Basses
- Early 70s Gibson 50
- Gibson J67
- Ludwig and Tama Drums
- Lab 80, Fender Synthesizer
- 90s Gibson 49E
- 1972 Fender Telecaster
- 4001 Ricky Buns
- Early 80s Fender P-Bass

"The Gate" is the album's lead track and first single and is the lyric from which Roberts took the title. "So Allan Reid came to Australia to hear what we'd done. It didn't sound like Sam's other record and he was kind of like, 'I don't know if we can put this out. I don't know if we can sell this,' and Sam tried to explain to him his concept and what was behind it all."

Roberts actually never used the word "concept album" in this interview either, but just as the conversation is ending he mentions that there's "a thread throughout" *Chemical City*, "an inter-relatedness to all of the songs," then adds, "not every song, but I think a few of them are directly related to each other." He also hints at a "conclusion" (maybe on b-sides) and then reveals he calls the style "sci-fi druid rock – I'm not even lying [laughs]."

In the six-minute psychedelic rocker "The Gate", a story of pending doom and possible light, within this mythical Chemical City, there is a sense of urgency in the lyric, while "Bridge To Nowhere" offers no solution, just stagnation and negativity. "With A Bullet" is a love song ("If you were marked with a bullet, I'd jumped in front of you") as is "Uprising Down Under". "An American Draft Dodger in Thunder Bay" is a fictional story about exactly that.

The link? The concept? Existing through the turmoil? Subsisting? Who knows?

Perhaps it *isn't* every song anymore because once Roberts returned home to Montreal and had a few weeks to live with the album, he too had second thoughts and went into his old friend Joseph Donovan's Stock Market Studio in Old Montreal and reworked a good 40 to 50 per cent of the album, hence the tri co-production credit in *Chemical City's* liner notes – Roberts, Howard and Donovan.

"We did a lot of work on the record when I got home. It wasn't just a polishing job. It was reconstruction. There are still many, many elements of Australia on the record. But there are also many new ones as well," says Roberts, such as re-tracking drums on some songs with new drummer Josh Trager, re-cutting vocals, guitar, trimming and rearranging songs – just a general overhaul.

"I don't want to say that I cared or didn't care what [the label] thought," says Roberts, "but obviously I have to care in a way, not that they liked the music but that they understand it. I want them to *like* the music. I want them to feel *passionate* about the music because that's what I want in people who represent me."

While there was speculation that being able to surf every day may not have been the most productive environment, Roberts vehemently disagrees. "It has nothing to do with that. It's really about requiring a creative spark."

They arose at 6 a.m. to surf and Roberts and the band were always in The Old Church by noon and remained well into the night.

"I work incredibly hard; I don't ever stop," says Roberts. "When I'm working on a record, I put every ounce of my energy into it until it's finished and I can't rest. I find it hard to enjoy other things when I have that in progress, so whether I'd been in Australia or whether I'd been in Studio Piccolo in Montreal, it was the same amount of focus required.

"I often really do have to wait for the lightning to strike. What I'm trying to learn is how to make lightning strike more often [laughs] or in a way that can be anticipated. I think that was really the guiding principle behind going to Australia was to make lightning strike. I felt like it was time to make a record and I felt

SAM ROBERTS

like the dam was bursting with all these ideas, but I needed a catalyst to help put them all together."

Roberts essentially hadn't stopped working since releasing his 2002 breakthrough indie EP, *The Inhuman Condition*, on Maple/Universal and full-length *We Were Born In A Flame* on Universal. He toured constantly, swept the 2004 Juno Awards, and was constantly covered by print, radio, and television entertainment media. The guy was everywhere in Canada, but he was drained creatively. He needed to step out of the spotlight and start writing new songs.

"The label was always very forthcoming with the fact that they wanted a new album, but they didn't want me to go and make a record that was substandard quality just so they could have a product to sell," says Roberts. "If anything, they were constantly asking, 'Are you ready to do this?' 'Is this where this needs to be?' because basically all I gave them were sketches."

They also demoed at Studio Piccolo and Stock Market in Montreal with Donovan, who has worked with The Dears and The High Dials – both acts on the trippy side.

Roberts didn't have much else in the way of songs, so once Howard and the church was booked, he went to South Africa, where he has family, to try to write. "Bridge To Nowhere" came out of the trip, as well as the album-closer, the piano and vocal ballad "A Stone Would Cry Out".

"I felt the pressure. I wanted the pressure. I needed a deadline," says Roberts of why he waited until the final hour to come up with songs. "I needed to set parameters for myself so that this wasn't just some open-ended project, that at some point I would have to say, 'Okay, this is finished.'"

Meanwhile, Howard set up the studio at the church before Roberts' arrival.

"I'd worked with Midnight Oil in the past and I called them for a favour," Howard recounts. "Now that they were no longer a band, one of the guys

were done.

"Sam could have made the whole record by himself, but it makes you feel good that you're there," says Nugent. "Last time, we went to the studio (Mushroom in Vancouver) just so we could be on the record in a sense, and he *showed* us what to play. This one, we could write little musical parts above and beyond what he'd been doing. We had more influence on the way that a song would go or be arranged because we were jamming them together as he was writing them."

Roberts says their contribution is hard to describe. "I write the songs. I write the riffs, but they'll all come up with their own interpretations of things; I'll be inspired to write a certain way because I know that they like playing a certain way. So the relationship is far more interrelated at this point than it was.

"So they had a lot more studio experience under their belt and I think they're all great players, but it's not just that they're great players; it's just that they're the *right* players."

So the band bonded even more, surfing together, eating and sleeping in the same premises, working day and night, and it's hard to imagine there was any trouble in paradise, but there was – an un-neighbourly neighbour, who Roberts has nicknamed "Rodney The Angry Neighbour," a great song title if he ever got around to it.



The Old Church in Newrybar, Australia, where the band recorded.

Although Roberts is the sole songwriter, The Sam Roberts Band had become integral to his sound. For *We Were Born In A Flame*, co-produced with Brendan McGuire (Sloan, The Dears), the singer arranged all the parts, played most of them, and then brought in his bandmates in the last week or so in order to contribute to the album.

But on the road, the songs morphed and took on new, exciting shapes, usually rockier, longer, jammier. This time, he wanted the band in the studio from the outset.

"We were always a band, but we've become a better band," Roberts says. "We've become a band that's been able to go into the studio and play the way we want to play, whereas before too much of it was in my own head to try and translate directly or we didn't really have the time to let it develop into whatever it was going to become, so I just went in there and sort of *extracted* the information from my brain [chuckles] and put it down."

The summer of 2004 was their first attempt at pre-production for the next album. They went into The Tragically Hip's Bathhouse Studio in Bath, ON where they just pressed record and jammed. "I didn't even record vocals," says Roberts, who came out with the seeds of "Mind Flood", which ran 17 minutes at one point (eight minutes on the album), "With A Bullet", and "The Gate" – all now on *Chemical City*.

runs a hire company and I told him what I was looking for – all these Neve preamps and he had the same kind of console that I had which was an Amek Media 51 surround sound desk, and it was amazing to get the same gear that I'd been using."

But before Nugent, Fares, Hall and Anthopoulos arrived, Canadian musician Matt Mays did. A good friend of Roberts', he came to Australia for three weeks "to get inspired and surf," according to Roberts, and "added a spark to kick the record off."

"It's a tough wheel to get turning," explains Roberts. "You're sitting there; you're kind of lost, what the hell are we gonna do now, and for me, I like singing with Matt; I like playing with Matt and I think it helped me to have him around, firing ideas off of him and getting feedback from a guy who I think is a great songwriter and a great musician."

Mays sings and plays guitar on "Uprising Down Under". The only other guest is Roberts' cousin Danielle Duval who sang on "The Bootleg Saint" and "The Resistance".

Roberts' band members figured more prominently on this album because they were there for the duration of the recording and not after all the songs

Rodney had a court injunction against the owners of the church, claiming that it was an illegally zoned business, Roberts says. So when the band started recording, City officials showed up to do noise readings and Rodney phoned every night to tell them to turn it down.

"So we had to board up the beautiful windows and we shut out all the sunlight, so the first bit of the record there was unbelievable amounts of light streaming through these old church windows and, all of a sudden, it was dark even during the day and that sort of changed the vibe of the record," says Roberts.

Still, when all was said and done, the vibe wasn't right for whatever reason, Rodney or no Rodney, sunlight or no light.

"I did have a philosophy behind making this record and that was, 'Let's go there; let's have this experience and see how it translates into making music and recording that music and whatever happens will happen,'" says Roberts. "It was an experiment."

"It was like Neil Young going and making a record of songs he'd never written before. That's

how people used to make records. That's how The Band used to go and make records. Bob Dylan and Robbie Robertson locked themselves in a room for 48 hours and came up with 120 songs."

After returning home to Montreal, Roberts went to see his friend Donovan, with whom he had been in the band Screwtape back at Loyola High School and even one called Happy Death Men in

THE BAND...

Sam Roberts: vocals, guitars, keyboards, strings

Dave Nugent: guitars, backing vocals

Eric Fares: keyboards, backing vocals, acoustic guitar

James Hall: bass

Josh Trager: drums, percussion on "The Gate", "Bridge To Nowhere", "With A Bullet", "Uprising Down Under", "Mystified, Heavy", "The Bootleg Saint", "The Resistance"

Bill Anthopoulos: drums, percussion on "Mind Flood",

"An American Draft Dodger In Thunder Bay"

Matt Mays sang and played guitar on "Uprising Down Under"

Danielle Duval sang on "The Bootleg Saint"

and "The Resistance"



Additional drum arrangements by George "El Condor" Donoso on "Mind Flood"

Co-produced by Sam Roberts, Joseph Donovan and Mark Howard

Recorded at The Old Church in Newrybar, NSW, Australia and at Stock

Market Audio in Montreal, Canada

Additional tracking at Studio Frisson in Montreal, Canada

Engineered by Joseph Donovan and Mark Howard

Studio Frisson session assisted by Don Murnaghan

Mixed by Stuart Sikes at Last Best Recordings in Dallas, Texas

Mastered by João Carvalho, at João Carvalho

Mastering in Toronto

Grade 8. They had been friends since Grade 7 and there was a trust and ease. Fares and Hall had also been one-time Screwtape members and Fares and new drummer Trager were also in Donovan's band Martowe, which recently disbanded. Point being, everyone was comfortable with each other in the studio together.

"What stuck out about the Australian [recording] was this amazing vibe to the songs, but I think it was a little bit too rough," says Donovan. "[Sam] was going for a rough and not super over-polished sound, but I think we just wanted to take it to another level just to sculpt them out a bit more.

"One of the things that's really key with Sam, particularly on this record, was he wanted to really capture a particular vibe. He really didn't want a very over-processed pitch-corrected, time-

corrected record. The thing about how things turned out in Australia, it turned out amazing, but some of the songs were being written on the spot so we just needed to take them a bit further."

Initially, Howard came to Montreal and the three of them all worked together at another studio, Frisson, for two weeks last summer choosing three songs deemed to be singles – "With A Bullet", "Bridge To Nowhere" and "The Gate".

"That was pretty freaky for me 'cause I was working with Mark Howard, who is a pretty big name," says Donovan. "I was a little bit intimidated coming in, but Mark is like the vibe-master. I learned a lot from him on controlling the atmosphere to get people to create what they're hoping for, and he was really welcoming and encouraging."

Then Howard moved on to other projects and Donovan was on his own co-producing with Roberts every day at Stock Market and pulling in Trager, Nugent or whoever, when needed.

Donovan has operated his 800-square-foot

studio, Stock Market Audio, for the past six years.

"We have a '70s touring live board – a Yamaha PM 2000 – which is not a terribly hi-fi board, but it's definitely kind of fat and girthy; we also have a lot of the Neve type preamps and some API preamps which are super top-end, which we used on this and for drums we wanted a real vintage-y vibe, so we ended up using some of the stuff through the console."

"A Stone Would Cry Out" was the only song from Australia they didn't "rip apart in some way," says Donovan. "The Gate" they chipped away at every chance they got, probably replacing everything in the end. "Mystified, Heavy" and "An American Draft Dodger In Thunder Bay" weren't even going to be on the album in their Australian form.

"We'd always work on 'The Gate'," says Donovan. "When the band first showed up at my studio to do the demos, as soon as they played that song, I was like, 'this is the song', but we battled it. It went through hundreds of changes.

"A lot of it was just getting the right sounds. It was also probably about 10 minutes long, the original version, and when we'd send it back to the label, they'd always say, 'Well this is going to be a single,' but at that point it was eight minutes long so the edit we ended up using for the four minutes radio version involved some pretty fancy trickery [laughs].

"We actually created a whole new section to tie in some other section. It's really just edits, but we had to make it flow, so we had to add a little breakdown section because there was an extended little

solo part, and then it went into the end vocal part and we just needed to find a bridge for those two, while scooping out a minute of time so we could add a little breakdown section.

"One of the songs that was definitely not going to make the record was 'An American Draft Dodger...' At the time, everyone was feeling that that wasn't really happening. We re-did some guitars and got some really heavy sounds and it had a lot of energy, but still wasn't quite happening.

"Sam was trying to do his vocal in the chorus, this harmony, and I just kept telling him, 'It's too high, you just can't sing it.' Sam had a really hard time in Australia because he was out surfing every day in the salt water and gargling with salt water. His vocal chords were really dry so a lot of the vocal performances [laughs] from Australia were just beat up, so he was saying, 'I think I've lost my voice,' but when he came back to Montreal, part of it was just rebuilding the confidence, but he was able to do a lot of different things than he was able to do in Australia.

"Like I remember, he came in and we were trying to work out a harmony and we both had our guitars out trying to figure out this thing and he said, 'You know what? I'm just going to sing the high one,' and he went in and totally nailed it and it completely brought the song to – 'There it is!'"

"'Mystified, Heavy' was another song that just wasn't going to make the record," Donovan reveals. "We did almost that entire song live at my studio. It was recorded in Australia, but we redid that song from scratch. I think that was key for Sam because he felt the song wasn't coming together how he wanted and we tried tracking things differently.

"We started with the drums or we started with them and a vocal, but we actually ended up with Sam singing that live while playing guitar with the drums. Everybody was playing together in the room, kind of like Neil Young did. Then with this pretty reverb-y keyboard track, it added a spooky element to the song. That was one of the last ones that we did and I think that he felt that was a blueprint of how they wanted to work on future material in that really organic live-feel way."

So could Roberts keep working on *Chemical City* even today or is he finally happy with it?

"Aside from the songwriting and the actual content, I feel like the *feeling* of the record is closer to what we are now as a band and that was really important to me," he says.

"I was reading *Shakey*, the Neil Young biography, while making this record and his constant emphasis on not doing anything that doesn't ring true just served as a mantra for me when trying to steer it in a certain direction, or evaluate whether something was right or wrong. I think that the rawness to me is something that I've always wanted to do and I think that comes through on this one more than anything we've ever done before." ●



Toronto music journalist Karen Bliss is the Canadian correspondent for *RollingStone.com*, and operates her own Canadian music news column, *Lowdown*, at <http://jam.canoe.ca/Music/Lowdown/>. In addition, she writes for *Gasoline*, *Teen Tribute*, *Words & Music*, *Access*, and others. She has also published an anti-racism children's picture book, *The Girl With Pinhead Parents*, available at chapters.indigo.ca and amazon.com.

THE SAL



YOUR VAN BLEW UP?

OKAY. I HAD A VERY DIFFERENT QUESTION IN MIND, BUT WHEN SALADS FRONTMAN, DARREN DUMAS, TELLS ME THEY HAD TO BLOW OUT TWO DAYS OF SHOWS DUE TO CATASTROPHIC CAR TROUBLE I HAD TO ASK.

JAMES PATTYN

LES SALADES/ LAS ENSALADAS

BY KEVIN YOUNG

AOS

"We've had the thing forever," he says. "It's been close to breaking down, but we've been trying to keep the faith. There is no faith. It just blew up at 358,312 kilometres later." He laughs, but the van is only the latest in a series of misfortunes. There was the break-in at guitarist, Dave Ziemba's studio – as a result the band lost irreplaceable guitars as well as a computer with rough recordings and ideas for their new record, *The Big Picture*, on hard-disk. After the band returned from shows in Australia more trouble was waiting. "Our drummer came home to find his car stolen. He's the only one who travels to jam with the rest of us – just a whirlwind of shit!" You can almost hear a good-natured shrug when he talks about the mishaps. A sort of "never mind, it will all work out" gesture that teeters between resignation and hope.

