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Classified Weigh In On
CANADIAN HIP HOP

Havier Rudd

IS **CRASH KARMA**
HERE TO STAY?



The Weakerthans

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- Michael Piersante

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World Radio History

FEATURES

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Winter In Winnipeg

by Andrew King

Having spent the last few months working on their soon-to-be-released live CD/DVD package, The Weakerthans are ready to discuss the project, as well as offer insight into some of the songs that made it onto the set list.

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by Lynsey Kitching

He may not have been born here, but Xavier Rudd is indeed a Canadian citizen, and we're happy to have him. This international success combines the music and energy from places around the globe turning it into something to call his own.

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by Andrew King

Some big names in Canadian rock have come together under a new banner, with tracks already reaching radio and some high-profile shows on the horizon. The question is either: Is Crash Karma ready for 2010, or is 2010 ready for Crash Karma?

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by Luther Mallory

It's nice to finally see some critical attention being directed at up-and-coming Canadian emcees. We chat with Classified, D-Sisive, and Shad about Canadian hip hop and its invisible borders, which finally seem to be eroding.

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by Kevin Young

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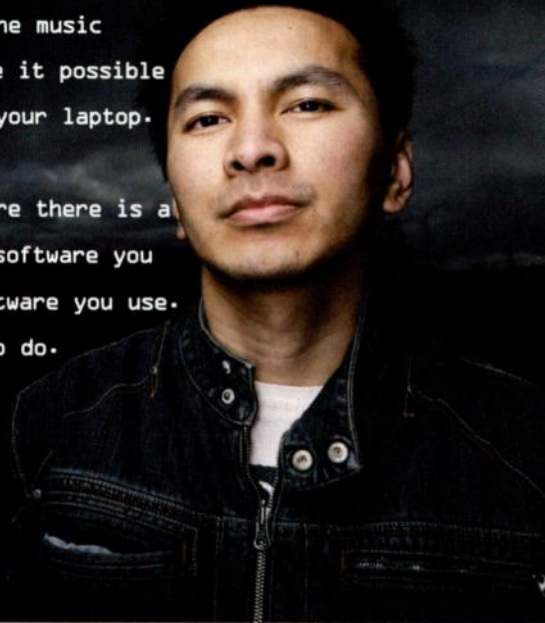
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Keep Up The Great Work

For decades, *Canadian Musician* has been one of my absolute favourite music magazines, as well as a must-read; however, your recent issues have really caused me to sit up, take notice, and send this response.

I don't know what is happening there editorially, but I feel like I am witnessing a newfound and pleasantly surprising renaissance. Virtually every feature, column, and department contains tidbits of information and ideas that are essential to my own artistic endeavours. As a 61-year-old musician still hungry for knowledge, ideas, and inspiration, I can only say please, whatever you're doing, don't stop.

David Henman
www.davidhenmanband.com

Ed. Thanks a lot for noticing, David. We've got a great team assembled and are constantly trying to one-up ourselves with every issue. Let us know how we fare down the road...



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If you're on Twitter and want to keep abreast of some of the ideas and opinions flying out of the CM office, follow us at: www.twitter.com/cdnmusician. Of course, you can also keep tabs on the CM Blog for news, opinions, and multimedia links. Check it out at: www.canadianmusician.com/blog

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THE NAME GAME

When a band is formed and all the individual musicians come together as one, an important step to protecting your work is to consider protecting your name.



LIAM CORMIER OF CANCER BATS

If you want to survive as a musician, tour with your band, or sell CDs and other merchandise, it is important to think of your music as a product you're packaging and selling to the public. Though this is a tough way of looking at your band and your blood, sweat, and tears, it is a necessary realization for an artist in the 21st century. Though there is no equation to discovering your group name, nowadays, along with finding your brand, comes the steps required to ensure you keep it.

Every band ever made has a story about how its name was born, what it means to them, and why it's important. In a recent interview with the Cancer Bats, singer Liam Cormier explains the origin of their fitting nose-cringing title. Cormier says: "I was brainstorming slash wasting time at work when it came to me. I just thought it would be kickass. It sounds spooky." He goes on: "Also, with a name like this you can do a lot of merch – you gotta think about stuff like that. How can I put bat wings on everything? Call our band Cancer Bats. Perfect."

