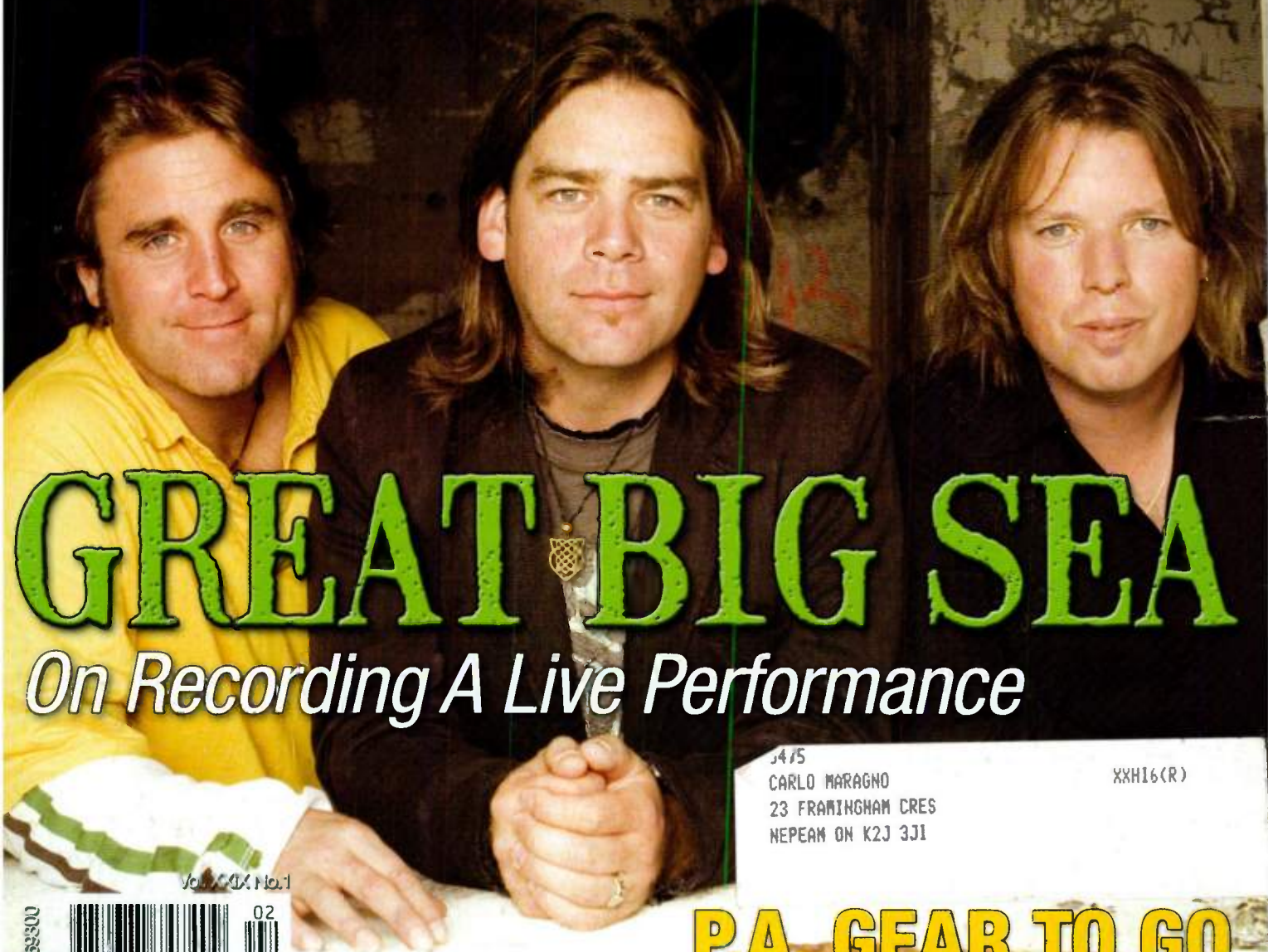


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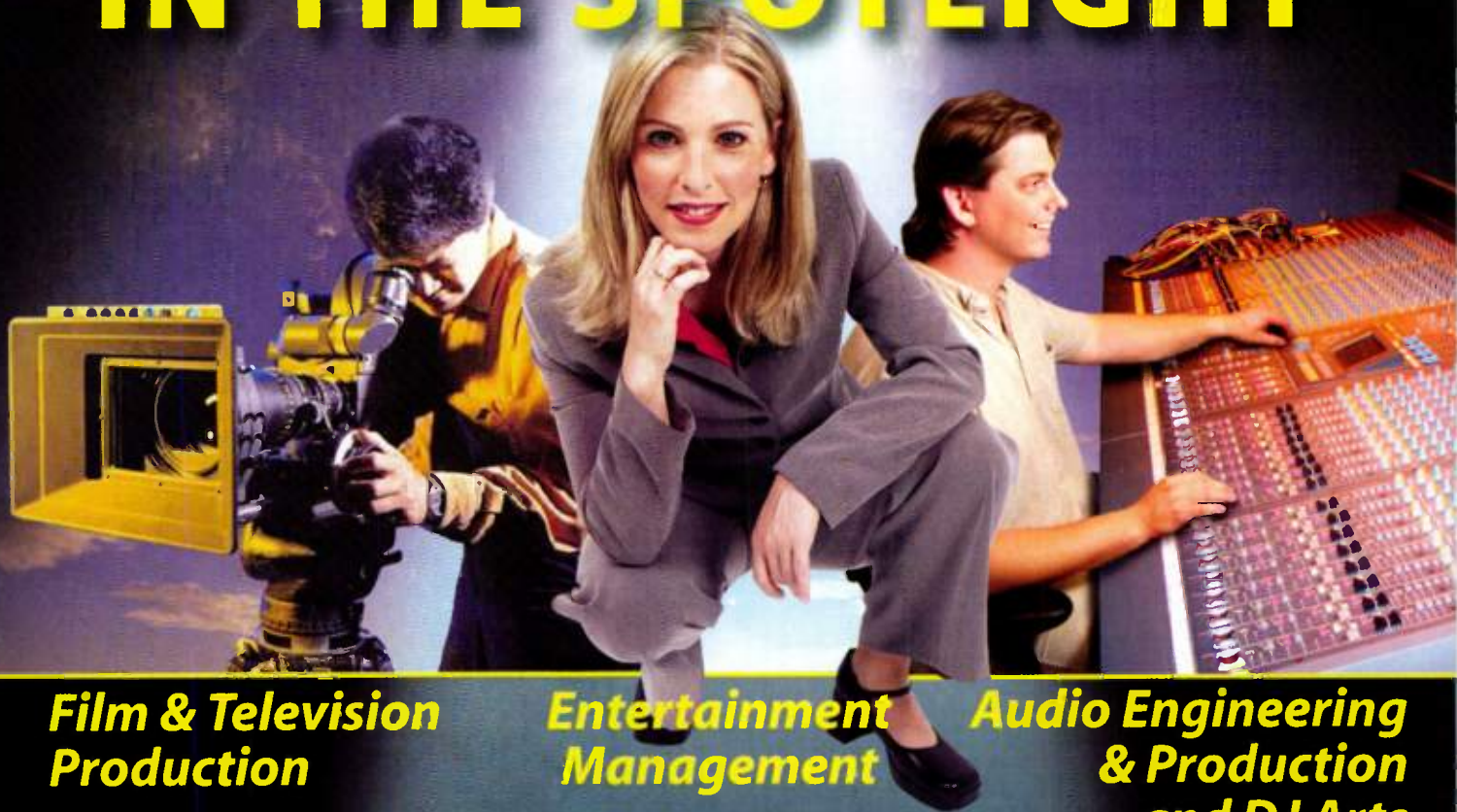


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## Lighten up, CM!

I was reading your magazine in a quiet moment enjoying my break. I couldn't help noticing how many pictures in your issue showed unhappy faces. I took a moment to count. You have over 50 obvious unhappy faces in your layout, and only about 10 smiles (I counted them as smiles if it registered as not pouting or angry!). It feels like a weighted down issue. Just an observation.

Is everyone in the Canadian music industry going for the angry/pouty/serious look? Is anyone not willing to admit they are happy? Is anyone having fun? Is this

sort of negativity truly representative of the Canadian music scene?

Lighten up, CM! I hope to find more inspiring, positive articles and photographs in your next layout! I know there are happy Canadian musicians out there having fun with inspiring stories to tell. Not everyone is complaining with drama, drama, drama. Some are experiencing great things despite those perceived limitations out there! Please, tell their stories!

Nancy Houle

P.S. I'm a big fan of CM.

PPS. Some of your columnists are in desperate need of new head shots! It would go a long way in helping CM portray a better, healthier, trustworthy look!

*Ed. I would venture that what you're perceiving as negativity in the layout is really a reflection of musicians and writers taking their craft very seriously.*

## Hard Work

I am a musicologist. Many parents have a common question when they send their children to music lessons. It goes something like this:

"My child learned to read books very quickly. Why does he/she struggle to read music?"

Many students have inborn musical talent. They grasp music very quickly and have a great memory. These are the true prodigies. One may not find such abilities very often. Any student can read and play beautifully, too. It will just take a bit more hard work.

Hellene Hiner

## Production Column?

Currently, the closest thing *Canadian Musician* has to a Production column is the Digital Music column. While this column is relevant, it tends to focus on the more technical elements of recording music. I think that there should be a column dealing specifically with production. This column should also touch upon important considerations like preproduction, planning, budgets, arranging, hiring session players, etc.

Matthew Tishler

*Ed. Check out Bill McBirnie's Woodwinds column and Mike Turner's Recording column this issue for some of those subjects you've touched on. Meanwhile, the call is out - are there any experienced producers out there who wouldn't mind giving away a few trade secrets?*

## Alexisonfire

I love the magazine. I just got my first issue in the mail with our hometown boys on the cover. I remember seeing them in bars with just 20 or 30 people, back in the good old days.

I was hoping that you guys could please, please do an article on my favourite Canadian band, The Musical Box. They are the premier tribute band in the world in re-creating Genesis concerts. Have seen them 18 times in two years all over North America. They have embarked on their "farewell" tour and have shows all over Canada. Would love to see an interview on them, and how they did the show, and the equipment they used.

Luke

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**Matt O'Ree**

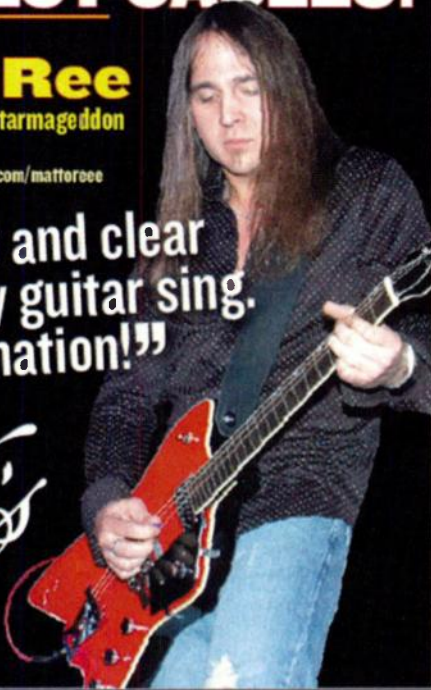
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## The Many Methods Of Band Promotion

by Katie VanSlack

■ As a budding flower in the garden of musical gods, it can be difficult for an independent band or artist to draw a crowd to their shows. But there are many avenues you can take that are effective – if done right.

I've talked to two women in the Indie music scene who presented some interesting and innovative techniques for band promotion. Amber Duque is almost finished the Entertainment Management course at Metalworks Institute, and is working hard in assisting promotion for Club Treehouse – a group of six guys who met at Metalworks and launched their band a year ago. Check out [www.clubtreehouse.com](http://www.clubtreehouse.com). Emily Weedon is an aspiring musician working with her band, Emily Weedon & Delta. She has experience in graphic design and marketing from George Brown College and spent seven years in the Art Department working on films. Check out [www.myspace.com/deltatheband](http://www.myspace.com/deltatheband).

So now that you've got a feel for the ladies, check out some of their promo tactics. In a world as fast-paced as ours, it's crucial for every band to have a website. Check out the sidebar to see what your site *must* have. "If you're a band and you don't have one yet, put this magazine down and make one already!" Emily exclaims. Amber agrees, "That's probably better than advertising and magazines." Be sure to promote it just as hard as your music. Your web address, logo, and slogan should be on every piece of product that markets your name: CDs, stickers, flyers, posters, and the endless amount of swag to throw to your fans. Club Treehouse collects e-mail addresses at every show they go to in order to add them to their electronic mailing list and send out monthly newsletters. Amber says they include everything from info about the band to world issues.

The next greatest essential is a press kit. This needs to contain your CD, a professional photo or disk with a high-resolution image, your bio and, of course, your contact information and website. "We don't want to put too much in the press kit because you want to keep it short and sweet," suggests Amber. When it comes to print media, Emily says that this is a strange beast. "You don't get printed until you're printable – and even then it's a patience game of having the most kick-ass press release

at exactly the right time." She adds that you need to politely follow up e-mails with phone calls while remembering that, "at the other end of the line there is a busy person who's never heard of you, and may have red carpet media passes to a film festival ... Keep trying."

So now that you've got the two essentials, it's time to hit the street and do some leg work. Emily creates flyers and posters for each show that she performs, and usually gives each show its own design. She says that flyers are one of the cheapest ways of promoting a show. She'll stand outside of a venue she played the night before handing them out and will see spikes in traffic, hits, and downloads on her site. She's learned to tile flyers in rows of three by three on an 8 ½" x 11" page and leave wide margins around each flyer. She's also learned that ink is not cheap to print at home. She saves her work in a .pdf format and takes them to a printer, such as Kinko's, to get 20 pages printed. This way the flyers end up costing about \$0.10 each for full colour. "Many nights you'll see me on the way out to see a play or a show, balancing my guitar between my knees and cutting flyers out of an 8 ½" x 11" page with a pair of scissors while riding the subway," Emily laughs, "but it's gotten my flyer into the hands of a complete stranger."

You'll want to hand out flyers as efficiently as possible. One way that Amber has done this is by setting up street teams of about five to 10 people downtown where they can spread the word. "Word of mouth is the best way for sure," she says. This allows you to grab your target market in person by seeing people and focusing on whom you think is going to be your main audience. Go where you think your audience will be. Go to a show where the band is similar to yours, and catch the audience either on their way in or out. Go to colleges and universities where you would perform. One thing you don't want to

do is shove a flyer in someone's face before even saying "hi." Try a softer approach like starting a conversation and then mentioning that you're performing soon, then offer them a flyer that has all of the details. "That way you save the flyers for someone who really wants it. I treat my flyers like business cards – they fit in your pocket," says Emily. "If you have a show coming up, don't leave



CLUB TREEHOUSE

the house unless you have a pocket full of flyers."

There's an effective strategy to posting flyers and posters. First of all, you don't want to post a flyer in a venue for a show that's taking place in a different venue. "That's called biting the hand that feeds," advises Emily. Always ask before posting and clear away old posters to keep it looking clean and tidy. "As you're posting, think of your shows as a partnership with the venue and you'll go a lot further." She adds that you should always be polite and smart when posting: "Don't ever cover someone else's upcoming gig, or Karma will get you." Amber adds that you should be posting your print media in all the venues that you play and where you think the right genre is going to be.

Discount coupons could also be an effective way of promoting your band while saving your fans a few bucks. Club Treehouse generally sells its CDs for \$10 each, so it may be worth it for them to include a discount coupon for an upcoming show in each CD, or for them to offer savings on a CD after the purchase of a concert ticket. "If they like the music then they're going to go to the



**EMILY WEEDEN & DELTA**

shows," says Amber. Emily has considered this method as well but found it hard to track as people can colour copy the coupons. Perhaps something like a seal of authenticity would help prevent this.

Also, be sure to submit your CD to local radio stations and especially to college radio stations, as major label distribution isn't necessarily at the college level. You want to get creative. Do something that hasn't been seen before that will fit in with your band and your sound. Get noticed.

Amber advises, "The best way you're going to make it is to prove yourself to everybody that you can do this on your own and that's the way you're going to make the money you deserve." But don't be so proud to ask for help. Emily concludes, "Take a marketing course, read a bunch of books. And if all that fails, find a friend who can do a bit of design and get them to help you."

*Katie VanSlack is Assistant Editor of Canadian Musician.*

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## 2006 Hamilton Music Awards

■ The 2006 Hamilton Music Awards took place on Sunday, Nov. 19, at the Irving Zucker Theatre in the Dofasco Centre for the Arts in Hamilton, ON. It was televised on CHTV on Nov. 25, and was the closing highlight of a weekend of festivities.

"This year's event has succeeded at promoting local artists on a national level as well as brining together the

largest-ever gathering of the local music community," said Jean-Paul Gauthier, Director of the Hamilton Music Awards. "The televised Awards ceremony is also a testament of the world-class talent that comes from Hamilton."

Hosted by Tom Wilson and CHTV's Wendy Wolfe, the awards ceremony featured performances by Blackie & The Rodeo Kings, Chantal Chameland, Cities In Dust, Dave Rave, Tim Gibbons, and Kelly Jay with Trickbag. Feature guest appearances included Patrick McKenna of *Traders* and *Red Green* as well as Eugene Levy of *American Pie* and *SCTV*. Lifetime Achievement awards were presented to Ronnie Hawkins, The Colonel Harold Kudlats, and Richard "King Biscuit Boy" Newell posthumously.



Eugene Levy presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to his Uncle, Harold Kudlats.



Blackie & The Rodeo Kings

The awards ceremony topped off a weekend of festivities that included an industry conference, a festival, and a sold-out career day conference. Visit [www.canadianmusician.com](http://www.canadianmusician.com) or the Hamilton Music Awards website for a complete list of award winners.

For more information, contact: Hamilton Music Awards, (905) 719-9612, [jpg@hamiltonmusicawards.com](mailto:jpg@hamiltonmusicawards.com), [www.hamiltonmusicawards.com](http://www.hamiltonmusicawards.com).

## Songwriting & Singing Workshops

■ Two workshops have been set for the beginning of 2007 that will benefit songwriters and singers, the Songwriting & Singing Workshops.

The Songwriting Workshop will be hosted by James Linderman who lives and works at theharmonyhouse: a music lesson, songwriting, and recording pre-production facility in Newmarket, ON. He writes songwriting articles and music book reviews for *The Muse's Muse Web* magazine, [www.musemuse.com](http://www.musemuse.com), *CM*, *Songwriters* magazine, *Professional Musician* magazine, *Songwriters of Wisconsin International*, and *The Dallas Songwriters Association*. His workshop will be held on Sunday, Jan. 28, from 12-4:30 p.m. at Tammy Frederick's Voice Studio.

He will cover everything that a songwriter needs to know about music composition and lyric writing. Both beginners and established songwriters will benefit from this workshop for \$60 plus GST. The 100-page workbook and refreshments are included.

The Singing Workshop will be hosted by Tammy Frederick who has been developing voices with a vocal technique

designed to connect the voice from top to bottom, increase range, endurance and flexibility, and to develop a sound that is effortless to produce. She teaches private voice lessons, conducts voice workshops, musically directs, adjudicates, and is a director. Her workshop will be held on Sunday, Feb. 4, from 2-4 p.m. at Tammy Frederick's Voice Studio. Singers who find that they have little voice left after a night of singing, have difficulty singing high notes and/or low notes, sing with a break in their voice, or know that they can get more out of their voice will benefit from this workshop. Frederick will teach how the voice works, the proper way to breath, how to eliminate hoarseness, and what the key is to singing effortlessly. This workshop is \$40 plus GST.

Call today to reserve your spot in one or both of these workshops. All spots will be confirmed upon receipt of payment. Tammy Frederick's Voice Studio is located at 327 Kingston Rd., Toronto, ON M4L 1T8.

For more information, contact: Tammy Frederick's Voice Studio, (416) 850-0972, [voice@tammyfrederick.com](mailto:voice@tammyfrederick.com), [www.tammyfrederick.com](http://www.tammyfrederick.com).



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## CMW Approaches & Inducts Many Into Hall Of Fame

■ The annual Rogers Wireless Canadian Music Week (CMW) 2007 is quickly approaching as we head into the new year. It is set to be held from March 7-10, in Toronto, ON.

Canadian hard rock trio Triumph will be the next band to be inducted into the Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame during CMW. Music veterans Gil Moore, drums and vocals; Mike Levine, bass and keyboards; and Rik Emmett, guitars and vocals launched their self-titled Attic Records debut, *Triumph* in 1975. This was followed by: *Rock 'N' Roll Machine* in 1977, *Just A Game* in 1979, *Progression Of Power* in 1980, *Allied Forces* in 1981, *Never Surrender* in 1983, *Thunder Seven* in 1984, *Stages* in 1985, *The Sport Kings* in 1986, *Surveillance* in 1987, *Classics* in 1989, *Edge Of Excess* in 1993, self-titled *Triumph* in 1996, and *Live At The US Festival* in 2003. Today, Moore is the Owner of Metalworks Studios in Mississauga, ON, Emmett has established a solo career and performs across Canada and the US, and Levine pursued a number of Internet businesses related to the entertainment industry.

Considered to be one of the first openly gay rock bands, Rough Trade will be inducted into the Indies Hall of Fame as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Inde-

pendent Music Awards, dubbed "The Indies." Rough Trade is Carol Pope and Kevan Staples.

David Foster, Producer and Songwriter, will be inducted into the Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame during CMW. He has been in the industry for over



Triumph, Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame inductee.

30 years, is a 14-time Grammy Award winner, received 43 nominations, seven Juno Awards, an Emmy Award, and three Oscar nominations. He established the David Foster Foundation in 1986 and has raised several million dollars to fund organ transplants for children.

The Chairs for Rogers Wireless CMW 2007 are Shane Bourbonnais as President, Rob Mise as Director of Programming, and Brad Schwartz as Senior VP and GM.

Bourbonnais has been in the Canadian music industry for over 15 years and has promoted acts such as Jann Arden, Barenaked Ladies, Avril Lavigne, Simple Plan, Coldplay, Mariah Carey, and much more. He received the Canada's Top 40 Under 40 Award, which recognizes Canadians under 40 years of age for their leadership, vision, and impact. He also sits on the board of the BC Cancer Foundation, which has raised over \$2.5 million.

Mise is the Director of Programming for NewCap Radio, which includes 73 radio stations across Canada. He is a previous chair of the radio committee and has been involved in The United Way Community College Boards. He also believes that local radio stations should give support for local people and community groups.

Schwartz oversees the launch, growth, and day-to-day operations of the CTV-led return of MTV Canada. He worked at MTV Networks International for three years as Director of Global Marketing Partnerships and was with Broadway Video, one of New York's leading post-production services.

For more information, contact: Rogers Wireless Canadian Music Week, (905) 858-4747, FAX (905) 858-4848, info@cmw.net, www.cmw.net.

## KoSA Cuba 2006 A Success

■ The 5<sup>th</sup> annual KoSA Cuba event was held in Havana, Cuba this past October in conjunction with the Havana International Drum Festival at the Havana Libre Hotel.

Participants came from Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland, Canada, and the US for the week-long workshops, which included both master classes and intimate hands-on classes. Cuban artists who led the workshops included: drumset artists Giraldo Piloto, El Peje, Oliver Valdez, and Julio el Pechere; conga artists El Panga, Julio, Jesus Abreu, and Yaroldi Abreu; rumba artist Alexis; and Ethnomusicologist Dr. Olavo.

Concerts featured Cuban artists such as Tata Guine, Changuito, Giraldo Piloto and Klimax, Yaroldi Abreu, Caribe Girls, El Panga, Eliel, Oliver Valdés, Miguelon Rodriguez, and Los Tres de la Havana. Participants were able to visit the musical instrument factory of Havana and took part in a traditional rumba party. There was an open rehearsal of traditional Danson ensemble Sensacion featuring soloist Amadito Valdez. Nightly performances included traditional folk music, dance groups, Yoruba ensembles, and a spe-

cial highlight with Columbian-born Memo Acevedo and Canadian Aldo Mazza. Acevedo and Mazza played a solo in the main concert event and sat in with Klimax.

A competition was held in five categories: conga, bongo, timbales, bata, and drumset. Ages ranged from 7-25 years. The finalists performed in the grand finale concert on live national television and the winners each received an instrument and trophy.

This year's festival will be held at the end of October and will be open to the international community. It will include the KoSA Cuba International Percussion Workshop.

KoSA 12 is being planned for Aug. 6-12, at Johnson State College in Johnson, VT. New this year will be a KoSA "First Timers" Guide, which will be a long list of FAQs with answers that will cover everything from campus navigation to master class procedures.

For more information, contact: KoSA Communications, (514) 482-5554, Toll-free (800) 541-8401, FAX (514) 483-2226, info@kosamusic.com, www.kosamusic.com.

# Songposium 2.0 & Bluebird North Tour 2007

■ The intensive seminar for songwriters is back and has become a two-day event, Songposium 2.0. Dates have been set for early January and February and will help songwriters learn the art, craft, and business of songwriting with some international pros of the music industry.

Songposium 2.0 will first be held in Calgary, AB from Jan. 13-14, then in Guelph, ON from Jan 20-21. The speakers and presenters for these locations include John Capek, songwriter, composer, and Director of Songwriters Association of Canada (S.A.C.); Lennie Gallant, singer/songwriter and Director of S.A.C.; Byram Joseph, producer and engineer; Janis Nixon of New Media Marketing, and Universal Music Canada; and Steve Wilkinson, songwriter and country artist.

The final Songposium 2.0 will be held in Halifax, NS from Feb. 3-4. The speakers and presenters for this location includes Haydain Neale, singer/

songwriter, producer, and owner of Megawatt Studios; Chocclair, hip hop artist and label owner of Suave Dawg Entertainment; Byram Joseph "Slakah the BeatChild", producer and engineer of Phase One Studios; and Chad Mitchell, Sony BMG content developer.

Day one of the two-day Songposium will include the following sessions: Anatomy of a Hit, New Media Marketing, Technology & The Tools, and Demo Evaluations. Attendees will be able to bring a copy of one of their demos on a CD or cassette and four copies of the lyrics. The selected songs will be reviewed by the panel on the song's merits of craft and business prospects. Limit one song per attendee. Day two will offer Mentor Sessions and Songwriting 101: Facts and Tracks.