Having said that, if the new record and recent live shows are any indication, hope is winning out. The most important thing the band does is gig, says Darren. "If you dig the recordings, cool. If you like what we look like, cool. Come and see us live and we'll rip your head off." For anyone who's seen the band it's immediately clear that they're having a ripping good time on stage. Recently, with new material to showcase and positive feelings about the record, more so than ever: "This is the first record that we all really love – every song on the record."

He isn't belittling past efforts, it's just that this record is a big step. There was more focus on the songwriting, to begin with. "With *Fold A To B*, we wrote the songs and went straight into the studio as they were." It was on that record that Producer/Engineer Dan Brodbeck came into the picture. Once in London, ON's EMAC Studios for the *Fold* sessions they began to forge a working process that would carry over onto *The Big Picture*. This time out, Darren jokes, "We did this thing called 'pre-production', which was totally foreign to us. We'd spend a day per song, really trying to make the best song of each one. It's a phenomenal outcome." All the more satisfying given the long chunk of time between records, explains bassist, Chuck Dailey. "It was driving us crazy," he says of the interval between albums. And this time out the band intends to keep writing.

It's not hard to see why the band has gained an enduring reputation for being a good time, party band – there's the Web site, a song dedicated to David Lee Roth, their famous e-spliff, all the graphics pilfered from *MAD* Magazine for merch and artwork ... and clearly – if a recent gig photo featuring guitarist Dave on stage in imminent danger of becoming suddenly pant-less, is any indication – they still are. That said, sonically and lyrically *Picture* is a departure for them – The Salads are taking no prisoners this time out. The album is a relentless slab of in your face burners that rip it up almost without pause. The good times may keep rolling, but it's clear that they do so in spite of some hard growing up the band has done since their last record.

There's plenty of trademark Salads exuberance, but this is a far heavier record. Not darker necessarily, but a little more self-aware. There's a lot of positive thinking going on here, proving that, regardless of some of the things that have been happening in The Salads' world lately, there's little that will keep them from having a great time doing what they do best.

Songs like "Growing Up", the lead single, are a reflection of where the band is individually and as a unit. There's been a fair bit of change to deal with since the last record, both personally and for their business: The band has changed agents; Jake Gold's Management Trust has joined The Salads, Matrix Entertainment to manage them; their label, Toronto independent, Kindling Music, formerly distributed by EMI, is now distributed by Warner Canada and the implication is that Warner intends to market and release the record as if they were a direct signing.

With all the changes the band is increasingly optimistic. Touring has made them far tighter musically and personally, interest in the group is growing on MySpace.com and the band hope to capitalize on both the new record and their new infrastructure. Though Darren isn't sure where in the spectrum The Salads fit, the fact that Canadian music in general is hot right now doesn't hurt either. But Darren knows that a band's longevity is based on their ability to re-invent themselves and capitalize on their strengths. "We're a live band and we want to be touring as much as

possible. We still feel that's the best way to get the word out about The Salads."

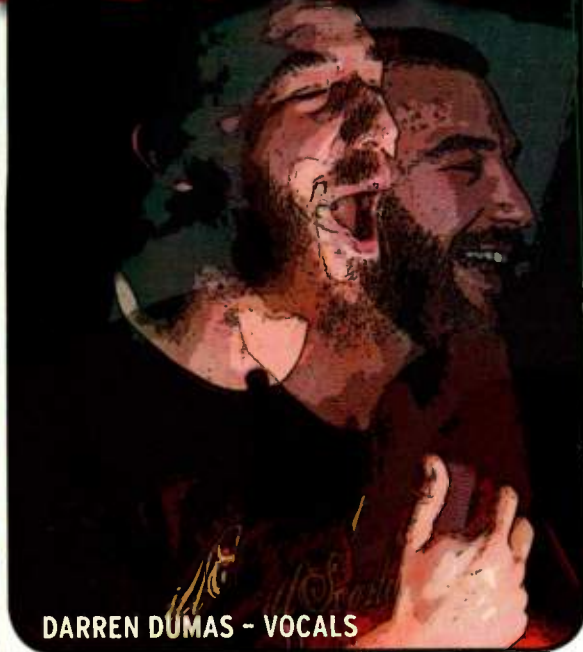
The Salads' founding core Chuck Dailey (Bass), Grant Taylor (Drums), and Dave Ziemba (guitar) have been bashing away together since their pre-teens. It wasn't until singer/lyricist Darren joined in 1999 that their sound began to solidify, as their name and touring resume suggest into a high-energy blend of ska, metal and punk. Along the way they've gathered fans by way of their own fiery shows, and while opening for artists like Our Lady Peace, Goldfinger, Gob, Blink-182, Fishbone, Quiet Riot and Poison.

Prior to The Salads, Darren was a Graphic Design student at George Brown College. "Most of my artistic expression was visual," he says. The switch from design to music happened the way it often does, naturally. "I had some friends in a jam band that did a weekly thing. I joined, we started writing our own songs and eventually we had some gigs with The Salads – it just kind of goes from there.

"I didn't really come from a family that had musical training, but I came from a family that loved music," he says. An avid concert-goer, from the time his parents would let him out of the house, he has widely varied tastes. "I like to think that all these other bands, that I've been listening to since I was a kid, educated me. I analyzed a lot of different groups; how they came up with certain sounds, why certain things in certain songs moved me the way they did." Of course the learning process never ends for musicians and since joining the band Darren has had a fair bit of vocal training. Simply a matter of sensible preparation to get ready for night after night shows, he says. Not a bad plan given the band's tendency to rip it up on stage. Though their influences run the gamut from old school '80s hard rock and metal to modern indie rock, one constant seems to be the band's enduring respect for acts that really blow the roof off the joint live and The Salads records are really a blueprint for their live show. "We all really clicked on a handful of groups – The Police, Van Halen, Fishbone; high energy positive stuff," he explains.

Subtlety and excess are present in equal doses in on both their records and on stage – ripping guitar solos, tight hooks that open up into heavy riffs and spacey textural breaks. It's obvious The Salads are serious players and they have extensive chops. Although they never beat you over the head with them, they're not about to hide the fact either. "My guys can play," Darren says simply. "We let Dave go off as far as solos go – there are way more on this record than the past." Even so, Ziemba has the ability to get a great deal across without being overbearing. Instead of shredding like mad at every opportunity, he

THE SALADS



DARREN DUMAS - VOCALS

takes a more lyrical approach that adds to the general cohesiveness of the record and the mood of individual songs.

For some artists, Darren says, "It seems like the goal is to not show off your playing; if you can play, that's nice, but nobody really cares. When Dave starts wanking on stage ... people love that shit - why not put it on the record? Because you don't think it's going to play on the radio? Take the guitar solo out for the radio version."

Darren can afford to speak confidently. On *Fold* they solidified their sound. This time they've taken the vibe they developed, refined it and infused it with far more weight - the sort

of record that plays well when you're moving and a welcome listen at any speed. "It's a much heavier record." The band are all fans of heavy music, Pantera in particular, and when Dimebag Darrell was shot they naturally went back into those records. "There's something different about playing a funk groove than hearing that fucking heavy rumble on stage that we really, really love."

On *Picture* that rumble is loud and clear, part of a natural progression informed by what they've heard since their last sessions. "We listen to a lot of new music. We're pretty in touch with what's going on and what we like and don't like, and very vocal about it with each other." This degree of candour is something they take into the writing process, along with a willingness to let their songs develop naturally along the way. "There's only so much you can plan for the song. Ultimately, it's going to turn out the way it's meant to be."

Still, pre-production figured heavily in the process this time out. Recorded largely in EMAC Studios, the songs that made it onto *Picture* were thoroughly and repeatedly thought through during the writing, arranging and recording process. "We've been writing this record forever," Chuck says. "We wrote about 30 songs that didn't necessarily have vocal parts or lyrics. A lot of that stuff was done on our dollar store microphone," he laughs. "A lot of it was also done by Dave, our guitar player, sitting in his home studio, presenting us with ideas and then running with it from there."

In some cases they would keep only a portion of the song, a vocal melody, for example, toss the rest and re-write. "That's the beauty of Pro Tools," relates Chuck. This process started in Ziemba's home Pro Tools rig. "It was awesome. We could take Darren's vocal parts and shift them around in the song. Take his pre-chorus and turn it into the chorus if it was a better hook. We'd move it over and take a listen." Rather than discuss and debate changes, they simply tried various arrangements and honed in on the core elements of the songs. "We did it until everybody was happy with the songs." The result, says Darren, may actually be heavier than they anticipated. Although The Salads' writing and arranging process has always been fairly collaborative, most songs start with Dave. He'll take a riff or a song idea to the band, each member will put their stamp on it and help hammer out the arrangement. Darren then takes a demo of the song and loops it until a melody or lyrical hook sticks.

Obviously, in any collaboration there are inevitable disagreements. The Salads, however, honestly seem to be able to keep the strife from boiling over. "These guys have been playing together since Grade 6 - almost 20 years," Darren says. There's a depth of understanding and mutual respect. "We still fight, but we understand that we're a family and this is the family business now. You're not going to move forward if you don't listen to somebody else's suggestion." The important thing, he says, is to listen with respect and either suggest alternatives, or find the middle ground.

The band seems to be finding a middle ground lyrically as well; between the good time, party music vibe they're known for and a more serious approach. It's still a fun record, Darren says, but his stance as a lyricist has changed since *Fold*. "I was, like, who am I to tell people what's right and what's wrong and preach to people and tell them what to do with their lives?" Still, *Picture* is more an extension of some of the sentiments expressed on *Fold* rather than an abrupt about face. Tracks like "Growing Up" and "Better Way" are more a call for people to get together and make change happen than sermon. Other songs, like "Circles", are more intensely personal, but they still allow latitude for listeners to find a broader meaning. The band never falls into the trap of being so specific about their politics or experiences that you feel as if their point agenda is being forced on you. In fact, as a new lyrical partnership developed, they made a conscious effort not to...

Although Darren is the band's main lyricist, roughly a third of the record's words were co-writes with Chuck. Both Darren and Chuck write primarily from their own experiences. "I feel more comfortable writing what I am familiar with," says Darren. "At the same time I try to take those personal experiences and generalize them so that other people can identify." So that listeners feel that, on some level, he's speaking directly to them, something that comes across particularly well on "Circles".

Throughout, the co-written tracks fit



DAVE ZIEMBA - GUITAR

- ERNIE BALL AXIS
- ERNIE BALL SUPERSPORT
- ERNIE BALL SUPERSPORT MM90
- ERNIE BALL ALBERT LEE
- ERNIE BALL STRINGS & PICKS
- MESA BOOGIE ROAD KING
- MESA BOOGIE RECTIFIER POWERAMP
- MESA BOOGIE RECTO CAB 4 X 12 (X12)
- MESA BOOGIE RECTO CAB 2 X 12
- LINE 6 M100 PRO
- LINE 6 ECHO PRO
- LINE 6 FILTER PRO
- TC ELECTRONIC G FORCE
- FURMAN PLB
- GCX SWITCHER (X2)
- BOSS DS1, OC2
- DIGITECH WHAMMY
- AN AUDIO BLUES DRIVER
- XOTIC AC BOOST
- ROBERT HOLMES CUSTOM PEDALBOARDS
- ERNIE BALL VOLUME PEDALS (X2)
- DIGITAL MUSIC CORP GROUND CONTROL PRO
- GROUND LINK AXIS ELECTRONICS BS2
- CLYDESDALE ROAD CASES

seamlessly into the record. "We work really well together," Chuck says simply. "Circles", which Chuck wrote all the lyrics for, doesn't seem the least bit out of place and is one of the album's most resonant tracks. Personal losses are present in every line, but it's not hard to put your own stamp on – to think back to a time when you felt as if you were becoming something you weren't terribly happy with and wanted to get back to your centre. The song is a fair bit more personal for Chuck: his observations of a family member diagnosed with Alzheimer's and slipping away.

"It's a really complex subject," Chuck says, explaining that the lyrics are drawn from conversations and observations that are intensely personal. "It's something that's really hard for anybody to understand. I took a really broad subject and wrote in a way that people could understand." He takes a point of view that virtually anyone can relate to, but understanding the actual context of the song doesn't interfere so much as make the track even more potent. The same is true of "Powerless" where their co-writing took what was a deeply personal, brutally specific song and again made it broadly accessible. "With Darren writing on it as well, it expanded the whole theme of the song. It turned it from being about one person to being about a whole bunch of things."

Both Chuck and Darren are refreshingly forthcoming about what the inspirations for certain songs are – showing no evident fear that by being specific the lyrics will lose the universal quality they both obviously value. "We had talked a lot about making the songs more 'we' and 'us'. Involving other people rather than just saying, 'I am Chuck and this is my problem'. 'Circles' doesn't have to be about Alzheimer's; it could be about being lost in any situation."

You get a sense of a group of guys stepping back and taking a good long look at life, but staying positive in spite of occasional adversity. "These things are going to happen," Darren says. "We all grow old." The album doesn't linger on these themes, but they're present in greater force than on the previous record: on "Growing Up", "It's All Right", "Powerless" – time passes, the good, the bad and the inevitable come about, things you want to say to people you will ultimately have to say goodbye to, in some cases, far sooner than you're ready to, get said – the recognition of grief and change by people who are gaining a clearer understanding of it.

Though Darren and Chuck want people to relate and find their own experiences between the lines, some tracks that don't mince words at all. They may not name names, but their sentiments are much less broad. The relentless, "Got No Love", for example. "Of all the songs on the record, that one is really plain and simple. At least to me," Darren explains. "It's about dealing with substance abuse among friends. You still love them," he says. "But if you don't love yourself then I can't do nothing for you." No warm, "it'll be okay" to offer, there's no love to give and

- PEARL MASTERS MSX WHITE MARINE PEARL W/BLACK HARDWARE
- PEARL MSX DRUMS 24" KICK, 22" KICK DRUM
- PEARL MSX TOMS: 10", 12", 16", 18"
- PEARL SNARE 14" X 6.5" DENNIS CHAMBER SIGNATURE MODEL
- PEARL 12" FIRECRACKER SNARE
- PEARL ELIMINATOR PEDALS
- COOL CLAWS LUG ACCESSORIES
- SABIAN HHX 22" GARIBALDI RIDE
- SABIAN AAX 16" 7" 18" 19" CRASHES
- SABIAN HHX 7" 18" CRASHES
- SABIAN HHX 14" POWER MATS
- SABIAN HHX 15" GROOVE MATS
- STUDIO STICKS VATER SUGAR MAPLE BLAZERS
- LIVE STICKS VATER HICKORY POWER SB
- EVANS G2 CLEAR TOM HEADS
- EVANS EMAD BASS DRUM HEADS
- EVANS HVB DRY SNARE HEADS



GRANT TAYLOR - DRUMS

no redemption for a character that, in the end, got what they deserved.

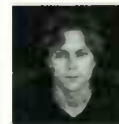
Picture doesn't have much patience for filler – The arrangements are relentless in terms of payoff. That's not to say there aren't quieter moments – more delicate guitar work that showcase Dave Ziemba's ample chops, as well as his ability to reflect the mood of a song in a sound or riff. But they never go on overly long. It isn't hard to lose sight of a song's intent in an effort to get your part down, just so, on tape. Nor is it unusual to be unsure of how to deliver a lyric during tracking. But The Salads don't seem to have any difficulty in that department. There's no shortage of clever moments that *could* distract a listener; that *might* make them feel like they caught the band trying too hard. But The Salads execute them so well they seem natural – a hint of the kind of musicianship and mayhem you might expect at a live show. Of course it helps that the album is held together by its tone as much as by tight, crushing riffs that would make KISS blush. The kind of "air guitar" moments that make listening a pleasure, but interfere with typing this article.

Simply put, The Salads have a knack for getting them-

- ERNIE BALL STINGRAY 5 MUSIC MAN
- 6 X 10 AMPEG CABINET
- GALLIEN KRUEGER BOOB HEAD
- ERNIE BALL SLINKY STRINGS & PICKS
- BOSS TUNERS
- GLYDESDALE ROAD CASES

selves across on record that stems from the fact they're just having a hell of a good time being The Salads, even, Chuck explains, at less than ideal times.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO PASS ALONG THE SALADS' VIRTUAL "E-SPLIFF" GO TO WWW.THESALADS.COM.



Kevin Young is a Toronto-based freelance writer and musician.