THINK BEFORE YOU INK

Once your band name has been chosen, it is potentially beneficial before making up t-shirts, posters, and buttons, to consider registering as a trademark. With us today are two entertainment lawyers, with years of experience in the name game.

Paul Sanderson, Barrister & Solicitor at Sanderson Entertainment Law

Opening Statement: "I've been practicing in the field of entertainment law since 1983. I've been a trademark agent since about 1986. I've seen a lot of band name disputes. What often tempers this reality is the cost of lawsuits, the cost of trying to protect the name. It can be expensive. What often will happen, once there's been some notice given, is the group will make an assessment of whether or not they want to change names. Sometimes it's cheaper to avoid the problem than to buy into it trying to defend a name.

If you've been using it in the marketplace for a number of years, that gets more difficult. Bands often get invested not only business-wise in terms of their name, but they've got CDs, videos, they've been touring with the name, and they also become very emotionally attached to it. I've never met a band yet that wanted to change its name. Sometimes they can't afford to keep it; therein lies the dilemma. Better to search and protect it first before you exploit it."

Stacey Mitsopoulos, B.A., LL.B. from Taylor Mitsopoulos Klein Oballa, Entertainment and Media Lawyers

Opening Statement: "The music industry is global, therefore an artist must choose a name that will not infringe on a foreign artist's mark. A simple Google search is not enough to clear an artist's name, but is a first step. An artist should also check numerous sources to survey the global music industry – the Database of Performing Rights Societies and Musicians' Unions is a good start."

PRECAUTIONS PREVENT PROBLEMS

The first step after doing a leisurely Internet search for name-mates is to get out there and claim your stake. According to Sanderson, "The very best thing to do is to register the name as a trademark with the trademarks office."

You can go online to the official government website (www.cipo.gc.ca) to learn more. CIPO stands for the Canadian Intellectual Property Office. The forms and a number of useful questions are answered there.

CASE STUDIES

There have been a number of instances where an artist has had to change its name due to trademark issues. Here are a few cases cited by Mitsopoulos:

- Dinosaur Jr. – formerly Dinosaur
- Death From Above 1979 – formerly Death From Above
- BushX – formerly Bush
- The reality show band *Rock Star Supernova* was originally to be called *Supernova*, but a band called Supernova forced it to change its name.
- The US Postal Service took issue with the name The Postal Service but an amicable solution was reached.
- Other examples are bands needing to change their name in other territories, such as Suede becoming The London Suede in North America, or The Charlatans becoming The Charlatans UK.

Though these changes are minimal, the main concern is the cost behind the whole ordeal. If precautions were taken, these snags could've been avoided before thousands of dollars (which could have been spent on gas for the van, recording time, etc.) is wasted on legal bills.

TO TRADEMARK OR NOT TO TRADEMARK? THAT IS THE QUESTION...

Scenario

Two bands with the same name, one living in Toronto and one out in BC (let's go with the name Fast Paced Putter for argument's sake), exist in different geographical areas, both playing in small pubs in their hometowns. One of the groups is more prominent,



PAUL SANDERSON,
ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER

performing loads of shows and having merchandise, though neither has their name trademarked. One lovely summer season, both bands decide to go out on tour, the one group for the first time. As destiny would have it, their paths cross. As the name is special to both, each want the other to alter their name so there is no confusion. When no agreement can be met, what can then be done?

Sanderson's Analysis

Legally, you're looking at putting the other band on notice that they don't have prior rights, and two, initiating some legal action. In essence, you'd have to sue them if they didn't stop using the same name. If you had a trademark registration, it doesn't mean you wouldn't have to sue the other band, but you have a stronger case to be made. Once you have a registration, it's proof you own the trademark, whereas in the absence of that registration you would have to prove it.

Often it's very complicated because one band may have performed first, but the other band released their CD first, so there are different dates of first use. I think the best thing you can do with any intellectual property is to protect it first, then exploit it. In this case, both of these bands didn't protect their name. They exploited it first and then hoped that there wouldn't be a problem. This is especially evident in this Internet era, with millions of bands and artists out there who are using potentially confusing names. We are now global and it's the world we are dealing with, not just someone down the street.