The lineup of the Bluebird North Tour 2007 has been announced. Performing artists include: Barney Bentall, Melanie Doane, Jeremy Fisher, Jenny Whiteley, Selina Martin, Danny Michel, Justin Rutledge, and Shari Ulrich. The

show hosts will alter between Blair Packham and Jian Ghomeshi.

The tour will run from Friday, Jan. 19-Friday, Feb. 16. The tour stops and contacts include: Edmonton, AB at the Transalta Arts Barns, (780) 231-2170; Calgary, AB at the Southwood United Church, (403) 668-4145; Ottawa, ON at the Library & Archives Canada Auditorium, (613) 230-8234; Casino Nova Scotia in the Schooner Showroom in Halifax, NS, (902) 425-7777; St. John's, NF, at the LSPU Hall, (709) 753-4531; and Whitehorse, YT at the United Church, (877) 393-2007. Ticket prices differ at each location and range from \$18-\$25.

Log onto [www.canadianmusician.com](http://www.canadianmusician.com) to see further details of who is performing at what venue, and prices for each location.

For more information, contact: Songwriters Association of Canada, (416) 961-1588, Toll-free (866) 456-7664, FAX (416) 961-2040, [www.songwriters.ca](http://www.songwriters.ca).



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## Bob Moog Memorial Foundation Launched



*The late Dr. Bob Moog.*

■ The Bob Moog Memorial Foundation for Electronic Music has an agenda to honour Dr. Bob Moog's legacy, establish a non-profit status, recruit volunteers, and commit to a multiple-year fundraising effort.

Over 6,000 people from around the world have visited the foundation's website and over 1,100 copies of the first of many Moog Foundation podcasts have been downloaded. The foundation aims to: create a Bob Moog Memorial Museum; endow scholarships in audio engineering at Cornell University in New York, the Berklee College of Music in Boston, and the University of North Carolina in Asheville; create outreach programs in musical discovery and self-expression for disadvantaged children in public schools; and to promote special musical events and competitions.

The Bob Moog Memorial Foundation is not affiliated with Moog Music Inc. Foundation Director, and one of Moog's children, Michelle Moog-Koussa, can be contacted to find out more information about the foundation.

For more information, contact: The Bob Moog Memorial Foundation, [info@moogfoundation.org](mailto:info@moogfoundation.org), [www.moogfoundation.org](http://www.moogfoundation.org).

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World Radio History

## TMX Becomes The Music & Home Entertainment Show

■ Following its second successful year with strong attendance and great reviews, the Toronto Music Expo (TMX) has changed its name to the Music and Home Entertainment Show (MHES) to better reflect the true character of this fast-growing show. This year's show will see further expansion into more areas of everything related to the home entertainment sector.

In addition to the strong base of exhibitors featuring musical instruments, music, and accessories, MHES will be accommodating a larger platform incorporating the home entertainment sector including everything from home theatre to iPods to video games.

The 2007 MHES, scheduled for Oct. 13-14, at the International Centre, is Toronto's only consumer show devoted to all things related to music and home entertainment. The home entertainment sector has never been bigger or

more interesting than it has become in the new millennium. MHES is a show for every musical interest and for anyone looking to improve, or understand the burgeoning technology of the home entertainment sector. The 2006 show attendance doubled over 2005 and organizers expect to increase by over 50 per cent again in 2007.

The show represents a positive marketing and selling opportunity for manufacturers or distributors of musical instruments, sheet music, pro audio gear, music retailers, schools, educators, companies involved in home electronics, video games, broadcasting, podcasting, digital music, software, CDs, DVDs, home theatre, stereo, the music business, and home recording.

MHES is planning an extensive multimedia campaign aimed at the Golden Horseshoe valued at over

\$250,000 in measured media including newspapers, radio, outdoor, TV, direct mail, and Internet. Plus you can count on a strong public relations campaign throughout the GTA and Golden Horseshoe.

Show features for 2007 include: seminar/workshop series, a broad and eclectic performance line-up, a presentation and demo stage, new products and technologies, panel discussions, and autograph signings.

MHES is produced by Toronto Music Expo Inc., a joint venture of Norris-Whitney Communications and Steinman & Co.

For more information, contact: The Music and Home Entertainment Show, David Stein, (416) 278-6194, david@musicandhomeentertainmentshow.com, www.musicandhomeentertainmentshow.com.

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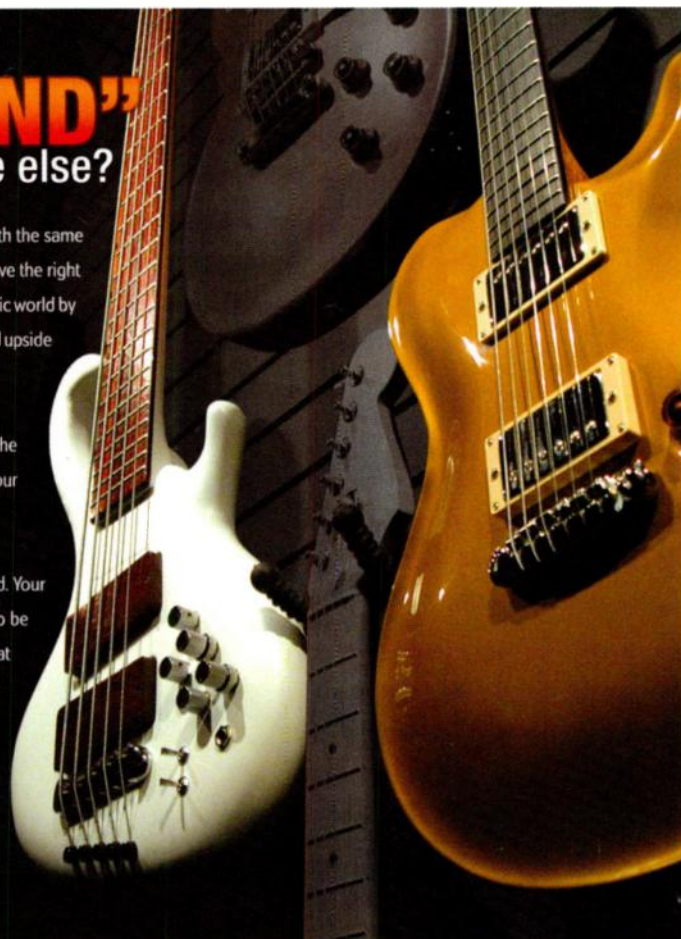
Everyday, people tell us they want their "own sound", but they're trying to do it with the same equipment everyone else has. We believe that every artist is unique and should have the right tools to help him or her express their uniqueness. Jimi Hendrix didn't change the music world by trying to sound like D'jengo Reinhardt, and Eddie VanHalen didn't turn the guitar world upside down by trying to be Jimi Hendrix.

Hey, don't get us wrong, if you're just looking to copy artists, we can help you find the equipment to get their sound too. But our specialty and passion is helping you find "your own sound".

We feel strongly that the name on the product should be the last thing on your mind. You're not buying an image, you're buying an instrument to express yourself in an effort to be undefined, even indefinable. So let your hands, ears and soul find the instrument that will free your creativity and help you "discover the music within". Leave the brand names for those kids at the mall.



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# Events

## ■ 41<sup>st</sup> Midem Annual Music Market

Cannes, France  
January 21-25, 2007  
+33 (0) 1-4190-4460,  
FAX +33 (0) 1-4190-4450  
info.midem@reedmidem.com,  
www.midem.com

## ■ Rumba Retreat With Joaquin Nunez Hidalgo

Lakefield, ON  
February 2-4, 2007  
(705) 877-8564  
info@tanglefootlodge.com,  
www.tanglefootlodge.com

## ■ ECMA '07 – East Coast Music Awards

Halifax, NS  
February 15-18, 2007  
(902) 892-9040, FAX (902) 892-9041  
ecma@ecma.com, www.ecma.com

## ■ MBLV07 – Mobile Beat DJ Show & Conference

Las Vegas, NV  
February 20-22, 2007  
(515) 986-3300, FAX (515) 986-3344  
mb@mobilebeat.com,  
www.mobilebeat.com

## ■ 19<sup>th</sup> Annual International Folk Alliance Conference

Memphis, TN  
February 21-25, 2007  
(301) 588-8185, FAX (301) 588-8186  
fa@folk.org, www.folk.org

## ■ Mountain Rhythm Drum Making Experience

Lakefield, ON  
February 23-25, 2007  
(705) 877-8564  
info@tanglefootlodge.com,  
www.tanglefootlodge.com

## ■ Billboard Music & Money Symposium

New York, NY  
March 1, 2007  
(646) 654-4660  
bbevents@billboard.com,  
www.billboardevents.com

## ■ 25<sup>th</sup> Canadian Music Week

Toronto, ON  
March 7-10, 2007  
(905) 858-4747, FAX (905) 858-4848  
info@cmw.net, www.cmw.net

## ■ South By Southwest (SXSW) 2007

Austin, TX  
March 9-18, 2007  
(512) 467-7979, FAX (512) 451-0754  
sxsw@sxsw.com, www.sxsw.com

## ■ CelticFest Vancouver

Vancouver, BC  
March 14-18, 2007  
(604) 683-8331  
ralba@telus.net,  
www.celticfestvancouver.com

## ■ Billboard MECCA Spring 2007

Orlando, FL  
March 26, 2007  
(646) 654-4660  
bbevents@billboard.com,  
www.billboardevents.com

## ■ 2007 Juno Awards

Saskatoon, SK  
March 30-April 1, 2007  
(416) 485-3135, FAX (416) 485-4978  
info@carasonline.ca, www.junoawards.ca

## ■ 2<sup>nd</sup> ASCAP Expo 2007

Los Angeles, CA  
April 19-21, 2007  
(323) 883-1000, FAX (323) 883-1049  
expo@ascap.com, www.ascap.com/expo

## ■ 30<sup>th</sup> Dallas International Guitar Festival

Dallas, TX  
April 20-22, 2007  
dallas@guitarshow.com,  
www.guitarshow.com

## ■ Gospel Music Association (GMA) Music Week

Nashville, TN  
April 21-25, 2007  
(615) 277-1380, FAX (615) 254-9755  
justin@gospelmusic.org,  
www.gospelmusic.org

## ■ Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards

Miami, FL  
April 23-26, 2007  
(646) 654-4660  
bbevents@billboard.com,  
www.billboardevents.com

## ■ Cape Breton International Drum Festival

Cape Breton, NB  
April 28-29, 2007  
(902) 727-2337, (902) 826-1316  
b\_aitken@yahoo.com,  
www.cbdrumfest.ca

## ■ Spring Music Festival '07

Hamilton, ON  
May 3-5, 2007  
www.springmusicfestival.com

## ■ Amp Show 2007

Piscataway, NJ  
May 5, 2007  
(818) 992-0745  
loni@ampshow.com, www.ampshow.com

## ■ The Music & Home Entertainment Show

Toronto, ON  
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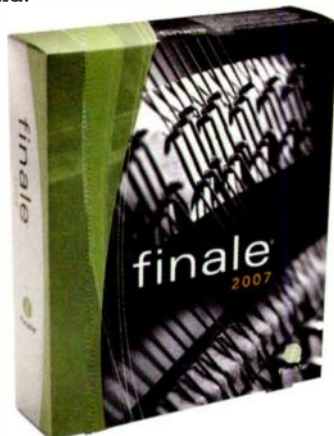
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## Finale 2007

by Eric Price

■ Big changes abound in MakeMusic's Finale 2007 software. For those of you unfamiliar with the program, Finale is a professional composing and scoring program capable of generating audio files and publisher-ready scores ranging from orchestral and choral to marching band.



This review was done with a Windows XP-based PC. Please see the additional notes for Mac users. Visit [www.finalemusic.com](http://www.finalemusic.com) to view the minimum system requirements as changes have been made for the 2007 version. A downloadable demo version of the program is also available.

My version of Finale is 2005. Having had a look at their website, I was eager to try the improvements in the latest version. All of the new features are nicely spelled out on the website with demonstration videos to watch. I will be mainly focusing on these updates here.

First off, the 2007 version uses a new authorization procedure, thankfully no dongle or iLok required. With the new installation process you can authorize Finale on two machines simultaneously and by de-authorizing a copy you can move the software to a different machine at will. An old-fashioned hard copy manual is still in the box. Good stuff!

Let's get started. There were some small changes in the launch window. A tutorial guide option has been added and Finale itself has a softer look overall. That's it for the superficial changes.

The first big change I encountered was that the options menu is gone. With some detective work, I discovered that most of the commands have been moved into the new document menu with some commands being moved to the MIDI and edit menus – a slight annoyance, yes,

but necessary due to the new changes as we will see below.

There were no real changes to data entry or file loading. All the usual suspects remained: mouse and keyboard entry, importing of MIDI, previous version and competitor's files, scanning a score, and the option of playing a monophonic audio part e.g. a flute, via a microphone through your soundcard and having Finale convert it to notation for you.

The biggest change in creating a score came from the new "linked parts" feature. When you start a new score you are given the option to link parts. This links the individual parts to your score, which means when you make a change to a part it is reflected immediately on the score. The parts and document are saved as one file now, thereby saving space. It also makes a difference when it comes time to print parts. This will be a big time saver.

Next on the list is video support. Finale now incorporates a video preview window to make it easier to score to movies or TV shows. You can write time-code into your score and send SMPTE/MTC to external devices. Scoring for TV/movies/Internet is only going to grow and I consider this an important feature. Compared to other programs I work with the video implementation here seems in its infancy. I have no video support in my 2005 version so this is a big plus.

I saw some major changes at playback. The actual playback controls themselves have been revised with the SMPTE time-code being added. I didn't fully explore the improved Human Playback, but I recommend you take a few moments to listen to the comparison MP3s on Finale's website. This feature makes a world of difference when playing back your scores.

Although users of the 2006 version of Finale may be familiar with the Native Instruments KONTAKT player and the Garritan Personal Orchestra sounds, I wasn't. All I can say is wow! The 2007 version now incorporates the even newer KONTAKT 2 player. These guys from Minnesota don't know when to stop!

If you score for orchestra and haven't heard of the Garritan samples you owe it to yourself to stop by their website, [www.garritan.com](http://www.garritan.com). They also have great sample sets for jazz bands, solo violins, and marching bands with the brass. If that's not enough, Garritan's website

For the Mac users – note that Finale 2007 runs natively in Intel-based Macs but KONTAKT Player 2 and SmartScore Lite are not yet available in the Universal Binary format at press time. You will currently need to run Finale in Rosetta if you want to use either of these features. I expect there will be program updates soon that will allow you to run them without having to use Rosetta.

currently has the Rimsky-Korsakov Interactive Principles Of Orchestration course on its site for free!

They threw in a whole new Latin percussion sample section for good measure and I was starting to get delirious. They also include a variety of authentic Latin rhythms along with the correct notation that can be added to any score.

Support for Native Instruments VST/AU players, Band-in-a-Box Auto-Harmonizing plug-in, save as MP3 ... the extensive list of features outstrips my space allowance.

I apologize if it sounds like I work for MakeMusic, but they have done a great job. I really enjoyed playing back scores using the orchestra samples and Human Playback.

Power users may find a few things lacking in the program but I suspect they will have to dig deep to find them.

If you are a beginner, I suggest you start with Allegro or PrintMusic as Finale 2007 could be daunting and offers features that most novices may never use. Remember, there is always an affordable upgrade path to Finale if you outgrow your basic version. The manufacturer's suggested price is \$799 CDN for PC and Mac versions. Institutional and academic pricing is available.

Make no mistake; this is a professional scoring program!

*Eric Price is based in the Niagara Region of Ontario. He has worked in music/software retail for almost 20 years and currently owns his own consulting company. He teaches music software and builds computer music systems. Visit him at [www.gepconsulting.com](http://www.gepconsulting.com).*

### Manufacturer's Comments

Coming Soon: Finale 2007a, a free-of-charge maintenance release, will be available at [www.finalemusic.com](http://www.finalemusic.com). It will include many improvements, including Universal Binary versions of KONTAKT Player 2 and SmartScore Lite.

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## Mapex Pro M Series

by Chris Taylor-Munro

■ The working person's drums is what Mapex touts their Pro M series kits as, and I have to say you get a lot of bang (or shall I say boom) for your buck.

I often cringe at the word "pro" when used as a prefix for drum gear mostly because it's usually entry-level stuff trying to lure the ill-informed or come off as sounding better than it is. Not so here, thankfully. The Pro M kit I Road Tested was up to professional standards both in sound quality and sturdiness when it came to the rigors of gigging night after night. In fact, Mapex ups the ante when you find out how inexpensive these drums really are.

The "M" in Pro M stands for the maple from which the 5.8 mm snare and toms and 7.2 mm "thin" bass drums are constructed. The shells are thin and resonate with the best of any Keller shell I've ever played. My test kit was the Classic configuration that included a 12" x 9" tom, a 16" x 16" floor tom, a 14" x 7" snare and an awesome got-to-have-this-bass drum measuring 22" x 20". The bass drum was surprisingly lightweight to carry and impressed spectators and musicians alike on the numerous gigs I brought the kit to. When the kit arrived I wondered how the heck I was going to stuff it into my VW Jetta. To my surprise, the bass drum slid behind the driver's seat with a gig bag to protect it from bumps and scuffs. The floor tom, hardware, and the rest were tucked into the trunk. My world is a better place knowing I can lug around good-sized drums and not break my back.

The hardware that comes standard with any of the eight factory Pro M configurations is Mapex's high quality double-braced 550 series and again is surprisingly lightweight. Some cool features I liked were the nylon sleeves on the boom stands and the mini-booms. They provide a gasket-like fit and are made of a material that remained malleable even during the cold fall nights I was gigging on. Any time you bring a kit in from the cold you have to be careful regarding the plastic cracking – when you don't have the luxury of letting your hardware acclimatize before setting up.

Another nice feature on the mini-boom included with the "multi purpose stand" was the ball-in-socket-style angle

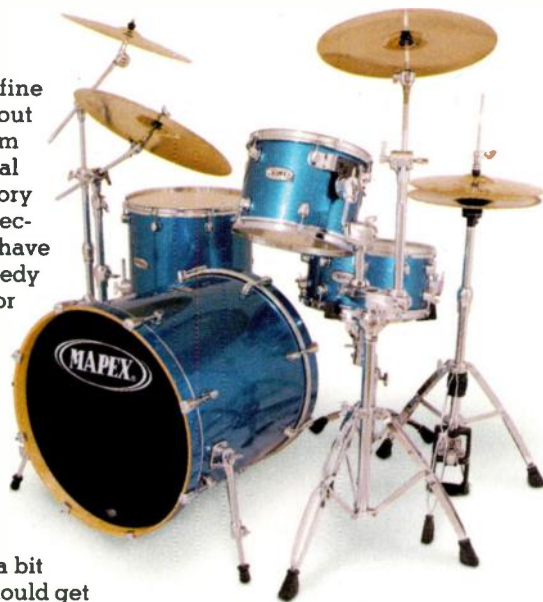
adjustment allowing for the fine tuning of cymbal angles without monkeying with the boom arm itself. Once you have your ideal setup you can move the memory locks into position and never second guess if your adjustments have changed, which makes for a speedy setup and a good comfort factor knowing your kit will be the same at your next gig.

The standard bass drum pedal is a chain-driven 750 series with the Tri-beater (wood, felt, plastic) and floating hoop clamp. The pedal is solid, smooth, quiet, and follows the KISS (keep it simple stupid) theory, which means that with a bit of ongoing maintenance you should get some high mileage out of it.

The tom mounts are Mapex's non-penetrating I.T.S. (Isolating Tom System) that manages not to encompass the drum – detracting from the finish and adding considerable weight. With the tom positioned badge facing outward you can't even see the mount, leaving the audience to marvel at the rather lengthy list of eight-coat lacquers, sparkled lacquers, and Delmar wrap finishes offered in the Pro M line. The lugs are low-mass with one contact point, allowing for better resonance. The 2.3 mm chromed steel hoops keep the drums' appearance clean and strong.

To further bolster your confidence, Mapex is proud to make the Pro M shells to the same specifications as their top-of-the-line Orion series and offer a full component line with toms ranging from 8" x 4" up to 16" x 14", floor toms ranging from 14" x 14" to 18" x 16", snares from 13" x 5" up to a fat 14" x 8", and bass drums starting with 18" x 14" up to the Bonham-esque 24" x 20". Kaboom!

Remo's clear Ambassadors for the toms, coated for the snare, and Powerstroke 3s (clear on the batter and Ebony for the resonant) for the bass drum are standard fare and turned out to be a nice choice for the Classic configuration. I tuned the bass drum up and relished in its openness for the first couple of days, then, out of necessity, decided to quell its boombastic nature with a pad and finally a vent hole before taking it out of the basement for a run. The Pro M



performed like a champ and needed little coaxing to reveal it's clarity; it was focused, not flappy, even at lower dynamics.

Mapex has a winner with the Pro M series and its suggested list price of \$1,899 USD makes the victory even sweeter.

### Distributor's Comments

The Pro M Series has seen a huge increase in popularity this year with the introduction of the Classic and Classic Plus configurations. Drummers also tell me they appreciate the full set of padded bags with every Classic configuration kit. I guess it saves them from having to scour the country for a 22" x 20" bass drum bag! We're thrilled that high-profile artists such as Chris Pennie (Dillinger Escape Plan) have chosen to play the Classic Pro M as their primary touring kit.

The industry has introduced a number of great sounding maple kits in this price range that exclusively use Asian or Chinese maple. I think the fact that the Pro M drum shell combines North American maple with Chinese maple adds to the series' appeal and makes for a unique sound experience. Discerning drummers see and hear the difference, particularly in our bass drums.

Sami Kizilbash  
Mapex Product Manager,  
SF Marketing Inc.

## Sparrow Rat Rod Guitar

by Levon Ichkhanian

■ Sparrow Guitars, founded by craftsman and guitar enthusiast Billy Bones, is an electric guitar company offering bold and inspired custom works of art that deliver performance and value.

Parts of Sparrow Guitars are manufactured in South Korea, China, and Canada and then assembled, wired, set up, painted, and finished in Canada at Sparrow Guitars' Vancouver, BC facility.

The Custom Shop guitars and basses are 100 per cent handmade in Vancouver.

### Rat Rod Specs

Body: Mahogany/maple

Neck: Mahogany

Fingerboard: Rosewood

Scale: 24 3/4"

Binding: Single/cream

Tuning Machines: Grover Original

Rotomatics 14:1

Tailpiece: Stopbar

Bridge: TOM

Knobs: Gold Top hats

Construction: Set neck

Nut: Bone

Unique Features: Hand pinstriped

Strings: Mojo nickel .010-.049

Available Colours: Black, red, white, silver

Neck Pickups: Kent Armstrong humbucker

bridge Pickup: Kent Armstrong humbucker

Controls: Two volume, two tone, three way switch

Sparrow offers five models. Each of these models has three levels: Ace, Boss, and Pro.

The difference between models is tuner and pickup upgrades between a Pro and a Boss, and a Vibrato tailpiece addition between a Boss and an Ace. The Boss level comes with Grover Rotomatic tuners, Kent Armstrong pickups, and a stop bar tailpiece. The suggested list price is \$1019.99.

### Unique Features

Sparrow guitars come with custom artwork by one of their in-house painters. There are six styles of artwork that

are put on the guitars: three different pinstripe versions and three different flame versions. The flames are done by hand with an airbrush, and the iron cross-style pinstripes are done by hand with an old school pinstripe brush. Because of this, Sparrow considers each and every guitar that comes out of the Vancouver facility a custom piece.

### Comments

At first glance the guitar truly is a piece of visual art. It's also well made and put together properly. The chosen parts, like the Grover machine heads and the TOM bridge, are respectable. The fingerboard had an even and smooth feel throughout.

It had great tones with lots of great sustain plugged in. It is reminiscent of a Les Paul, both in weight and tone! (The other models are ones that resemble teles, strats, etc.) I played the guitar plugged through a number of amps including a Fender Hot Rod Deluxe (tube amp), and a Roland Cube (solid state). It sounded good through both. Absolutely fantastic sound, both clean and overdriven. Lovely warm tones. There was plenty of range in the tone and volume controls. Tonally speaking, as the characteristics of the humbucker pickups have a richer and warmer sound compared to single coil pickups, the three-way switch is handy to get the variety of tones needed with two humbuckers for pickups.

In the neck position the sound was warm and jazzy, and in the combined pickup mode the sound was rich with a bell-like tone, perfect for rhythm work. In the bridge mode the sound was hot and biting on the high end – this is where you would play with the tone pot to roll off some of the high end if you desire less bite.

All in all it's a very well built guitar that plays and sounds great. In the price range it's in, and for how much guitar you get, it's truly worth trying one out at your local music store.

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



Levon Ichkhanian is a multi-instrumentalist. He plays guitars, oud, bouzouki, and banjitar.  
Contact: [www.levonmusic.com](http://www.levonmusic.com).

“ EVERY INSTRUMENT IS TOUCHED, WORKED ON AND CARED FOR BY DOZENS OF SKILLED MEN AND WOMEN. ”

*-Paul Reed Smith*

By applying the human touch in our production, we believe that we create instruments that are unique, beautiful and a joy to play. Visit a dealer near you to experience PRS Guitars.



[www.prsguitars.com](http://www.prsguitars.com)

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# Warming Up

by Levon Ichkhanian

**W**arming up is a very personal experience, almost ritualistic. I once interviewed a world-renowned classical guitarist who told me that on the day of the performance he doesn't look at the music he will be playing. Instead, his warm-up is eight hours of scales and arpeggios.

As I played in *The Lord of the Rings* orchestra, I was part of a musical team that included brass, horns, strings, key-

boards, accordion, and percussion. I was also surrounded by actors, dancers, and singers. It was very interesting to me to observe the variety of warm-up techniques used by all. I came to realize that there are many ways of warming up before a show that don't include the instrument.

Before I get to what I learned through that experience, here are some examples of exercises to get your hands agile and ready on the guitar in C major.

## Exercise 1

C major scale:



## Exercise 2

An intervallic warm-up in major thirds:



## Exercise 3

C major arpeggio:



## How to apply these exercises:

- Warm up by using other intervals (fourths, fifths, sixths, sevenths, octaves...).
- Play all the exercises in all twelve keys.
- Play all these exercises at a slow tempo and increase it as you move along.
- All exercises should be practiced in ascending and descending patterns.
- Start by using only downstrokes and switch to alternate picking as you move along.
- Try a tremolo.