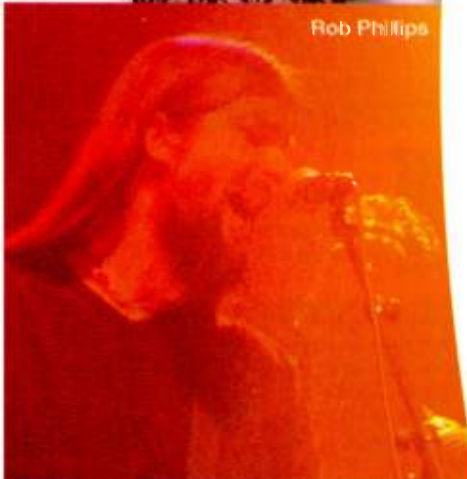
CHUCK DAILEY - BASS



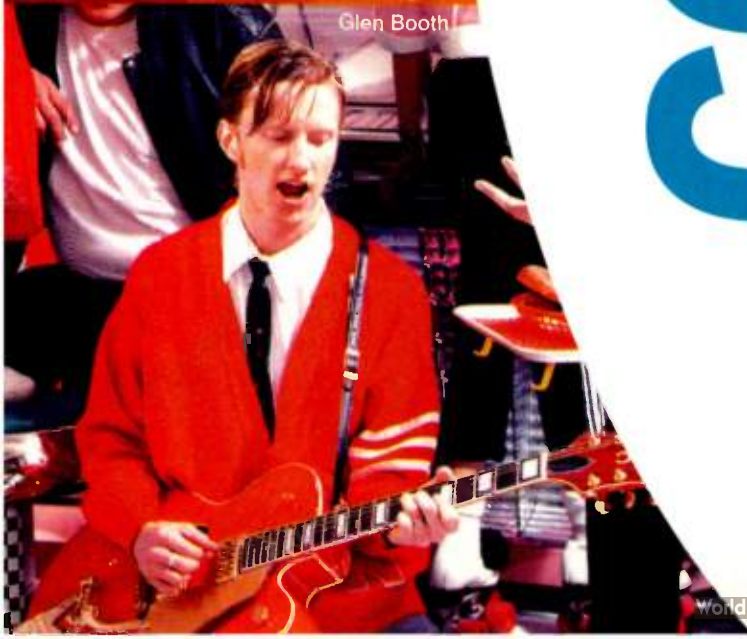
Shania Twain



Rob Phillips



Glen Booth



LEGENDS

From bathroom mirror air

band moments, to sorting out just the right chain of effects to cop that sweet sound you heard on your favourite record, at some point every musician spends a little time putting themselves into another artist's shoes...

Craig Martin, producer of Classic Albums Live (CAL), has a long history of performing other people's music. "I quit college to take a two-week gig in Parry Sound playing Teenage Head and Beatles songs to a bunch of rednecks. That was 1980." Then he formed the Ramblers, a Stones tribute he still plays with today and did 'Legends gigs' – the very same that spawned JD Fortune of *INXS Rockstar* fame. "It's a death gig. I hated the lack of attention to musical detail. My Stones band was never about the look – all we cared about was the music. I would play a dive one night with the Ramblers make \$100 and then the next night, hit the Legends stage, slap on a wig, dance like a fool for three songs and make \$500."

When Martin started out he was playing six weekly shows in a crappy hotel north of nowhere for 70 bucks a week, then getting in the van on Sunday to head for the next town. Over the years he's seen his fair share of weirdness, including, he says, "guys praying to their dead idols for guidance."

Times have changed some – there's still a lot of weirdness out there, but there's also a demand for tributes and various flavours of impersonators that's growing as more classic icons of rock hang up their codpieces and guitars forever. Increasingly the tributes and impersonations are going upscale both visually and musically. Creating and touring the next big thing based on a former big thing is lucrative – done smartly. Even still, few people find just the right mix to resonate with crowds...

"The audience is age 10-70 and looking for entertainment value," says Ralph Schmidtke of Jeff Parry Promotions. The company has been promoting shows for 25 years, including Rain and The Pink Floyd Experience and giving people shows that satisfy their lust for nostalgia.

It takes a fair bit of work. "Take the example of the Pink Floyd Experience," says Ralph. "Jeff was travelling through England and saw the Australian Pink Floyd on tour." Interested, he called them to see if he could broker a deal to bring them to North America. With no deal forthcoming, Jeff built The Pink Floyd Experience and put it on the road, instead. Sales were so strong they were able to bring the show back twice to Toronto. Two nights after they wrapped, in rolled the Aussie Floyd to the same venue. "What does that tell you?" Ralph asks. One: people love Pink Floyd. But also that there's a huge market for tributes with the right hook, at the right time. These Floyd tributes are major productions, big money, risk and inflatable pigs to boot. To put something like this on the road Ralph has a checklist when scouting potential markets; "The right radio partners, the right venues, the right agent," he says. Schmidtke uses Beatles tribute, Rain as an example. "Nobody's seen the Beatles in a long time – with Rain you see Ed Sullivan to Abbey Road. Once it plays in a market it kind of sells itself." The shows are a hybrid concert/Broadway show. "We hate the word tribute. It's more an experience and you're getting to relive it." When it comes to taking this sort of act upscale, special mention has to be made of The Musical Box. The Quebec-based Genesis

WIGS

A Survival Guide To Playing In Tribute & Cover Bands

BY KEVIN YOUNG

TMX

Toronto Music Expo

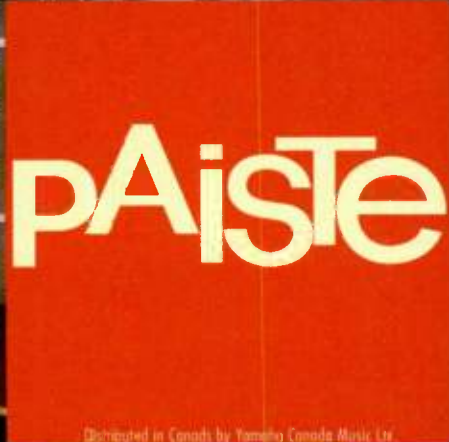
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World Radio History



Hands In Your Pocket

- The Record Royalty Revisited

by Miro Oballa

business

The views and opinions expressed in this article are not meant to substitute for legal advice, which should be sought in each particular instance.

By now you've likely heard the news before; after all it's no secret. Everyone from Steve Albini to Prince to Courtney Love has taken the music industry to task about it. Even the gloved one himself was heard cursing out Tommy Mottola (president of Sony Music at the time) and the rest of the record companies for conspiring against artists. The bottom line is this: record royalties paid to artists are paltry; most artists spend their entire careers unrecovered and never see any payments on the back end. So now that you know, what are you going to do about it?

The truth is that even though the game is fixed, you still have to play if you want to win. While there are a few artists who have managed to remain completely independent throughout their career, for the most part you will have to get in bed with a record label (be it major or indie) at some point, if you decide to enter into the business of music.

The most common form of record royalty structure today is known as a "points deal". A points deal is the traditional means of calculating a record royalty, and the "points" refer to the percentage of either the wholesale or retail price of the album, which the artist receives as a royalty. These days, a typical wholesale price (PPD in the industry) is roughly \$12, while a typical retail price (SRLP in the industry) is around \$18. Thus, when receiving points on a record, "of what?" is just as important of a question as "how many?", as 10 points of SRLP (.10 x \$18 = \$1.80) is a higher royalty than 14 points of PPD (.14 x \$12 = \$1.68).

Whenever you are offered a points royalty, you need to convert those points into what's known as a penny rate; this will tell you the actual dollar amount you will receive per record. A few record labels are kind enough to express the royalty in penny rate terms from the start, or to at least provide you with a penny rate calculation if you ask. In most cases though, this calculation will be left to you, your manager or your lawyer. If only the penny rate calculation were as straightforward as in the above example; unfortunately, it's not. For a true indication of what your penny rate is, you have

to account for a number of reductions to your royalty. These stinkers are sprinkled throughout the royalty section of your record contract like dog droppings at the park. The most common deductions are the off the top deduction of the producer royalty (3%) from the artist royalty, and then reductions for packaging (25%) and free goods (15%) - copies given to retailers for free or at a discount - from what's left of the artist royalty. Going back to our previous example of an artist royalty of 10 points of SRLP, the penny rate calculation is as follows:

Record royalty: 10% less producer royalty of 3% = 7%

Less Packaging Deduction of 25% = 5.25%

Less Free Goods discount of 15% = 4.2%

Penny Rate = .042 x \$18 = \$0.76

If your album and videos cost your record label a combined \$150,000 to produce, it means you need to sell just shy of 200,000 albums before you see a dime of royalties. FYI - platinum status in Canada is 100,000 records; maybe MJ hasn't totally lost it after all.

Other common deductions which may reduce your royalty even further are: the sale of singles (usually paid at 75% of the album rate), the selling of your album at a discounted price point (i.e. the ever popular introductory artist pricing), the use of television advertising by the label to promote the album, the sale of the album in foreign markets, and the sale of the album via a so-called "new media technology" (some record contracts from 1999 were still calling CDs a new media technology).

Thankfully, not all labels follow this royalty model. With the coming of the new millennium, and the push towards greater artist awareness of the pitfalls of traditional record royalty structures, many independent labels have begun to offer artists what's known as a "50/50 deal". So named because it refers to a 50/50 split of revenue between artist and record label, once the label has recouped its expenses. On the surface, this type of deal is much better for the artist since it represents a true sharing of rewards. Even here however, dangers lurk beneath still waters.

In a 50/50 deal, always pay close attention to exactly how "Gross Revenue", "Net

Revenue" and/or "Expenses" are defined. Gross and Net Revenue should include any advances as well as royalties the label may receive (often an indie label will license out your album in a foreign territory to another label, and in some cases receive in advance for such license). Expenses should be strictly defined to ensure that the marketing company that is handling the marketing of your album, which also happens to be a subsidiary of the label itself, doesn't overcharge the label for marketing expenses that you then have to recoup off the top before you and the label split profits.



Also pay attention to the structure of the record label offering you the 50/50 deal. How far down the food chain is it: (i) does it deal directly with a distributor, be it indie or major; (ii) is it distributed by another company which is in turn distributed by an independent or major distributor; or even worse (iii) does it have a license deal with another indie or major label rather than a distribution deal? In scenarios (ii) and (iii), when you work out the math, you may find out that the 50/50 deal actually works out to less money in your pocket than a traditional points deal.

Don't expect major labels to be offering you 50/50 deals anytime soon. Honestly, their overhead is simply too large to be able to pull off that kind of structure and still remain profitable. Thus for the near future at least, both points deals and 50/50 deals will continue to exist.

When the time comes to snuggle up to the record label of your choosing, don't forget to have an entertainment lawyer or other industry professional review the contract with you before signing! Even though the game is fixed; with the right knowledge, you can still come out on top.

Miro Oballa is an entertainment lawyer with the law firm of Taylor Mitsopoulos Burshtein, a law firm for Avril Lavigne, Nelly Furtado, Sum 41, Sam Roberts, Billy Talent, Three Days Grace and others. He can be found at www.tmblawyers.com.

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World Radio History



Recording Demos For A Music Publisher

by Rick Rose

I've been asked this question many times through my travels. I have these songs that I wrote and I think they suit certain artists on the radio, what should I do? I've heard this come up from aspiring songwriters from all across the world.

Since I've been a staff songwriter for Publishers such as Sony ATV Music in Nashville, Warner Chappell in Toronto, and BTB Music in New York City, I have had releases on labels such as Polygram, Columbia, Elektra, Attic, Unidisc, Universal and many others. I have also worked with and collaborating with Incredible Producers such as Mick Ronson (David Bowie, Bob Dylan, John Mellencamp) Rodney Mills (38 Special, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Average White Band), Jim Steinman (Meatloaf, Celine Dion) Paul A. Rothchild (The Doors, Janis Joplin, Joni Mitchell) Desmond Child (Bon Jovi, Kiss, Aerosmith) and have also written with some of the world's most prolific, very talented songwriters such as Monty Powell (Keith Urban, Tim McGraw, Brooks & Dunn), Anton Fig (David Letterman's Late Night Drummer), Tom Douglas (Martina McBride, Collin Raye), Billy Falcon (Bon Jovi, John Berry) and many others. All my experiences working with these great friends and very talented people is that recording demos for a recording career and recording demos for a songwriting career are like oil and vinegar: they have to be treated separately and different applications go into the recording mode to justify the product.

Recording a demo for a major label to kick-start a recording career is a lot different for a Music Publisher. To become a recognized recording artist today, it's just not about the songs and production, it's about everything. The way you are as a person, your tenacity, resilience, perseverance, your outlook, your work ethic, your patience, your understanding of the music business, how much you are willing to sacrifice (emotionally and financially). Are you

willing to give up a great paying secure job with benefits, perks, security and go for it and put everything on the line?

Luck, timing, people pulling for you, likeable qualities, long lasting impressions,



hurry up and wait, ups and downs, co-operating, having to deal with the new phenomenon such as *Canadian Idol* and *American Idol* and finding the room to break through and be noticed. You've also got My Space.com now! So basically being a songwriter that gets paid to write songs sounds like a good job, doesn't it? Yes, if you have a huge, hit song charted, it's a great life, both financially and artistically, but you have to get there first...

So here it goes: it's pretty basic when it comes to recording demos for a Music Publisher. Don't go crazy on the production. Keep it simple, clean, tight, easy to listen to, don't complicate it, don't be fancy, and let the melody and lyric carry the song. In Nashville, for many years producers loved to listen to demos with just a vocal and piano or acoustic and piano. I personally think it's changing because they are so swamped with

songs that if something doesn't sound like a hit, they won't get it. Make sure your song is complete with melody and lyrics – what I mean by that is that every word counts and every melodic note counts. Your arrangement doesn't have to be that elaborate, but if you have signature musical hooks, let them hear a few times in the song where you think it should be.

Make sure you hire vocalists that are easy on the ears – make sure pitch and phrasing is right on! Don't have a Broadway singer singing a country song or have a heavy metal singer sing a jazz song ... make sure you match the voice with the melody and song setting. If a song has a very strong emotional lyric with a lot of imagery, maybe just a piano, cello, percussion, you can do all that in one of these great computer software programs. When it comes to dance, hip-hop, club, house music, then you better surround yourself with the real deal or they definitely won't get it. No long intros, no seven-minute songs. I know "Hey Jude" and "Stairway To Heaven" worked, but that's unexplainable, that's all about the art, and that was 30 years ago.

You will need to be prolific and very creative and very inspired at all times, both lyrically and musically, because it's not about writing three songs a year. It's about writing many songs a year. Titles, choruses and vocal performances are all important because the vocalist has to make the publisher believe the song. Sometimes it's just a case of the singer not justifying the real emotion of the song or maybe he was more focused on showing off his vocal range and not telling the story. Don't have the vocal performance sound like vocal exercises – you can do that for your friends. Always remember that the artist and producer are going have the final say on what song they want to record.

Good luck, and let the artist that wants to record your song shine!

Rick Rose is a Staff Songwriter of Sony ATV Music in Nashville and owns the Music School (Niagara Institute Of Music And Arts) and Jingle Company (Tangerine Broadcast Signatures). Rick can be reached at rickrose.ent@cogeco.ca.

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World Radio History

Wendy Lands And The Zen Of Bend

James Linderman Interviews Wendy Lands...

writing

This is part one of a two-part interview.

Developing songwriters often speak about their artistic goals with terms like “chance” and “hope” while developed songwriters tend to use terms like “risk” and “faith”. The difference may seem like a matter of semantics but, in fact, the difference is a matter of being much more daring but in a way that is very deliberate; proactive and not just reactive, to your art. It’s all about having tremendous purpose with respect to what is being created and why.

Wendy Lands first appeared before my ears at a Songwriters of Canada Bluebird North about seven years ago where she sang songs from her CD

Angels And Ordinary Men and her performance that night was full of the daring, and yet also deliberate stuff, that convinces you as a listener, that you are hearing an artist that’s almost completely fully formed. Her sense of purpose was absolutely striking.

Wendy has been living for the last five years in Los Angeles with her husband, (and often collaborator) Jim Gillard and their daughter Chloe, but has recently returned to live in Toronto. Despite having had many “eye-widening” experiences in the “city of lost angels”, in the end she realized how much she missed Canada.

While in L.A. she met and was asked to write with many of music’s most legendary songsmiths but the co-write that was most memorable was her session with Grammy award winning singer/songwriter Melissa Manchester.

In a recent interview, Wendy Lands talked about this co-write, which ended up with a cut on Melissa Manchester’s new CD *When I Look Down That Road* in the form of a song called “Bend”.

Q: Where and when was “Bend” written?