Mitsopoulos' Analysis

In Canada, trademark rights are created by use of your name and/or mark in commerce, and therefore a "common law" right also exists.

In other words, if you have been openly performing within a certain area using a band name, you can legally stop others from using it there even without a formal trademark; however, if another band shares your name and is known in an area you have not performed, they can prevent you from using the name in that area. This means it is always a good idea to trademark your name in your home country, and then ideally, register in every country where your music is.



STACEY MITSOPOULOS,
ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER

THE SEARCH CONTINUES...

There are a number of ways you can search to find if your desired name has already been claimed. The most formal one would be to go to a search house or a clearing house for names. In many cases artists cannot afford the fee because it could cost upwards of \$1,000-\$1,500 for a search of both the Trademark Copyright Register, and Business Register. The more thorough the search the better, but Sanderson warns, "The more you search the more you'll find and the more potential there could be of a conflicting name. Even if you've done an extensive search, there is no guarantee that it's exhaustive and it often isn't."

Though it may be the farthest thing from band members' minds when deciding to embark on a musical journey, both of the entertainment law professionals contend that trademarking your name could help prevent unnecessary conflicts in the future. So if you don't want to deal with the hassles of the name game, get out there and claim your stake!

Lynsey Kitching is the Assistant Editor for Canadian Musician.



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Toronto To Host 2011 JUNO Awards

• The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS), along with broadcast partner CTV, have announced Toronto as the host city for the 2011 JUNO Awards, marking its 40th anniversary next year. JUNO Week will take place March 21-27, 2011, culminating in the live CTV broadcast of The JUNO Awards on Sunday, March 27, 2011 from the Air Canada Centre.

CARAS selected Toronto based on its strong bid and the solid partnership presented by the province of Ontario, city of Toronto, and the private sector led by Tourism Toronto.

Melanie Berry, President and CEO of CARAS says: "Toronto is sure to put its own vibrant and distinct personality to Canada's most recognizable music awards show – a perfect convergence of music, culture, diversity, and industry." For more information, visit www.junoawards.ca.



Photo: CARAS/Photo

Bryan Adams & Kathleen Edwards perform "Walk On By" during the 2009 JUNO Awards.

Celebrate Independent Retailers On Record Store Day



Nudie & The Turks rocking Charlottetown's Back Alley Music.



Photo: Martin Cathrae

• Record Store Day is a celebration of the unique culture surrounding over 700 independently-owned record stores in the US, and hundreds of similar stores internationally. The 2010 edition will be held on April 17, 2010. Special vinyl and CD releases and various promotional

products are made exclusively for the day, including packages from several Canadian artists.

"I love that people actually care for and know about the music they are selling," says Canadian artist Neko Case about indie retailers. Alexisonfire's George Pettit also

weighs in, saying: "Like junkies who require a more portent dose to get high, so do record collectors, and we all know you get the best shit at indie record stores. [They're] a focal point of your local music scene." For more information, visit www.recordstoreday.com.



Eric Baptiste

SOCAN Names New CEO

• SOCAN has announced the appointment of Eric Baptiste as CEO, replacing André LeBel, who announced his plans for retirement last year, as of May 16, 2010. Regarding the appointment, Baptiste says: "SOCAN is a remarkable performing rights organization, with a proud history of innovation and outstanding success throughout its 20-year history." For more information, visit www.socan.ca.

Mark Your Calendars For Music Monday

• Every year for the past six years, people across Canada have been taking part in Music Monday, using their voices and instruments to celebrate the importance of music and music education in their lives. Last year there were over 750,000 participants.

This year's event, taking place May 3, 2010, is timed to happen across the country at exactly the same time: 10 a.m. Pacific, 11 a.m. Mountain, 12 p.m. Central, 1 p.m. Eastern, 2 p.m. Atlantic, and 2:30 p.m. in Newfoundland. It is organized by the Coalition for Music Education in Canada to remind everyone of the value of music education.

Last year, the S.A.C. joined in the event by holding an inspiring concert at Metro Hall Square with Ohbijou, Jordan Croucher, and The Wooden Sky, joined by many music students. This year, the country will unite once again around Serena Ryder's song, "Sing! Sing!" Different arrangements and charts for this song are available for download.