When I was working with *The Lord Of The Rings* orchestra, I was fascinated by everyone's warm-up rituals – the horn players warming up their lungs, percussionists warming up their arms and feet, string players bowing, keyboardists running drills, singers/actors/dancers stretching...

I learned that warming up before a performance goes beyond technique and practice. There are other things that you can do in body and in spirit, and I thought about how they could be applied into a guitarist's warm-up routine.

## A warm-up could be:

- (1) **Visual:** visualization of the music, fingerings.
- (2) **Physical:** get your body relaxed and flexible through Yoga or stretching.
- (3) **Aural:** sing your parts, so that you can commit them to memory.
- (4) **Combine** all of the above.

When you are warming up for your next performance, consider how you can add these into your routine.



Levon Ichkhanian is a multi-instrumentalist. He plays guitars, oud, bouzouki, and banjitar.  
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# Scale Sources And Chord Stacks For Fluency

by Kevin Young

A teacher once told me that technique – scales, arpeggios and the like – were the building blocks of music, the “meat and potatoes.” To me they seemed more like stumbling blocks, the lima beans, creamed turnip, and squash of music. You may learn them to forget them, but going back to old exercises is a great way to warm up before performing and grow your chops. Revisiting technique should be far less painful than when you first started playing.

Every parameter of an exercise should have a purpose, not just for increasing physical fluency, but reinforcing understanding of theory and training your ear.

You can do the following two exercises at any point in your practice regimen, but I find them to be a good place to start a practice session – right after warming up with a few scales, or a favourite drill to loosen up.

Start simply – major scales and diatonic 7<sup>th</sup> chords.

## Ex. 1 – Chromatic Chords

The idea of this exercise is to get a variety of chord shapes in both your hands and ears.

Pick a chord shape and a starting point. For our purposes we'll use Cmaj7.

A) Play the chord shape, in both hands, in block chords through two complete octaves, ascending chromatically...

Cmaj7 – C#maj7 – Dmaj7... and so on.

Then descending...

Cmaj7 – Bmaj7 – Bbmaj7... back to the Cmaj7 starting point.

B) Repeat the same sequence again, in both hands, but with arpeggiated chords.

Ascending...

C – E – G – B, C# – F – G# – B#, D – F# – A – C#...

And descending...

B – G – E – C, A# – F# – F# – B, A – F – D – Bb...

Repeat the entire sequence, alternating

between A) solid, and B) arpeggiated five to 10 times before moving on.

C) The object is to make movement between chords fluent and effortless. If moving some chords in the chromatic scale is more difficult than others on the first pass, isolate those places next time through.

For example, if you're tentative between E $\flat$ maj7 and F#maj7 run over the problem area before moving on, like so...

||: E $\flat$ maj7 – Fmaj7 :|| – ||: Fmaj7 – F#maj7 :|| – ||: F#maj7 – Fmaj7 – E $\flat$ maj7 :||

Continue up the scale chromatically when the problem area is fluid. When four-part major chords are fluent continue on to other chord shapes built from the root – Minor 7<sup>th</sup>, dominant 7<sup>th</sup>, half-diminished chords, 6 chords, sus 9s, 6/9 and so on.

## Ex. 2 – Diatonic Chords

The idea of this exercise is to increase fluency in moving between various chord shapes within a given key.

Again, start simply, major scales, their modes, and diatonic chords. For this exercise begin in the key of G $\flat$  major and move through the cycle of fifths...

G $\flat$ , D $\flat$ , A $\flat$ , E $\flat$ , B $\flat$ , F, C, G, D, A, E, B, F#

A) Begin by playing the G $\flat$  major scale, then each mode in G $\flat$  major, in two or more octaves, ascending and descending.

B) Play the diatonic chords in the scale, in sequence, in two or more octaves, ascending and then descending...

G $\flat$ maj7 – A $\flat$ min7 – B $\flat$ min7 – C $\flat$ maj7 – D $\flat$ 7 – E $\flat$ min7 – Fmin7 ( $\flat$ 5) – G $\flat$ maj7

As in Ex. 1, alternate between solid and arpeggiated chords, playing each two or more octave sequence five to 10 times.

C) Again, the object is to make movement between chords fluent and effortless. If moving between some chords is more difficult than others on the first pass, isolate those places in the next time through and run back and forth over the problem area



until movement is fluent, as in Ex. 1 (C).

Start all exercises at a tempo that's comfortable to you and allows you to play evenly, without pausing, or jumping on some notes more than others. As an alternate pattern of movement for Ex. 2 (B) instead of simply moving up and down the scale substitute the Cycle of fourths. For example, in C major...

C maj7 – F maj7 – B min7 ( $\flat$ 5) – E min7 – A min7 – D min7 – G7 – C maj7

When chord stacks built on roots become fluid move on to the first, second, and third inversions of the diatonic chords.

If the scales and chord shapes in these drills are already familiar, replace them with scales and shapes that aren't – minor harmonic and melodic scales, Pentatonics, altered, or composite scale sources. Your starting point depends on your level of playing.

Wherever you start this is a good way to cement chord movement and harmonic relationships in both hands and your head.

This exercise should be ongoing. Its natural progression will eventually lead you to ever more altered chords, and hybrid scale sources. Take your time.

Kevin Young is a Toronto-based keyboardist and freelance writer, known for his playing with David Usher and Moist, among others.

# Transcribing

by Marc Rogers

**G**reetings, and welcome to the first of (hopefully) many bass columns. In future columns I'll be getting into some more detailed specifics of how to play the bass (both acoustic and electric) but for my first column I'd like to talk about what I think is the most important element in learning how to play bass: transcription.

Transcription is, in my opinion, the single best teacher for any musician, especially in most contemporary genres. I'm not necessarily talking about setting pen to paper, although for some people that's certainly an element of it. While writing down your favorite bass line or solo is a great exercise (and will also do wonders for your reading!), I've learned from personal experience that it's much more useful to have a really good musical memory and not read well, than to be able to read well but not be able to play long passages without written music. Ideally, however, you should be able to do both! My main concern with students is that they learn how to **PLAY** the material first. If they choose to also learn how to notate it on paper as well, that's a bonus.

When I set out to transcribe a piece of music, the first thing I do is listen to it as often as possible for about a week, whether on my iPod while doing errands, in my car while driving, or around the house. I try to get the melody/bass line/sax solo or whatever it is in my head as much as I can, so that when I sit down to learn it on the bass I have a very good idea of how it goes. It's a good idea to begin learning how to transcribe with a song that you **REALLY** like, because you'll be hearing an awful lot of it! If the song stays pretty much in one key, the next step is to determine what that key is. I find it generally easier to hear notes and lines relative to a tonic, so that can be a timesaver. Then the hard work begins.

I find that the best method of transcribing a bass line is to start off one bar at a time, and to try to hear the notes and rhythms in that bar very clearly in your head before you try to play it. That way you're not just learning by trial and error, you're training your fingers to play what you hear, which is really the ultimate goal of any performing musician. Once you feel you have the first bar under your fingers, proceed to bar two and continue the process. I often stop once I've completed a musical phrase (usually four or eight bars, but not always), then I go back and make sure I can play the whole passage smoothly. This is usually the point where you find any problems in your fingering; sometimes a fingering that worked well for one bar on its own doesn't lead into the next bar at all, so you have to adjust. This is also where you start developing your musical memory chops, especially if the line has a lot of variation. If you're new to transcribing I recommend starting with something repetitive, so as not to get too frustrated. As your skills improve, try moving on to more complex bass lines with more variation. Ultimately you can transcribe anything (guitar solos, vocal melodies, whatever) because the more you learn the more information you'll have under your fingers.

For me, transcribing involves more than just learning the notes. I try to get as close to the original as possible, including tone, phrasing, and feel. If you can, try to find a video of the player in question and watch how he/she plucks the strings, whether they use a pick/fingers/slapping technique, what kind of bass they're using, and so on. Emulating other musicians' tones is not only a useful practical exercise (if I only had a nickel for every time I've been asked for a "Paul McCartney" sound in the studio...), but it will also teach you



a great deal about how to get different sounds of your own out of your instrument.

One concern students often have regarding transcribing is that they won't develop their own personal style. I don't believe that's true. Every person is unique with their own likes and dislikes, and you will naturally absorb elements of the music that appeal to you and reject the ones that don't. Even players who idolize only one or two musicians will inevitably end up with a unique sound given enough time. One of my favourite players, Anthony Jackson, learned to play by transcribing mainly two people: James Jamerson and Jack Cassidy. If you listen to him play, he definitely doesn't sound like either of them! He has a totally unique (and very cool) style all his own.

Transcribing can be a slow and frustrating process at first, especially if you're not used to it. The key is to be persistent and not get discouraged. The first bass line I ever decided to learn was "Pinball Wizard" by The Who, and it seemed like it took forever to figure out the notes, the rhythms, and especially how to actually play it on the bass. Once I could play the whole song with the record, however, I was hooked! Hopefully you'll have the same experience. Good luck and happy transcribing!

*Marc Rogers is currently the bassist for The Philosopher Kings, Jon Levine, Susan Tedeschi, Chris Seldon, Karen Kosowski, and Sunshine State. He is also active in the Toronto, ON recording and session scene. You can check out his website at [www.marcrogers.com](http://www.marcrogers.com) and his tour dates at [www.myspace.com/marcrogers](http://www.myspace.com/marcrogers).*

# Interdependence/Ambidexterity

by Gregg Bowman

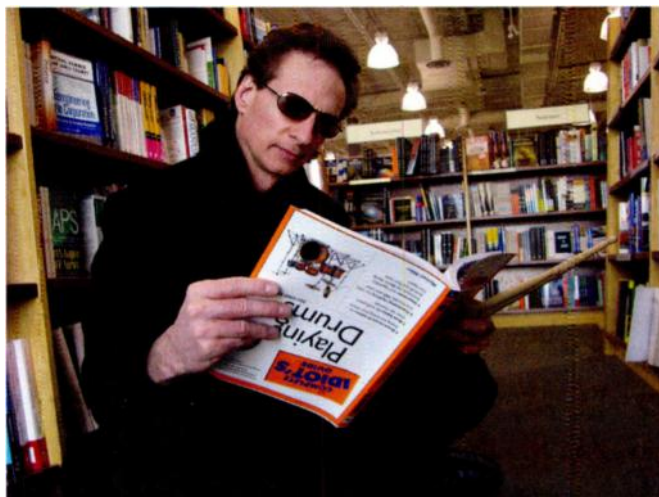
**H**ere's some practical advice to help you understand interdependence and ambidexterity and hopefully make your practice easier. Interdependence is the ability to play different rhythms simultaneously and somewhat independently of one another in a musical situation, or for coordination development. Drummers are always talking about improving their independence on the drums when in effect they are developing their interdependence.

Drummers who are able to perform or demonstrate totally independent and unrelated rhythms together at the same time are extremely rare. Most examples of this type of ability that we have seen in past performances have actually been interdependent rather than truly independent. There are many drummers known for their amazing interdependent abilities: Jim Chapin, Gary Chester, Vinnie Colaiuta, Terry Bozzio, Thomas Lang, Marco Minnemann, Carmine Appice, Mike Mangini, Billy Cobham, Virgil Donati, and there are many more. Some brilliant practicing methods/books have been developed by a few of these players to help us improve our own interdependent skills.

There does exist a relationship between interdependent rhythms. When time and note structures are mathematically broken down into very small increments they will then be able to be aligned properly and practically with rhythms being executed by the other limbs. Some of these rhythms are very complex (polyrhythms), but when broken down into smaller segments you can see how they interrelate with one another, and this will assist you when practicing. In our minds we need to be able to actually see and picture where our limbs need to be placed in relation to one another in order for us to practice our interdependence efficiently and receive good results for our time. Interdependence exercises must be practiced slowly and in a relaxed manner. You will only become frustrated if you attempt to practice them any other way. There is a saying I have been beating my students over the head with for years: "the slower you practice, the faster you get, sooner." Kind of trite I know, but it's true and will positively influence your progress.

To quote from Jim Chapin's famous book on jazz interdependence: "when practicing let your limbs fall into place without being forced." This is absolutely essential and will help you to gain solid development and mastery in interdependence. Gary Chester's books *The New Breed* and *The New Breed II* are great studies! The first book is a more practical direction and application. *The New Breed II* is very complex and is quite possibly a next-to-lifelong study. These are books that require discipline and the investment of time. Always well worth it. You can't rush interdependence.

I have been working on the development of my own book called *Practical Interdependence* and will use some examples from it in a future article, presented in an easy to understand and useable fashion unless I decide to present it in an entirely complicated and unmanageably complex way for the extremists! Hmm, if I make it simple I will have the extremists on my back and if I make it nutz I will have the normals on my back. Ok, it will be in Phoenician tablature, that way no one will understand it and I can relax. I am not the best person in the world to be talking about normal. Ask around. I think I just went off on another tangent. Where am I? Oh yeah ... I'm feeling the insatiable need to link ambidexterity in with



interdependence as they are both related. A little like aberrant mountain folk.

Ambidextrous control is the ability to play rhythms on the drumset using both sides of your body and, with practice, being able to lead from either side, right or left, at will in a musical fashion when the situation presents itself. Practicing to strengthen and gain control with your weaker side is a little frustrating at first, but if worked on slowly and methodically it will happen and your coordination will increase. It is possible for us to work on ambidextrous control without getting into heavy interdependence but not really the other way around. Working on strict interdependence will include ambidextrous movement. If this is confusing to you please e-mail me, and I will explain it in more detailed fashion.

To start on your development of ambidextrous control the easiest way is to simply take any beginning or intermediate drum book/method, a good one to start with is *Realistic Rock* by Carmine Appice. Starting with the easiest exercises at the beginning, work your way SLOWLY through each exercise switching every R for a L, or L for a R, depending on which is your weak side. Obviously, if you own a double pedal it will be easier for you to switch bass drum limbs, but if you don't you will have to move the bass drum over into a more efficient position for your weak limb. You will, of course, need to move the hi-hats over as well. This is frustrating, I know, but this is what you need to do. It is imperative that you practice slowly and in a relaxed manner using proper form at all times. Practicing to gain ambidextrous control is another form of practice that shouldn't be rushed, as it can be very frustrating if you push yourself to excel too quickly.

Don't be lazy! Send me any questions that you have and I will do my best to answer them!

*Gregg Bowman has been very busy over the past months involved in high-end business endeavours and projects with Roger Nichols and Carmine Appice, as well as working on the formation of a Contemporary Christian R&B band with plans to tour the former Soviet Union. As well, Gregg has been working on two book projects for publishing and is soon to be genuinely labelled as "Carmine Appice's protégé." Gregg can be reached at [greggbowman@hotmail.com](mailto:greggbowman@hotmail.com) and looks forward to any questions or comments you might have. Website coming very soon...*

# Studio Work & Recording

by Bill McBirnie

**I** was recently asked a series of questions about studio work and recording, so here are the answers I provided...

## What do you have to say about the sound and miking of the flute in different recording sessions?

Quite frankly, I don't worry about miking too much because I have never really had an engineer ruin my sound. However, in order to avoid a sound that is thin and/or harsh, I might ask the engineer to cut the highs and/or the mid-ranges as this serves to eliminate any brittleness in the sound, especially in the high register. This applies with respect to sound men on live gigs too! I find that if you are polite and not prima donna-ish about the matter, then the sound man will likely appreciate the guidance. The engineer will often consult you as you are warming up anyway so, when you speak to an engineer in these terms, they quite readily understand, and accept, what you're saying.

Non-classical recording sessions are typically close-miked and, if you detect too much wind blast, either mic well above the tone hole and/or ask for a pop screen. However, remember that in over-dubbing situations (which are frequent), you are probably going to hear more flute in your phones than will likely appear in the final mix. Some things that might sound less than perfect in your phones end up sounding fine in the final mastered track, so don't become overly preoccupied or, worse yet, self-centered about YOU, especially when you're dressing a track because it's not about you!

Having said that, my one concern about final mixes is that they often result in the flute being placed too far back in the mix and thereby losing some of its nice characteristics (such as just a little wind-blast which can be quite desirable, especially in exposed passages). I remember once, years ago, I was listening to a cut which Hubert Laws dressed for a high-profile artist and I noticed that, overall, his sound was just not that good. I thought, 'Gee, Hubert must have really had a bad day!' When I became more experienced and re-visited that same track some years later, I realized that it wasn't Hubert's fault. Indeed, it was obvious that the recording/mixing engineer had placed him so far back in the mix that they had completely lost the essence of him!

## Do you ever record your solos again?

In most overdub situations, I offer a couple of takes so the producer/artist can play with that track if they want to. However, I rarely offer any more than three takes because any more than that will simply create problems in making artistic and/or editing decisions, and neither the producer nor the artist need to deal with that!

## What kinds of flutes are needed for a session flute player?

I usually just bring a C flute unless they ask for something else. I find that the alto flute (as opposed to the piccolo or the bass flute) offers the nicest "sonic alternative" so, if I happen to know what is up and I feel that it may suit the circumstance, then (and only then) might I suggest the alto.

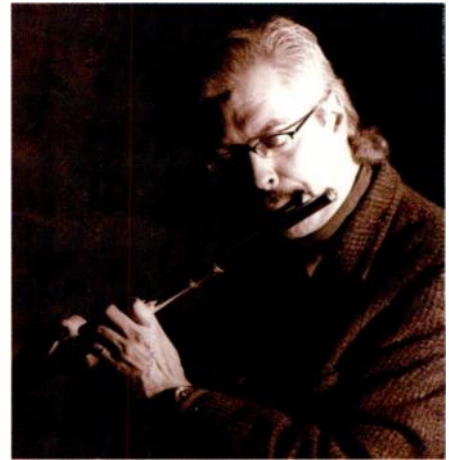
## How do you get the most from the contacts with producers and the like?

I am a craftsman – not a politician, so I am not very good at what one might call the 'glad-handing' side of things. It's been my experience that being on time, being co-operative and doing a REALLY good job is ultimately your strongest recommendation. I like to go into a session with the attitude that, "I want to see if I can deliver something they didn't expect ... but it is exactly what they wanted!" If you can succeed in delivering a singular and polished product then word will get around. (NOTE: Regarding "polished product" because I am a flute specialist, I do NOT double and this fact has worked both FOR me and AGAINST me in terms of session work over the years.)

## How do you price yourself for the sessions?

The pricing for recording sessions is a function of a number of variables but usually there is a minimum rate for say a three-hour call and that rate depends, in turn, on if the session is for a demo, a domestic release, or an international release. Check with your local AFM to find the applicable scale. However, producers on the session are generally fully aware of all of this and simply pay you the applicable scale.

I might add that, in today's work environment, there are a lot of independent projects going on. So, if I know that it is an indie session, I definitely have mercy on the artist! Indeed, if the artist is really new, then he or she knows that they can't pay you well enough, so I am inclined



to accept whatever the budget permits. Remember, the artist may well have a better budget for the next project, and they will keep in mind the players who were understanding and/or sympathetic towards the nature and the cost of their previous undertakings. They usually appreciate the ones who were on time, co-operative, polite, and who delivered a singular product that was worth far more than they paid. In such cases, believe me, they will call you back! Part of my empathy for the artist in this regard is because I have been a leader and I am an independent myself who has had to struggle with these very same issues, so I understand completely what that independent artist is going through. It's a little like being a sideman where I adhere to the philosophy that, "The leader has enough problems ... Don't you be another one of them."

Finally, I might mention that in a couple of key instances in my career I have been cold-called (typically by referral ... and because of what was an important and exposed flute part) for an indie/demo session that didn't really pay very well. However, after that one session, I was in the band, and that paid off with lots of live and studio work afterwards!

*Bill McBirnie is a jazz and Latin flute specialist located in Toronto, ON who has been chosen Flutist of the Year by the Jazz Report Awards, nominated as Instrumentalist of the Year at the National Jazz Awards, and declared a winner of the U.S.A. National Flute Association's triennial Jazz Flute Masterclass Competition. He has produced several Extreme Flute projects to date including his most recent, "Paco Paco," with Bernie Senensky (piano), Neil Swainson (bass), and John Sumner (drums). All of these are available from the distributor Indie Pool at [www.indiepool.com](http://www.indiepool.com). If you would like to contact Bill directly, you can reach him at [billmcb@jdirect.com](mailto:billmcb@jdirect.com).*

# New Rule: Blow Your Own Horn

by Chase Sanborn



The following is a condensed interview conducted by Burt Brown.

## Chase, when did you start playing, and how did you get started in your music career?

I started playing in grade four in the New Jersey public school system. Trombone was my first choice, but I couldn't reach seventh position (I still can't). During high school, I commuted to Philadelphia to study with Dr. Donald Reinhardt, a brass specialist. In the early 1970s, I attended Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA, one of the few universities offering a major in jazz at that time. In 1979 I moved to San Francisco, CA to cut my teeth as a freelancer for the next four years. During that period, I spent a year touring North America and Europe with the Ray Charles Orchestra. In 1981 I moved to Toronto, ON inspired by what I heard on Rob McConnell's Boss Brass recordings, and the quality of life offered by the city. I am very happy to be a Canadian (dual citizen, actually) and to be the father of a couple of them!

## What kind of playing do you do in Toronto?

As a commercial session player, I've made my living primarily in the recording studios and theatre pits, with the occasional jazz gig to make sure I have enough tax deductions. These days, I'm spending as much time on the road as in town, appearing as a guest artist.

## Do you have a regular group of your own?

I have a group whenever I have a gig! Toronto has a large talent pool, and there is never a problem forming a band. I do have my favourites, including Mark Eisenman on piano, Steve Wallace on bass, and Reg Schwager on guitar. That trio appears on my new CD, *Perking Up*.

## How do you approach making a recording?

I try to make the session as much like a live gig as possible: play a few tunes, take a break, play a few more tunes, etc. I avoid listening to playbacks in the studio and I never strive for perfection, because a) I'll never achieve it and b) that is not the goal. A jazz recording attempts to capture a moment of spontaneity; you want to hear a jazz musician taking risks. As Guido Basso says: "Don't forget to flaw." Basically, if you assemble

a group of great musicians that enjoy playing together, and give them tunes they enjoy playing, they'll make your record for you!

## Can you talk about your teaching?

As a younger player, I always resisted teaching, fearing that it would distract me from my playing career. As it turns out, teaching has made me a much better player, and actually provides quite a few playing opportunities as a guest artist. Teaching has become a major focus of my life, and if I have a calling, that is it. I enjoy travelling and working with students more than anything else I've done in my career.

My private students range from about 13 to 80, from beginner to pro. I teach a lot of adults and comeback players, people who stopped playing to raise a family or build a career, and now want to return to it. It's a satisfying group to teach because they are doing it totally for personal pleasure, without any pressure, beyond what they put on themselves. Often they get bugged that their real job interferes with their practice time.

In the jazz program at the University of Toronto (U of T), we have a small student body of about 70 undergrad and graduate students. With a faculty of more than 20 of Canada's finest jazz musicians, the students receive a lot of individual attention – there is nowhere to hide in our program! The level of the students is high, and they inspire and challenge each other. Many of the country's rising-star jazz musicians are graduates of the U of T program. Increasingly, I find myself on the bandstand with ex-students, for example in vocalist Heather Bambrick's band, where I am the token "old guy." I'm following the example set by Phil Nimmons who has obviously discovered the fountain of youth, which is: hang around with young people!

## Do you have any advice for students?

Make every note sound as beautiful as you possibly can. Practice slowly, with full concentration, and listen critically. Try to communicate with your listeners on an emotional, not intellectual level.

## How do you choose what style of music to play?

It chooses you. As a musician, it's important to stay true to your own taste. If you play music that speaks to you, it will speak to others too. Whether it speaks

to a million people or 100 people, you don't have a whole lot of control over that. If you are true to yourself, you are a success.

## Can you talk about your books and DVDs?

I have self-published three books: *Brass Tactics*, *Jazz Tactics*, and my latest, *Tuning Tactics*, which deals with intonation. The books and accompanying DVDs are extensions of my teaching. I attempt to distill 30 years of professional playing experience into a few hundred pages, presented in an enlightening and entertaining format. My writing style is casual, with a bit of humour. Readers will discover that the life of the professional musician, whatever else it may bring, guarantees a lot of laughter.

Self-publishing is very time-consuming, but I enjoy every stage of the process from writing to marketing. I love that my writing has connected me to people all over the world. People seem to feel that after reading my books, they know me a little, as they are written very much from my personal perspective.

## You are a Yamaha Artist. How does that work?

Yamaha co-sponsors some of my educational activities and I play and endorse their instruments. I'm very proud to be affiliated with Yamaha, because of the quality of their instruments and because of their commitment to music education.

## What equipment do you play?

My primary trumpet is the Yamaha 8310Z, which is the most versatile trumpet I've ever owned. My flugelhorn is the 6310Z. Both horns were designed for Bobby Shew. My mouthpieces are designed and manufactured by GR Mouthpiece Technologies. They are on the market as CS Signature Models, and have turned out to be very popular.

Chase Sanborn is a jazz trumpet player based in Toronto, ON and a veteran columnist for CM.

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

# Vocoder 101

by Paul Lau

Last year, my friend Larry Gowan invited me (with backstage passes in hand) to see him perform live with Styx and the anticipation was quite overwhelming. The late '70s and early '80s briefly returned the moment they broke into "Mr. Robot"; this was the era of the Vocoder in its early musical prime. Actually, when you look at the history of the Vocoder or just the development concept of the technology by Bell Labs, it's been around for almost 80 years. I recall that the name Vocoder actually came from "voice encoder" and/or "voder." The Vocoder is also synonymous with Wendy Carlos and Robert Moog during the '70s as they were the forerunners in the development and use of the Vocoder in musical applications.

The Vocoder is sort of a speech analyzer combined with a synthesizer and was originally developed as a speech coder for telecommunications applications around the 1930s, the idea being to code speech for transmission for secure radio communications. Most likely, this had a military application at the time. This is how it actually works in lay terms: by using several band pass filters, the vocal coming in from the microphone is divided into a series of frequency specific bands of sound. Then the volume envelope from each frequency band is transmitted onto a series of voltage controlled amplifiers which are modulating a corresponding set of frequencies which are filtered out from the pitches produced when you hit the keys. The timbral selection is controlled by an onboard oscillator which is usually rich in harmonic content and a noise source to provide sibilants, like an added synthesizer patch sound. So, if you have a Vocoder try this combination: add a vocal patch and a synth string patch, assigning them to different upper or lower octave ranges, adjust the variable attack and decay while modifying the variable portamento and then detune up or down two full tones. Presto! One funky Vocoder combo sound!