A: Bend was mostly written at Melissa Manchester’s home in Tarzana, CA in her amazingly inspiring/intimidating writing room. The walls are painted a most vivid red, with half-burned candles everywhere

and the most incredible photos of her with people like Bill Clinton and Barbra Streisand, as well as posters from her concerts at Carnegie Hall and platinum records for songs she sang, as well as wrote, covering the walls. Did you know she wrote, “Whenever I Call You Friend”, with Kenny Loggins? Every time I looked up from my page to chase an idea out of my head, I’d see another cool article or photo on the wall and get caught up in it.

Q: Were you a fan of Melissa Manchester as a recording artist and writer before meeting with her to write?

A: I’ve always been a huge fan of all those singer/songwriter girls from the ’70s, like Melissa and Carly Simon, Carol King, Bette Midler, and on the darker side, and maybe a little more profoundly, by Rickie Lee Jones.



However, I remember seeing Melissa Manchester on Entertainment Tonight many years ago and telling my friend that I really felt a connection to her specifically.

Q: Was your initial contact with Melissa Manchester by chance or did one of you deliberately seek to write together?

A: I was a Warner Chappell writer in L.A. at the time, I think it was 2003, and Melissa was with Warner too. We’d have these writer’s meetings in the boardroom once a month and there were always the coolest writers there. The first one I attended, Paul Williams (“We’ve Only Just Begun”, “Old Fashioned Love Song”, “Evergreen”, etc.), and Melissa were both there and I thought, wouldn’t it be a great experience to write with these people ... there must be so much to learn from their talent and experience,

little did I know I’d eventually end up writing with both of them.

Q: Who arranged that first writing session with Melissa Manchester?

A: I think she had put the word out to Judy Stakee at Warner that she was looking to write with new blood for her next album. Judy sent her some of my stuff and then called me and said “This is Melissa Manchester’s number, call her, she wants to write with you!” So I walked around with her number burning a hole in my pocket for a few days and then got the nerve up to call her. I remember I asked if she’d like to go out for lunch to talk about what she wanted to write about and she said, “I don’t do lunch anymore.” I thought OK, this lady means business!

Q: Did either of you come into the room with some of the initial lyrics or music that ended up in this song? Did you go in with a handful of possible song ideas?

A: I have a book that I keep ideas in and a few pages at the back with titles, only. When I became a staff writer I started trying to think a little more simply, a little more commercially and a little less poetically. When I sat down with her, I read a few titles to her from my book that I thought were her speed but by the silence in the air, I quickly realized I’d thought wrong!

To find out how the song “Bend” came into being from this writing session, tune into the next issue of *CM*.

James Linderman lives and works at theharmonyhouse, a music lesson, songwriting and recording pre-production facility in Newmarket, ON. James writes songwriting articles and music book reviews for The Muse’s Muse Web magazine, www.musesmuse.com (3 million readers monthly), Canadian Musician magazine, Songwriters magazine, Professional Musician magazine, Songwriters of Wisconsin International and The Dallas Songwriters Association. Contact James at theharmonyhouse@rogers.com.

And Wendy Lands is a singer/songwriter who has performed with Les Miserables, in addition to releasing two of her own CDs: Angels & Ordinary Men, and Wendy Lands Sings The Music Of The Pianist Wladyslaw Szpilman. Find her online at www.wendylands.com.



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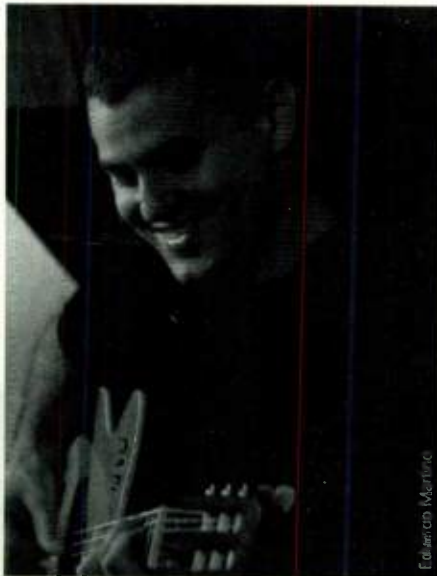
much listening to the latest sessions as I go back and forth to the studio. For more info on that, check out www.aaronmclain.com. But, if I'm not listening to my stuff, more than likely I'm listening to Seal, Coldplay, or Bowie.



Lionel Loueke

World Music scene and most of my gigs are related to these styles.

Jason Hook: I write and record non-stop. I run several small businesses, some music-related, some not. I love to eat sushi, go to the gym and



Ruben de La Corte

Frank Gambale: *Everything Must Go* - Steely Dan, *Ten Summoner's Tales* - Sting.

Keith Jenkins: A compilation I made of '60s Girl Groups like the Ronettes, the Angels, the Cookies and the Supremes.

Steve Stevens: Well it's an iPod ... but Avenged Sevenfold (some good guitars and drums in there), loads of flamenco.

Ulf Wakenius: Actually my latest CD "Notes From The Heart" (ACT) just released in the US. I love the sound on it. Definitely the best acoustic guitar sound I ever had. It is recorded by the master engineer Jan-Erik Kongshaug. The other one is a recording from London House with Oscar Peterson. Amazing!

What are your activities when not touring?

Damon Wood: I like to catch up on Harmonious Junk and write new tunes, book gigs and plan for the future. Also, I enjoy giving guitar lessons and jamming with friends.

Georges Herbert: I have a small studio called StudioArts and I'm involved with numerous projects as a producer/engineer and musician; also, I do some jazz gigs and in the summer time - I sail quite a lot.

Lionel Loueke: Staying with my family and playing few gigs in town and listen to some music.

Daryl Stuermer: I'm usually in my studio writing or working on various projects. When I get outside I'm into bike riding and working out at the gym.

Ruben de La Corte: I live in New York City. When I'm not touring, I perform with local artists and bands. I also record a lot in different projects as well as Jingles. NYC has a large Brazilian and

drink Starbucks. I avoid going out to bars at night, and try to spend more time planning my future.

Dominic Miller: Wife, kids extended family, chess, studying music and trying to compose my own.

Aaron Mclain: When I'm not touring, I'm either in my home studio working on my solo stuff. If I want to get outside, I'll go hiking. There are some cool trails near where I live. I'm also a big fan of going to the movies.

Frank Gambale: I love to read, hike, take pictures, play piano and hang with my friends and enjoy life's finer things...

Keith Jenkins: I have a 19-month-old daughter who keeps me pretty busy. When I get time, I write and record on my laptop. I still practice guitar a lot. Learning to play jazz is an eternal challenge. It's like the golf of music. I'm also trying to play drums and keyboards. I have no hobbies besides music.

Steve Stevens: Writing and recording in my home studio. Spending my time with my girlfriend doing all the normal things people do.

Ulf Wakenius: Taking care of my son that is four years old, quite a task and just keep all the stuff working, practice, gigs, family, etc. Full-time job!

What's the best part about your gig?

Damon Wood: The best part of the gig with James Brown is hanging out, smoking weed with the cats in the band!! And meeting cool people like Levon!

Georges Herbert: The best part about the Anne Murray gig is playing with an incredible singer like Anne and with really terrific musicians and singers. We also have an amazing crew that we tour with - they're the best!

Lionel Loueke: The best part is during the gig.

Daryl Stuermer: I found my passion in music, guitar playing and writing music. On top of that I'm making a living doing it and getting paid for doing something I would do anyway. I've never felt like I've ever had a job and it's great!

Ruben de La Corte: The best part about my gig is to be able to play music, on a stage for an audience in all continents. To make a living playing music and doing what you love is the best thing. With both Angelique Kidjo and Eliane Elias I have the huge privilege and pleasure to travel to and perform in many corners of the earth, to get in contact with different cultures, different public and learn a lot from all this music-cultural-travel exchange.

Jason Hook: In addition to being free to be myself (an aggressive rock player) I would have to say the travel. Most people will never leave their state or country. I have been all over Europe, South America, Australia, Japan, Canada and All the great places in the States. It's really freaky how small the world seems when you get on airplanes. I remember visiting the Alamo in San Antonio, TX, and then being in Paris the next weekend, or going from Key West, FL to Singapore. I'm finishing this interview right now on a flight returning from Madrid, Spain. Hilary's organization is filled with driven, mature and professional people. It's inspiring to be surrounded with people that are at the top of their field.

Dominic Miller: Just having it. Every time I wake up I am grateful to have what I still consider the best gig in the world. It's like I win the lottery every day. I jump out of bed and am raring to go. The other best part is to play with some of the best musicians (and drummers, that joke *always* works!) on the planet.

Aaron Mclain: One of the best parts about my gig is that I get to play with some really amazing players. It really helps to keep me on my toes. Also the fact that Marc gives me a chance to do my thing, really helps with the exposure. Overall the whole experience has made me a better player. And for this, I'm very grateful.

Frank Gambale: I am one of the lucky ones. I get to play my music and tour different parts of the world doing it - doesn't get any better than that.

Keith Jenkins: Getting to perform all over the world with a living legend, and not having to work a 9-5!

Steve Stevens: Recording and playing with Billy Idol after 24 years is a pretty amazing accomplishment. The songs have really taken on a life of themselves. I am able to express myself in just about every way that I want. I am very, very happy to be doing what I love for so many years.

Ulf Wakenius: When you are reaching the next level and you disconnect with everything else but the music. That is an outstanding feeling. It happens pretty often playing with Oscar Peterson.



Multi-Instrumentalist Levon Ichkhanian is a D'Addario clinician. He plays guitars, Oud, Bouzouki, Mandol and Banjitar. Levon's musical experiences range from producing,

composing and recording to touring. He has played on over 80 commercially released CDs. Levon's travels, the follow up to after hours with guests John Patitucci and Paquito D'Rivera blends contemporary Jazz with worldbeat overtones and features Alain Caron. Upon his return from A.R. Rahman's 3D world tour, Levon is currently playing in the Orchestra for The Lord Of The Rings stage production. Contact Levon through www.levonmusic.com.

don't want to start really getting in to it towards the end of the show. You want to burn from start to finish.

Frank Gambale: I just play the guitar ... sometimes I play chromatic scales but generally I like to just improvise to warm up.

Keith Jenkins: It's hard to find a quiet place to practice before a show so I don't really have a routine. I tend to play better if I go on cold. Too much pre-show jamming burns me out.

Steve Stevens: I have a guitar with me for at least two hours before a show. In that time I will play scales, riffs and solos.

Ulf Wakenius: I have no specific routines. I just always think about warming up slowly.

Has anyone caught your attention in the guitar world recently?

Damon Wood: A guitarist I've come across recently that I really like is Omar-Rodriguez-Lopez of The Mars Volta. He uses a lot of dissonance and Middle Eastern scales to great effect. Interesting sounds and hard driving rhythms – world metal for the new millennium.

Georges Herbert: I heard this guy called Bill Coons on "Espace Musique" and really liked what I heard. He plays like I envision playing.

Ruben de La Corte: Lionel Loueke, (guitarist from Benin-West Africa who plays with Herbie Hancock and Terence Blanchard), Wayne Krantz, Chico Pinheiro and Nelson Veras (Brazilian guitarists), Ibrahim Ag Alhabib (from Tinariwen, band from Mali).

Jason Hook: Not really. So many of the guitarists today are just repeating styles you've heard

before. I really thought Dimebag Darrell was an innovator. His approach was fresh and wild. It's such a shame that he is no longer with us.

Dominic Miller: I hate guitarists – too many clever bastards out there! I do suffer from guitar envy sometimes but I have come to realize it's a waste of time. I just do what I do and they do the same. But how the fuck can so many people be so good? I am very fortunate to be working at the level I do. I haven't really heard anything new for a while. But whenever Jeff Beck plays anything, it sounds new. Bastard! Someone who recently blew me away, and I am still recovering from, is Richard Bona on bass.

Aaron McClain: Well I must say that John Mayer has been making some really cool noise. I really like his playing. I've always been a fan of The Edge – the way he approaches his guitar parts and songwriting. David Gilmore to me is one of the most emotional players as well as Santana. Not to mention Jeff Beck who deserves credit as being one of the best cats around. There are so many players out there that I take my hat off to.

Frank Gambale: Yes, a couple of young Scottish kids and an English guy also ... the Scottish guys Ben MacDonald and Scottish bassist Kevin Glasgow ... absolutely burning ... also Alex Hutchings ... lives in Bristol ... fine young talents all of them. I was also in Tel Aviv recently and there's some amazing young talent there also.

Steve Stevens: An amazing flamenco player by the name of Gerardo Nunez. Sigur Rós.

Ulf Wakenius: The latest guitar player that caught my ear was the Brazilian guitar player Tonhino Horta. He plays beautiful!

What's playing in your CD player right now?
Damon Wood: King Crimson, *The Konstruktion Of Light*.

Georges Herbert: Lorne Lofsky.
Lionel Loueke: Bartok.

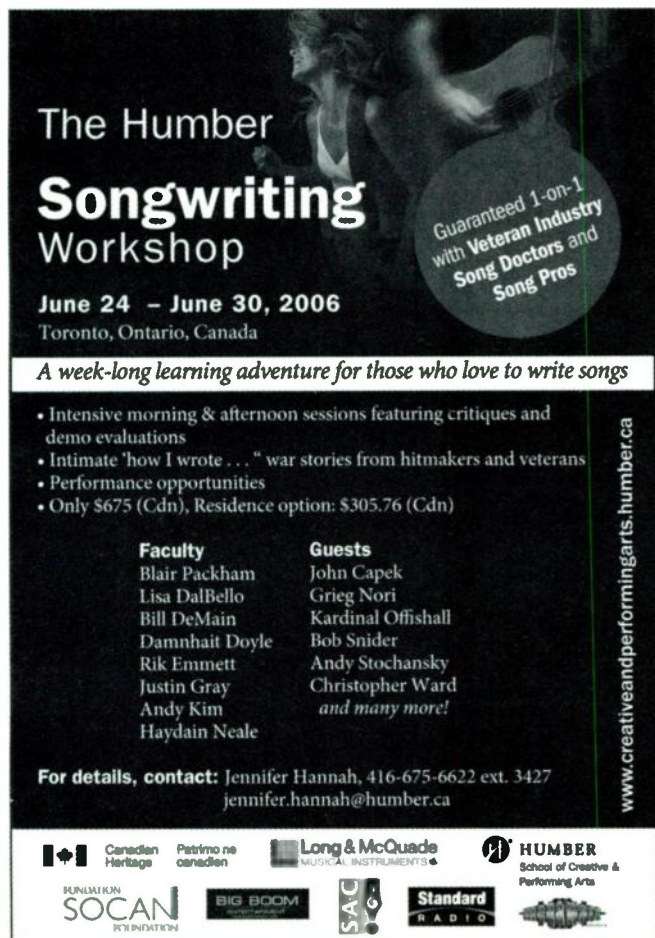
Daryl Stuermer: I'm writing for a new solo album so I will have a handful of CDs and play them in my car for inspiration. Right now I have Jimi Hendrix *The Ultimate Experience* (it's like a greatest hits collection), Eric Johnson-Bloom, John McLaughlin – *Birds Of Fire*, and Jeff Beck – *Wired*. There are others too but I tend to go to these most often lately.

Ruben de La Corte: A lot of World Music. I am currently recording my own CD and am influenced by the music from the Nomadic people of the Northeast of Brazil, North Africa and West Africa combined.

Jason Hook: I could be listening to something old just for fun. Yesterday I was jamming Rainbow "Straight Between The Eyes" (I love Ritchie Blackmore) or some CD that a kid gave me in a hotel lobby, or Kelly Clarkson because my friends played on the record or Nickelback because I heard one song that had a cool lyric, or an Audio Book from some World War II pilot. I don't own a CD player. It's all iPod for me so I'm constantly loading it up with new stuff, or dumping stuff that I didn't dig.

Dominic Miller: I only listen to talk radio. I am not a huge fan of music because that's my day job. But to answer your question, the Meters are in my CD player right now. I have a weakness for funk.