Visit www.musicmonday.ca to register and make a commitment to do something musical.



Organize Tours With Virtual Road Manager



• To help musicians on the road, TourSavant.com has introduced a program that provides artists with web tools, online applications, and offline components such as a personalized, loadable MasterCard with fuel and hotel discounts. The site allows bands to organize tours using an innovative tour router to make planning and booking easier. For more information, visit www.toursavant.com.



MobBase Gains Traction

• MobBase is an iPhone application that connects musicians with their fans, through more than 50 applications launched since the service debuted in November 2009. MobBase is the new service that makes it easy for musicians and music companies to create, launch, and manage their own custom iPhone applications. The service costs musicians about 50 cents daily and is a way for musicians to share music, photos, videos, tweets, news, information about shows, merchandise, and other content with fans on their mobile devices.

"We have had a great response thus far from our clients to MobBase's iPhone apps," says Adam Rabinovitz, VP of Marketing for the Independent Online Distribution Alliance (IODA). Additionally, several indie labels are also offering MobBase apps and are promoting them to their artists. For more information, visit www.mixmatchmusic.com.

KoSA International Percussion Workshops, Drumcamp & Festival

• This year's KoSA International Percussion Workshop, Drumcamp & Festival will take place at Castleton State College in Castleton, VT from July 27-August 1, 2010.



This percussive education experience is an intensive camp with hands-on classes taught by professional, world-class drummers and percussionists. For students of all ages and levels, attendees live and work with their mentors, perform with rhythm sections, and attend concerts featuring the faculty.

In past years there have been more than 150 attendees of all ages, with professional instructors including John Riley, Dafnis Prieto, Steve Smith, Glen Velez, Dave Samuels, Arnie Lang, Changuito, Memo Acevedo, Geoff Hamilton, Aldo Mazza, and many more.

For more information contact KoSA Music: 800-541-8401, www.kosamusic.com.

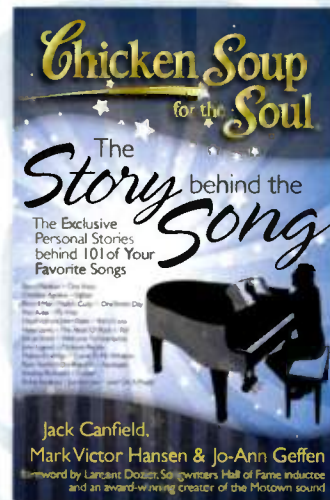


Nikki Yanofsky Performs In Celebration Of MusiCounts Grant

• MusiCounts gathered with more than 500 Centennial Regional High School students to celebrate a 2009-2010 MusiCounts Band Aid grant. Highlighting the celebrations was an appearance by two-time JUNO Award nominee, Nikki Yanofsky. One of over 60 grants to be awarded nationwide in 2010 by MusiCounts was won by the Quebec high school's The Flat, a program that inspires over 200 students through music education.

Created in 2005, The Flat is a program/place/philosophy that provides an opportunity for students to stay after school and work with professional musicians and artists. Encouraging at-risk students to express themselves through dance, art, and music. The MusiCounts musical instrument grant will help to double the number of students in the program.

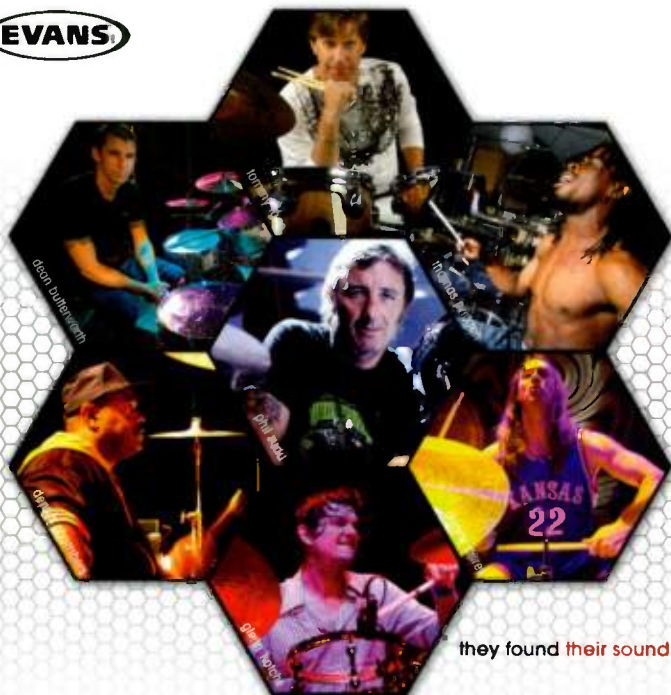
For more information, visit www.musicounts.ca.