The TalkBox is commonly mistaken for the Vocoder. The TalkBox is different in that it is a musical sound effects

device that allows a musician to modify the sound of a musical instrument by changing the shape of one's mouth, and with the Vocoder you just speak or sing into the microphone that is connected into the keyboard, adjusting parameters and playing the keyboard to change the sound. The TalkBox effect can be used to shape the frequency content of the sound and to apply speech sounds like singing, onto a musical instrument, usually a guitar or keyboard and hence this is where the confusion lies,



because they both require you to use your mouth. The TalkBox is an effects pedal and has a speaker connected with an airtight plastic tube that is taped to the side of a microphone, in or near the mouth. You've probably seen Kid Rock use this on some performance on MTV or MuchMusic, also Peter Frampton was quite famous for his use of the TalkBox on *Frampton Comes Alive!* Visually, the hardware Vocoder is either a keyboard or rackmount/desktop module connected to a keyboard controller and microphone through MIDI.

In the world of hardware Vocoder, you may think of the original Sennheiser Vocoder (used by Kraftwerk) and the many different incarnations of Roland Vocoder through the years ie: VP-330, SVC-350, and VP-70, but a few years ago Korg came out with a three-octave analog modelled microKORG Synth/Vocoder in the \$500 range and it gave Vocoder a new breath of life (no pun intended), renewing interest for a whole new generation of musicians. With so many hovering around a microKORG at music stores and being fascinated by re-creating the Cylons from *Battlestar Galactica*, I have been told that this little keyboard has out-sold the record breaking Korg M1. You may remember the M1, which revolutionized the entire keyboard industry with affordable sample technology during the '80s. Check out the latest hardware releases like Korg's Radius and Roland's VP-550.

But for all you non-hardware enthusiasts, there have always been numerous Vocoder software programs and plug-ins through the years – remember the Cylonix 18 Channel Vocoder for Windows95? How about the more recent Zerius, SonicismVintage, Fruity, Reason Vocoder, and Prosoniq Orange Vocoder to name a few?

That leads us to a second case of mistaken audio identity with songs like "Believe" by Cher, "Blue" by Eiffel65, "One More Time" by Daft Punk, and "Days Go By" by Dirty Vegas – these effects were not created with the Vocoder, but with Auto-Tune software ... and that's a whole different article in itself. But do not despair, the Vocoder is up front and centre with the latest hit album from Prince, *3121* (his house address?) which uses the Vocoder on "Incense and Candles." The Vocoder has also made a few movie debuts as in *Donnie Darko*, *A Clockwork Orange*, and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. Whether you have access to or own a Vocoder, or have tried a Vocoder plug-in, this is one powerful, memorable effect and is great fun to experiment with, just remember ... too much of a great thing can be noticeably annoying!

Paul Lau B.Sc. – Musician-Producer/MIDI-Digital Audio Specialist, Strategic Alliance Co-Ordinator for the [www.Userful.com](http://www.Userful.com) – Software that turns one computer into 10. Director of PowerMusic5Records – [www.powermusic5.com](http://www.powermusic5.com). Associated with Steve's Music, Roland, Microsoft, Apple, IBM, Toshiba, Sony, and Universal Music. Member of the cool Christian pop band Scatter17 [www.scatter17.com](http://www.scatter17.com).

# USING AND DEVELOPING VOCAL POWER

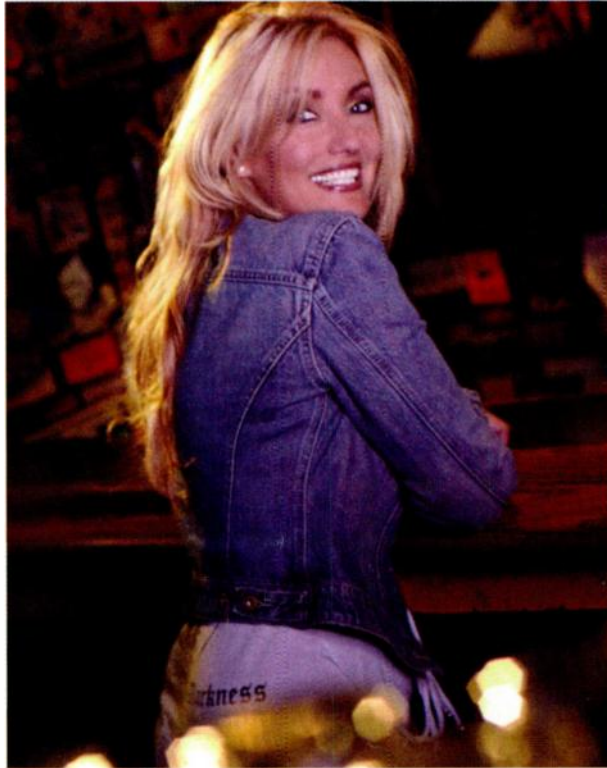
by Sass Jordan

**V**ocal power comes from the ability of the singer to control the diaphragm properly. It comes from exercising your instrument and using it regularly. The ultimate power in the voice is from the emotional commitment of the singer – when the singer truly believes and is part of the song, firmly entrenched in the moment. That is when the inherent power blooms.

The best voice teacher I ever had is in New York City, and he is the reason I made it through the insanely tough role of Janis Joplin off-Broadway – 19 Janis songs, four nights a week. That sounded like nothing to me until I actually tried doing it. The stamina and the discipline required were pretty new to me, having sung my own songs and knowing my way around them when things were in less than perfect working order. This was a whole new game, plus, there was dialogue. So, off to the first vocal coach of my life, Don Lawrence – a taskmaster extraordinaire. The first thing he showed me was where to place the sound in my head. This is quite tricky when you are not used to it. The sound has to come from the back of the mouth, where it opens into the throat, and through the middle of the head – basically, where the uvula is. The notes are reached and sustained through the use of the diaphragm, so you really need the whole body, more or less, to get the pitch and the tone right.

I had never before in my life heard the sound that I could generate when I got that combo right. My pitch got a whole lot better, too. The key with pitch (pardon the pun) is practice. The more you practice, the better your pitch gets. There is nothing more frustrating than being out of practice for anyone, be it athlete, singer, or instrumentalist. You know what you want to do, and you are just unable to physically do it, until you have been practicing for a while again.

I think that when you are going for power as a singer,



you have to know what it is that is inspiring you to sing. Is it anger? Is it confusion? Is it because no one else in the band can hold a note at all? Is it because you are just a ham and you crave the attention? Is it because you have a burning need to communicate? Is it a combo pack of all these things? Whatever it is, that is the emotion that will give you the raw power, the guts, and the momentum to really bring the house down, so to speak.

Once you realize that you can do this, and are doing it on a regular basis, you have to be sure that your usage of this particular asset is efficacious. A little goes a long way, and to really have power, you have to have the ability to sing softly. It is the fantastic juxtaposition of light with dark that makes all the difference to the listener. Listen to someone like Gladys Knight, or Chaka Khan, or Chris Cornell for great examples of this. The quiet makes

the loud 10 times more powerful than if you come out, full guns blazing, straight out of the gate. The knowledge of what is appropriate and at what time is a talent you are born with, or a skill you can approximate most of the time. Generally speaking, it's a blend of the two.

I suppose anyone can have adrenaline-fueled power for 10 minutes or so, but to be able to sustain that power and to use it to your advantage is something that is developed through hard work and dedication, just like anything else that is worthwhile. It is certainly a challenge to be able to have that sort of dedication in this age of instant gratification and thousands of distractions. That is why I titled my latest recording *Get What You Give* – the amount of energy you put into your voice and its power is directly proportionate to the energy you will receive for your efforts. May the Force be with you. Namaste.

Horizon recording artist Sass Jordan. Check out [www.sassjordan.com](http://www.sassjordan.com).



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Rik is pictured here with the all-new CPX900 featuring the incredibly natural sounding A.R.T. contact pickup system.

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SINCE 1966



**THE CELTIC-FOLK BAND'S NEW LIVE CD AND DVD, COURAGE & PATIENCE & GRIT COULD'VE ADDED "& EASE" ONTO THE TITLE**

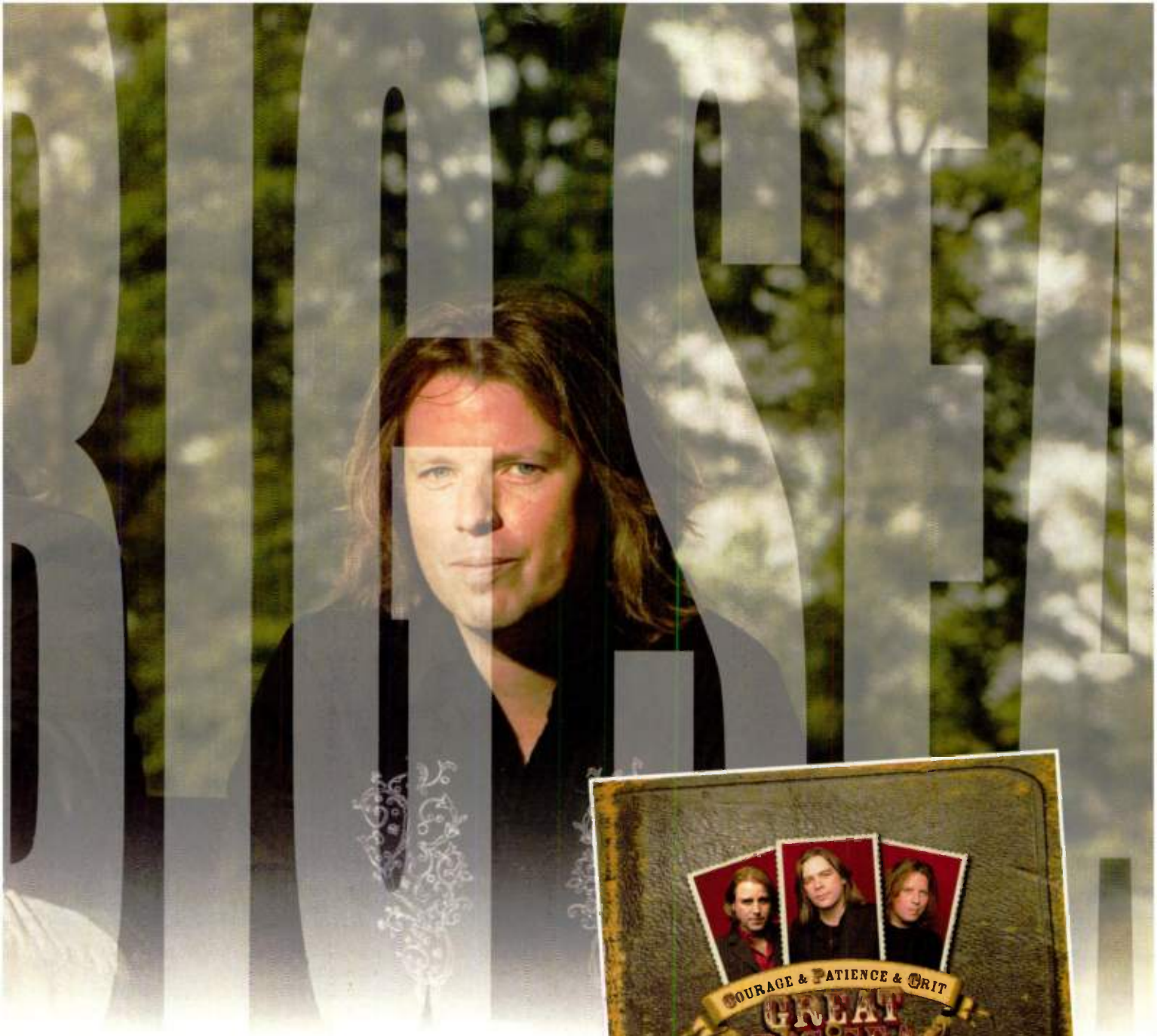
The making of Great Big Sea's latest release, a live concert CD and DVD called *Courage & Patience & Grit*, was a natural experience for the Newfoundland-based Celtic-folk band. There were no adjustments made to the show that had been performed so many times before in touring behind their latest studio album, *The Hard And The Easy*. • BY KAREN BLISS

There were no duct-tape "X" marks on the stage for positioning, no scripted banter, no rehearsals. About the only thing they purposely did for the shoot was wear the same outfits two nights in a row. The whole tour had been enough preparation for the lads and the two sold-out shows at the Empire Theatre in Belleville, ON, were among the last of a nearly six-month run.

"It was literally a passing thought," says bandmember Alan Doyle of the recording. "We'd done like 60 concerts or something by the time we played in Belleville, so it was as good as it was going to get. We were really confident that we could pull it off in a couple of nights and not have any heinous dingers that we couldn't live with for the rest of our lives. We've done it so often

that we didn't fret about it at all. It was a natural thing to do – 'We're taping another show, off we go.' We didn't want to create something here that's different from what we did for the 50 other *Hard Easy* concerts. We want a bunch of guys to come in with cameras and microphones and take pictures and record sound of exactly what we do in a most non-disturbed fashion that we can."

Great Big Sea's manager, Louis Thomas, says he and the band had been talking with brothers Pierre and François Lamoureux of Montreal's FogoLabs for four years about doing a live concert DVD. They also watched Rush's *R30 – 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary World Tour* and The Tragically Hip's *That Night In Toronto* DVDs that the company had produced.



"The two guys who ran the show, François and Pierre, were totally into the idea of having the film and audio crew be completely invisible to the audience and to us," says Doyle. The first meeting we had with them, we said, 'Well, what do you guys want to do?' And they said, 'Nothing. We don't want you guys to do anything. We don't want you guys to change a single step of spontaneity of what you might have in the concert – nothing.'"

That was a relief to Doyle especially, who reveals that Great Big Sea's previous live recording, the group's first in 2000 called *Road Rage*, was a bit of a nightmare. They had taped every single night of their 1999 *Turn* tour in hockey rinks, about 35 shows, and then had the ear-numbing task of listening back to everything in order to pick the best-sounding tracks for the album.

"When you have that many shows to go through and say, 'Well, we have 87 versions of 'Mari-Mac,' let's pick which version of the 87 we're going to mix for the record,' it was painful," recalls Doyle, exaggerating the numbers for effect. "I listened to 87 times 24 songs times three-minutes a piece, I think." The eventual track listing had 19 songs, including two new ones. Imagine listening to yourself that many times? Oh my God, because, of course, you look at pictures of yourself, you don't go, 'Wow, I'm hot' No, you



#### ONLINE RESOURCES FOR A D.I.Y. VIDEO PROJECT

- [www.angelfire.com/movies/nobudgetsfx/musicvideo.html](http://www.angelfire.com/movies/nobudgetsfx/musicvideo.html)
- [www.powertolearn.com/articles/teaching\\_with\\_technology/shooting\\_good\\_video.shtml](http://www.powertolearn.com/articles/teaching_with_technology/shooting_good_video.shtml)
- [eduscapes.com/seeds/shooting.html](http://eduscapes.com/seeds/shooting.html)

go, 'I'm fat' or 'My hair looks stupid' and that's exactly what it's like listening to live records. You're like, 'Woahhhhh.' I won't ever do that again (laughs). I'll produce a million records, but I'll never ever do that."

He laughs and the exasperation in his voice from a memory relived disappears.

Great Big Sea – main members Doyle (vocals, acoustic and

# GREAT BIG SEA

electric guitars, bouzouki), Séan McCann (vocals, acoustic guitars, bodhran, shakers, tin whistle), and Bob Hallett (vocals, button accordion, bouzouki, fiddle, tin whistles, tenor banjo), along with Kris MacFarlane (vocals, drums, percussion, acoustic guitar, piano accordion), and ex-Moxy Frivous member Murray Foster (vocals, bass) – didn't give many instructions to the Lamoureux brothers. Pierre attended four Great Big Sea concerts leading up to the Belleville shows to get an idea of how the group presents itself.

"Most of the considerations you have when you're recording music live and in the studio is technical stuff – is the preamp in this guitar good enough? Will the fiddle work if it has this on it?" says Doyle. "We had a meeting just about audio and we played Pierre a bunch of our live record-

"The only thing I recall we had to do by law is tell everybody that they're about to be photographed and if they don't want to be on the DVD, leave now. 'If you're here cheating on your missus, it's a good time to leave,'" Doyle laughs. "No, we didn't tell them anything to do. We legitimately wanted it to be an honest reflection of a random night on the road.

"In the past, when we filmed live things, especially TV shows where they have all kinds of strict requirements, they often spend so much time worrying about the angle of the microphone stand, blah blah blah, that the music sucks as a result, or the audience has been given so much instruction on when to clap and when not to that by the time the show starts they're scared shitless. Certainly if you go, 'This has to be the greatest time we've played this song in the history of our lives,' of course, there's no advice worse. It's like playing a sport, and someone leans into

mixed, the audience is all mixed after the fact and we can choose to bring them up and bring them down," says Doyle.

As for any between-song banter, it was often said succinctly and without 'ums' or 'ers.' Doyle says that too was unrehearsed: "The banter in between songs varied each night and in each case, it was always two or three things per set, and then it was always a dozen things per set that we always did. I'll say it like this – the greatest hits of the gags came pretty frequently as the tour went on. They get refined."

"If you come from the pub culture that we come from, if you're schooled in Celtic music, the banter is expected of you for a couple of reasons. First, I think people who come to see theatre performances of folk music, they come to expect humour in a lot of it, certainly in Newfoundland music, but also because each of these folk songs have a great story to tell about it and it's not difficult to be very genuine and very



Murray Foster, Kris MacFarlane, Alan Doyle, Séan McCann, Bob Hallett.

ings from the past and said, 'This is the way we generally like the fiddles to sound; this is the generally the balance for vocals.' We wanted to capture the vibe of a real live Great Big Sea show, not to have four guys sitting on stools behind sound baffles in front of an audience, so the challenge for the engineers or the equipment or for us is how do we get this on tape and not affect the show for the thousand people who are sitting in the chairs? It just goes back to the gear, to your equipment, and the stuff we use to do it makes sense."

When Great Big Sea arrived in Belleville, they taped the soundcheck just to figure out levels and lighting, and then Pierre and François planned to make the second night the actual concert recording. The first night would simply be B-roll of the band getting off the bus, the fans entering the venue, and various crowd shots, all filmed with a couple of handheld cameras.

The audience knew they were being filmed for a DVD and CD, but they weren't told to applaud excessively or not to hoot and holler during the performances.

their ear five seconds before they're about to step up to the plate and says, 'Okay, this is really important, so try really hard.'"

The audience is a key part of Great Big Sea's live show and while it might be brave for any other band to expect a sing-along from fans when recording one show only, Doyle got full cooperation for "When I'm Up."

"Well, whenever you do a live recording that involves a live audience, they're not in the band; they're not rehearsed; they're just coming for a great night out, so you always have some trepidation about how they will react," admits Doyle. "What if Great Big Sea, the great participation band, what if we play these songs in Belleville, the nights we have cameras, and nobody sings? So yes, you always worry about the crowd and on those two nights, luckily for us, they were how they usually are and reacted great."

The audience was also mostly respectful during a quieter song such as "Sweet Forget Me Not," but a couple of loud hoots are left in. "There's a pile of audience mics and, of course, when it's all

spontaneous and tell some factual thing about these songs."

The DVD of *Courage & Patience & Grit – Great Big Sea In Concert* contains 26 songs in total, while the CD has four less – "I'm A Rover," "Danny Boy," "Run Runaway," and "Old Brown's Daughter." Still, some songs in *The Hard And The Easy* tour set didn't make either live recording.

"We couldn't fit it all," says Doyle. "I think the three or four things that we ditched, we ditched because we already had live recordings of them. I think 'Lukey's Boat' is not on there because we've had it in a live record, a live video, a Chieftain's video, and it was on our previous DVD. So we said, 'If we have to ditch one song in the first set, let's ditch that.' 'Donkey Riding' got ditched too because we had it on 50 things."

Besides from cutting tracks in their entirety, Doyle says there were no overdubs at all on the ones that did make it. Great Big Sea didn't do that either with *Road Rage* because there were so many choices, but one would think with a one-night-only recording that one of the guys in the band would want to re-cut something.



"I guess to be honest with you, we picked these guys, Pierre and François, because we trust them and their vision, so we said, 'Guys, look, if we all get involved and we all pick away at every single little thing, you know what's gonna happen? It will be a recording that offends nobody.' We'll have a chance to take anything that we hate out of there, but let's trust the people that we hired and that's what we did."

## Courage & Patience & Gear GUITARS

- Takamine EN10 and EN20 models. Alan Doyle uses the cutaway model while Séan McCann prefers the older, full-bodied instrument. Alan also uses a black Gibson Les Paul Custom through an Ibanez TS-9 Tube Screamer. His Fender Blues Junior guitar amplifier was housed off-stage in an isolation chamber or "dog house."
- Murray Foster's Mesa Boogie V-Twin pedal preamp was used to drive the signal from his basses.

## TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENTS

- Alan Doyle can often be seen tearing it up on a Trinity College mandala or bouzouki.
- Bob Talbot, the band's multi-instrumentalist, plays Fylde bouzoukis, Hohner button accordions, and a vintage Barcus-Berry fiddle with a Bridgewater spare; occasionally he pulls out a 1920s Ludwig banjo and always has an assortment of whistles on hand.
- Séan McCann plays a Cooper-Man bodhran and various whistles.
- Drummer Kris MacFarlane gets in on the traditional scene with his piano accordion.

## DRUMS

Kris MacFarlane has been a long-time advocate and supporter of Ayotte drums. He has two custom wood-hoop set-ups both in black walnut satin stain. Most recently he has been using a 22" x 16" bass drum, 12" x 10" rack tom and 16" x 16" floor tom (his second kit is the same configuration with each drum being two inches smaller). He uses an Ayotte 14" x 6.5" steel hoop snare, which he occasionally substitutes with an Ayotte 13" x 5" wood hoop snare or a 10" x 4.5" Dixon side snare. Kris also uses SABIAN cymbals and a Roland SPDS sampler.

Montreal's FogoLabs has produced concert films and DVDs for Rush, Collective Soul, Harry Connick Jr., The Tragically Hip, Alanis Morissette, The Who, and others. Co-founder Francois Lamoureux discusses the making of *Courage & Patience & Grit - Great Big Sea In Concert*, which he produced, and his brother, Pierre, directed. It was mixed by both Denis Normandeau and Francois.

When recording audio, FogoLabs insists on true triple redundancy, which is hard to find in a mobile recording unit. More and more, we're bringing all our own equipment because of this. For the Great Big Sea project, we sent one feed from the isolated splitter to Dome Productions' Majestic HD video truck right into their Calrec console. I then mixed the audio, which served as reference for Pierre to direct the video. The audio was then recorded on the HD CAM SR decks in the truck. The two other isolated feeds were sent to two separate Pro Tools HD 7.2 rigs, one that we put in the Dome audio section and the other one in a small room behind the stage that we modified to be a little studio.

"Having done a lot of these things in my life, from Branford Marsalis to Slipknot to Willie Nelson, we're pretty well-versed in recording styles, I wasn't really scared of anything. But I wanted to stay faithful to the band. The biggest thing is always making sure that the traditional instruments sound like they're supposed to sound. (Band manager) Louis Thomas's brother, Danny, who does the monitors (and is stage manager), put all the mics on the instruments, so what we normally do is if we find the instruments don't sound very good, we won't change the mics, but we'll add more mics, but his stuff sounded so

good that what we had to do is make sure that we captured what he put on there. The only thing we added was drum overheads and we miked the room quite a bit. I think we had eight crowd mics and that was the big thing. Because it was an acoustic band, we tried to get as much spillover from the acoustic-ness of it, especially in the acoustic set. If you listen to their other live stuff, everything was really good, but we wanted it to sound like a folk band but as fat as it could sound.

"FogoLabs' main thing is we always make it so that we never have to overdub. In all the productions that we've done, we've never had to overdub anything except one time. We only taped the audio the first night, and we didn't tell anybody we were doing it. I guess they found out at the end. The idea was that we were setting up the first night, and we had a couple of cameras to film the crowd the first night, but we weren't actually filming the band the first night. Everything on there that people will hear is all from the second night. We cut a couple of songs for length, not because they were played wrong and they didn't overdub anything. Nobody went in the studio and sang or re-did anything. When their fans hear it (the DVD/CD), they're going to go freakin' bananas because they played so well. People won't believe it's all real, but I swear to God, we didn't record anything else.

"The FogoLabs motto is we're like *National Geographic* photographers. A lot of people ask, 'Okay guys, do it again' or 'Will you be doing that tonight?' We don't ask them to do anything. We actually put our cameras in a way that we capture as much as we can. Part of how that works is we actually go on the road with them. This time, my brother went with them to Toronto for a corporate show and then to four Ontario shows - London, Mississauga, and Kitchener a month before the Belleville dates, and again in Mississauga the night before - so he actually saw how the band is on stage. So we need to put a camera here, here, here, and here. As for the mermaid dance, Séan just basically does it and we made sure that we're going to get it, but we didn't ask him to do anything. We react around them. That's the big big key. That's why the bands that we do, we never have to re-record. Other companies say, 'Okay, play it again.' 'Rehearse.' Alan and the boys just went in. 'There's nothing we have to do?' 'No, just go in and sing, man.' 'Really, you want us to do a song?' 'No, no, just play.' So they played and people are gonna freak. It's awesome."



Karen Bliss is a Toronto-based music journalist, who operates her own Canadian music news column at [www.jam.canoe.ca/music/lowdown](http://www.jam.canoe.ca/music/lowdown) and is the Canadian correspondent for *RollingStone.com*. She has also published an anti-racism children's picture book, *The Girl with Pinhead Parents*, available at [www.warchild.ca](http://www.warchild.ca).