Aaron McClain: Well, I just started recording my solo album for Soul Unique Records, so I'm pretty



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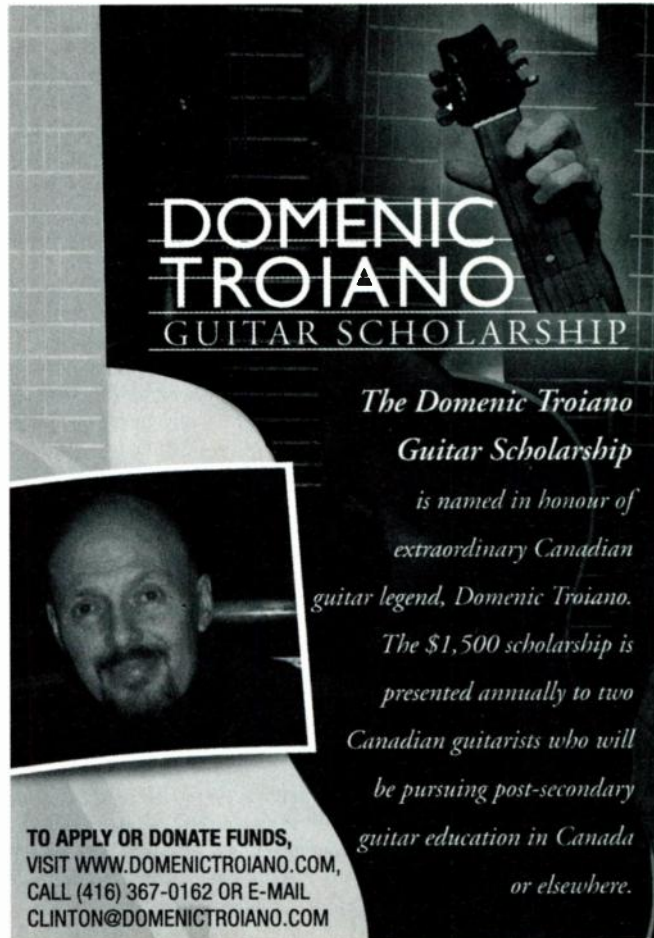
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some he makes me change. It's an interesting challenge.

Steve Stevens: Well first and foremost is if the part supports and enhances the vocals. I also try and find parts that do not simply follow the chord changes



Keith Jenkins

a particular song that day. So we usually just put it on record, taking about four takes. He usually will take a lot from the first take and then find some phrases from another later take. So the approach is usually spontaneous. With my own solo albums,



Ulf Wakenius

established by the bass. I attempt to orchestrate my parts both harmonically and tonally.

Ulf Wakenius: It is different depending on the structure of the tune. Sometimes I'll play a unison line, a lead theme or just play behind. Basically playing in the tradition of Joe Pass and Herbie Ellis with a more contemporary approach.

How do you approach your solos?

Damon Wood: When I begin a solo, I want to throw a few choice notes out there with a little space in between like the beginning of a conversation. I want it to slowly build and contain phrases that are singable. As it begins to build higher I'll throw some faster phrases in there and try to build to a climax, then settle down back into the rhythm part. I improvise about 95 per cent of my solos. With James Brown it's 100 per cent. We often don't know how long he wants the solo to go, so sometimes you play until he comes back to the mic.

Georges Herbert: It all depends if you mean on Anne Murray gigs or on my jazz gigs. On the Anne Murray gigs, the solos, for the most part, are like the recordings. On my live jazz gigs I try to be as melodic as possible. I guess I don't stretch out as much as some players, but I try to keep it as a good experience for the average listener as well as the musicians.

Lionel Loueke: I approach my solos more in a composition way and add some colours.

Daryl Stuermer: Usually I don't know if there will be a guitar solo until I'm in the studio. Phil will just say when he thinks there should be a guitar solo in

I'll have more of an idea of what I want and how to approach it.

Ruben de La Corte: For some songs I approach my solos harmonically by choosing scales, arpeggios and motifs according to the chord changes. There are other songs that I approach less from an academic place but rather I let the ear guide me. In these situations, many things, little phrases or effects, the groove or mood of the song and/or the interaction with the other musicians inspires me.

Jason Hook: I like to write all my solos. I feel like I can make them really add to the song when they have been thought out. My lead channel has a 20dB boost so when I step on it, it really grabs the audience's attention. You don't want to do that unless you feel confident with what you are about to play.

Dominic Miller: Badly. This is not my forte. I usually stick around the pentatonic (blues) vocabulary. I am a chord dude.

Aaron McClain: If the song has a solo on the CD, I tend not to stray away from it too much because that audience is expecting to hear what they hear on the CD. But, I always make sure to throw a bit of my own flavour on it. Just enough so that I can sound like myself without taking the audience too far away from the original. But, if it's my own solo, I have more freedom, and I just make sure it's clean, tasty, and that it's telling a story.

Frank Gambale: I examine the chords and try to understand the harmonic intention ... analyze each chord and make a sequence of the changes so I can practice improvising over the chords ... by the time the recording comes I'm ready ... but it's

all improvised as I said ... I don't write my solos ... that's too premeditated.

Keith Jenkins: It's funny because with James Brown you don't really know when or if you'll get a solo. You have to be ready when he calls you. One night he may give you four solos, the next three nights, none. Also, you don't get much of a chance to dial in a lead tone and you're playing through a different amp every night. My solos tend to be a combination of improvisation and stock licks and phrases. I rip off B.B. King a lot (poorly).

Steve Stevens: I usually will just improvise on the chord changes until I play something that excites me. Occasionally I will construct a solo before recording.

Ulf Wakenius: I play on what I hear. Trying to be spontaneous and playing with groove. If you should play with Oscar Peterson you have to have serious groove. He is, in my opinion, maybe the most-hard swinging pianist of all time so you have to bring something to the table.

What are your practice/warm-up routines before a performance?

Damon Wood: Before a show I like to run through all kinds of exercises so when I play, my hands will have the strength and agility to pull off the stuff I want 'em to. I run up and down the neck doing chromatic exercises, then run Major scale positions in thirds like G B A C B D C E D F# etc. Also in fourths: G A B C A B C D B C D E C D E F# etc. with alternate picking. Then I go through the pentatonic scales but more freely, improvised, like a solo or melody. That way, I've got my scales together, my fingers happening and my bends and blues licks feeling fluid. Also, if you put on new strings, the strings are stretched and won't be slipping out of tune or feeling too tight.

Georges Herbert: I like to do a bit of everything before a performance; I do some scales and some noodling and play some jazz standards.

Lionel Loueke: A lot of stretches, warm up my fingers and my imagination by playing some random notes and some wild intervals.

Daryl Stuermer: It's just a lot of noodling. Scale type lines usually. Nothing special really. All I'm trying to do is get the fingers moving so I don't fall on my face on stage.

Ruben de La Corte: Before a performance I do warm-up exercises, for both hands, including: fingerpicking, alternate picking and rhythmic grooves – with and without the pick. I play some of the set songs by myself by working through the guitar lines. Occasionally I warm up by playing some improvised solos or scales and arpeggios.

Jason Hook: I practice sending e-mails and updating my Quicken accounts... Honestly, it's more of a mental warm-up. I'll jam loud music to get pumped up.

Dominic Miller: I like to play Bach Partitas and Sonatas (for violin) really slowly. It's kind of like doing yoga (which I also do) or Tai-chi. The slower the harder and ultimately the better. I have learned a lot from watching Vinnie Colaiuta practice before a show. It's like a performance and discipline in itself.

Aaron McClain: Well, before a show, be it my own project or Marc Anthony, I always pray. Then I warm up my fingers by running various scales up and down the neck. That's important because you

Aaron McLain: The amps that I use are a Framus Dragon Head and cabinet, as well as a VHT Pitt-bull. I use a Ground Control MIDI controller with a Lexicon MPX G2 guitar processor, along with Trex stomp boxes. However, when we do one-offs, I use my Vox Tone Lab. We use in monitors, so normally my rig is off stage. My guitars are Godin Multiac Steel, and Nylon. A Seagull Acoustic, a couple a Farnell XG2s along with a Framus Camarillo Custom, a Washburn N5 and a Floyd Rose.

Frank Gambale: My model Yamaha called an AES-FG and that goes through a FG Carvin preamp called a Tone Navigator, Carvin Power amp and a TC Electronic G-Force for effects ... a Rolls MIDI pedal and a couple of Ernie Ball volume pedals through two Carvin 2 x 12 open back speaker boxes. A very simple setup but it sounds great!

Keith Jenkins: With James Brown I usually play my PRS Standard 22 Gold top. I've had it since 1995. A 1965 Reissue Twin Reverb, Ibanez TS808 Tube Screamer, BOSS Tu-2 Stage Tuner.

Steve Stevens: I currently use two amps, which are a John Suhr OD-100 and a Randall RM 100M. These are switched via an Axess Electronics RX1. The MIDI is handled by a skrydstруп MIDI board. Effects are too many to mention really ... some include Digitech Whammy, Dunlop Wah Moolon pedals, Moog Moogerfooger and Murf, Foxxtone Fuzz, original MXR phase 90, Guitars are five Gibson Les Pauls, Godin LGX-T and Multic nylon and steel.

Ulf Wakenius: I usually request a Roland JC 120 amp because they are easy to get. They sound pretty cool.

How are the guitar parts worked out in the tunes?

Damon Wood: Many parts come from the records, some parts we feel out (depending on what the other two guitars are doing), some parts come from James Brown himself (even during the show!), and some parts come from Keith. He has put a lot of time and effort into figuring out ways to write new parts for these songs that fit the grooves well and sound authentic to the style.

Georges Herbert: The guitars are worked out according to the parts that are on the CDs. Sometimes I'll play lead and other times rhythm. We have two guitar players in the Anne Murray band; Aidan Mason is the other guitarist. We try to work out the parts so that they fall into each player's style.

Lionel Loueke: My approach to the instrument is to be different because sometimes I am a percussionist, or I create some atmosphere or I use my voice as well.

Daryl Stuermer: Phil usually gives us demos with vocals, keyboards and drum machine sequences. Sometimes you play what is considered a guitar part on the demo. You can usually figure out what is a guitar part because he'll use a keyboard guitar patch on a certain chord or phrase. On other songs you have to come up with something on your own or he'll give you a sense of what he wants. It's different for every song.

Ruben de La Corte: From 2001 until 2004, Angelique's band had two guitarists but no keyboards or piano. I played the chords and copied with different grooves using the Nylon String guitar. Djon Motta, a guitarist from Guinea Bissau West Africa, played the electric guitar. Djon's role

was to provide the "African" melodic guitar lines. We divided the guitar solos of the show.

Jason Hook: In the beginning we were given the record and would try to identify our parts as best we could. Now we are actually given isolated tracks off the record. This makes learning my parts much easier and more time efficient.

Dominic Miller: I usually play the first thing that comes to my mind. But I don't doodle with the guitar. I like to sit there and just imagine what the guitar should be playing. Then I have to figure out how to play it. This is when I find new chords.

Aaron McLain: Usually the MDs will give us the sheet music along with the CD or, just the CD. There are two guitar players, but normally I'll take the lead stuff. After that, we'll take the material

home or back to the hotel room, work it out and be ready to jam by next rehearsal or show.

Frank Gambale: Chick writes everything ... I interpret for the instrument. All the solos are improvised and the band records live in the studio...

Keith Jenkins: On some songs we play exactly what was on the original recording. I try to replicate the authentic JB guitar style as much as possible by studying the records and the parts played by Jimmy Nolen, Alfonso Kellum, Phelps Collins, "Cheese" Martin and Robert Coleman. However, Mr. Brown is known for changing arrangements of his songs and often will give us new parts by humming them to us or playing them on the keyboard. When I feel like I can get away with it, I'll make up my own parts. Some he likes,

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had to go ... so I signed up at GIT and that led to me meeting bassist Jeff Berlin. He hired me after I graduated for his band. Eventually we recorded an album called *Pump It* and he chose Madhatter Studios. Madhatter was Chick's studio then and

playing. I was invited to join the group and have played with him since 1997. It is a great honour and the best guitar gig in the world following in the footsteps of Joe Pass, Herbie Ellis and Barney Kessell.



Jason Hook



Daryl Stuermer

ard Line 6 Pod unit for some delay and the Line 6 Modulator for envelope filter sounds.

Georges Herbert: My setup in the Anne Murray Show is a Fender Deluxe American Strat running through a Boss GT3 (pedalboard) and a Larrivee O5 acoustic. We use ear buds so there is almost no sound that comes off the stage. When I do jazz gigs at home in Halifax I use my Godin "Montreal" electric through a Fender Hot Rod Deluxe or sometimes a Cube 60. I also use a Seagull S6 for some of my recordings. The Godin Montreal is absolutely a fabulous guitar to play!



Steve Stevens

below the studio was his management office. One day after a session I was packing my gear in the car and a woman came out of the office. I didn't know who she was but I approached her anyway. I said, "You don't know me but I'm a huge fan of Chick and if he ever needs a guitar player please call me." She looked at my card and said, "Mmm Frank Gambale ... I've heard of you ... in fact, my husband has played with you." I said, "Who's your husband?" ... she said, "Tom Brechtlein ... and he said you were really good!" I saw Tom play with Chick in Australia when he was just 21 - a real drum prodigy. His wife Evelyn was Chick's manager's secretary. She said, "Yes sure, if something comes up we'll let you know." Six months later I got a call for an audition and the rest is history.

Keith Jenkins: Through a guy that I had been in a band with who knew a lady that worked at James Brown's office, Maria Moon. She had heard what a huge fan I was and without even meeting me, set up an audition with Mr. Brown. He was impressed with how much of his music that I already knew and offered me a job immediately.

Steve Stevens: My previous band was managed by Bill Aucoin, then manager of KISS. I had left the band just as Billy moved to New York. We arranged to meet and started jamming on some Lou Reed songs ... stuff like that.

Ulf Wakenius: I think the first time Oscar heard me was when Ray Brown played him the CD we recorded *Seven Steps To Heaven* on Telarc (now Concord), but it was mainly NHOP-Niels Pedersen that got me into the band. He played a CD we recorded for Oscar and he got interested in my

What is your live stage setup?

Damon Wood: My live setup with James Brown is very simple. We have backline provided Fender Twin 2 x 12s for all the guitar players and even the keyboard. He [James Brown] doesn't like too much stage volume so we're very careful to not be too loud. But he'll want you to turn up in an instant for a solo or fill, so you have to ride the volume of your guitar at about 6 so you have headroom to turn up. (Those of you wondering why I don't use a volume pedal, understand there are no roadies or techs in this band.) If we play a festival, we gotta grab all our stuff when the gig's over and haul ass, so too many pedals isn't practical. Also with 20-something people running all over the stage, there's not a lot of extra room. I bet I've had my cords knocked out or pedals stepped on at least a hundred times. But if you tape everything down, you sometimes run into problems where your pedals are not really in a good spot for the MCs or the dancers flying by. For a solo where I might want distortion, I use an Ibanez Tube Screamer for a subtle boost and drive. The only other things I use are a BOSS Chromatic Tuner and a Dunlop Cry Baby Wah Wah pedal. I use DR Strings Tite fit 10s and Dunlop 1.0 picks exclusively. My rig for my band at home is a little more complex but still basic. I use a Mesa Boogie F-50 combo amp. With James Brown I recently have only used my 2004 Fender Stratocaster, but with my group, Harmonious Junk, I use the Strat as well as a 1994 Les Paul Studio, and a 2001 Epiphone Sheridan semi-hollow body. For effects I use the Wah Wah, the Tube Screamer, the BOSS Tuner and also a BOSS Super Overdrive, the stan-

Lionel Loueke: My setup is wild: I use Godin and Yamaha guitars, an AER Amp and different pedals (wah-wah, delay, octaver, Loop station, volume pedal, Rat, whammy, Roland MIDI pedal).

Daryl Stuermer: I play Godin's LGXT synth access guitar, plus guitars from Gibson, Fender, Sadowsky and Takamine.

Ruben de La Corte: I have two different setups, one for Angelique Kidjo and another for Jazz Pianist-singer Eliane Elias. I mainly play Godin guitars, along with a variety of effects including Alesis, Line 6, BOSS, Sansamp, etc.

Jason Hook: My guitars are ESP EC-1000 Les Pauls and the Godin LGX SA. My amps are the new Randall RM100's - it's an all-tube head that has interchangeable preamps. It's a brilliant idea and has done very well for Randall. They have over 20 preamps available (the amp will hold three at a time) anything from an AC30 to a Plexi to a Mesa Boogie. I use their SL+ modules (which is basically a hot rodded Marshall sound) and the Blackface module for my clean tones. The Head is MIDI so I run a MIDI chain through a Line 6 Mod Pro and Echo Pro and that's about it. I use the GCX Ground control system to patch and switch the head and the effects.

Dominic Miller: My live setup varies, but the general approach hasn't changed much over the years. I prefer a Les Paul now going through Mesa Boogie Lone Stars. Great amps! They have that Vox-y sound but can handle really good clean sounds as with a Fender amp. The Lone Star is the AC30 and Fender champ love child. I use various pedals like everyone else does which keep changing.

at the audition of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz in Los Angeles. Next I received calls from them.