Making You Feel Warm From The Inside Out

• *Chicken Soup For The Soul* has partnered with veteran Hollywood publicist, talent manager, and celebrity booker Jo-Ann Geffen for its first all-celebrity book. Geffen peels back the curtain on 101 songs, songwriters, and artists with the upcoming release of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Story Behind the Song*.

The book reflects on many famous songs by the likes of Kanye West, Melissa Etheridge, and Canadians like Paul Anka and Barenaked Ladies. Some bring laughter, others bring tears, but all are insightful and great reading for music fans, aficionados, or people who just like a good story. For more information, visit www.chickensoup.com.



they found their sound.



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Photo: Mark Tabor

Thrilling Audiences For 50 Years

• This year marks a milestone 50th anniversary for the Mariposa Folk Festival. Come out this year and enjoy the performances, workshops, and all around hoot-hollerin' good time. Visit www.mariposafolk.com.

Love Indie Music Online

•Indielove.ca has been spinning 100 per cent Canadian content since its inception in 2007 as a privately-owned Internet radio station. Indie Love now has some 3,000 acts ranging from country to hip-hop on its roster. Indie Love claims it is wholeheartedly committed to developing a Canadian scene, which is accessible to artists, promoters, venues, and indie fans. The site plans to initiate several projects in 2010, which will promote all genres of Canadian independent music.

Alan Sochan is the Founder of Indie Love Radio, and as a musician and entrepreneur, he is passionate about Canadian music. Sochan started Indie Love using his own savings, telling the *Toronto Star* he did it all "On a wing and a prayer, and a hunch we're onto something."

Artists can set up an account on the site and upload their music, or they can send a CD and press package to the station. For more information, visit www.indielove.ca.

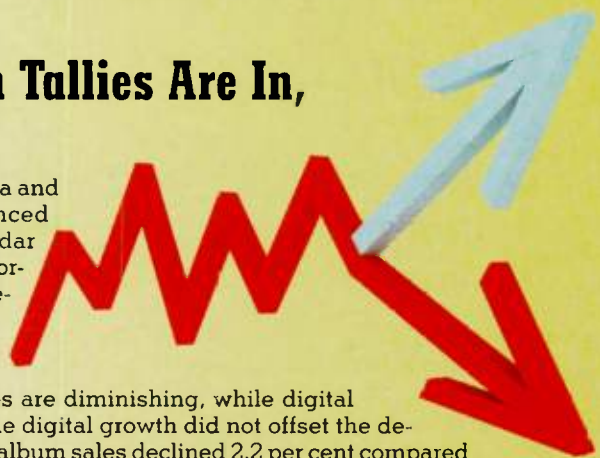
The SoundScan Tallies Are In, Canada...

•Nielsen SoundScan Canada and Nielsen BDS have announced their 2009 Canadian calendar year sales and airplay monitoring data for the 52-week period January 5, 2009 through January 3, 2010.

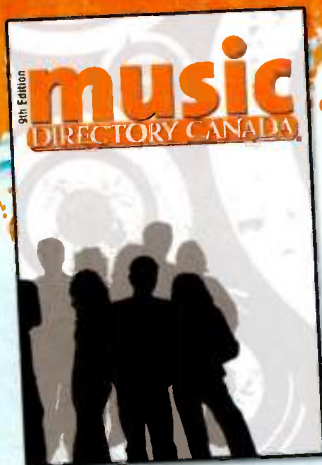
As expected by most, traditional record store sales are diminishing, while digital sales are rising; however, the digital growth did not offset the decline in physical sales. Total album sales declined 2.2 per cent compared to 2008, continuing a trend of declining music sales in Canada. There were 9 million album sales during the holiday season, down 3.2 per cent compared to 2008. Digital album sales accounted for 14 per cent of total album sales for the year versus 9 per cent in 2008. Retail music stores accounted for 53 per cent of all album sales, compared to 58 per cent in 2008, 63 per cent in 2007, and 66 per cent in 2006.