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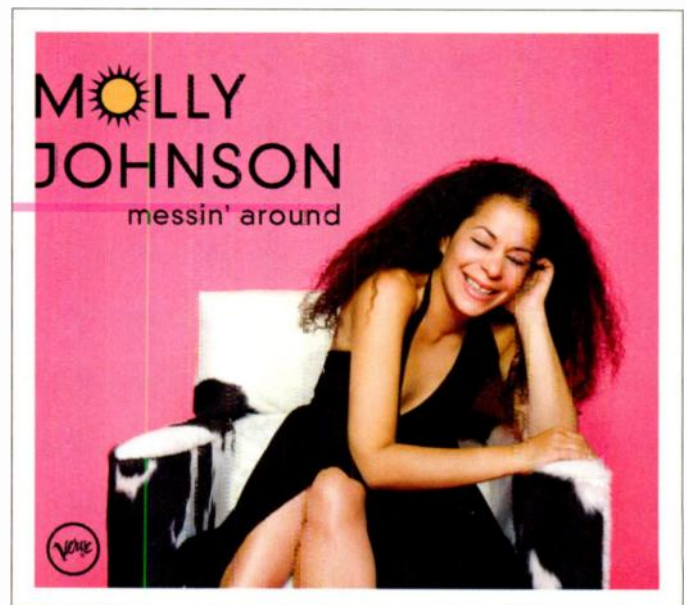


As an underage teen I remember walking around Ottawa's Byward Market with a musician friend and clinging to the hope of grabbing a beer and perhaps taking in some live music. It being a weeknight, and Ottawa being Ottawa, the chances were not great – but that never stopped us before. While passing Grand Central, a popular venue for local up-and-comers and “known” bands from out of town, I was drawn to the door by a seductive voice I swore I recognized, but couldn't place at the time. We nonchalantly approached the ticket window, paid our cover charge (avoiding eye contact with the imposing doorman) and felt an immediate sense of accomplishment as the stage came into view from the back of the club. The band was Toronto's Alto Moda and the voice was none other than Molly Johnson's. The group had been getting decent radio airplay across Canada with the single “Julian.” That was 20 years ago. Now on her third solo release, *Messin' Around*, Molly's voice is as captivating and inspiring as ever. It's not only her singing that makes an emotional impression – she's earned her place among Canada's crusaders by working tirelessly for many charities and worthy causes. She sought to educate her surrounding community and beyond about AIDS/HIV by founding the annual, grass roots Kumbaya Festival in 1992.

Speaking with Molly on the phone on a morning after she and her husband volunteered their time working (and celebrating) into the night for an independent running in the municipal elections, I was astonished by how revved up she was. Molly is charged and brimming over the top with energy and enthusiasm for her music and her passions outside of music more than ever. She appears to be thriving at both. She gets behind people in her community who exude their own passion whether it be politics, social rights, fashion, or art. Molly explains her involvement with local politics and her admiration for stepping forward and representing the people of your neighbourhood: “You don't strive to be a city councilor, I mean the hours are bad! The pay is terrible! You get 'yer shit dragged all through the press. You get, like, no sleep. What are you nuts?” I ask if what she describes sounds an awful lot like the life of a jazz musician albeit less press. Johnson is quick to respond, “There's no money in jazz, really unless you have the initials D. K.” she chuckles ever so softly and finishes, “God bless her, you know.” Molly is again quick to defend her reasons for becoming a jazz singer: “I love the jazz world. It's a soft-seater, civilized, grown-up place to be with a tonne of respect in there. It has taken me years ... years! I had been singing the American songbook at the Cameron Public House (Toronto venue on Queen St. West) ... started there 15 years ago while I was still in rock bands to help me understand what a melody was.”

Molly credits the “pockets of people she can pull from” for staying in the biz. “You know I have a really great team. You never do anything on your own, really, and your team can start with your family and build out from there. I come from a great family and really strong roots. I'm actually looking right now from my downtown house in Toronto at the hospital I was born in. I can see it from where I live.”

Molly is proud of Toronto and has spent the majority of her life performing in front of her hometown. As a grade schooler she trained at the National Ballet, later appearing in Mirvish Productions' *Porgy and Bess*, *South Pacific*, and *Finian's Rainbow*. Acting and dancing would soon take second stage to being a singer/songwriter and fronting an R&B band into the wee hours of the morning with Toronto's who's who of musicians. The late 1970s drove the point home when she decided singing disco



cover tunes wasn't feeding her creative fire. “I love creating my own music first and foremost,” Molly affirms. And so during the '80s the Alto Moda chapter began, leading to The Infidels until that band was dropped by its label in 1992.

Johnson is now part of a select group in the Canadian music biz. Not many can claim a successful leap in genres. Jeff Healey has jumped to jazzland and plays flugel horn in a Dixie band, not his laptop Stratocaster most would picture him riffing away on. Lee Aaron was doing the rock thing, but hung up the spandex for cocktail dresses (lookin' good) and has herself become a resident of jazzland.

Molly has had success outside of Canada, France in particular. It's no coincidence the new record has a lovely tune called “Tristes Souvenir” that conjures up images of Paris with it's instrumentation. The French like jazz. Molly agrees: “The French like Quebecers, have a huge love of culture. Look how many French artists there are. We never hear of them,” she says with an exasperated tone. “And they literally sell millions of records in Quebec! We don't even know who they are in Ontario.” Molly enjoys the fact she has had success in Europe and has showcased in the US, but in her own words has “confused the hell out of the Americans.” How so? “Well, as Canadians we really have a different approach. We are extremely democratic,” now laughing with a hint of guffaw, “extremely mixed race. We're multicultural. In America you become an American (from an immigration point of view). Here you retain your culture ... you add Canada to it. It's a different mindset and I've been up against it many times in many different dresses.” Molly is laughing and now reminiscing, “my Alto Moda dress and my Infidels dress.” She finishes in an optimistically cunning demeanor: “We'll see. I have some interest down there.”

With the fall release of *Messin' Around* Molly plans to initially make appearances across Canada with “great guitarist” Rob Pilch and then take the full sextet out in early spring. Molly's regular core of musicians is nothing short of spectacular.

Mark McLean is a Toronto University grad who was inducted into the Oscar Peterson Trio at age 22. Now living in Brooklyn, NY Molly says there is a “double edged sword there. I helped kick Mark out of Canada. I said ‘Man. This is your time to get out there.’ So he's out there. He's done a ton of stuff. Go on his website. It will freak you out,” she says with a mother's pride.

Andrew Craig is on keys and vocals and has a popular classical radio show called *In Performance* on CBC Radio Two amongst many other credentials. Molly brags about Andrew's talents: “He is just a killer. He goes from Mozart to (Stevie) Wonder in a breath.”

# MOLLY JOHNSON

Andrew and Mark were introduced to Molly when she was a guest of the Nathaniel Dett Chorale. "I stole Andrew and Mark from the Nathaniel Dett Chorale. I don't want to play the race card, but part of my duty is to go looking for the young, gifted, and black. And man oh man! Homerun. Both of them. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to go to Europe and represent Canada in such a beautifully diverse way. It's so important to me to be able to speak that from the stage." Molly herself is the product of a white mother and black father and clearly celebrates this in her life and art.

Colleen Allen is on saxes, clarinet, flute, and accordion. "She plays seven instruments ... think about that. And she looks like a sexy librarian while she's doing it. And she's a mom" – Molly's faux shouting turns again to laughter – "at the beginning of all this she and I would be at the 24-hour Dominion after gigs buying apple juice and diapers at fuckin' two in the morning. Brutal. BRUTAL!"

"I have an awesome bass player, Mike Downes. The guy is the head of the bass department at Humber College. He's the rock. He is sooo the rock of the band. Great command. I can't say enough about Michael Downes. And now the father of two kids under four," once again with that all-knowing wicked laugh.

Molly continues, "Everybody in the band with the exception of the drummer has kids, jobs, mortgages. So we're not all piling into a van and taking off for six months, you know what I mean? It's a whole different bag and it's great."

Many artists are often quoted as saying they enjoy making albums and the whole process that goes with it, but it's the gig and playing to an audience that is their so-called flywheel. Somewhat of an enigma, Molly gets the most satisfaction writing and

[www.mollyjohnson.com](http://www.mollyjohnson.com)

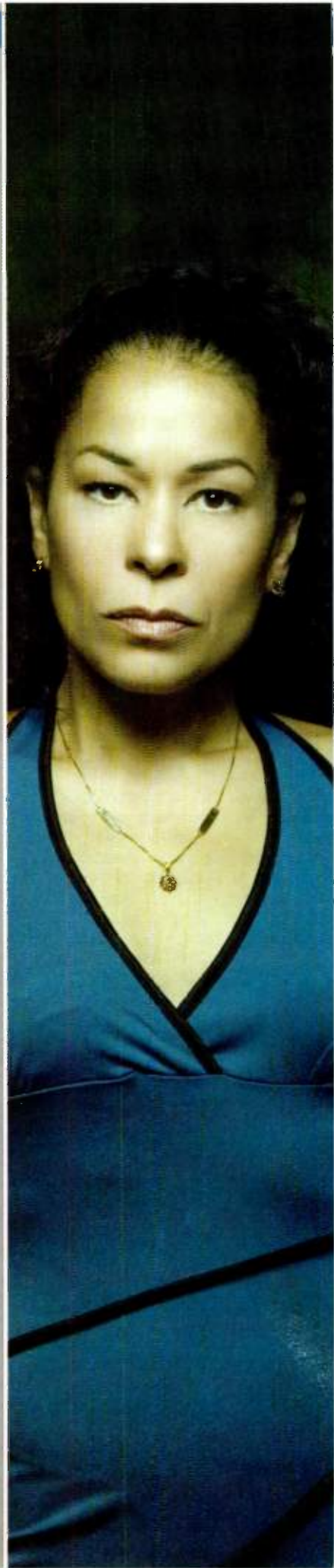
For a list of gear used in recording *Messin' Around*, see [www.canadianmusician.com](http://www.canadianmusician.com).

co-writing the song itself. She has once again collaborated with Steve Mackinnon, a Toronto-based producer/composer who worked with Molly on her previous two solo records; the first, self-titled *Molly Johnson* was recorded in MacKinnon's living room. The song "Melody" from her second album *Another Day* was co-written with Craig Ross, guitarist for Lenny Kravitz, and received critical and commercial success in France. Molly and Ross have once again teamed up by writing the title-track "Messin' Around" and "Sunday" together.

Being a child of the city, Molly appreciates "the north" and escaping with the family to what she calls heaven – but sometimes artists need their space. "I actually wrote the lyrics and the melodies for the Craig Ross songs over a three-day period when I was without the children and my husband in a cabin up north, which is my favourite place to be on the planet. It was awesome to live like an artist, not like a mom slash artist, 'cause that's insane. I don't know how any working mother does that. I don't care if you're a bank teller or a popstar. Mom is mom and you can't get around that. It's not like a little switch you can turn off."

In true but endangered fashion *Messin' Around* was recorded with the band and Molly live off the floor. "We did it in 14 days. It was recorded and mixed at Canterbury Studios which is one of the last, if not the last, studios in downtown Toronto where you can put that many people on the floor at once. We actually hit record ... counted in" – she says as if not to be believed – "and cut the track! Like I've said, I'm extremely low-fi. If you need Auto-Tune (a popular pitch corrector used to hone in the not-so-popular sharps and flats of the vocals) why are you there? You shouldn't be in the room. Get the fuck out of the room," she quips in a dry, frank manner. Molly jokes about her old-school ways: "I'm Amish, I'm tellin' ya. Give me a horse and a buggy!" The ironic part is Molly doesn't drive and only recently was "held at gun point to start e-mailing. I don't initiate the e-mails I only respond to them. Would you believe I have a webmistress, CVM in Victoria, BC, that does any amazing job on my site?" Molly continues to describe the recording process. "That's what we would do. We'd record maybe three takes and then we'd come in (studio control room), listen and then pick one and mix it. We had no A&R hang-ups because label people came to the studio and sat there while we cut the fuckin' track. They couldn't believe it. It's a beautiful thing."

*Messin' Around* is a beautiful thing. The album is a hybrid of sorts, highlighting Molly's love of standards in the style of Gershwin, Ellington, and Holiday, yet has a contemporary feel including renditions of songs written by "The Boss" and "The Artist" once again known as Prince. Halfway through recording the album it was suggested to Molly by her French record company that she record Bruce Springsteen's "Philadelphia," as it was so closely linked to her longtime involvement in the AIDS/HIV community. "I had never sang that song before, but Steve (MacKinnon) came in to the studio the next day with one







LIVE AT THE MOD CLUB

chart, we recorded it twice. We picked one take and that's it!" Tied up in one of those artist vs. record company disputes, she directed her attention to help bring the uneducated horrors of the AIDS virus to light when "people thought you had to be a queer hairdresser to become infected!" While the Kumbaya Festival has been on a temporary hiatus since the birth of her first son, she plans to start it up again in the near future. "When the AIDS conference was held here in Toronto (2006) I wanted to have a benefit, but I just couldn't organize it in time." See Molly's website for all the good she strives to create.

The first single is a track called "Rain" that was co-written with MacKinnon and crosses into the adult contemporary format with ease. It's a slow- to mid-tempo R&B tune that will worm its way into your brain with the line "goodbye Montreal" replaying over and over again as you go about your day.

The album hits upon so many eras of jazz: from the '20s "If You Know Love" to the '70s with its horn arrangements on "Let's Waste Some Time." Molly likens MacKinnon's scoring to the theme from TV's *Mash*.

A great version of Prince's obscure "Tangerine" is the last track on the album and makes you think it was one of Prince's better-known hits for how catchy it is. Molly credits Mark McLean for coming up with the funky arrangement with its percussive groove between the bass and drums. Like me you'll wish the song would go on longer than it does.

The record is an enjoyable musical journey, sounds fantastic, has world-class players, and all 12 tracks have attitude – just like Molly. Recently signed to Verve/Universal Music Canada, she was "dug out" by her managers Pegi Cecconi and Ray Daniels from what Molly calls "a nasty little record deal that took two years and a tonne of dough" and decided the best way to get back at her old record company was to "kill'em with kindness." "I thought the sweetest revenge would be to make a really happy, sexy, fun, fresh you-didn't-kill-me-motherfucker kind of record. So!

That's what I did." ●



Chris Taylor-Munro is a Toronto, ON-based freelance writer and drummer.



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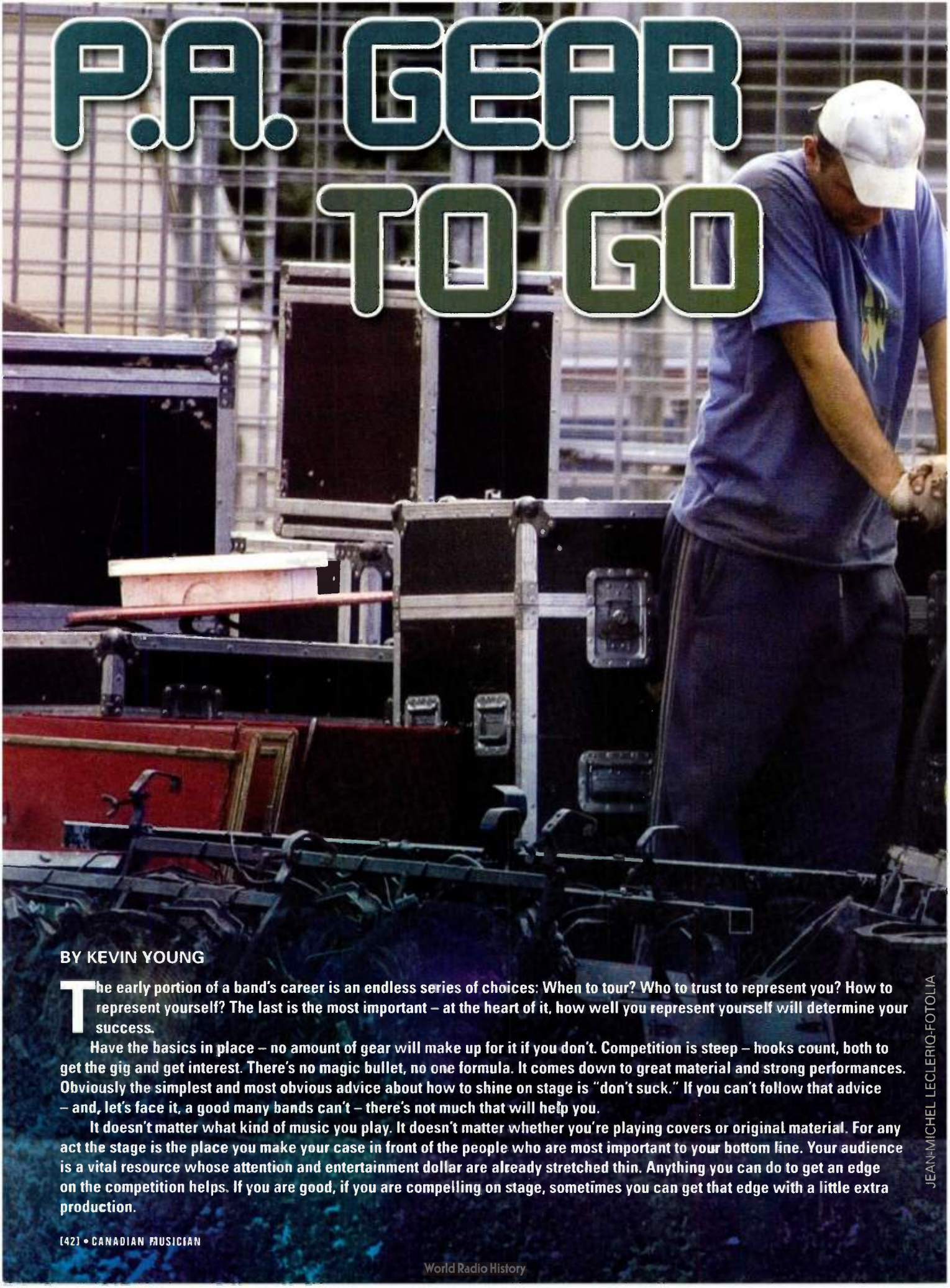
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# P.A. GEAR TO GO



BY KEVIN YOUNG

**T**he early portion of a band's career is an endless series of choices: When to tour? Who to trust to represent you? How to represent yourself? The last is the most important – at the heart of it, how well you represent yourself will determine your success.

Have the basics in place – no amount of gear will make up for it if you don't. Competition is steep – hooks count, both to get the gig and get interest. There's no magic bullet, no one formula. It comes down to great material and strong performances. Obviously the simplest and most obvious advice about how to shine on stage is "don't suck." If you can't follow that advice – and, let's face it, a good many bands can't – there's not much that will help you.

It doesn't matter what kind of music you play. It doesn't matter whether you're playing covers or original material. For any act the stage is the place you make your case in front of the people who are most important to your bottom line. Your audience is a vital resource whose attention and entertainment dollar are already stretched thin. Anything you can do to get an edge on the competition helps. If you are good, if you are compelling on stage, sometimes you can get that edge with a little extra production.

## SORTING OUT WHAT YOU NEED

### IN REHEARSAL

One of the best purchases a young band can make is a small practice P.A. Before you hit the stage you need to be well rehearsed. Having a small system for rehearsal is useful if you're in a space with no P.A. or just plain lousy equipment. If you're moving around from rehearsal hall to rehearsal hall, having your own gear also helps for consistency. If you do have your own lockout rehearsal space, chances are it's cheap and doesn't come with a P.A.

There's a side benefit to buying a small system that goes well beyond being able to hear your vocals. It feels more like you're in business with people when everyone's invested something in the project. If you think you've learned something about people by spending a lot of time with them playing, you should try spending money with them. Co-ownership of this type of gear is a good idea. If the band breaks up you can sell it and split the proceeds and if a member leaves it's easier for you to buy out their share than to start over if the P.A.'s owner packs up and moves to greener pastures.

### ON STAGE

Hauling your own production isn't always feasible, it's also not usually necessary for a new original band. One of the first questions you need to determine is when and if it's worth the expense?

When it comes to getting solid advice about sound reinforcement, you can't do much better than long time Red Hot Chili Peppers Engineer, Dave Rat. In addition to mixing bands like The Red Hot Chili Peppers, Rat has worked with a laundry list of successful touring acts: Blink 182, The Offspring, Rage Against The Machine, Black Flag, Sonic Youth, Soundgarden, L7, and Pearl Jam. He's also the owner of Oxnard, CA-based Rat Sound and knows audio production inside and out – not just from running the gear, but from providing it, designing it, and building it.

That all-consuming passion you have for making music? Easily matched by his passion for problem solving, innovation, and creating the optimum system for live sound. Rat's passion drives his career and is the force behind Rat Sound's journey to international success from a company that got its start doing back yard gigs for beer and petty cash.

"Sorting through what to buy is where it gets tricky," he says. "When making purchasing decisions in the sound world I use five main factors to help me see things clearly: size, weight, cost, sound quality, and maximum volume."

He suggests weighing the above factors against each other when it comes to your particular application, putting them in order of importance as they pertain to the application you intend the gear for. "If you're independently wealthy, travelling in a minivan, the order will be vastly different than if you're eating macaroni and cheese and putting together a system for a giant old warehouse," he says.

Upgrading your live sound isn't necessarily just a question of whether to buy or rent a P.A.. In many cases hauling your own system is far more trouble than it's worth. You can get an edge by bringing a small amount of outboard gear instead.

"There is a vast difference in quality between the lower line compressors and gates

vs. the higher-end stuff," Rat cautions. "For me, a super compact travel rack would have a quad comp, or two, like the BSS DPR404, a Klark Teknik DN514 Quad gate, and a multi-effects unit like one of the Lexicon PCMs." A good selection of good gear goes a long way. "I'm not a big fan of all the super expensive, pretty gear with big knobs. I want it compact, functional, and great sounding."

After you've sorted out what you want, what you need, and what you're going to use it for, you have to decide whether you're going to rent or buy.

"On the smaller scales I think buying is the way to go," says Rat. "Set your sights for success and since you will be a successful band, you will be playing lots of gigs."

If you do actually need a P.A. to gig, you can use a small system, in rooms that have nothing, augment it with rentals when necessary. It doesn't hurt to team up with a friend that likes to do sound, either, Rat suggests.

"Pulling graduates from a sound school that are starving for experience may be a cool line to follow as well. Just like when you put the band together, you searched out a set of people with certain musical talents, keep going with that plan and bring in the techs as well."

Bear in mind that more expensive gear may save you money in the long run, he says. "If you buy good quality and reputable gear, it should hold its value," says Rat. "If you go too cheap, you may take a big financial hit if you have to resell it to upgrade. So add that into your research and see what the re-sale and depreciation values are."

The flip side to this is that the more successful you are, the more production you potentially need, and the more sense it makes to rent. "On larger scales renting is the way to go unless your plan on touring over 250 days a year." The more high-end a system is, the higher the percentage of the year it has to work to be cost-effective."

Being well informed about the options available is important whether you're renting or buying. In addition to checking out manufacturer's sites, bending the ears of engineers you come across when gigging, you might like to take a look at the Rat Sound site as well – [www.ratsound.com](http://www.ratsound.com). "Quite a few years ago I started a free message board with the goal of offering the information and guidance I wish I had had when I started." What makes the Rat board unique is that it provides a productive and useful forum of helpful peers, Rat explains. Where the user has the ability to ask any question they wish "without fear of being slammed by know-it-alls."

### ONE MORE PIECE OF ADVICE FOR GEAR LOVERS

"Never sell your first P.A., because you may miss it forever," says Rat. "I wish I still had some of the gear I have owned over the years. My first system was two 12" monitors, a BGW 250W power amp and a cassette deck with a pair of mic inputs for a mixer with a "Y" cable on the outputs. The main downfall of the setup was that you had to record the show to make the P.A. work and the P.A. would shut off when the tape reached the end.

"I did sound for an amazing show that Social Distortion played in the bowl of a skateboard park in Venice Beach, CA. I charged \$30 but got stiffed on payment and was given two blown JBL 8" speakers as payment instead. Funny thing is I was bummed but now, looking back, I would gladly take the JBL 8's."

### NEEDS VS. WANTS

Deciding what route to go – practice P.A., full system, or select outboard gear – ultimately depends on where you play. And where you play often depends on where you can actually make money. Most people who make a living as musicians do so with a variety of drastically different gigs and Canadian guitarist Gerry Finn is a prime example of this.

Finn started his career playing with metal acts Helix and The Killer Dwarves in the late 1980s, but while based in Los Angeles, CA Finn also took a gig playing with a cover act that did disco covers for clubs and corporate gigs. Over the years he's also taught, worked as a session player and played with a



KEN FRIESEN

**On tour something will break ... usually more than one thing and right when you need it.**

**Back up everything you can afford to** – particularly on things that can easily go missing: power supplies, adapters, and cables of all varieties. If a piece of gear has been acting up for any reason, hoping for the best won't fix it. Eventually vibrations, a glass of beer, or Murphy and his cursed, all-pervading law will strike.

**Organize your gear.** The more accessible everything you need is, the more likely your show will go off without a hitch. Put your spares in a specific bag, drawer, road case, or lunch box – the same place every day – extra cables won't do any good if they're in the van, at your hotel, or 10 hours behind you at last night's venue.

**Don't skimp on road cases.** No hard case can guarantee the safety of what's inside it, but you can cut down on risk by getting the best you can afford. How much padding or shock mounting is up to you, and depends on how fragile the gear in question is. For the most part, going to a custom case manufacturer is a good idea. Generally, they're not that much more expensive. Even if they are pricey, it's worth every penny – if only for superior latches, hinges, locks, and other hardware. Like any contractor, get two or three different quotes before you choose a company and compare their materials and hardware to what their competitors use.

**Finally, label and number your cases,** even if you only have a few cases. It helps when you're explaining to a local crew where to put things when you're setting up, it's easy to identify if it's left behind, and it's less likely to be mistakenly loaded into the wrong vehicle.

# P.A. GEAR

variety of other original acts, most recently with former I Mother Earth lead singer, Brian Byrne. The disco band, however, was something he continued to do after returning to Canada.

To maximize Superfreak's income Finn decided early on to buy his own system. "I have a Yorkville AudioPro 1212 powered mixer, and two custom-built cabinets with two 15" speakers and a horn in them. I set them up sometimes to the side of the stage so they also function as monitors, so we don't need to carry monitors." The initial outlay of three to four grand can be daunting – and there are other costs. "You have to have a van, you have to have a dolly, it's a lot of extra work," Finn says. With the extra effort and responsibility comes perks as well when you're hauling your own gear. If there's budget for production, that's profit if you're providing it.

The band found a residency gig at a resort and used the production budget to finance the purchase instead of renting. By the end of the summer the choice paid off with the band owning the P.A. It continues to pay – it's easy to set up, hasn't needed to be upgraded, and can support venues with capacity of up to 200 people.