Daryl Stuermer: Actually I landed the gig with Genesis in 1978. At the time I had been with violinist Jean-Luc Ponty for three years and was on hiatus. I was recommended to Genesis by a musician that knew Phil Collins. Genesis had already auditioned guitarists in England but didn't find what they were looking for. They sent me a cassette of two old songs and two new songs from their new album *And Then There Were Three...* I



Georges Herbert

was flown to New York and auditioned with Mike Rutherford. He set up a pedal board and a monitor and had me play along with the cassette. I probably played a couple minutes of each song. He then stopped the tape and said, "I think you're the one." He told me that he had four other guitar players to audition that day but would call me at the hotel around 5 p.m. He did call and gave me 20 or so songs to learn because they were starting rehearsals for their 1978 tour in a couple weeks. A few years later Phil Collins started his solo career and I've been recording and touring with him ever since.

Ruben de La Corte: After graduating from the Berklee College of Music in Boston (1998), I moved to New York to further my career. I began gigging in NYC, mostly in the Brazilian Music scene using the Nylon String Guitar. In 2000, I received a call from Jean Hebrail, Angelique's husband, inviting me to record a few demo tracks for Angelique's "Black Ivory Soul" album. Jean was looking for a Brazilian guitar player to record some tracks as the album was a cross over between West African and Brazilian music. From the first recording sessions with Angelique, we all felt very comfortable and happy with the results. Angelique invited me to put a band together and to be her musical director. I've been her guitarist and MD for about six years now.

Jason Hook: A lot of it had to do with being in the right place at the right time. I used to play for Mandy Moore. At the end of the Mandy gig, her other guitar player (and my good friend) Ty Stevens, was hired to put a band together for

Hilary (this was back in 2003). I got the call, but turned it down because I was out on the road with Vince Neil (Motley Crue). One year went by and I noticed that Hilary's popularity skyrocketed. It didn't matter to me because I was having a blast playing for Vince. When I found out that Vince was planning on reuniting with Motley for a three-year tour, I was bummed, but understood. Luckily, I received a second call from Ty to join Hil's band (The guitar player they had chosen wasn't working out). I played my last show with Vince on a Saturday night at Pine Knob in Detroit, grabbed as much



Damon Wood

equipment as I could take with me on the plane, and was in Hilary's rehearsal Monday morning ... talk about a shift in gears, whoa!

Dominic Miller: I met Sting through producer Hugh Padgham. Sting was looking for a guitarist and Hugh recommended me. This was 16 years ago. Hugh and I are, and always will be, great friends. I met him through working with Julia Fordham and then recording with Phil Collins.

Aaron McClain: There was an agency that I worked for here in Los Angeles. They called me and asked if I wanted to audition for Marc. I'd heard of him, but wasn't too familiar with his stuff. I went by the office to pick up a CD, which had three songs from his first English pop CD. There weren't guitar parts on the songs, so I vibed with them for a while and came up with something that worked. I went to the audition, and of course there were a lot of musicians going out for guitar, bass, drums, keys and background vocals. I remember being very relaxed during the auditions, which I believe helped my playing. The agency liked what I was playing and my attitude, so they asked me to come back for about a week as they went through more players. They narrowed their choice down to two bass players, one drummer, myself on guitar and two keyboard players. Then, finally Marc came in to give his seal of approval, and lucky for me, I was a part of it. Three months later, I was at the front of the stage at Madison Square Garden blazing out guitar solos on an HBO Special.

Frank Gambale: It was really about having made the decision to come to the USA because all my favourite records were being recorded in LA. I just



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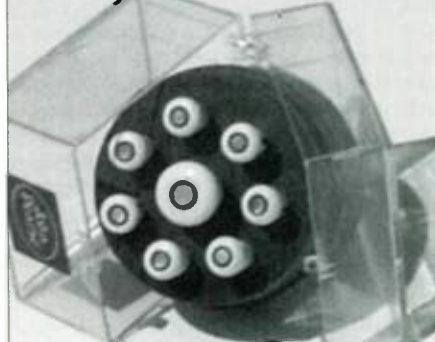
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for a combination of reasons. Read on and find out what put the spotlight on these masters of guitar and explore your own journey to reach your desired heights.



Aaron McLain

Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band by The Beatles. I listened to that album non-stop for months, memorized all the guitar lines and pretended I was playing with the band by doing a lot of air guitar. The passion and excitement I felt while listening to



Dominic Miller

Jimi Hendrix ... I was a kid but somehow I knew that my life would be dedicated the guitar.

Keith Jenkins: When I discovered KISS at age five. I started actually playing at age 11 after my older brother got a guitar. He quickly lost interest but I was hooked.

Steve Stevens: It was probably a combination of events. One being watching Little Richard on Johnny Carson. Combine that with an incredible growing record collection that my older brother had which included Tommy by the Who, Grand Funk Railroad Live and Led Zeppelin.



Frank Gambale

Tell us about the first moment you knew you wanted to be a guitar player...

Damon Wood: The first time I knew I wanted to be a guitar player is when I went over to my friend Tom Madsen's house, we were about 14, and he was playing this nylon string classical guitar. He was playing Bach and other classical stuff really well and then he started playing this Yngwie Malmsteen tune we all knew. Yngwie was the hot shit in 1985. So I just thought it looked like so much fun, and my interest was piqued when I found he'd only been playing a year or so. That began the obsession.

Georges Herbert: I played trombone in a school band and also harmonica with my Dad on TV as a kid; but, from the first moment I strummed a chord at 13 years old, I knew I had to be a guitar player. I was obsessed with playing the guitar. I played (Kay) acoustic for two or three years and then bought my first electric guitar. It cost \$65 and I think it was the first Japanese guitar I've ever seen.

Lionel Loueke: It was the first time I played in front of an audience.

Daryl Stuermer: I'm not sure of the first moment because I was 11 years old when I first picked up the guitar. I remember seeing Elvis in a movie and wanting to be one of those lead guitarists behind him. I didn't want to be the front person (or singer). I wanted to be the lead guitarist/sideman. When I saw The Beatles I wanted to be George. Now, playing behind Phil Collins, I became that guitarist/sideman, and it all makes sense to me!

Ruben de La Corte: When I was about eight years old, my older brother brought home the album *Sgt.*

that album were the first indications that I wanted to be a guitar player. I started guitar lessons at age nine and never stopped.

Jason Hook: I think I was six or seven years old. My next-door neighbour gave me his KISS *Destroyer* album because he claimed his mother wouldn't let him keep it. I must have played that album until I had vinyl shavings all over my bedroom floor. It was powerful, exciting music and I couldn't stop staring at the cover. I begged my dad to get me either a drum set or a guitar, so god bless him, within a few months I had a Stuart 5-piece kit and a Sears Les Paul. My father is an electrical engineer, so he built all my amps and effects for me when I was a kid.

Dominic Miller: When I first heard Jimi Hendrix I knew I wanted to be a guitar player. I don't think I am alone in this. I am still struggling with it and realize I will never be able to play like him but it's still worth a try.

Aaron McLain: Ever since the age of about six or seven, whenever I saw a guitar, I would just stare at it. No matter if I saw one in a store, or if one was lying around somewhere. As a kid, when I lived with my grandparents, there was an old electric guitar that my cousin used to own. I found it in the garage, and it had only one string on it. I got some wire to make a strap, as I stood on the patio pretending to be in concert while my grandmother had the radio playing in the background. I had a great audience of two dogs and about five cats. So basically, I knew from early on what I wanted to do with my life. And that was to play guitar.

Frank Gambale: When I heard "Little Wing" by

Ulf Wakenius: I was 12 years old and heard Led Zeppelin, that really made a great impression on me. I went through all the blues players like Eric Clapton, Johnny Winter, etc. After that I was a die-hard jazz guitarist.

How did you land your gig with...?

Damon Wood: How I got with James Brown when I was living in Las Vegas, in between bands, and answered an ad for a '60s/'70s revue show band. It featured the music of the psychedelic era groups like Janis Joplin, Grateful Dead, The Beatles and The Doors. There was an impersonator lead singer for each act and the band backed up all the different performers. Well before the act got off the ground, the girl doing the Janis bit, Tomi Rae, met James Brown. He was looking for a backup singer and she was looking for a job. Anyway, he took a liking to her and had the bandleader and I (from the revue) form a group around her. This became his sometimes opening act. So I had opened for him in this group about a dozen times or so, including four European gigs, when he had an opening in the guitar section and hired me. That was June 30th, 1999. My first show was in Greece.

Georges Herbert: I probably got the Anne Murray gig from being on *Sing-a-Long Jubilee* with Anne. After that TV show ended I was out of work and called Skip Beckwith, who was Anne's musical director at the time, and asked him if they needed a guitar player. He said that they could use another guitar in the band so I was hired. That was in 1975.

Lionel Loueke: Herbie and Terence heard me first

GUITAR 2006

by Levon Ichkhanian

Are all life-altering experiences in a musician's life simply the result of a chance happening? Or are they the reward of many practice hours, good personal skills and most of all, the drive and focus to stay on the course of their musical journey? I say reward, because no matter how you start, it is the journey that takes you to new heights. This is exemplified by this article's featured masters of the guitar, who honed their skills to reach a high level of expertise enabling them to perform with some of music's icons.

The cross section of artists in this year's guitar article is vast; Sting's Dominic Miller, Billy Idol's Steve Stevens, Anne Murray's Georges Herbert, Hillary Duff's Jason Hook, Phil Collins' Daryl Stuermer, Oscar Peterson's Ulf Wakenius, Herbie Hancock's Lionel Loueke, Engelique Kidjo's Ruben de La Corte, James Brown's Damon Wood and Keith Jenkins, Chick Corea's Frank Gambale and Marc Anthony's Aaron McLain.



The author, Levon with A.R. Rahman in 2005.



Levon at 13 with Adiss Harmandian, years ago.

I remember every moment of my first professional gig. It was with an icon, singer Adiss Harmandian, pioneer of popular Armenian music. I was only 13! I ended up on stage because I knew all his tunes inside and out, having listened to them as a kid growing up in Beirut and sitting in on band rehearsals (it helped that my dad was Adiss' Music Director). That was the start of my journey. Forward 29 years, where I have just returned from performing on A.R. Rahman's world tour, featuring the best of India's singers and musicians.

What do I gain along the way? The journey is one of great learning, not just musically, but also personally and emotionally. It takes discipline and passion to keep your focus and professional attitude night after night, flight after long flight. Then the inspired situation arrives where you can stand out on your own, while at the same time, be part of the leader's overall vision.

It is a testament to some of these players who have been with music icons for so long. Steve Stevens has been with Billy Idol for 24 years, Daryl Stuermer's connection with Phil Collins spans 28 years. What does it take for them to continue? What is it like?

How wonderful it is that Ruben de La Cote references one of the artists in this article, Lionel Loueke, as the guitarist who has caught his attention lately.

This shows that good players will always stand out and land their desired gig

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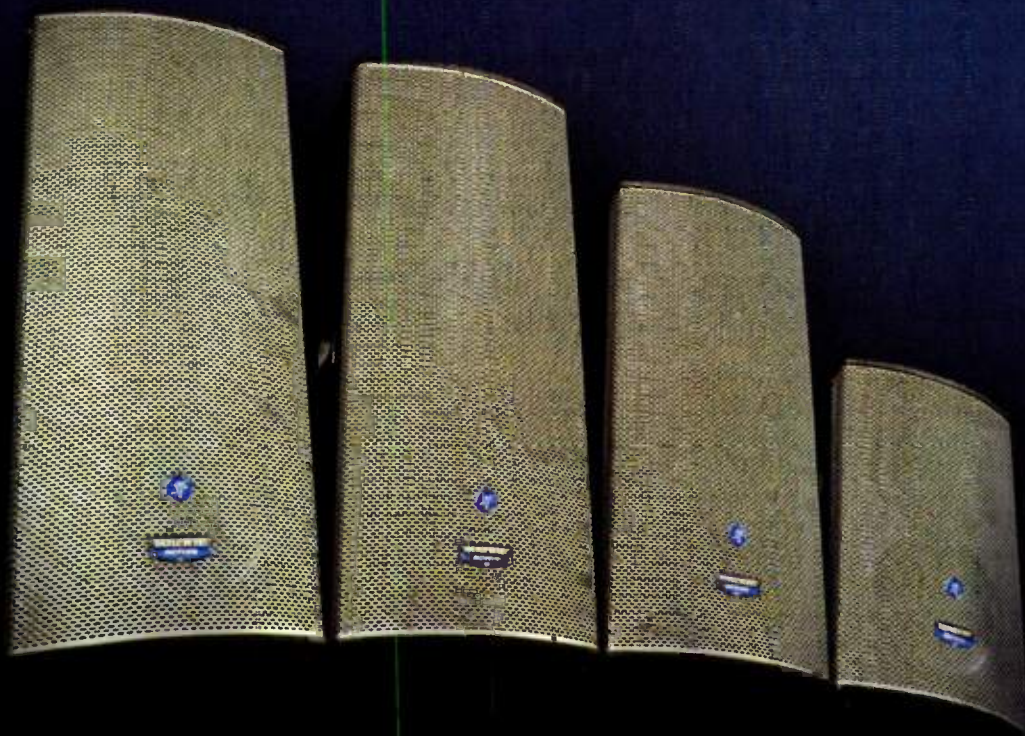
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Roadhammers

do everything needed to sound like the record." That can mean 12-piece bands, choirs, orchestras, horn sections, sitar players, children's choirs and kazoos.

Of course getting close to the real thing can be taken a bit too far. How far is too far? Okay, well plastic surgery, for one. Going too far is something fans often judge. And in most cases the people most likely to take issue with tributes aren't the original bands – but their fans...

Enter Tortelvis – calling Dread Zeppelin a tribute act isn't entirely fair. Their sound is more original than many original bands. The sound, for those of you unfamiliar with it, is extension of the name, Dread Zeppelin... Zep cut with reggae is an amusing idea, but when Tortelvis tried to sing Plant, he found it too high in his range. Necessity bred invention and Tortelvis was born. It fit – Tortelvis and Dread Zeppelin have been playing 'Led Zeppelin music inna reggae style with an Elvis impersonator' for 16 years. They've yet to come up against a Zep song they couldn't set to a reggae or ska vibe. "I think we have a piece of every Zeppelin song there is intertwined in the songs. Some arrangements will have four or five Zep melodies or riffs in them." Along the way they've confused a few audiences, but wowed more, across North America, Europe and Australia.

Occasionally purists have given them a hard time, but not those Tortelvis was initially concerned about. "The first time we played in Memphis our management hired a bodyguard. I just didn't know how people would react, but they loved the show more than anyone. I guess we were a breath of fresh air." Ultimately it was the Zep fans that took issue with the band, but that tapered off over time. "Plant actually preferred our version of 'Black Dog' to his own," Tortelvis says. "Seriously though, it's the music. Despite the funky concept, the boys in the band really can play." And that's why it still plays out after so many years.

Why any song, album, or band still plays well after many years is because there is some quality mystique to the songs, the sentiments and the band. There's no end of great covers by original artists – full albums by artists as diverse as Johnny Cash, Nick Cave, Garage Inc. AKA Metallica. A well-known song, with a fresh spin can make a lot of impact.

Most artists pay tribute to the music that formed them in some way. And that's the idea behind Canadian Country star Jason McCoy's new band, The Roadhammers. The album is a 50/50 mix of covers and originals – a tribute to the road and the people who make their living on it. "The idea was to pay tribute to truckers and trucker lifestyle. The highway, anything driving, because as musicians we kinda live the life of a trucker anyway. We wanted to sing about what we know about."

The album is a conscious effort to mix covers and originals – and a seamless mix, according to fan comments. "It's really opened my eyes to different projects you can do that are really off the wall. It's certainly a renaissance time in music. We've become so professional and so good at making good records that now you have to do something wacky a little bit to get out of the box to get recognized. More than ever people are looking for personality, not just for interest sake, but to survive."

The process of choosing covers involved some negotiation. "Chris, our bass player, came up with the idea to do 'Willin'. I didn't grow up on Little Feat so I didn't really know the song. So they talked me into that and I talked them into 'Eastbound', because they thought it was a cool tune, but probably too polite." Too polite maybe, but the Hammer's trashed it out a bit and got more aggressive with it – "I wanted to punk-a-billy it up." The band and the record are a hit. It's gone gold here and is on its way to platinum, they have a #1 hit in Australia and a US release on the horizon. Beyond that, Jason's having a fantastic time. "It makes me feel like I'm 18 again – like I'm in my first high school band."