In 2009 there were a few records and songs that owned the charts. Susan Boyle's *I Dreamed A Dream*, which was released with just six weeks left in the year, is the biggest selling album with 319,000 sales, just edging Lady Gaga's *Fame* at 315,000. Michael Jackson is the biggest selling artist with album sales of 651,000 in 2009. Prior to 2009, there had been just over 700,000 Michael Jackson albums purchased over the past 13 years in Canada.

Female artists did really well this past year in Canada, with five out of the top 10 biggest selling digital artists in 2009 being female solo artists. Celine Dion has 7.1 million albums sold and Shania Twain has 4.2 million albums sold. These same two artists continue to have the biggest selling albums for Canada in the Nielsen SoundScan era. Coldplay's *Viva La Vida* continues to be the biggest selling digital album in the Nielsen SoundScan era with more than 60,000 downloads.



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Live Nation & Ticketmaster Entertainment Merger Receives Clearance

• Live Nation Inc. and Ticketmaster Entertainment Inc. have announced that they have reached agreements with the US Department of Justice and with the Canadian Commissioner of Competition, clearing the way for the merger of the companies.

Upon closing, the company will be renamed Live Nation Entertainment Inc. The combined company will be led by Michael Rapino as CEO and President and Irving Azoff as Executive Chairman of Live Nation Entertainment and CEO of Front Line. Barry Diller will serve as Chairman of the Board of Live Nation Entertainment. The Board will consist of 14 directors, seven from each company.

Michael Rapino, CEO of Live Nation says, "This is a good and exciting day for the music business, and we are close to finalizing the creation of a new company that will seek to transform the way artists distribute their content and fans can access that content."

For more information, visit www.livenation.ca.



Wave Your Flags For The World Cup

• Football enthusiasts are biting at the bit as the final few months of the 2010 World Cup wait count

down. This year's event takes place in South Africa during the summer months, and the official anthem for the event is Somalia-born Canadian rapper K'naan's "Wavin' Flag." As the cup anthem, it has been remixed and called "The Celebration Mix."



Canadian Music Hall Of Fame Welcomes April Wine

• The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences announced on February 8, 2010 that April Wine will be inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame on April 18, 2010 during the 2010 Juno Awards gala in St. John's, NL.

Meeting Of Minds In Vancouver

• The 2010 Vancouver Island Music Business Conference (VIMBC) is a four-day event that brings together local, national, and international music business professionals and artists from a variety of genres to share ideas, experience, knowledge, and talent in an intimate atmosphere.

The 2010 conference runs from June 24-27, 2010. The VIMBC is in its third year, taking place in the small-town setting of Courtenay, BC. Through information seminars, the conference provides delegates and panelists with a focused experience. There will also be three live music venues, which will operate throughout the duration of the conference, showcasing over 30 acts.

Photo: Tom Davies



(L-R) Larry Wayne Clark, Ron Irving, Ralph Murphy, Bill Henderson & Sue Medley

This year there are 20 seminars. Topics include songwriting, producing, arranging, performing, publishing, promoting, copyright, marketing, distribution, radio, music law, management, touring, A&R, record labels, SOCAN Foundation, and FACTOR funding programs. A few of this year's confirmed panelists include Dan Hill, recording artist, producer, and author; and Patricia Conroy, award-winning singer/songwriter, among many others. For more information, visit www.vimbc.com.

One Million Downloads For Charity

•Montreal native and musician Mario Biferali has set out to raise funds for the Montreal Children's Hospital and the Generations Foundation. He will be donating 100 per cent of the revenue generated by downloads of his song "Till I See You Again" through his website. Biferali says, "As a kid, I was often sick and visited the Montreal Children's Hospital on many occasions but only now, as a parent, do I realize how lucky we are to have a place like the Children's Hospital to take care of our kids. One Million Downloads for Charity is my way of saying thanks for being there." For more information, visit www.onemilliondownloadsforcharity.com.