"Initially it was a little intimidating to run sound from the stage while I was playing, but it doesn't take long to get used to. I can mix the band from behind the P.A. I've done it long enough to imagine what it's actually sounding like." With built-in preset reverbs and delays Finn also says he has no need for additional outboard gear.

The key to the appeal of the band is a lean set up: vocals, guitar, bass, and drums, augmented with pre-recorded horns, keys, and orchestral elements. "It's a lot more concise," Finn says. It's also consistent, simple, and economical – "It's not like I'm replacing one musician, so you get the sound of a bigger band." For the type of gig and venues they play, the leaner the better. "We've played little dinner cruises up in the Muskoka area, to offices in downtown Toronto, to festivals – you name it."

For disco gigs, Finn also occasionally brings a small light rig and a fogger as well. Doing triple duty makes for a drastically different gig than the type of other shows and projects he works on. Between booking, scheduling players, setting up and running sound, he says, "my role as a guitar player is almost an afterthought."

## HIGH IMPACT – LOW OVERHEAD

For cover projects like Gerry's the key is to keep it simple and easy, but also to adapt to stay in demand with your clients. To do so Gerry and bassist/producer Jeff Pearce (Moist, Rye) came up with a fresh take on karaoke. Figuring that if people like getting all pissed up and singing "Desperado" with a machine, they'd absolutely love to do it with a live band. Rock Star Live gives them the chance to do just that.

The initial outlay of work – sourcing out over 150 songs, creating the video/sound files with scrolling lyrics, click and any additional track the songs might require, never mind learning the lot – was substantial. The amount of additional gear necessary once that was done was minimal. Essentially, a laptop outputting the QuickTime files Jeff created, hooked up to a couple of elderly TVs and, occasionally, a digital projector. If the venue already has TVs they simply plug into the existing A/V system.

Keeping it simple isn't just about loading and setting up, says Pearce. Again, the addition of pre-mixed track – percussion, keys, and strings – on denser tracks means RSL is a no hassle, no-brainer hire for clients – and the house sound person. Not to mention a lean moneymaking machine to boot, one that allows Pearce to put time and effort into other developing projects, songwriting and production.

Certainly an act like Superfreak or Rock Star Live requires a guerrilla approach to production to do the gigs they routinely have to. Finn says that there's an underlying premise that's common to original acts: "Your dollar goes a lot further the more self-contained you are."

Remember that the maximum size of venue you can play is limited by what you're carrying, but you will limit yourself by carrying too much. Choose wisely.

For booking information go to [www.myspace.com/rockstarlivecanada](http://www.myspace.com/rockstarlivecanada).



GERRY FINN

[44] • CANADIAN MUSICIAN

## ORIGINAL BANDS

Initially, there's quicker payoff for cover bands than original bands. Generally live original acts are less predisposed to running loads of track. They also have fewer occasions to bring their own production to showcase night at the local live venue, or haul their own system in a van through the teeth of a Canadian winter.

Meet The Left. After winning the CFOX Seeds competition, this Vancouver, BC-based four piece went out on the road with a set of clearly defined goals, and a P.A.. They not only did 53 shows across Canada, they made the best of growing interest from the industry and packed in co-writing and demoing, before turning around and heading west again.

In Superfreak's case the investment paid for itself in short order, but that payment isn't always just monetary. Putting yourself on the road as an unknown isn't just difficult, it can involve courting all manner of disaster. The Left's toured against the advice of many, but the tour paid dividends even before it was through. Contacts they made along the way resulted in their landing opening slots for their return trip with Hedley and Tal Bachman.

The first thing drummer Eric Davis credits is a good relationship with Long & McQuade. In their case they rented and got a good price on a small monitor system (two monitors and in-ear monitors for the two vocalists), a small soundboard and compact mains for Front Of House (FOH) sound. Although they used the full rig for only a fifth of their gigs, having it allowed them to book non-traditional venues that were not only happy to have them, but happy to pay them. Anyone who's toured on a shoestring, with no tour support, will tell you that every dollar counts.

"We don't have a fan base across Canada, except in British Columbia and Alberta," Davis explains, "and some of those venues didn't have a system." The only way they could afford to make the trip was to play churches, high schools, comedy clubs, as well as regular venues. The small system took the guesswork out of playing some venues and even with just the two monitor mixes the band was ahead nightly in terms of consistency on and off stage. It also gave them a practice P.A. to use once they hit Ontario for a month of rehearsal and co-writing sessions with a number of Toronto-based songwriter/producers.

Touring with no support isn't easy – no hotels and little money meant the band spent a couple of nights in sub-zero temperatures in Winnipeg, MB sleeping in the camper. They may have made some mistakes and have some regrets, but Davis tells me it was worth it. "It's the best thing our band has ever done." Road-testing the band helped them musically and road-testing the gear narrowed down their choices in terms of what they eventually bought to use next time – in this case just the in-ears to save their singer's voice.

The Left toured in a camper van, with a trailer, keeping their rentals at the very back of the pack in the trailer. Carrying the extra gear wasn't always easy. It was more labour-intensive, and required the band to run their sound as well as put on a show. "It's a hassle," says Davis. They wouldn't do it again – at least not the same way, but they don't regret their choices. At least not all of them...

They brought their own lights as well, Davis laughs – and a pedal board to run them. "That was a mistake," says Davis. Luckily, because they used a store with multiple outlets across the country they had the opportunity to offload the fat as soon as it became evident it wasn't useful – just something overly fragile that they had to pack and unpack every night and took too much time to set up to be worth it. The lights lasted no farther than Edmonton, AB.

The Left showed balls and good sense, by parlaying a tour – one that could easily have become a disaster – into an opportunity to maximize industry interest in their project. They'll be back in Toronto again to record tracks for a forthcoming record with Moe Berg and Lawrence Curry.

For more information about The Left go to [www.theleft.ca](http://www.theleft.ca).

## THE NITTY GRITTY

When it comes to making choices and practical considerations you couldn't ask for a more well-informed and bluntly honest source than Ken Friesen. His experience as an engineer spans a huge spectrum in terms of venues, product and artists: he's worked in television – mixing the main stage for



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# P.A. GEAR

this past year's MuchMusic Video Awards, the Juno's Pro Tools gig, live touring and promo gigs for every kind of radio and television there is, as well as engineering and record production with artists like Blue Rodeo, Hawksley Workman, and Jeremy Fisher.

## IN THE SPIRIT OF KEEPING IT SIMPLE, KEN'S ADVICE IS DIRECT...

What PA. to bring – "A typical bring-it-in-yourself P.A. consists of two speakers on sticks – preferably self-powered. You used to have to have amp-racks, cabling, crossovers, cable trunks, somebody who knew how to set it all up, a lot of power – complicated."

Speaker technology has come a long way in just the past few years, he says. "With off the-shelf powered cabs with built-in EQ settings, and volume control readily available, there's no need to be overly complex. "I recommend speakers with a single 15" and a 2" horn – a small P.A. like that, even without subs will suffice for small clubs and community halls." Option two is the powered mixer and speakers without power – "Either one works, but both are pretty idiot-proof these days."

What else? "The number one thing you can bring that will make more difference than anything are mics. If you're a bass player, get a good DI. If you're a vocalist, get your own mic." Your own mic is worth its weight in gold, he says. "You just have to catch one cold from a mic and it could cost you a day's work."

As for outboard gear? "Now we're up a notch from one speaker on a stick on either side of the stage. What I carry is a couple of good compressors." Compression will allow you to make the most of your system without killing your audience with volume. "They're a bit of a dangerous item to be carrying around, because most people don't understand how to use them." Bottom line – if you don't know how to use them, "You're better off not having them at all." The worst thing that can happen in a small room is to scare your crowd out the door with massive rock volume when it's inappropriate. "People want to be able enjoy themselves, talk, maybe get laid, not be punished severely just for showing up."

Friesen stresses that you don't have to go super high quality. "a couple of good comps, a good reverb, a multi-effects unit with a good delay and a good reverb. Typically, some clubs, they'll have a reverb, but it will be a crappy one, or one reverb and no delay – just not enough to make it happen."

That alone can make a huge difference, setting you apart from other bands significantly. "When you come in with the good reverb and you get a vocal sound that's solid gold, but everybody's used to hearing that same, shitty reverb for the past 10 years in that club... nobody thinks about the sound guy. They think the artist is worth a million bucks."

We can't neglect a tech support kit. "My critical elements? The short list includes a roll of labelling tape and a Sharpie, a small flashlight, and a Leatherman or Gerber multi-tool." If stuff starts blowing up it requires more. "A small tool box, a soldering iron, some solder, wire strippers, needle-nose pliers, some screwdrivers, and a small multimeter for checking voltage. While you're checking voltage there's a little plug you can get to plug into the wall outlet and it will tell you if you have a proper ground or not. Also a complete adaptor set – 1/4" to XLR, RCA to XLR – all the different permutations. A lot of people are carrying laptops – I have a 1/8" stereo mini to stereo 2 x 1/4" mono so I can plug my laptop in and play walk in music."

Getting rid of noise is one of the main issues you'll face, he says, and suggests that adding in a couple of isolation transformers and ground lifts can save the day. "The other adaptor you want to carry is a Phase Reverse, because a lot of people have been listening to P.A.s that have been out of phase for years. When you're in phase, once again, all of a sudden, you're sounding better than everybody else that's been in there. At the end of the night you take your little adaptor with you and let them go back to what they had before, or not. That's up to you."

Disaster-proof your gear! "Packaging is important, if you can't get it to work quickly and easily, you're better off not bringing it along. The bar staff doesn't want to show up six hours ahead of time so you can build your P.A." In short – make friends not enemies.

"Label all of your cables and tape the ones that go to the same places every night together and drop the one loom down instead of ending up with a mess of spaghetti you're tripping over all night."

Playing vs. renting. "At the level we're talking about, musicians want



THE LEFT

to be musicians, not lab coat-wearing technicians." Renting, with insurance, means you're safer if something gets broken. "Strike up a good relationship with a P.A. company and you get the same P.A. every time." Hopefully getting a good price as well. "Let them fix it and store it so you don't have to carry it in and out of your apartment."

You need to decide whether to use the house tech or BYOT (Bring Your Own Tech). "It's only worth bringing your own guy in if he's more competent than the guy that's already there. If you and your tech are just starting out... you'd better hope the house guy is there to take care of him, because he could potentially do you more damage than good." It's a toss-up. "Typically house guys make it work," says Friesen. True, some won't really care about your sound, but a dedicated, qualified engineer could cost you more than the gig pays. That said, if you do bring your own tech and he approaches the house tech appropriately, he'll learn more, more quickly. "He'll be there to be the guy who cares. You're better off going in with a competent guy and going in with whatever gear is laying around than going in with a bunch of gear and not having anyone to operate it."

## WEIGH YOUR OPTIONS FULLY

Even if you can afford to, and are tempted to bring everything you could possibly want, take it back to the basic pack and go lean. Regardless of the material you play, deciding what production to bring means being brutally honest with yourself in terms of what you need and staying that way when more success does come your way.

"You might want to have the most sophisticated and complicated production possible," says Finn, "because your art deserves it. A lot of times that's short sighted. I'd rather put money in my pocket or into a new recording project than into someone else's pocket – that's a better use of the money." That's hard-won wisdom. "All you need," says Finn, "is someone to tell you that you deserve more and the next thing you know you've got an entourage of 10 people and you come off tour and you're in debt."

## GOOD SOUND STARTS WITH GOOD SOUNDS

Good sound starts from the player and you, as a player, can take a great deal of responsibility for it yourself. The fewer variables you leave to chance, the better your gig is going to sound.

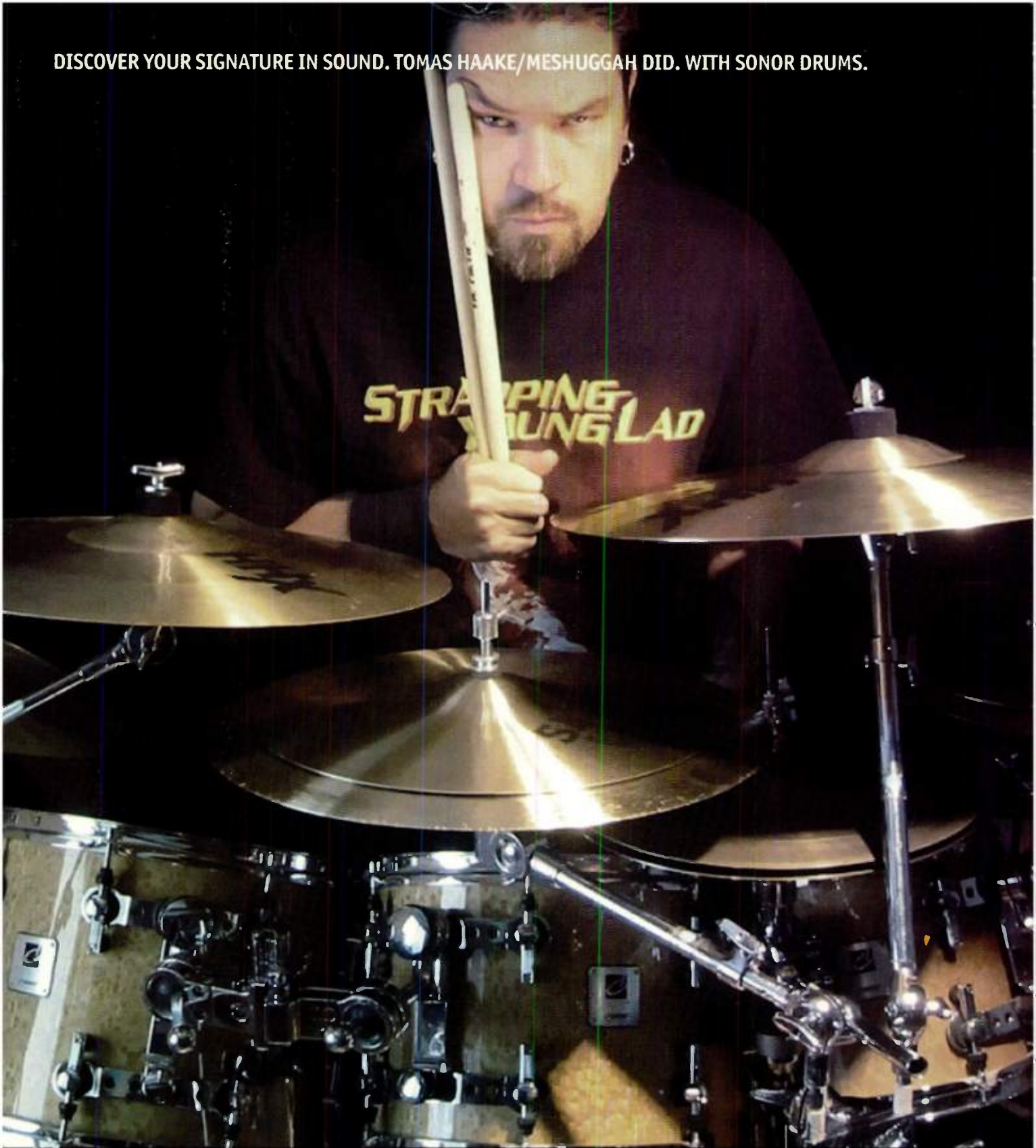
The more you take care of from the stage the less a FOH engineer – yours or the house tech – needs to worry about. If space is at a premium, then ditch the large, sexy-looking cabs and racks for what you actually need. Whether you're saving space, running track, or just a few loops and samples here and there, whenever possible look into software to shoulder the load. Increasingly stable digital platforms allow players to re-create a complex heavy amp rack in a briefcase and programs like Amplitude, Guitar Rig, and Ableton Live among others are finding homes on stage. The easier and more flexible the setup, from the stage on out, the more gigs you can take, the more exposure you get, and the better off you are.

You may not make loads of cash your first time out, but you can limit your losses with smart choices. Apply the same care to your choice of sound gear you would to your own instruments. And, when you get in the van, make sure you have a good quantity of nature's cure-alls – duct tape for the gear and fine Canadian whiskey for yourself.



Kevin Young is a Toronto, ON-based freelance writer.

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# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



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## 2007 GUIDE TO MUSIC EDUCATION

BY DAVID JOHNSTON

Nietzsche wrote that music is one of the arts that sharpens our sense of participation in the world. It gave him a much greater meaning to life. For him, it was not merely a passing pleasure but one of the things that made living possible.

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

One's education in music never really ends, nor should it. Learning is a lifelong activity. Whether you are just starting out or are already a seasoned player, you will constantly find yourself seeking out new knowledge and advice. You have many sources available: private teachers, books, specialized courses, the Internet, instructional videos, software and other media, seminars, conferences, and even a whole program of study at an academic institution. There is always room for more musical knowledge and ability at any level.

### What do you need to know?

No matter what instrument you play, there is one common element that is fundamental. Call it the beat, meter, rhythm or whatever. If you can't keep time, you'll never sound like a pro. Learning rhythm is all-important.

There are really only 12 notes in music. It's the spaces between the notes that make music. From the simplest childhood lullaby to intricate, frenetic jazz fusion, there are still only 12 notes to work with. So, what you do with them is what makes music. And that's why understanding the fundamentals of rhythm and time signature are critical to help a music student advance.

So what do you really need to play?

- Rhythm and meter – to keep it all together
- Music theory – to communicate effectively
- Physical dexterity – to play proficiently
- Mental discipline – to master technique
- Creativity – to contribute your own ideas
- Time and Patience – anything worth having is worth working for

To be successful in the business of music might require additional skills. Some of them are transferable skills that will benefit an individual in many career paths. For example, learning networking and self-promotion will help you get established in just about any career. No matter what the role, from time to time you will have to sell yourself, either to a prospective employer or a potential client, so it is to your advantage to know how to present your best side.

Networking is the proven best way to find new business contacts. Thanks to the Internet, a new field of communication exists online. People can link up to each other through many sources, often sharing information, knowledge, and more. Many aspiring musicians have found [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com) a valuable tool for getting exposure.

Business skills and employability skills can be learned in a variety of ways. Many schools offer programs designed to help you advance your personal transferable skills. In fact, recognizing your strengths and capitalizing on them is one of the fundamental principles being taught in most post-secondary schools.

### Why study music in school?

Many post-secondary institutions offer a wide variety of music programs. What can you do with a music degree?

The opportunities are boundless. A degree in music qualifies people for numerous music and non-music careers. Many graduates are currently pursuing careers in performance, teaching and education, retail music, arts administration, music therapy, software engineering, recording engineering, church music, radio, banking, insurance, and more.

Either by itself, or as part of another discipline, music offers a huge variety of career possibilities. Jobs in the areas of either public or private education bear some looking into since it is an increasingly common belief that music should be a part of every child's education.

### So you want to study music in Canada...

Getting a formal education in music can never hurt, but there are many factors to consider before deciding to go to a college, university, or private post-secondary institution to study music.

You, as a potential student, must consider your goals. There is more to it than just choosing a school that you can afford. You don't have to have your career path set in stone before your first class, but you should consider the potential outcome of your education. Performing in a rock band doesn't require a degree. Teaching music in the primary and secondary school settings does. It is currently a matter of discussion in audio engineering circles as to how important a background in electrical engineering is in addition to a background in music. A formal background in the computer sciences could also be completely relevant in the music industry as a whole. Ask yourself: "What areas of music am I interested in and what kind of post-secondary education is necessary for me to enjoy a career in these areas?"

After deciding that a formal education is for you, you really only have three parts to your next decision: college, university, or private specialized institution. There is a lot of overlap between these options in terms of what is taught. Many schools offer classes in performance, theory, ear training, composition, the business of music, recording, music



• Many scholarships are available for the aspiring musician. One new scholarship is the Domenic Troiano Guitar Scholarship, named in honour of the late Domenic Troiano, Canadian guitarist in The Mandala, Bush, The James Gang, and The Guess Who. This annual scholarship grants \$1,500 to two Canadian guitarists (one male, one female) who are pursuing post-secondary guitar education in any university, college, or private institution

guitar program. For more information, visit [www.domenictroiano.com](http://www.domenictroiano.com).  
• [www.scholarshipscanada.com](http://www.scholarshipscanada.com), offers a variety of Canadian college and university scholarships.  
• [www.campusaccess.com](http://www.campusaccess.com), has many Canadian student loan programs.  
• [www.Canada.gc.ca](http://www.Canada.gc.ca), has a list of government grants such as: Canada Study Grants (CSGs) and the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Look under "E" in the "A to Z Index" for

education.  
• The Canada Council for the Arts is a national agency funded by Parliament and reports to it through the Minister of Canadian Heritage. They offer grants and services to professional Canadian artists and arts organizations in the field of dance, media arts, music, theatre, writing, publishing, interdisciplinary work, performance art, and visual arts. Application details can be found at [www.canada-council.ca](http://www.canada-council.ca).

history and musicology ... there are as many programs as there are facets of the music world. In the area of performance, you will be dividing your time between the pursuit of excellence on your instrument(s) and your general musicianship. You'll need to spend some time researching and comparing specific programs and their availability. A guidance counselor can help with this process, and you can certainly make a lot of headway by looking online and making appointments to talk to faculty and students at the institutions you are eyeballing. Remember that school is still school – most post-secondary institutions require music students to take courses outside the realm of music. The three Rs never really go away.

Be realistic about your resources in your decision. Cost is a consideration, as well as accommodation, location, the availability of scholarships or bursaries, and transportation.

For some people, one of the attractions of a post-secondary musical education is structure: there are a lot of things that you don't realize you need to know until you get there, and that's what learning is all about. There is also something to be said for having a class schedule and learning some time management chops. Can your ego handle being graded on your musical abilities? Are you comfortable in a competitive or non-competitive environment? Large or small campus?

Always consider the reputation of the school, which largely depends upon the reputation of the faculty. Speaking of whom, remember that there are as many teaching styles as there are teachers. The ideal faculty member is extremely busy and well accomplished in his or her field but has plenty of time to coach and clarify. If this sounds like a contradiction, it is. Still, there are good teachers everywhere. Take the time to find them and pick their brains.

There will be varying degrees of flexibility in choosing courses within any music program at any given institution. Generally, you are allowed more choice as you progress through the program. Choose your electives wisely. They should be relevant to your interests, but it's also a good idea to take a course that broadens your outlook in another area of music. You may open doors for yourself that you always considered closed or didn't even know about. Courses like ethnomusicology and the history of popular music can be especially fun and valuable. Listening is huge. It's the whole point, isn't it?

And now for the tricky part for performance majors: yes, the dreaded audition. You need to be ruthlessly objective about yourself at this point. Did high school music prepare you for the next step? Did you take advantage of any and all of the opportunities available in the orchestra, jazz band, choir, tech crew, social committee, etc.? Chances are some extra preparation is in order. Get the audition requirements as far in advance as possible. You may have to upgrade your Royal Conservatory grading in piano or theory. You may need to double on another instrument. You will definitely need to practice what is required for the audition. Don't be too nervous – the school wants you there and wants your money, but the faculty doesn't want to waste its time or yours. There must be some standard, or everybody would be doing what you want to do in terms of career choice. A private teacher can help you get over this small hurdle before you enter the fray.

Getting a formal education in music – whether it is a diploma, degree, certificate, or something in between – is a path to your career. You will probably be challenged, babysat, punished, and rewarded. Success is not guaranteed. Like anything else, if you decide to be there you need to truly be there and invest the time and effort.

## Are lessons worth the investment?

Some people are natural at most anything they do. They pick up a football and instinctively know how to throw it. Others do the same with musical instruments. They just seem to know what to do without ever being shown.

Those people are the rare cases. For most of us, learning and practice are the sure routes to success. In sports, music, academics – it takes effort to get anywhere.

"Learning to read music is essential if you want to do more with your instrument," says Frances Whelan, owner of Domenic's Music Academy in Ottawa, ON. She has been a musician and teacher for more than 30 years, and is very passionate about what she does. "When you can read music, you are able to play a song as it was intended. Without the music, you can waste hours trying to get it, and still end up missing some very important elements."



Frances Whelan

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# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Whelan says many people who play guitar try to teach themselves the basics and then copy the rest from others or listening to recorded music. Though ear training is valuable, she points out that the serious musician needs to know more.

"Ray Charles is a great example. When you look at the printed music and see all the difficult chords that he used to create a full sound, you realize there is more to music than what is immediately audible on the surface."

Whelan says every musician can benefit from lessons, regardless of their level of proficiency: "Your teacher can be your most important and influential asset. It is the best way to learn. The teacher has to know what they are talking about to teach it effectively. They can point out things that you will not see in a book. They can watch you play and help you focus your practice on areas that will benefit you the most."

Most teachers have helpful learning techniques that they have developed over experience with students. In many cases, they are also professionally trained to teach, and have taken the time to learn what works and what is a waste of time in the classroom setting. In all cases, teachers have to study to teach effectively. They also use personal ingenuity to keep lessons interesting and the student moving forward.

Teachers often can help a stalled student get beyond a dry spell, too.

"If you find yourself not progressing, try going in a totally different direction," advises Whelan. "Your teacher can help you discover new styles of music and playing techniques that will revitalize your spirit and interest. That will lead you to achieving new things. Lessons build confidence. You know you are doing things right and it can make all the difference when you learn to play properly the first time."

On average, people who want to learn to play an instrument for personal enjoyment generally take lessons for two or three years. They get a good solid grasp of the basics and then progress on their own in whatever direction motivates them most. Playing in a band and jamming with other musicians is the usual way to share ideas and gain more out of your musical experience. Lessons need not break your bank account. On average, private lessons through commercial music academies range from about \$15 to \$20 per half-hour session. Group lessons are cheaper although you sacrifice the one-on-one attention that private tutorials provide.



Normi Zimmerman

## FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Don't judge a teacher on price or credentials alone. It is possible that the most expensive and experienced teacher may not be able to relate to you or your child in the same manner that's needed. On the other hand, many people swear that "what you pay for is what you get." So look for a teacher that balances your goals, skill level, and budget all in one educational package.

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## Finding & Choosing The Right Music Teacher

No matter what instrument you're interested in playing, the qualities of a music teacher should match the characteristics that you're looking for. More experienced players, even at the virtuoso level, will seek out certain teachers to learn about very specific techniques or concepts. They often travel or go to great lengths to secure this knowledge from a reputable teacher.