Clearly it's just plain refreshing to slip into someone else's songs occasionally. Emm Gryner has

tried on more than a few. "I've actually made two cover records," she laughs. The first, 2000's *Girl Versions* included The Clash's "Straight To Hell", Ozzy's "Crazy" and a Death Cab For Cutie tune. "That was more of a confessional expose of what I actually listen to. I just put together a lot of songs I like." The other, 2005's *Songs Of Love And Death* is a collection of songs by contemporary Irish artists was more a project that allowed her to explore a side of her own heritage.

On stage, she says, covers provide a reference point for potential fans to size a new band up. "Doing a cover helps them understand who you admire." Her approach is to turn covers inside out, taking loud rock songs sung from a male perspective and turning them around without losing the spirit of the song. Def Leppard's, "Pour Some Sugar On Me" is one that's popular with her crowd. "It's a song everyone, whether they admit it or not, really likes. When you make it a ballad, people are either intrigued or horrified by the lyrics." Emm's new record, *The Summer Of High Hopes*, is scheduled for summer 2006.

For artists with a track record of original material, like Emm and Jason, the pitfalls of breaking through on a cover don't apply. If that's all you're known for, however, covers may get you in the door, but if you can't back it up with great work of your own the door might hit you pretty hard, pretty fast, on the way out. "As long as your take on the cover is interesting, you can make an immediate splash by releasing a song with which the audience is already familiar," says Allan Cross, Program Director of CFNY, 102.1 The Edge in Toronto. But he cautions, it should be a fresh interpretation in terms of arrangement, tone or irony."

Regardless of your feelings about cover acts, tributes, impersonators, or original artists and their treatment of your favourite songs of all time, musicians are, by their very nature, exhibitionists. One way to get people out to your shows is to play music they already know. Whether it's one song, or an entire show complete with inflatable farm animals, it's about selling the experience – whether it's a whiff of your past or a tribute to a past you missed, the less it becomes less likely to see the original artists, the more the demand for representations and remakes of classic acts and music will grow. The cover act is out of the dingy bar, dusted off, shined up and ready to roll.

"A lot of the younger listeners, myself included, never really had the chance to experience a lot of these bands live," says Scott Penfold of Q107. And you can look for some new additions to the ranks of the tributes out there already. "In just a few more years Pearl Jam will be considered Classic Rock – even REM is even getting airplay on a lot of Classic Rock stations." The music that people want to hear again and again and again is very much the cream of the crop. "It was political. It's powerful." And it's coming to a theatre near you – in some cases with higher production values and ticket prices the originals had at their peak. ●



Kevin Young is a Toronto-based freelance writer and musician.

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normal into the songs. There are 20 to 25 Zeppelin crowd pleasers The White had to play in order to get out of the club alive, he says. "One time we played in Hamilton and the club owner cut us off." The crowd reacted by busting up the club until the band came out and played "Stairway To Heaven".

Like Gerry Finn, Michael's had his share of hassles keeping the band together. "Have you seen *Spinal Tap*?" he asks jokingly. "I've been band leader for 30 years and I've had over 100 musicians in the band." A successful leader has to wear a lot of hats: producer, manager and booker. The most talented players aren't the ones that necessarily stick around the longest, but he gets the best players he can even if doing so causes him grief. What sort of grief?

"They don't have a car. They don't have an instrument. They don't have an amp. They don't have any money. They don't have any clothes." Many players tend to be a bit eccentric and getting several eccentric players together can be volatile...

Everyone has their own and sometimes opposing opinions about what makes a musician right for a certain gig. Craig Martin looks for a combination of passion, talent and 'The DNA Factor'. "The record I've asked them to learn has to be a part of their DNA. I get hundreds of e-mails from musicians, saying they can play anything. The one that says 'If you ever do Pink Floyd *Animals*, I'd love to play bass!' That's the guy I'll call."

Of course there are some constants that will keep you on the list for work, says drummer, Troy Feener. "It's not just about playing. Chops apply to more than technical ability – you have to deal with production requirements that involve triggering samples and loops, nuances in the music that require new techniques, tunings and specific equipment."

With 20 guys behind you waiting to take the gig, it's important to keep a few things in mind... "If you don't rise to the challenge you may not get another chance." Again, your reputation plays into it, especially when choosing a sub – "The danger of subbing out on challenging gigs is that your sub may not take the gig as seriously as you do." As with all things in the music business – it's as much talent show as a showcase for your ability to get on with others. Simple nuts and bolts... "Be on time and prepared. Remember names and tell good stories. You'll have a better chance of retaining your gig if people like you."

Troy gravitates to gigs that challenge his skills and his notion of artists and records. Performances like CAL Floyd shows force attention to detail. "It's amazing how much detail I hear now when I am learning *any* new material. *Dark Side Of The Moon* seems like a very simple record from a drumming perspective but the sound and the trance-like feel was a challenge – very different from most modern music I play." Anything you glean from one player or songwriter is something you can apply to furthering your own chops, be they instrumental, lyrical, or in terms of songwriting skills. Really tearing apart the original is like having a master class with the artist.

Getting up close and personal with another person's material expands your musical vocabulary, says Rob Phillips, another CAL veteran and front man for Quebec Floyd Tribute, Eclipse. Making your re-interpretation convincing is about more than just aping the original – like an actor, says Phillips. "You're using someone else's words, but you're the one giving them life." Eclipse, he says, focused on the sound. "I've done voices since I was a kid. Before Eclipse I could do a mean Roger Waters; the Gilmour voice developed over time." But it's not strictly imitation or about pretending to be the band, it's about playing the music as if you'd written it – with that level of commitment. "A really good tribute band has to fool the audience for a while. People know it's not the real band, but, in a way, the audience has to get into character to watch the show."

Regardless of the demand for tributes, "When it comes down to making your rent as a committed musician," says Glen Booth. "You have to go where the money is." Typically, where the money is, is spread around – to make a living you have to diversify. In addition to multiple bands, Glen is Ontario Sales Manager for a variety of instrument manufacturers and sells instruments to retail outlets. Being a guitar player, knowing and using the gear makes him a better salesman. "That's part of the equation."

Michael White also has more than one gig going on also. "That's the only way I can stay alive." Along with The White there's Animal House (the Q107 house band), Michael White's Blues project and The Men in Black (Animal House in formal wear). "You have to be five or six things." It's a bit of a juggling act, but it ultimately helps business; rotating acts in the market keeps the demand and price up. If a club really wants The White, they might be inclined to book Michael's other acts as well to leverage the deal.

Personally you have to diversify, as a band you need to specialize – you need a hook to get people in the door. As hooks go, ThundHerStruck has a great one... an all-girl AC/DC tribute. It goes a lot farther than the fact that it's a damned sexy idea – ThundHerStruck are in demand because they really rip it up. "The fact that we can play as well as any of the guys gives us the extra edge over the competition," says vocalist, Dyna Shirasaki. As of this writing the band is in Afghanistan on the USO tour. Shortly they'll be back and releasing an album of AC/DC tunes. "We paid the mechanical royalties like good little girls," Dyna confides. Far from having any issue with copyright with AC/DC, ThundHerStruck actually has some ties to the band. "Brian Johnson knows us," says drummer, Steph Leigh. "He LOVED Dyna and the whole concept. Not only that, but Chris Slade (AC/DC drummer '85-'92) is filling in for me for the Afghanistan tour."

Original acts are often enamoured of tributes to themselves. It's a healthy ego fix, but it often helps turn new fans on to the music, moving product and tickets by proxy. "I've had people come up and say that they never really listened to AC/DC until they saw us, then went out and bought their CD," says lead guitarist, Tina Wood. And what do the women of ThundHerStruck get out of this? Besides once in a lifetime trips to Afghanistan and a chance to make a decent living playing music they love? "We get to sign body parts," adds Tina.

The key to staying on the right side of copyright law is to ask if you're unsure. "There's a bit of a grey area," says Jeff Pary Promotions' Ralph Schmidtko. "We get legal advice on these things and spend money on getting legal advice. You just don't want to start selling trademark. We're careful, on merchandise, not to mention the band." It's a matter of legality, but also of respect, says Donna Huber AKA Shania Twin. "The music is identical, but we don't take anything else – no graphics and so on."

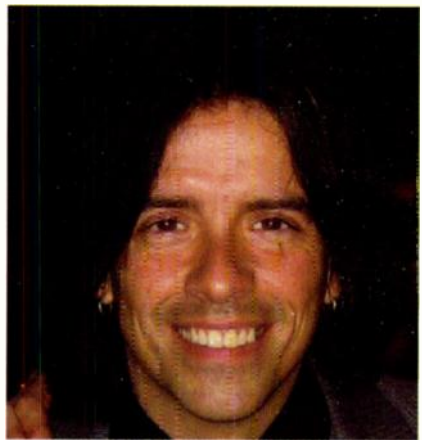
There's a charm to tributes that capture the essence and spirit of the material, but still let themselves shine through. Audiences feel it's something that sets Donna apart. "I wear her outfits. I try to look like her. There's a few moves, if I remember her doing in one of her videos, I'll do it, but I'm basically Donna up there." Before getting into the business Donna didn't actually know who Shania was. "I was on a farm; no TV, no radio. I owned a bakery and that was really all I did."

It's a bit of a Cinderella story; she had never sung professionally, but her easy manner and folks-y attraction were an instant hit with the crowd. Whatever it is that Donna brings to the stage – it works. The act has garnered television exposure, allowed her to meet Shania and taken her all over the world. She does roughly about 150-190 shows a year. That's down from 225-250 in the '90s. In a couple of weeks Toronto Tourism is sending her to Shanghai, China for six days. "I'm telling you, I love my job," she says.

Standing out in a crowd is something Craig Martin is banking on Classic Albums Live doing internationally. "This year we have 100 shows on the books," he says. Craig's level of enthusiasm is almost as palpable via e-mail as it is in person. "We perform entire albums note for note, cut for cut. The same way an orchestra would perform the works of Mozart we perform Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin... there are no impersonations," he says emphatically. "We just



Troy Feener



Gerry Finn

tribute's re-creation of "The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway" tour utilizes materials from the original show and has travelled all over the world.

Still, there's a sense that tributes are something you see at a club for 10 bucks. People understand an Elvis impersonator, or a Beatles tribute and an inflatable pig is hard to miss in any venue, however, some shows need to be seen to understand their appeal. There are thousands of cover and tribute acts and in order to get gigs, bare minimum you need to cover a few bases...

First, don't suck. You might get some latitude from people if you're playing your own songs. Cover and tribute acts that are obviously half-assed don't. You can't hide behind not having found the right pre-chorus yet. There's no excuse for getting it wrong besides just being a crappy band, so choose your players carefully.

Glen Booth plays with ABBA Gold and The Practically Hip and others. TPH are more of a bar band, he explains, but ABBA Gold plays the more lucrative corporate gigs and casinos. They've travelled the States and Canada and have also done the Canadian version of Legends Alive, the band not doing their show, and backing up other impersonators. "We do everything live. The premise of the show is it's like you'd see ABBA in the late '70s." Full-on costumes, full horns and a 10-piece band are featured. It's been a roaring success, touring Canada and the US. "We did Legends in Concert in Las Vegas at the Imperial Palace for seven weeks – one of those jobs you can't say no to." Obviously musicians doing this sort of gig have to fulfill certain roles. There's more to it than learning a few charts and standing around like you're waiting for a bus. Acting, costumes and playing a role appealed to Glen. For something like this, the demand is substantial, but there are no shortages of acts to fill the gap: Abbamania, Bjorn Again ... the most successful impersonators, says Glen have both the look and the sound down rock solid. It's very specific – the better you are, the higher your fees.

Even a more general cover act needs a definable hook. "When you're covering an era you're taking on a general based character," says Glen. Still, for this sort of band you're looking for the musicians who can pull it off, cop the sounds, the look to some extent. But most importantly, players who get the job done responsibly...

Sometimes that can be harder than it might sound says Gerry Finn. In addition to playing with a number of original acts – most recently with former IME singer, Brian Byrne – Gerry runs his own disco band, Superfreak, similar to a band he worked with in Los Angeles. A raging success there and something that was in demand here when he started.

Superfreak puts on a show that's tongue in cheek glamour – a ripping good time in wigs and tight pants. It's not an artistic statement. They're not trying to recreate the experience of living in the disco era; they're just there to make sure you get your freak on to songs you know. The formula is flexible, but Finn keeps things simple, a four-piece band, with horns and keys on track to fill in sound. Simplicity is a matter of logistics: "Getting three other guys to show up on time is hard enough – 10 people? I can't imagine." It's also cheaper and allows Superfreak to play virtually any function with a minimum of hassle. That alone helps build more business. "The club shows don't pay as much, but they generate private shows."

Between original acts, teaching and family, Gerry's a busy guy. Luckily, Superfreak is the kind of gig he can manage from afar. Some people he's hired don't take as much ownership or care with the gig as he'd like when he's not around. "The ideal player is someone who's experienced and professional, who drives, and who shows up on time happy to work," he says. It's a simple equation; satisfy the client by hitting the stage on time, playing the right length and number of sets and not getting hammered and take an impromptu bath in the lobby fountain of the hotel you're playing. True, an original act might get away with something like that. "With an original artist people are hiring you because of that personality – they're not necessarily watching the clock. Part of the aspect of being in a cover band is like being a tradesman."

Bottom line; if you end up pissing off your employer they'll find someone else. In LA, he says, "Every one shows up on time, can really play and are sober, because there's 20 guys behind him who will take their place if they're not." Although Toronto isn't nearly the entertainment Mecca LA is, the competition is still fierce. "You run into the same people over and over – they're going to be around for a long time." Reputation is key, as is truly enjoying the music you play.

Michael White has been doing Led Zeppelin for a very long time. Between original material and Zep re-records he's recorded roughly 30 disks. Though based in LA until 1988, he had a Canadian band as of 1984. "I tried touring the original stuff in the '70s. We made no money. Then I played with Nikki Sixx. We made a little bit more money, but not much." Still, his stint as the original voice of Motley Crue still brings curiosity seekers out to see his band, The White. "I started doing The White to get people to hear my music," he says. The band became a Zep tribute and then an original act again, when Robert Plant expressed interest.

Plant was instrumental in getting Michael a record deal, but when the record was in the can and he hit the circuit again, the clubs were still asking for The White. The original material just wasn't going over. "It wasn't very successful," he says, flatly. "One of the reasons being I was playing the same clubs I had done with the Zeppelin thing." It's nothing new for original bands to run into irritating hecklers, but in Michael's case, he was competing with himself.

With a growing family to support, not paying the bills wasn't an option and he went back to Zeppelin. It may not have been exactly his dream, but The White has paid dividends, personally and professionally.

"The music is dear to my heart," he says. "It was never about cloning Zeppelin. It was about capturing the spirit of the music live. A clone band and a tribute band, I've always believed, are two very different things." It wasn't about copping the band's moves and characters. "We don't do any of that. It doesn't revolve around that image as it does around the music." Success isn't based on choreography and costumes ... "You've got to feel it," he explains. "People come to see us because they like what we do, not because we're trying to be the band."

When he first saw Zeppelin in 1975 he thought they were the greatest band in the world. You have to remember that, at that time, seeing your favourite band walking and talking on TV was an event. Seeing them

live was, for some, a once in a lifetime experience – there was the sense that rock could actually change the world, not just make a fantastic backdrop for a car commercial. "I've played probably 6,000 shows now – doing Zeppelin. I've listened to every Zeppelin bootleg there is. I saw them live 12 times." He hopes to take this ethic to his "Discography" series – forming bands that will do the same for acts like AC/DC and The Who and play full albums. "To do something that has energy and a life of its own you have to expand on those arrangements." Based on Michael's research The White tries to jam as the band itself did on many songs, delving deeper than



Craig Martin

TIPS FROM THE PROS...

Any tips for other people on getting set up, getting your band together and getting work in the line of covering or paying tribute to other acts?

Craig Martin – Classic Albums Live...

"Have steel balls and a ton of money. Amass as much money as you can and aim high. If you make money, reinvest it in the band. I'm married with children and in my mid-40s. I gambled a lifetimes worth of savings to make this work. I've never had a straight job ever – I've always paid the rent, but I wanted more. I see the world as nothing but possibilities and options. There's money to be made out there, providing you can go without sleep, TV and recreational drugs. Look for something that's never been done before and put everything you got into it."

Michael White – The White

"Tailor your act towards what the fans of the original want to see. Tailor your band to being able to do the gig. Passion sells. If you don't have passion for the music, keep your day job. People wouldn't be coming to the shows if I didn't have passion for it."