Mario Biferali



Noteflight Announces Online Music Notation Service

•Noteflight LLC has announced the launch of Noteflight Crescendo, an online music notation service. The next generation of the Noteflight platform enables individuals to write music online and provides a fun means to create and share scores. "By launching Crescendo, we are now able to provide the music community with the best of both worlds – a more powerful online music notation platform for professionals, educators, students, and music enthusiasts and a free model for the novice or occasional user," says Joe Berkovitz, President and Founder of Noteflight. For more information, visit www.noteflight.com.

Kang Of All Battles

•Beat Kangz Electronics is looking for the next superstar producer and has announced a contest with legendary producer Rockwilder. The winner will receive \$30,000 in prizes, get flown to Nashville to have a track produced by Rockwilder, receive a pro photo shoot and image consulting by Eye Jammy Records, and more. Visit www.beatkangz.com, contests for more information.

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Photo Credit: Grant Martin Photography, Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame 5th Annual Gala.

Anna & Kate McGarrigle, Rufus & Martha Wainwright, Lily & Sylvan Lanken at last year's CSHF Gala.

Canadian Songwriters Honoured at 6th Annual Gala

•The Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame (CSHF) has revealed its 2010 inductees, which include 11 influential songwriters, 16 songs, and two Legacy Award recipients. It was also announced that the CSHF and the Toronto Centre for the Arts have established a strategic partnership that will help expand the CSHF mandate by presenting regular music programming, ongoing educational initiatives, and a permanent home for the Hall of Fame located at the TCA.

The 2010 inductees will be honoured at the CSHF's 6th annual Gala, presented by BMO Nesbitt Burns on March 28, 2010, at the George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts. "We are honoured to welcome this year's inductees into the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame. Each of these artists have helped define Canada's musical legacy and we look forward to recognizing and celebrating their efforts at this year's Gala," says Sylvia Tyson, President, CSHF. Nominees include Rush, Robert Charlebois, and others. Visit www.cansong.ca for more information.



John Petrucci



Robben Ford

Guitar Workshop Plus Artist Lineup Announced

•Guitar Workshop Plus has announced its artist lineup for the 2010 summer program, running July 18-23 for Session 1 and July 25-30 for Session 2 in Toronto, and August 8-13 in Vancouver. Guest artists include: John Petrucci (Dream Theater), blues legend Robben Ford, Andy Timmons, and musical chameleon Greg Howe. Tony MacAlpine will be joining for the first time along with acoustic genius Tony McManus. Drum guru Paul Delong, jazz great Lorne Lofsky, shred master David Martone, rock professor Jon Finn, and guitar designer Robert Godin round out the lineup.

For more information, contact Guitar Workshop Plus: 905-567-8000, info@guitarworkshopplus.com, www.guitarworkshopplus.com.

Music PEI Week Celebrates The Island's Best

•The 2010 Music PEI Week and Conference, the ninth installment of the event, ran from January 20-23, 2010 in Charlottetown. The event brought together the music industry and public for four days of showcases, workshops, and the annual Gala Awards Show.

Workshops were hosted January 22-23, with featured sessions like "Plan Your Work So You Can Work Your Plan," hosted by Will Strickland of the Urban Music Association of Canada; a "Be Media Savvy" round table; and a keynote address by CBC Radio 3's Grant Lawrence dubbed "On Stage & On Point: Tips For Putting On The Best Live Performance Possible."

Showcases were held throughout the week featuring many artists from across the Island at various venues in the city. The entire event culminated in the Gala Awards Show, where Catherine MacLellan took home four awards, and Haunted Hearts, Tim Chaisson & Morning Fold, and Grass Mountain Hobos each earned two. There were several outstanding musical performances throughout the night by Island artists.

For more information, visit www.musicpei.com.



Music PEI's Media Panel, with (L-R) UMAC's Will Strickland, CBC Radio 3's Grant Lawrence, SpinCount's Kimberly Sinclair & CM's Andrew King.