When looking for a teacher, begin with the faithful word-of-mouth method. Ask other musicians for referrals. You can also ask for recommendations from local music teacher organizations, music stores, school music teachers, churches, or students already studying with someone. Also take a look at online resources such as the Yellow Pages, Canada 411, or your local community website.

At the beginner or intermediate level, you may have a long list of potential teachers; it's time to get critical and narrow the list down. First, you should visualize the results that you would like to achieve. You want to find a teacher that cares about your goals and has the experience, knowledge, and patience to help you achieve them.

Begin by arranging an interview with the teacher, in person if possible, to see if your goals and personalities match. Some questions that you may want to ask about your prospective teacher's professional and

educational music experience include: How long he/she been teaching for? What age groups? Does he/she participate in ongoing professional development? Is there a written studio policy and can you review it? How does he/she evaluate student progress? What instructional materials are used? What kind of music is taught? What are the teacher's objectives and teaching techniques? Are group lessons offered? Are there performance opportunities for the student? What kind of technology is used in the studio? What is

### ONLINE EDUCATION RESOURCES

Below is a list of websites that feature plenty of online learning resources. Check them out to see which one would best serve your music education needs.

- [www.worldwidelearn.com](http://www.worldwidelearn.com)
- [www.socan.ca](http://www.socan.ca)
- Search "online music lessons" for more sources.

the practice time required each day? Does he/she have a teaching certification? – If so, ask to see it and any other credentials. What is required of the student? What are the policy payments? Is there any material that needs to be purchased? Ask if you can tape the session or if you can watch. Any teacher that is confident in his/her teaching won't have a problem with this. If the lessons are for your child, find out if the teacher has had a police background check and if they have worked with children before. The teacher should be asking you questions

as well such as why and what you want to learn, so they can determine if they can help you with your goals.

By now your list should be significantly shorter. It's time for the first, or "trial" lesson. Some teachers may not charge for the first lessons, but don't expect any freebies. During this first lesson look to see that the teacher provides a relaxed technique, constant criticism, steady improvement, and motivation. He/she should demonstrate: the ability to meet your needs; that they enjoy teaching; interpersonal and diagnostic skills; knowledge of learning theory; and varied learning styles. The teacher should also be making positive corrections and have a sense of humour. Other considerations: Are you encouraged to ask questions? Does the teacher explain something in a different way if you don't understand? Are visual aids used? Is there emphasis on proper hand and body placement?

Once you've attended the first trial lesson with each teacher on your list, it's time to make a decision. Hopefully you've asked about all of your concerns and followed your intuition. Ask about payment procedures and if there are any scholarships available. Don't sign a long-term contract, as you may later decide that this teacher is not the best for you. Study with him/her for a couple of months and then decide if you want to stay or go with someone else. The fees should be clearly set out along with the cancellation policy.

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# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

## You can do it yourself

For some people, formal lessons are either too expensive, time consuming, or just not available at the level they want. Provided the individual has the energy and personal commitment to succeed, there are a variety of ways to learn to play, learn theory, and generally improve as a musician that don't involve a live teacher.

Many publishers offer a huge variety of print material and teaching aids, including CDs, DVDs, CD-ROMs, etc., that will help a student progress on their own.

Check out your local music store's book department. You'll find a lot more than paperbacks. And that is just scratching the surface. Many music stores offer an extensive catalogue for ordering specific products.

Norm Zimmerman at Steve's Music in Montreal says, "DVDs and CD-ROMs have definitely taken over from video. They're just so much easier for customers. No rewinding. It's a quick and detailed format with lots of options." Norm's pick of the year is CD-ROMs by E-media: "They are absolutely fantastic. It's a software company with musicians as programmers ... they know what the problems are. The visual clips, explanations, and music make it easy for the user. You can work on the same song at various progressive levels. Each CD-ROM has over 100 lessons in one package."

Even with all the new electronic products to support music education, print music – the traditional book – is still and will always be a good choice for a musician. Even the Internet won't replace books. They are still the most portable, easily used, and long lasting version of instruction material. You can take a book almost anywhere and no equipment is required to read and learn.

Books have kept an excellent pace with the electronic world. A trip to your local music store's book department might be all you need to find new inspiration, great teaching aids or some amusing play-along material. Don't forget to ask to see their catalogues, too. You will be surprised at how many titles are available on an almost endless range of topics.

## What can you learn online?

There are many factors that can get in the way of you and your music lessons – time, money, transportation, or maybe you simply can't find a compatible teacher. If this is the case, there is always the option of the all-mighty Internet.

Many music professionals and teachers agree that much of the music literature available as free downloads on the Internet is not worth the time it takes to download it. Charts created by other musicians to replicate a popular song are often sadly lacking in accuracy.

That's not to say the Internet is not a good source for music instruction, or to buy everything from charts to instruments. And

you can learn online, through a variety of credible sources. In fact, the Internet can be a handy and rewarding resource for people trying to find new ways to learn.

First ask yourself if online learning is right for you. Are you generally a self-motivator? Can you work well independently? Can you complete assignments and meet deadlines without being constantly reminded? Could you find time throughout your day to correspond with fellow students in discussions, reading, or research? Do you want to learn more, and do you enjoy working with other people? If you answered yes to most, if not all, of these questions, then online learning may be the route for you.

One of the sidebars in this feature has some sites where you can take a look at all of the music schools in Canada. Many of these may offer online courses and lessons. Some questions you may want to research are: How do you get marked? Is personal attention from an instructor offered? How long would you have to wait between submitting an assignment and receiving your grade? Or will you get graded at all? There are many sites out there that offer free music lessons. Two of these include [www.berkleeshares.com](http://www.berkleeshares.com) and [www.gibson.com/lessons](http://www.gibson.com/lessons). Simply type "online music lessons" in a search engine, and many more sources will generate.

When choosing an online course look for one that best fits your time frame and needs. There are many college-credit certificate programs available, and most, if not all, will be instructor-led. You could get an education in music, excel in new skills, stay up-to-date in your current occupation, and explore your personal interests. The biggest benefit to online learning is that it can take place anytime and anywhere. This allows you to incorporate learning into your schedule without compromising your day-to-day life.

Many schools will have student advisors that can help you choose a program that will meet your goals, interests, and schedule. Most programs will require books and/or materials, so check to see if there is an educational student discount. To take part in online learning you will need a computer; a web browser; the required software, which varies with each program; computer skills; and possible course-specific requirements.

Don't forget to check out the many payment plans, educational loan providers, scholarships, and bursaries. Check out one of the sidebars in this

feature for a list of places to search. Be sure to check into this early as processing times may vary from program to program and school to school.

## Get out & play

Beyond lessons, there is another excellent way to learn more about music. Play live. Get out and exchange licks with other musicians. Whether it is in a band environment, or sitting in at an open stage, sharing your musical interests and abilities will go a long way to perfecting your technique and expanding your knowledge. Playing live gigs will also help to bolster your confidence and chase away any shyness you may have. Jamming is definitely one of the best ways for musicians to swap ideas, expand their personal realm and



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### CANADIAN MUSIC SCHOOLS

[www.excel-ability.com](http://www.excel-ability.com) and [www.socan.ca](http://www.socan.ca) feature a list of Canadian music schools, from colleges to universities and other helpful information.

Type "Canadian music schools" in any search engine to find a school that suits you.



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# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

get exposed to new ways of doing things. It will also act as a catalyst to your personal creative energies, and may even lead to new levels of ability in writing your own music or expressing your own thoughts.

## Seminars, Workshops, Clinics, Conferences

Students and professionals alike can benefit from attending the information sessions held at trade shows, music stores, festivals, and even clubs. It is common to see an age range of 18 to 80 in attendance. The format, like the venue, can vary greatly. There are hands-on product-oriented demonstrations, roundtables, showcases, lectures, panels, Q&A sessions, jam sessions, and free-for-all that may or may not be open to the public.

Membership in a music-related association or organization is a good start for getting news and access to these kinds of learning experiences.

These kinds of sessions are also excellent networking opportunities. You will likely meet others at your experience level. Many pros and teachers attend sessions as a matter of their professional development or merely for the sake of interest. You can generally tell where you belong by the title of the session, e.g., "Introduction to..." or "Advanced..."

Some sessions are geared towards all levels of your instrument or profession, e.g., "How to..."

Your conduct, as always, should be professional. Try not to monopolize the speaker's time, but participate fully and ask relevant questions if you can. Wait your turn to get a one-on-one after the formal presentation.

You might have to sign up in advance and/or pay a registration fee. You may also need an I.D. badge, depending on the event. If you're attending more than one or two sessions in a day, it's a good idea to make notes and take any brochures and/or literature available. A lot of information is usually covered in a short amount of time.

Presenters are like teachers in that every one will have an individual style. Some will point you out and ask, "What version of Pro Tools are you using?" and some will read a prepared speech from behind a lecturn.

The great thing about seminars, clinics, and the like is that everyone who is there wants to be there; there is a sense of common interest in the room. Everyone is there to learn. A large part of your music education requires an open attitude: you're allowed to ask questions, be wrong, approach people who intimidate you, have fun, and go over things until you understand them. Music is a social activity, after all.

A list of upcoming trade shows and conferences is available at [www.nor.com/events](http://www.nor.com/events).



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## FINAL THOUGHT

No matter how you tune it, music strikes a chord in all of us. It can resonate through your entire life, and even be the substance of a great career. Or, music can just be a relaxing pastime or an excellent social outlet.

Make of music what you want, but make it your best.



David Johnston is a writer, musician, and music teacher who lives in eastern Ontario. He currently plays in the Ottawa-based band *Tempus Fugitives*.



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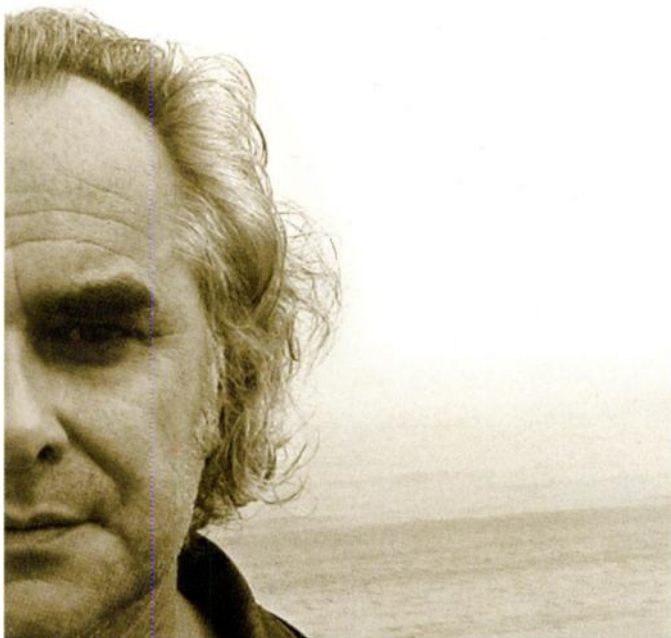
# IT'S A SETUP!

## Collaborating And Co-writing

by Bob Lanois

In 2005 I had the opportunity to work on two different projects during the same time span: one with my brother Daniel Lanois on my debut CD *Snake Road*, and the other with Tom Wilson on *The Shack Recordings, Vol. 1*. Although the two projects came together under quite different circumstances, at the core of each one lays the concept of setting people up so they can bloom – an important aspect for all successful collaborative ventures in life.

*Snake Road* happened because of Dan's persistent push for me to lay down my harmonica melodies and begin the process of recording. He initially offered to help me get started, but things went so well that we ended up recording a whole CD together and the project turned into an unexpected musical collaboration.



When working with a producer like Dan, someone with such strong instincts for arrangements, the songs will inevitably be profoundly shaped. I walked out with the writing credits, but the compositions would have been quite different without him. Dan's writing skills are so keen that just working with him would be a co-writing experience for anyone. Here's a run-down on how the process went.

We arrived at the final melodies for tracks like "Rendezvous" and "Negril" by using "bits of this 'n' that" he had heard me play in the past, and re-organized it all into something new and exciting. On most tracks, however, I would come in and

present him with what I had already written and rehearsed. Usually this would be a little melody with verses and choruses, which I would play for him on the harmonica. Then we'd go to the piano, where we would explore the song structure in terms of where the verses and choruses might be placed, and simultaneously try different feels and tempos while playing along together. Sometimes he would ask me not to play in a certain section, like the bridge, because we didn't have a solid part worked out yet, something we'd work out and punch in later on. Dan would make comments like: "Okay, let's twist the melody around a bit and see if we can come up with an intro." Once the structure of the piece was laid out, he would search for a beat on the Roland 808, sometimes for a whole hour, while I played in the room for him. He would not walk away from that rhythm box until we got goose bumps. That beat would then get printed on a track of the Radar recorder.

Next came the exciting part – where we recorded while playing together, but only Dan got to hear the beat. He listened to the beat track on his headphones, while I, unable to hear the beat track, played harmonica to his piano accompaniment alone. This became the setup we honoured throughout the project, and although we created some variety on the CD, the fact that we remained loyal to our basic setup gave the project continuity. This kind of magic goes on all the time. Many artists have had the good fortune of working with a strong producer who generously handed them a few pearls along the way. There is no doubt that my brother set me up well.

For my collaboration with Tom Wilson on *The Shack Recordings* I stepped into a co-production role, and it was now my job to set up Tom – to bring out a side of him that we haven't heard before. Tom, on the other hand, proposed that I play harmonica on the tunes, and he encouraged me to co-write with him. He probably also chose me for his project because of my working style in the studio and because my take on music would bring that certain something to the record that he had in mind. It was essentially the way we set each other up in the Shack that gave us the results we desired and produced the performance we were after.

Watching a strong lyricist like Tom at work was a learning experience for me, and he encouraged me to write my own lyrics for future projects. We ended up writing two instrumentals together: "Kids" and "Car Dream." Tom had it all planned. He played me chord progressions for the tunes over the telephone with a feel that he had already worked out. The two instrumental pieces sounded great right from the start, but both needed a melody. The feel was right up my alley, and once we sat down together he coaxed me to come up with the melodies on the spot. He generously allowed us to split the writing 50/50. Tom really knew how to set me up for my contribution to the project. That's all it comes down to, knowing how to set people up – whether it's producing or co-writing.

Check out *Snake Road* at [www.boblanois.com](http://www.boblanois.com), or go to [theshackrecordings.ca](http://theshackrecordings.ca) to hear some Shack.

# Are You Really Ready To Record?

by Mike Turner

**W**arning! This is a dangerous question! You may not be ready for the explosive reaction that this may unleash! The level of frustration that this can cause may lead to much ranting and gnashing of teeth! Unprepared bands are a problem for the engineer on a session, and, unfortunately, most of those people have grown accustomed to unprofessional musicians. For the producer, part of the job is to make sure that preparations have been done for the studio – so if the band isn't ready it's at least partially the producer's fault. Of course, if an artist doesn't have a producer per se, someone in the band will have to take the reins and direct the session, usually without having done the needed pre-production.

Ideally, when a band plans to go into the studio several things need to be in order before you get there. The song is the most important thing. If it's not great, why are you recording it? If you believe it's as great as it can ever be (we all start somewhere) then you need to make certain that the arrangement is doing what it should be.

The normal flaw is that, as musicians, we tend to think that things are as much fun to hear as they are to play. Not true. Each part of a song needs to be represented enough that it serves its purpose and doesn't overstay its welcome. You know that great four-bar riff in the intro of the song that you play four times through? Most likely it only needed to be heard twice, maybe only once if you're going to play it again after a chorus as a re-intro (refrain, motif, or whatever you choose to call it). If you manage to dress up the riff in different settings, i.e., acoustic vs. electric, or by the use of dynamics or effects, then you might be able to repeat it more – but just bashing away on a riff for extended periods doesn't do anyone any favours. If you love the riff more than anything and want to play it longer, feel free to do that live, just don't beat the hell out of people with it on a CD.

Okay, now your song is the best one you've ever done and the arrangement is tight and concise. Well done! Now, does the drummer know his/her parts? I mean really know them? You (looks like you're going to be the producer after all!)

should be able to ask: "What are you playing in the second half of the second verse where it goes to the pre-chorus?" and your drummer should be able to pick it up from that point and tell you, even verbally (Boom KA BuBoom Boom KAK KACK-A), EXACTLY what he/she intends to play. As a matter of fact, everyone in the band should be able to give the same answer – not just for their own parts but, at the very least, the drums as well. This way there's no confusion when you're in the studio. I can't tell you the number of times I've heard arguments about how part of a song is supposed to go once the band is in the studio: "Why are you changing chords on the 'and' of four? It's supposed to be on the downbeat!" "NO WAY! I always play it like this..." "If you knew each others' parts, this discussion would have taken place at the rehearsal stage where nobody feels like an idiot in front of the engineer at the studio. This is one of the things that marks somebody as a pro: knowing to listen first, hearing what needs to be played, and playing it well.

So, now you have a great tune with a tidy arrangement. Everybody knows what to play and those parts all agree. Next, make sure all of your gear is in perfect condition. Do you want a permanent record of how you were substandard? This means new strings and setups for the guitarists, new skins and a well-tuned kit for the drummer, and the singers should not show up hung over from being out at a loud bar yelling and smoking all night. If you don't have top-notch gear, you should look into renting some for the recording – most studios either have some or can help you with a recommendation on where you can get it.

Your checklist is almost complete. You now have a great tune, a great arrangement, great individual parts that work great together being played on great gear in the studio. Doesn't that sound great? Here's where the final hurdle is. When you get into the studio there's a different experience of the music you make. It might not sound as exciting as you'd thought. This is where a little flexibility is in order. You remember those parts that everyone memorized and the arrangement that you laboured over so diligently? They might need a little tweaking in the studio. This isn't a



contradiction of what I've said already. If you know the song as well as you should, changes are easier to accommodate BECAUSE you know the song so well. Know your parts going in, but don't get so attached to them that you can't hear the opportunity for something better. Sometimes the smallest change puts excitement into a track that was lacking once you got to the studio. The chance to get the best performances will only be increased by the atmosphere of achievement you will get by not having the session grind to a halt because you weren't prepared. Trust me, it's hard to be creative when you're dealing with someone who hasn't done their homework and is feeling too much pressure executing their parts in a song that they don't quite know.

*Mike Turner is the co-founder and former guitarist of Our Lady Peace, as well as a three-time Juno Award winner and a four-time MuchMusic Video Award winner. He quickly established himself as a premier source for live recordings using a streamlined mobile live recording rig of his own design. Mike soon had the itch to build a "real" recording studio, and he partnered with kindred music industry veterans Mari Dew, Caryn Hanlon, and Trevor Kustiak to launch The Pocket Entertainment and The Pocket Studios. Please contact [www.thepocketstudios.com](http://www.thepocketstudios.com) for more information.*

# Old Favourites That Got Me Through Many Live Shows

by Tim Crich

## The Sound Check

**A**nalyze the room's frequency response with a "spectrum analyzer." An analyzer uses pink noise played through the PA system to visually pinpoint errant frequencies. Better sound engineers can walk around a room while the band is playing and use their trained ear to analyze the room, determining which frequencies need altering. Every room has a resonant frequency that should be lowered using the graphic equalizer connected to the main amplifier. The sound changes, of course, when the club (or hall, or arena, or hotel) is full. People absorb sound in a club. They also absorb alcohol, so relax.

Don't overload the mixing board. Set the fader levels at around zero, then use the mic input trim for fine tuning the input level. Leave enough headroom for fader movement during the songs to avoid overload.



For vocal clarity maybe lower the frequencies between 200 Hz and 350 Hz and add somewhere between 5 kHz and 7 kHz, depending on the voice. Lower the frequencies under 100 Hz to eliminate rumble and to open space in the low end that better benefits the bass guitar and kick drum.

The kick drum and bass guitar should complement and not step on each other. To clean up a kick drum, pull the "flabby" 120 -150 Hz then add a bit of wide 2.5 kHz. This should add clarity to both the kick and the bass guitar.

For brighter guitars, maybe sweep the upper midrange, between 2 kHz and 6 kHz for the right spot. Too much may result in a brittle sound. The body of the guitar sound lies between 80 Hz and 300 Hz because that is the range of the guitar's fundamental tones. Add or pull as needed.

Practice setting a wider Q (bandwidth) when raising a frequency level and a thinner Q when lowering a frequency level. And remember, singers sing louder and stronger once the show starts.

If you need to add liberal amounts of equalization, compression, or effects to a certain channel there may be something wrong with the original signal. As in the recording studio, it is better to dial in the best sound at the source, then place the correct mic where it sounds best.

Set a good vocal level, then build around it: bringing in the bass and drums, then the guitars, then everything else, keeping the kick bass and vocal clean and clear. Maybe mark the fader level of each channel as a reference. Then you know where the ideal fader position lies when you are in the thick of it. If the mixing board has subgroups, sub the kick drum and the bass guitar. Raise and lower as needed.

## Right Before The Show

Do a visual inspection before the band hits the stage. Things change between the sound check and the show, such as mics getting bumped or cables get pulled out. Maybe a player has added a new guitar pedal. Watch for less obvious things, such as a guitar tech changing the strings, a loose mic stand, or the singer getting too friendly with your sister.

## During The Show

When the show starts, players may discretely signal to you that they need a change in their monitor, or if something is wrong. Hopefully you are astute enough to clue in. If they are staring at you while they play, something is probably wrong. As the band plays, the levels may need some riding. Maybe add some delay during a guitar solo, or maybe ride the levels of the rhythm guitar, or push the tom toms now and again. You're the mixer, so mix.

Watch the crowd. If everyone has their fingers in their ears, their hair is being blown back, and there is blood on the floor, maybe the volume is a bit loud. If people are casually chatting with each other, then maybe the sound isn't loud enough.

Have patience with people coming up and saying "more snare, more vocal." They mean well. Trust your ears and do your own mix. As in any job, things will go wrong, but stay cool, look good, and usually no one except you and the players notice.

## Additional

Purchase a good set of earplugs for two reasons: first, wearing earplugs can give you a more realistic response, as a loud PA mix can be deceiving. Earplugs help you hear whether the snare drum is too soft, or a guitar is too loud; second, earplugs protect your hearing. Nothing is more important than your hearing.

Never will everyone think the sound is great. You will always get some sort of criticism from someone. Just don't let it bug you. But if you must, drop a bass bin on someone who is being particularly bothersome.

Finally, a good attitude goes a long way. Stay positive and everything will go a lot smoother.

*Tim Crich has over 20 years of experience in the recording studio and has worked on records by the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, John Lennon, KISS, Billy Joel, U2, David Bowie, Bon Jovi, Ozzy Osbourne, Cher, Bryan Adams, and many more. He has engineered for some of the biggest producers in the world.*

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# Cover Songs

## Or, As Jenny Lewis Would Say By Way Of The Traveling Wilburys, "Handle With Care"

by Pat Leyland

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

### Introduction

We all have our favourite. For me, it's a toss-up between Annie Lennox's version of Bob Marley's "Waiting in Vain" and the Smashing Pumpkins' adaptation of "Landslide," as originally performed by Fleetwood Mac. Other tracks commonly cited include Johnny Cash's spin on Trent Reznor's "Hurt," and, more recently, Nelly Furtado's acoustic take on the currently ubiquitous Gnarl Barkley smash "Crazy." Of course, what we are talking about here are cover songs. For the purposes of this article, the term "cover song" refers to a new performance or recording of a composition written and/or previously recorded by another artist.

### Live Performance

A cover song can be a valuable tool in a live setting. If placed appropriately in the set list, a cover can elevate the overall performance and reinvigorate the audience members by infusing them with a dose of familiarity. However, an artist should consider the possibility that a first-time audience member may only recall a handful of songs from a set, and a recognizable cover song may effectively displace an original song from the listener's memory (for better or for worse).

In terms of the legalities of performing covers, Canada's *Copyright Act* grants the creator of a copyright protected musical composition the sole right to perform the work in public. As such, in order to perform a copyright protected song, an artist must first obtain permission from the creator of the song or the owner of the copyright in the song, if such copyright has been assigned by the creator. Fortunately for the musician seeking to perform a cover, this burden is effectively relieved via the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), the non-profit collective that administers performing rights in Canada.

In exchange for license fees, which vary according to the nature of the particular usage, SOCAN issues blanket performing right licenses that grant users

of music the right to publicly perform in public any song in SOCAN's vast repertoire. Due to reciprocal agreements with international performing rights organizations, a SOCAN license offers access to songs from all across the globe. It will very rarely be the case that the responsibility to obtain a SOCAN license lies with the performing artist. Generally, such responsibility falls on the owner of the venue and/or the promoter of the event in question. However, if you are planning on performing a cover, it may be wise to inquire with the venue and/or promoter in advance to ensure that the performance is covered by a SOCAN license. Please visit [www.socan.ca](http://www.socan.ca) for more information.

### Recordings

As in a live setting, an artist must be careful that the inclusion of a cover song on an album does not overshadow the original material. At the very least, an artist should produce covers in a manner that tilts listeners in the direction of the artist's original works. A good example here is Marilyn Manson's cover of the Eurythmics "Sweet Dreams." This cover, which gave Manson his first commercial hit, contains the dark and distorted goth-industrial elements that helped define the artist, as does his later (and excellent) cover of the song "Tainted Love." On the flip side, note the many bands that effectively became one-hit wonders after recording cover songs (e.g., Alien Ant Farm). A cover song can give your career a boost, but it can only carry you so far.

On the legal side, recording cover songs engages issues of law distinct from those related to the performance of cover songs, namely because an entirely different right is at play. While performing cover songs involves the right of public performance, recording cover songs implicates the right of reproduction. This right also originates from the *Copyright Act*. The owner of a copyright protected musical composition has the sole right to reproduce a composition in any material form. Therefore, if you want to manufacture an album that includes a cover song, you need to first obtain permission from the person(s) holding the copyright in the song in question. Such permission takes the form of a "mechanical" license, which is essentially a contract between the par-

ty making the reproductions and the party administering the copyright in the song.