Rob Phillips – Eclipse, Classic Albums Live

"We were lucky that there wasn't a Pink Floyd Tribute in Quebec at the time and our agent was happy to give us a big push. You have to think about if there's a demand for what you want to do or not."



Acoustic Babicz Guitars

Former builder of standard construction acoustic guitars, Jeff Babicz, has recently released a new acoustic that has a unique construction, the Babicz Acoustic.

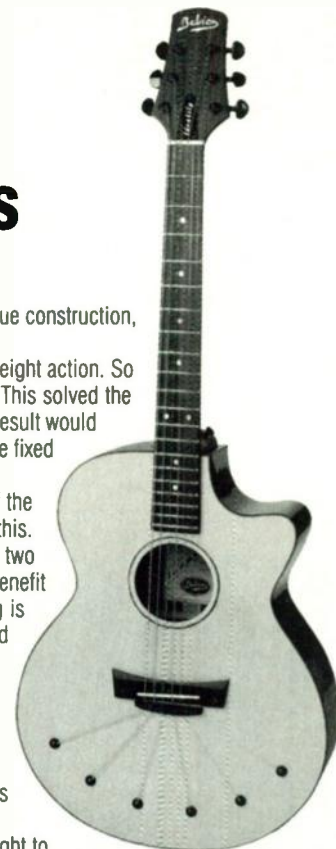
He noticed three defects that are in standard flat top acoustic guitar construction: sonic purity, intonation and string height action. So he developed the Lateral Compression Soundboard, Torque Reducing Split Bridge and the Continually Adjustable Neck. This solved the problem in building a X brace acoustic, and how the soundboard bracing had to be light to move a lot of air. Over time the result would be a "bellied" lower soundboard that resulted in high string action and bad intonation. Before the Babicz this could only be fixed with lowering the saddle height or resetting the guitar's neck.

The Lateral Compression Soundboard involves the strings being removed from the bridge and anchored to the top of the guitar in a fan-like pattern for an energized soundboard. Lateral compression, or "acoustical perpetuation" is the result of this. This creates a strong bracing with little stress on the centre of the soundboard. The standard X bracing is replaced with two semi-parallel braces that start at the upper bout and pass along the edge of the bridge and end in the lower bout. Another benefit to this design is the relaxed string feel. The Babicz uses standard length strings, however, a longer portion of the string is used overall. Anchoring the strings on the top of the guitar are threaded metal posts that pass through the soundboard and attach to Anchor Plates inside the guitar. These plates support the nut system that holds the string anchors in place and provide a "cross grain" strength to the soundboard.

The Torque Reducing Split Bridge is not glued but secured with fasteners that can be released to reposition the bridge. The bridge is a split design with a separate String Retainer. This aligns the strings and applies downward pressure on the bridge's saddle. The forward rotational torque is reduced to lower soundboard stress. The bridge cannot become unglued or lift as the strings are not directly attached to the bridge and because of the Continually Adjustable Neck, the bridge's saddle height never needs to be altered.

The Continually Adjustable Neck prevents the need for altering the neck angle to the body or changing the saddle height to adjust the string height. The neck slides up and down with an ordinary Allen key to adjust the neck to the string height, instead of the other way around. The instrument's scale length and tuning is never changed with this construction. There is also solid wood under the fretboard past the body that offers stability and sustain in the upper register.

For more information, contact: Audionova Inc., 2083 Chartier Ave., Dorval, PQ H9P 1H3 (514) 631-5787, FAX (514) 631-5789, sales@audionova.ca, www.audionova.ca.



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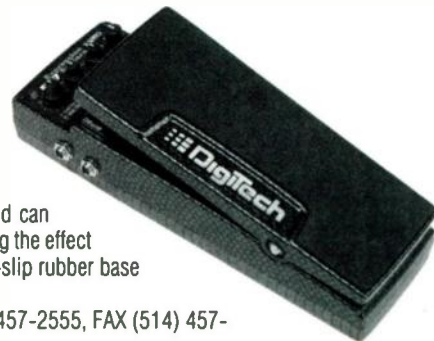
DigiTech EX-7 Expression Factory Pedal

DigiTech, has recently released a new guitar effects pedal, the EX-7 Expression Factory pedal.

The EX-7 Expression Factory pedal models seven expression pedals and seven classic distortion models from the DigiTech DF-7 Distortion Factory. Model one is based on the Dunlop Cry baby, model two is based on the VOX Clyde McCoy Wah, model three is based on the DigiTech XP300 Space Station/Synth Swell, model four is based on the DigiTech Whammy, model five is based on the Unicord Uni-Vibe, model six is based on the Leslie 147 rotary speaker and model seven is based on the A/DA Flanger.

The EX-7 features three dual concentric pots for hands-on control. It has dual amp and mixer outputs and can connect directly to amps and mixing consoles. This pedal can be used as a dedicated volume pedal by bypassing the effect models. It is housed in a metal enclosure with a rugged cast-metal treadle and carbon-fiber look. It has a non-slip rubber base and is built for life on the road. DigiTech's PS0913B Power Supply powers it, which is included.

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.



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Dunlop Manufacturing has recently partnered with Harley-Davidson Motor Company to launch a new line of guitar accessories.

The new Harley-Davidson guitar accessories include full-grain calf suede leather straps, guitar picks and pick display cabinets. The straps each bear the Harley-Davidson logo and as Harley-Davidson says, "are designed to honor the freedom and individuality that Harley-Davidson represents". There are 10 strap designs available that feature a split suede lining and sturdy saddle stitching. The guitar picks Player's packs are a great way to present these guitar picks. Each Player's pack has six picks of single gauge.

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Sparrow Guitars Primitive



Canadian electric guitar manufacturer, Sparrow Guitars, has recently released a new line of American Hot Rod inspired guitars, one of which is the Primitive electric guitar.

The Primitive is hand painted by resident artists, making it a work of art. The top, sides and back are made of Maple and it features white single binding. It has a chrome plated finish, a tune-o-matic bridge, original Grover machine heads, 14-1 Rotomatics and a Stopbar/Tremelo tailpiece option. The two volume switches and two tone switches have gold top hats.

The neck is Maple with a set construction. The fingerboard is Rosewood and has a scale length of 24 3/4", with 22 frets and a nut width of 1 11/16". The electronic features on the Primitive include the Kent Armstrong Covered 8.7 kohm Humbucker neck pickup, the Kent Armstrong Covered 15.4 kohm Humbucker bridge pickup and a 3-way switch. The jack location is on the top of the guitar.

The Primitive is available in black, red, white and silver and it has a polyurethane finish. The pickguard is available in black or white. It comes with a hard shell black case that features a white Sparrow silk-screen.

For more information, contact: Sparrow Guitars, 360 Glen Dr., Vancouver, BC V6A 4J3 (604) 253-3034, FAX (604) 253-3008, general@sparrowguitars.com, www.sparrowguitars.com.

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LP RhythMix Instruments

Latin Percussion (LP) has recently released a new line of instruments that are made of durable, wipe-clean plastic that is chip and peel resistant and safe for children ages two and up, the LP RhythMix Instruments.

The LP RhythMix Guiro Shaker and Stick are two instruments in one, a guiro and a shaker. Rub the stick along the grooved tonal ridges and the elongated scratch to sound like a guiro, then shake it like a maraca. The steel shot fill is non-toxic.

The LP RhythMix Tick-Tock Blocks make a tick-tock sound without the need of a stick. The blocks can be tapped on any surface and makes a range of tones from high-pitched to low-pitched.

The LP RhythMix Tone Block with Stick doesn't chip or splinter. The LP RhythMix Triangle has an easy-to-grip handle with an added curved striker for safety. The LP RhythMix Jing-a-Ling is a jingling child-safe tambourine-like instrument with no sharp corners.

The X-Drum with Drumstick, Guiro Shaker, Triangle, Tone Block and Jing-a-Ling are available in the LP RhythMix 5-Piece Rhythm Kit with Backpack. Also included is a musical activity booklet.

For more information, contact: B&J Music Ltd., 2360 Tedlo St., Mississauga, ON L5A 3V3 (905) 896-3001, Toll-free (800) 268-8147, FAX (905) 896-4554, Toll-free FAX (800) 777-3265, bjmusic-kmc@Kaman.com.



Roland V-Accordions



FR-3



FR-7b

Roland Canada Music Ltd. has recently added four new models to its V-Accordion line, the FR-5b, FR-7b, FR-3 and FR-3s.

The two new button-type accordions are the FR-5b and FR-7b. The FR-3 and FR-3s are two new smaller-scale keyboard accordions for students. Each model integrates the Physical Behavior Modelling (PBM) technology and can simulate a variety of accordion sounds. Each model also includes multiple treble registers, bass and chord registers and free bass registers. They can switch from an Italian jazz sound to a German folk, French Musette or historic Bandoneon sound.

The FR-3s and FR-7b include an onboard digital amp with rechargeable Ni-Mh battery pack to power a pair of neodymium woofers and tweeters. The V-Accordions don't depend on moving parts for sound generation, so they are always in tune and can be transposed to play within a wide variety of octaves. They can be plugged directly into a sound system or recording device and have a headphone input.

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

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Best wishes,
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Conn-Selmer "Chicago C" Trumpet

Tedd Waggoner, Director of Marketing for Bach, and Roy Hempley, author of *Bachology*, worked together to research Vincent Bach's 1947 to 1956 design period of his trumpets. The result of their research is the new Conn-Selmer Bach Stradivarius "Chicago C" trumpet.

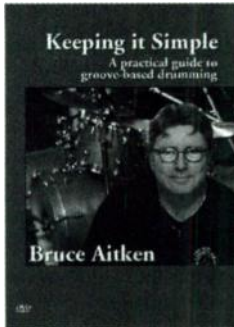
The famous "Chicago Cs" come from the 1947 to 1956 design era and this trumpet was closely based on the original designs. This trumpet features a #229 bell and a #25 leadpipe. It is also sketched to the original blueprints.

The "Chicago C" came just in time to honor the 50th anniversary of when six C trumpets were delivered to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, four of them were purchased by the Orchestra and two were sold to a music store. The four trumpets are still in use and in the property of the Chicago Symphony.

For more information, contact: Conn-Selmer, Inc., PO Box 310, Elkhart, IN 46515 (574) 458-0980, FAX (574) 522-0334, www.conn-selmer.com.



Bruce Aitken's 'Keeping It Simple'



Award winner, teacher and drummer, Bruce Aitken has recently released a DVD titled: *Keeping it Simple: A Practical Guide To Groove-Based Drumming*.

The instructional DVD is designed for you to take your drumming to the next level by "learning the subtle art of keeping it simple." It includes Aitken's advice on opening and closing hi-hats, the cross sticks, ghost notes, triples and swing feels, the 12/8 feel, buzz notes, the train groove, shuffles, do diddy beat, drag, ratamacue and there are also complete songs and examples. So by the end of watching this DVD you'll be able to be a "master of the groove instead of a slave to the beat."

Aitken has worked with Sir Ray Columbus in New Zealand, Lobby Loyde in Australia, Greg Verner in Cape Breton, NS and Canadian Blues Artist, John Campbelljohn of John Campbelljohn Trio. He and his wife, Gloria Jean, are the founders and organizers of the annual Cape Breton International Drum Festival. He is also a feature writer for *Canadian Musician* and *Atlantic Volume*.

He has won many awards. In 2004 he was the Winner Musician of the year Music Industry Association of Nova Scotia (MIANS) and the Cape Breton International Drum Festival was nominated by MIANS as the event of the year. In 2005 he was nominated as Industry Professional of the year East Coast Music Association (ECMA), Musician of the year MIANS, Educator of the year MIANS, Promoter of the year MIANS and Industry Professional of the year. The Cape Breton International Drum Festival was also nominated as the event of the year ECMA.

For more information, contact: Bruce Aitken, 112 Grand Mira South Rd., Marion Bridge, NS B1K 1E7 (902) 727-2337, b_aitken@yahoo.com, www.bruceaitken.com.

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by Karen Bliss

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Tokyo Police Club

Who: Tokyo Police Club

Where: Newmarket, ON

What: join the club

Contact: Paper Bag, 455 Spadina Ave., #306, Toronto, ON M5S 2G8 (416) 260-1515, info@paperbagrecords.com, www.paperbagrecords.com.

The Newmarket, ON-based teenagers, all 19 and 18 years of age, recorded seven songs in three days at Toronto's Signal To Noise Studio. With Jon Drew of Uncut at the production helm, the resulting EP, *A Lesson In Crime*, doesn't contain one song over two-minutes-and-something seconds. Vocalist/bassist David Monks; keyboardist-vocalist Graham Wright; guitarist Joshua Hook; and drummer Gregory Alsop started the band while in their last year of high school in February 2005 and two were in first-year university when MySpace friends Magneta Lane told the heads of its record label, Paper Bag, to check out their gig at Pop Montreal in October. Green but fun and enthusiastic, the quirky endearing band won over Paper Bag, which added it to its roster (Magneta Lane, Fembots, controller.controller, Deadly Snakes, Uncut and others). Monks doesn't have the greatest voice, but it totally works in this alternative context; its weird spoken weariness has an intellectual air too. "Citizens Of Tomorrow" is a stand-out with its unpredictable turns – the claps, the shouts, the storyline (robot masters, spaceships, computers ruling the world), but the first single, "Nature Of The Experiment" is an angular, upbeat pop song featuring back-up vocals by Magneta Lane's Lexi Valentine. Universal Music Canada will distribute the album, and TPC will be able to expand its club membership.



Roxanne Potvin

Who: Roxanne Potvin

Where: Gatineau, PQ

What: feeling the feels

Contact: Alert Music Inc., (416) 364-4200, contact@alertmusic.com, www.roxannepotvin.com.

Let's drop some names ... Daniel Lanois, John Hiatt, Bruce Cockburn ... now let's drop them on this album by this 23-year-old bilingual singer, guitarist and songwriter. That's cool company for this relative unknown. Not only did her pop blend of blues, jazz, rock, folk and country impress Grammy-winning Canadian producer Colin Linden to produce the album. *The Way It Feels*, but the aforementioned three signed on to lend their talents as well. Hiatt's rough voice provides the perfect foil to her rich voice on the opening track, "A Love That's Simple". Lanois joins her on the gentle folk of "La Merveille", a purely francophone number and Cockburn plays electric guitar on the sultry jazz-pop of "While I Wait For You". The Regina-born Potvin is the daughter of musical parents (dad played guitar; mom sang) and cut her teeth as a performer at the Rainbow Club in Ottawa where she was raised. Her first recording in 2003, *Careless Loving*, was self-penned, self-produced and self-released. Linden produced the sophomore album, on Alert/Universal Music Canada, at various studios – Pinhead Recorders, Hennesey Bray Productions and Canterbury Sound, all in Toronto, and The Rendering Plant and Quad Recorders, both in Nashville. It was mixed and mastered by João Carvalho in Toronto.



How I Won The War

Who: How I Won The War

Where: Toronto, ON

What: victory

Contact: Dylan White, 5 Sudbury St., #504, Toronto ON M6J 3W6 (416) 662-3455, dylan_white@hotmail.com.

Toronto-based Dylan White and Alex McKee have been writing together for six years, but this is the first time they've stepped out on stage and really made a go of it. All that woodshedding has paid off – the songs are fully-realized harmony-driven pop gems, in the vein of an adult-contemporary early treble charger. While there still needs to be some more up-tempo numbers in their live repertoire, the four songs on this demo EP are perfectly crafted. The lead track, "The Highest Low" is the rockier, most catchy of the four, followed by "Further I Go," which has this odd ominous vibe. The beautiful "House On Fire" has a melancholy feel and "Everytime You Go" is another melodic mid-tempo number. How I Won The War was only solidified in October of 2005 with McKee (lead vocals, rhythm guitar), White (lead guitar, backing vocals), Michael Dilauro (bass, backing vocals) and Patrice Dion (drums). They recorded the EP at their rehearsal space in downtown Toronto, bringing in a Pro Tools rig owned by Dilauro, who calls his set up Crow's Nest Studios. He mixed it back at his home. How I Won The War played its first gig February 4, and only a few since then, but it has been drawing at least a 100 people each time.



Toronto music journalist Karen Bliss is the Canadian correspondent for *RollingStone.com*, and operates her own Canadian music news column, *Lowdown*, at <http://jam.canoe.ca/Music/Lowdown/>. In addition, she writes for *Gasoline*, *Teen Tribute*, *Words & Music*, *Access*, and others. She has also published an anti-racism children's picture book, *The Girl With Pinhead Parents*, available at chapters.indigo.ca and amazon.com.

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