Similar to the case with SOCAN and the performing right license, a non-profit agency provides administrative assistance to an artist who seeks to manufacture copies of an album that includes a cover song. The Canadian Musical Reproduction Rights Agency (CMRRA) issues mechanical licenses to music users on behalf of the copyright owners represented by the organization. The mechanical license differs from the performing right license in that the artist manufacturing copies of the cover song is responsible for paying a fee, currently set at 7.7 cents per song per copy sold or distributed if the song is five minutes or less. Each additional minute or part thereof adds 1.54 cents to the fee. Therefore, if you wish to manufacture 1,000 copies of an album containing a cover song that is five minutes or less, then the mechanical license for that particular pressing will cost \$77, provided the CMRRA represents the applicable copyright holder(s). If the CMRRA does not control the rights to the composition in question, then the artist seeking to manufacture copies of the cover song must obtain the mechanical license directly from the pertinent copyright holder(s). Any fee related thereto will be entirely subject to negotiation. Note that the reproduction of a song protected by copyright in the absence of a mechanical license constitutes copyright infringement. Please see [www.cmrra.ca](http://www.cmrra.ca) for more details.

### Conclusion

While the cover song can be a valuable weapon in the arsenal of a musician, it must be handled with care. Use it sparingly, use it strategically, and use it legally.

Pat Leyland is a law student at Taylor Mitsopoulos Burshtein ([www.tmlblawyers.com](http://www.tmlblawyers.com)), a former recording artist for Arista Records, and co-manager of the upcoming metal band Threat Signal.

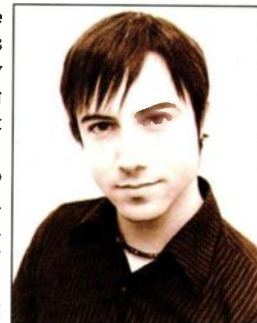


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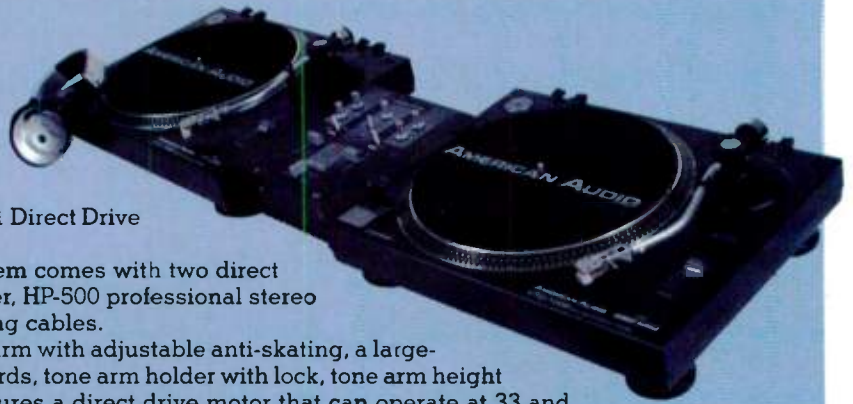
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The Vinyl 101 Direct Drive Turntable System comes with HP-100 professional headphones with 57 mm speaker drivers. They feature a flexible housing design that allows for dual- or single-ear monitoring, and for easy folding. The earpads are replaceable and a carrying bag is included.

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## Levy's Accordion Straps

■ Instrument strap manufacturer, Levy's Leathers, has released a new line of straps for accordion players: the Accordion Straps.

Available in eight models, the Accordion Straps come in nylon, polyester, leather, and bright-coloured vinyl. The colours are inspired by the many colours on today's accordions, so players are sure to find a Levy's strap that compliments both their instrument and style.

For more information, contact: Levy's Leathers Ltd., (204) 957-5139, Toll-free (800) 565-0233, FAX (204) 943-6655, [levys@levysleathers.com](mailto:levys@levysleathers.com), [www.levysleathers.com](http://www.levysleathers.com).



Levy's Accordion Strap model PM18HM in blue hammered-metal vinyl.

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## Dean Edge Hammer 10



■ Dean Guitars has released a new line of electric bass guitars: the Edge Hammer. One model in this line is the Edge Hammer 10, a 10-string bass.

The top, body, and neck of the Edge Hammer 10 are made of mahogany, while the fingerboard is rosewood and finished in satin natural. It has a scale length of 34" and a nut width of 1 7/8". With no fret markers, this bass features one D bass clef inlay on the 12<sup>th</sup> fret. It has Grover tuners and a Tune-O-Matic bridge with black hardware. Two Dean Exposed pole/active EQ pickups give this bass its edge of darkness.

For more information, contact: Intellimix Corp., (514) 457-9663, FAX (574) 457-0575, [salesinfo@intellimix.com](mailto:salesinfo@intellimix.com), [www.intellimix.com](http://www.intellimix.com).



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## Korg Pa800

■ Korg has recently released a new professional arranger keyboard that features RX Technology and many more highlights: the Pa800.

The RX (Real eXperience) Technology in the Pa800 is the guiding philosophy behind the Pa800 as it features a graphical user interface that uses a Graphical Colour Touch Screen. It also features the TC Helicon Voice Processor, which features EQ and professional effects such as compressor, reverb, and delay. There is also a built-in three-voice harmonizer and mic preamp, so the user can just plug in a mic and start performing.

Musicians of all levels can make music on the Pa800 as there are two interface modes: Easy and Expert. The Easy mode shows only the most important controls while keeping the interface clean, which is useful for beginners or when playing live. The Expert mode gives the user full editing control. Switchers and sliders are assignable and there is a multilingual contextual Help System.

Several sounds from the Oasys synthesizer are included on this arranger, which adds to the sound memory that has been increased to include multi-level samples of instruments. The polyphony has also been expanded to 120 notes to cover busy passages. There are over 950 ROM sounds such as a new multiplayer stereo acoustic piano sampled from a concert grand, 63 extra drumkits, the User area has up to 256 user sounds and 64 drumkits. There is



also full on board sound editing.

Sound Expansion is possible as users can load Wave, AIFF, Korg format files, and the Akai sample library into the standard 64 MB of added memory. Editing options include loop, cut, normalize, and cropping samples. A Time Slice feature allows the user to slice audio grooves and import the audio data into a style. There are four Stereo Master Effects processors with effects such as reverb, delay, and chorus, as well as vocoder and REMS guitar effects. The vocal effects, EQ, compression, delay, and reverb are separately controlled.

The Pa800 features four audio outputs, two mic/line inputs, two USB Host connections, and one USB connection. It has a custom designed amp system with two 22 W amps that drive two tweeters and two 10" woofers in a bass-reflex box.

For more information, contact: Korg Canada, (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, info@korgcanada.com, www.korgcanada.com.

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## Marshall MB Series Bass Amplifiers



■ Marshall Amplification has released a new line of bass amplifiers, the MB Series, which are ideal for rehearsing, recording, jamming, or for small gigs.

Rugged and compact, the MB Series includes two models: the MB15 and MB30. Each amp features two channels: Classic and Modern. The Classic channel has independent controls for volume and gain while the Modern channel offers a crispness and clarity that is ideal for slap and other modern styles. Both channels share a 3-band EQ and a built-in limiter. The Modern channel has a built-in variable compressor, which features an LED indicator that glows green when the compressor is on and red when the user-determined threshold is reached and the bass signal is being compressed.

The MB Series includes Marshall's Emulated Line Out, which provides an emulated line-level signal that's ideal for live performance or direct recording. This is also applied to the headphone output on both models.

The MB15 is a 15 W, 1 x 8" combo with two channels and a CD input. The MB30 is a 30 W, 1 x 10" combo with two footswitchable channels, a 3-band EQ with 3-way Voice Shift switch, Series FX loop, and a CD input.

For more information, contact: Erikson Music, (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, [www.eriksonmusic.com](http://www.eriksonmusic.com).



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## Behringer El Toro Guitar Pack

■ Manufacturer of professional audio and musical instrument products, Behringer, has released a new guitar pack that includes everything an aspiring guitarist would need to get started: the El Toro Guitar Pack.

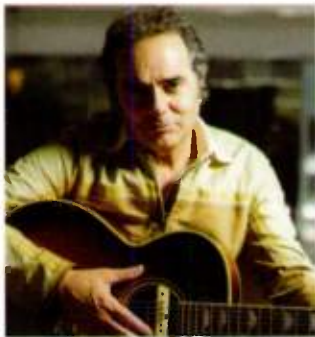
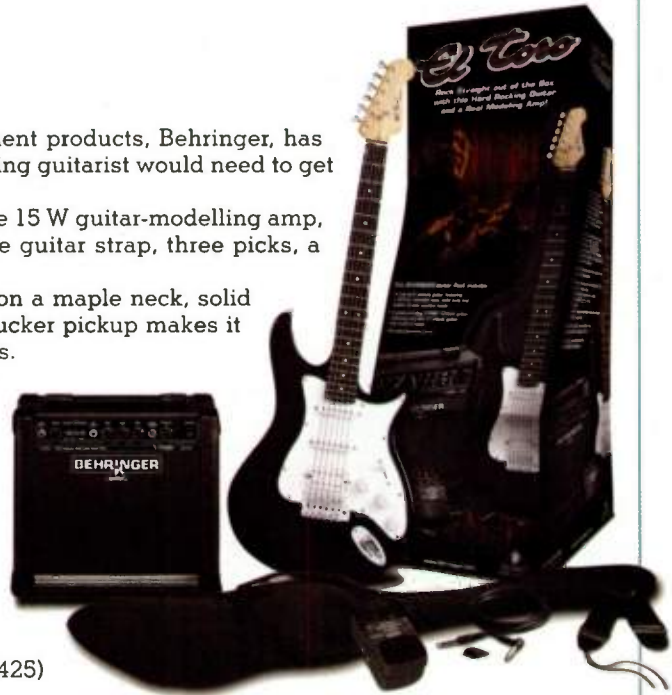
The El Toro Guitar Pack includes an electric guitar, a V-Tone 15 W guitar-modelling amp, an auto-chromatic tuner, an instrument cable, an adjustable guitar strap, three picks, a guitar instruction book, and a padded gig bag.

The electric guitar features a 22-fret rosewood fretboard on a maple neck, solid body, and sealed chrome machine heads. The bridge humbucker pickup makes it suitable for heavy playing and getting rock and metal sounds.

The V-Tone GM108 guitar amp has 27 true analog modelling settings for all classic guitar amp sounds and a vintage design 8" speaker. It also features a headphone output with speaker simulation to allow for silent practicing. There is also a CD input to allow the guitarist to play along to favourite songs.

The TU100 is a stage-proof tuner that features seven different tuning modes for electric guitar and bass, including Regular, Flat, Double Flat, and Chromatic mode. A LED display and the 11-point Stream Meter guarantee accurate tuning and clear visibility at low light.

For more information, contact: Behringer Canada Ltd., (425) 672-0816, FAX (425) 673-7647, [www.behringer.com](http://www.behringer.com).



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World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice.

## IK Multimedia StealthPlug

Software manufacturer, IK Multimedia, has released its first hardware product: StealthPlug.

StealthPlug is a 1/4" jack to USB audio interface cable that allows guitar and bass players to plug into software-based amp and effects modelling and recording. It comes in a bundle with six software and sounds packages, a guitar/bass amps effects and plug-in processor, a recording studio, two effects and instrument plug-ins, and many sounds and loops.

This hardware comes with AmpliTube 2 Live standalone and plug-in for any recording software. It is MIDI-controllable and has 15 guitar and bass amp combos, as well as 11 effects, mic-modelling, a built-in tuner, and over 128 customizable user presets. The standalone version offers the SpeedTrainer, an integrated audio player with pitch and speed control, for playing with or learning songs.

There are four additional software packages that are included such as: full audio/MIDI sequencer Traktion 2.1 by Mackie, IK's T-RackS 6-band mastering EQ, SampleTank 2 SE sound workstation, and 500 MB of Sonic Reality loops with guitar, bass, and drum loops. Users are eligible for upgrades and crossgrades to the full versions of the included software and the full IK range.

System requirements for Macintosh is 866 MHz Power Macintosh G4, with 512 MB of RAM, Mac OS X 10.3 or later, 1,024 x 768 screen, and one free USB port. Requirements for Intel-based Macintosh is 1.5 GHz Intel Core Solo processor, 512 MB of RAM, Mac OS X 10.4.4 or later, and one free USB port. Finally, requirements for Windows is Pentium III 1 GHz/Athlon XP 1.33 GHz with 256 MB of RAM, Windows XP, 1,024 x 768 screen, and one free USB port.

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## Audio Technica Artist Series Vocal Mics

Manufacturer of professional microphones and headphones, Audio Technica, has recently released three new vocal mics as part of its new Artist Series live sound microphones: the ATM410, the ATM610, and the ATM710.

This line features upgraded classic models for vocal, instrument, and drum mics. They are rugged mics that are engineered for flawless performance with low distortion to reproduce virtually any sound source. Each mic ships with a soft protective carrying pouch and Audio Technica's AT8470 Quiet-Flex stand clamp.

The ATM410 is a cardioid dynamic vocal mic that is designed for smooth, natural vocal reproduction and low noise. It has a Hi-ENERGY neodymium magnet for high output and a multi-stage grille for protection. It has a frequency response of 90-16,000 Hz and a low impedance output via a 3-pin XLRM-type connector. With an all-metal construction, this mic weighs 8.2 oz, is 6.69" long, and has a body diameter of 2.11".

The ATM610 is a hypercardioid dynamic vocal mic that is ideal for lead or backup vocals. It also has a Hi-ENERGY neodymium magnet, a tight hypercardioid polar pattern, and multi-stage grille design. It also uses a dual-wall floating construction as the back-cavity assembly floats inside the handle shell, providing isolation from handling noise. It has a frequency response of 40-16,000 Hz and a low impedance output via a 3-pin XLRM-type connector. Also

constructed with all metal, this mic is 6.97" long, has a body diameter of 1.89", and weighs 9.9 oz.

The ATM710 is a cardioid condenser vocal mic that reproduces high-fidelity vocals. The condenser design makes it ideal for studio performance and venues with controlled stage volume or in-ear monitoring. It also features a Hi-ENERGY neodymium magnet for high output and has an integral 80 Hz hi-pass filter to allow switching from a flat frequency response of 40-20,000 Hz to a low-end roll-off position.

The switchable 10dB pad lowers the mic's sensitivity to provide higher SPL capability. It also features the low impedance, 3-pin XLRM-type connector, and all-metal design. It is 7.05" long, has a body diameter of 1.97", and weighs 9.7 oz.

For more information, contact: Erikson Audio, (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, info@eriksonaudio.com, www.eriksonaudio.com.



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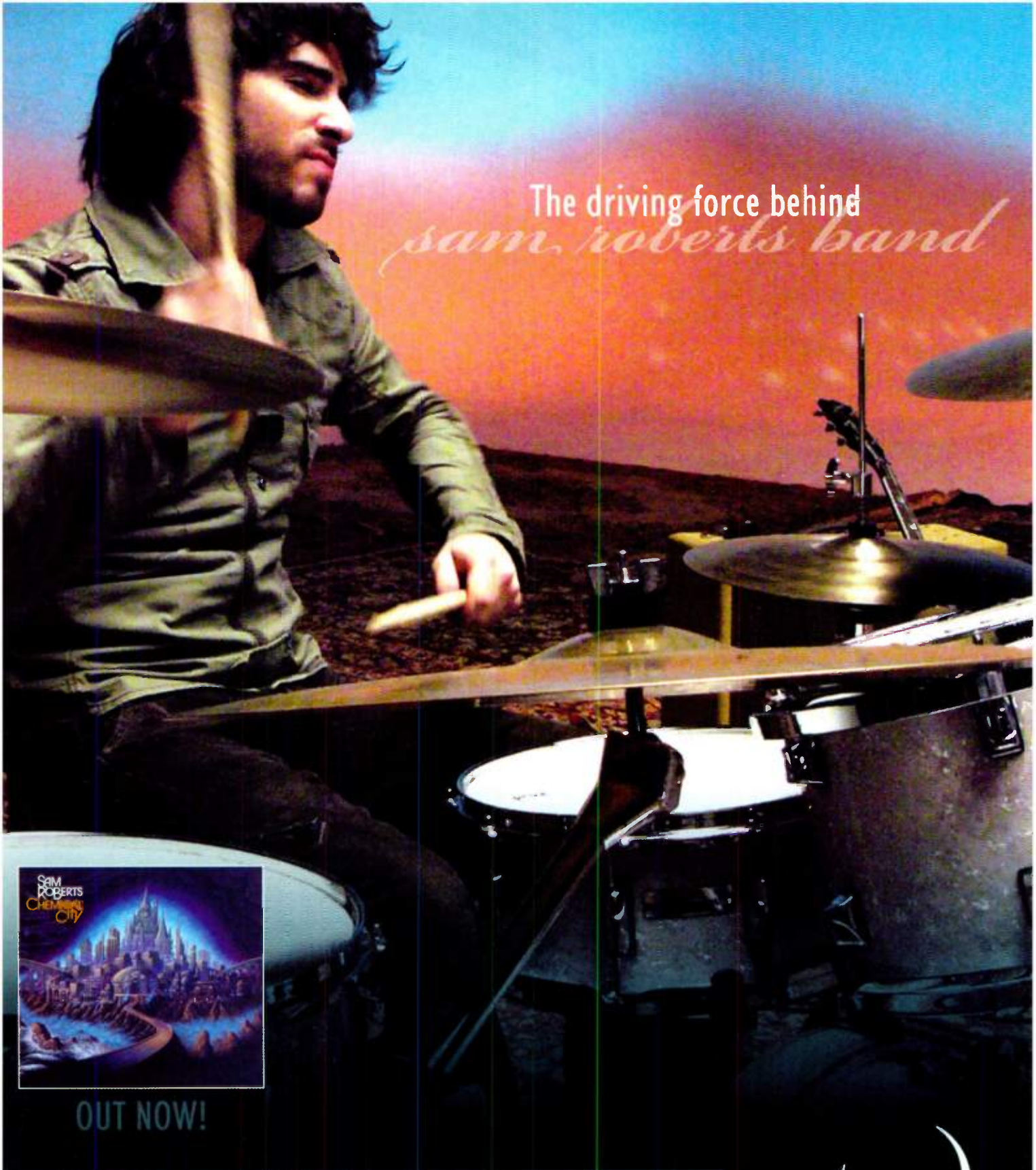


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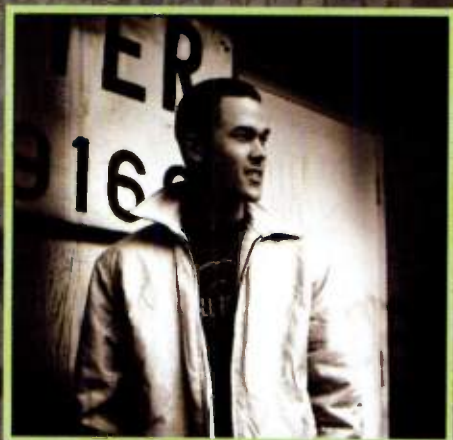
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by Karen Bliss



## JUSTIN NOZUKA

**Who:** Justin Nozuka

**Where:** Toronto, ON

**What:** just yes

**Contact:** Coalition Entertainment Management, 10271 Yonge St., #302, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 3B5 (905) 508 0025, [www.justinnozuka.com](http://www.justinnozuka.com), [www.myspace.com/justinozuka](http://www.myspace.com/justinozuka).

Ok, this guy is beyond good – for any age. Never mind, he just turned 18. Anyone who hears the way this New York-born, Toronto-based singer-songwriter writes lyrics about everything from domestic abuse to heartbreak will be astounded that he does it in such a fresh and creative way. Nozuka worked with rapper G Stokes in the past when he was doing an R&B thing, and was in a boy band with brother George, but this side of him was “discovered” by Damhnait Doyle at a songwriting workshop. He recorded this album, *Holly*, independently at Wellesley Sound and Soleil Studio with producer Bill Bell (Shaye, Tara MacLean) and it really is brilliant. It leaves you shaking your head, it’s that good. Check out “Mr. Therapy Man” about being dumped. This is about as far away from cliché as you can get. Then, there’s “Criminal,” a destined hit about the one time he smoked some weed and got a little paranoid. The song is hilarious. On the other side of the spectrum is “Save Him,” a story so painful it’s hard to get through. To top it off, Nozuka has a voice that is kind of hard soul, capable of falsetto on “Supposed To Grow Old” and blues on “Be Back Soon.” A rare talent.

## COCO LOVE ALCORN

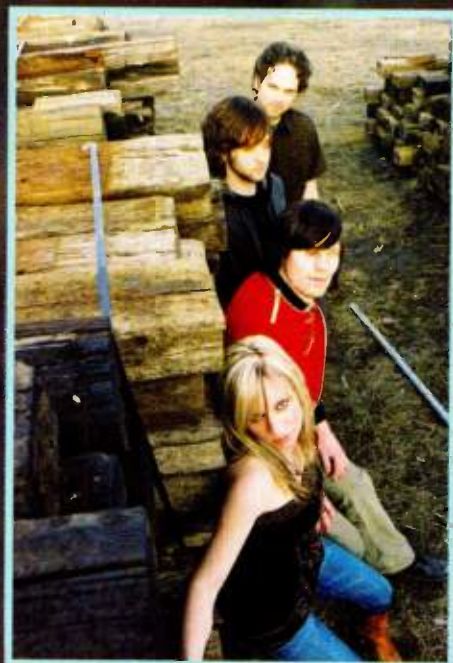
**Who:** Coco Love Alcorn

**Where:** Vancouver, BC

**What:** all you need is love

**Contact:** Black Hen Music, P.O. Box 74661 Kitsilano, Vancouver, BC V6K 4P4 (604) 224 5717, [info@blackhenmusic.com](mailto:info@blackhenmusic.com), [www.cocolovealcorn.com](http://www.cocolovealcorn.com).

Vancouver singer Coco Love Alcorn inherited her musical prowess from father, Toronto-based jazz singer/pianist John Alcorn, only her instrument of choice is acoustic guitar. Over the years, she has opened for Chantal Kreviazuk, Ani DiFranco, and Jesse Cook; played on Sarah McLachlan’s *Lilith Fair* and *Blue Rodeo*’s *Stardust Picnic*, and sung backup and toured with 54.40. Believe it or not, this album, *Sugar*, is her first all-original collection and it’s a blend of jazz, pop, and folk that serves her beautiful voice. Writing a half-dozen of the songs herself (including the lead track, “For Just One Night”), four with her dad, one with Lennie Gallant, and a couple with other people, Alcorn sums up the lyrics as being about “love, angels, and her power within.” Her dad did some preproduction, and the whole album was produced and engineered by Steve Dawson mostly at Vancouver’s The Factory. The core musicians are Chris Gestrin (k-os), Kate Hammett-Vaughn on keys, John Raham (Kinnie Starr, The Be Good Tanyas) on drums, and Keith Lowe (Fiona Apple, Bill Frisell) on string bass, with Dawson on lap steel, acoustic and electric guitars, banjo, and other stuff, but *Sugar* is always about Coco.



## THE BLOOD LINES

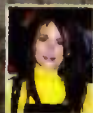
**Who:** The Blood Lines

**Where:** Saskatoon, SK

**What:** blood-type B positive

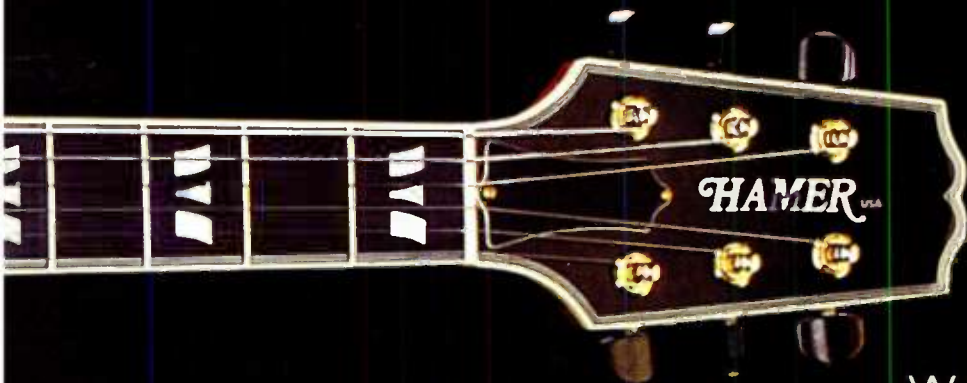
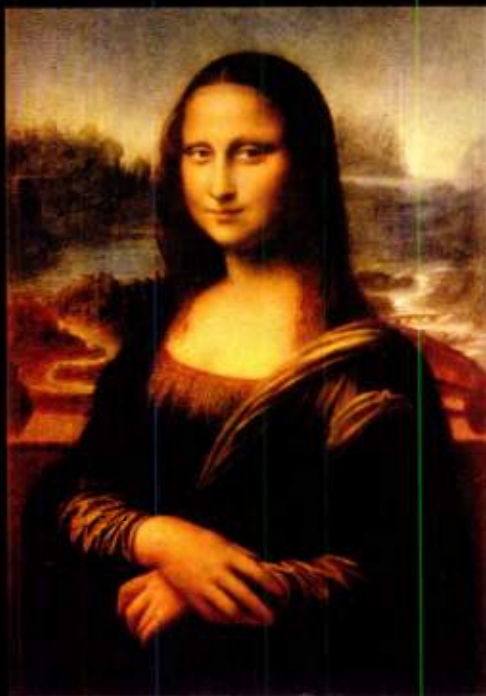
**Contact:** S.J. Kardash (management), 520 10th St., E., Saskatoon, SK S7N 0E2 (306) 373 5030, [www.thebloodlines.com](http://www.thebloodlines.com), [band@thebloodlines.com](mailto:band@thebloodlines.com).

The Blood Lines is the perfect name for this Saskatoon band. The story is a little complicated, but follow along. In 2005, bassist S.J. Kardash had no one to jam with, so he taught his sister, Maygen, to play drums. A friend was encouraging S.J. to play with guitarist Paul Ross, while a soundman/keyboardist named Barrett Ross was insisting Maygen play with his brother, the one and only Paul Ross. So there you have it, except for one thing: Barrett was a better drummer and Maygen a better keyboardist, so they traded positions and The Blood Lines was born in March, 2006. All sing, but S.J. is the lead vocalist. They booked a tour for June, which gave the guys and gal incentive to finish a full album. Recorded by S. J. at Living Space Studios, the self-titled disc has that unpolished ennui-pop, rock ‘n’ roll thing happening, including on the slower strums of “Off My Mind” and “Hold On To Your Love” and the raring-to-go “The End Of The World.” In no time, they saw results, showcasing at New York music festival CMJ and opening a Canadian tour for Montreal’s The Dears. That’s bloody good in nine months.



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 [www.warchild.ca](http://www.warchild.ca).

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