Photo: Grant Martin

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■ KoSA Cuba 2010

Havana, Cuba
March 7-14, 2010
514-482-5554,
info@kosamusic.com, www.kosamusic.com

■ Canadian Music Week 2010

Toronto, ON
March 10-14, 2010
905-858-4747, FAX 905-858-4848
info@cmw.net, www.cmw.net

■ SXSW 2010

Austin, TX
March 17-21, 2010
512-467-7979, FAX 512-451-0754
sxsw@sxsw.com, www.sxsw.com

■ MTNA National Conference

Albuquerque, NM
March 20-24, 2010
513-421-3135, FAX 513-421-2503
mtnanet@mtna.org, www.mtna.org

■ Musikmesse

Frankfurt, Germany
March 24-27, 2010
905-824-5017
info@canada.messefrankfurt.com,
www.musikmesse.com

■ Niagara Music Awards

Niagara Falls, ON
April 14, 2010
905-835-2345
www.niagaramusicawards.com

■ 2010 Juno Awards

St. John's, NL
April 18, 2010
416-485-3135, FAX 416-485-4978
info@carasonline.ca, www.juno-awards.ca

■ Gospel Music Association (GMA) Music Week

Nashville, TX
April 18-21, 2010
615-242-0303, FAX 615-254-9755
www.gospelmusic.org

■ "I Create Music" ASCAP Expo 2010

Los Angeles, CA
April 22-24, 2010
800-278-1287, FAX 212-595-3276
www.ascap.com/eventsawards

■ MUSEXPO 2010

West Hollywood, CA
April 25-28, 2010
323-782-0770
www.musexpo.net

■ 2010 Cape Breton International Drum Festival

Cape Breton Island, NS
May 22-23, 2010
bruce_cbidrumfest@yahoo.com,
www.capebretoninternationaldrumfestival.com

■ Montreal International Music Competition Violin 2010

Montreal, QC
May 24-June 4, 2010
514-845-4108, FAX 514-845-8241
info@concoursmontreal.ca,
www.concoursmontreal.ca

■ 2010 COCA National Conference

London, ON
June 16-20, 2010
519-690-0207, FAX 519-681-4328
www.coca.org

■ NXNE 2010

Toronto, ON
June 16-20, 2010
416-863-6963, FAX 416-863-0828
info@nxne.com, www.nxne.com

■ Toronto City Roots Festival

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416-960-1568
www.torontocityroots.com

■ TD Canada Trust Ottawa International Jazz Festival

Ottawa, ON
June 25- July 5, 2010
613-241-2633, FAX 613-241-5774
info@ottawajazzfestival.com,
www.ottawajazzfestival.com

■ 2010 Montreal Musical Instrument Show

Montreal, QC
July 9-11, 2010
514-871-1881
info_simm@equipespectra.ca,
www.mmmis.ca

■ TD Canada Trust Atlantic Jazz Festival Halifax

Halifax, NS
July 9-17, 2010
www.jazzeast.com

■ 33rd Vancouver Folk Music Festival

Vancouver, BC
July 16-18, 2010
604-602-9798, FAX 604-602-9790
board@thefestival.bc.ca,
www.thefestival.bc.ca

■ 22nd Beaches International Jazz Festival

Toronto, ON
July 16-25, 2010
416-698-2152, FAX 416-698-2064
info@beachesjazz@rogers.com,
www.beachesjazz.com

■ Guitar Workshop Plus

Toronto, ON
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Session 2: July 25-30, 2010
905-567-8000
info@guitarworkshopplus.com,
www.guitarworkshopplus.com

■ Hillside Festival 2010

Guelph, ON
July 23-25, 2010
519-763-6396, FAX 519-763-9514
info@hillsidefestival.ca,
www.hillsidefestival.ca

■ GMA Immerse 2010

Nashville, TN
July 28-31, 2010
615-242-0303, FAX 615-254-9755
info@gospelmusic.org, www.gospelmusic.org

■ 2010 Canmore Folk Music Festival

Canmore, AB
July 31-August 2, 2010
403-678-2524, FAX 403-678-2524
info@canmorefolkfestival.com,
www.canmorefolkfestival.com

■ Guitar Workshop Plus

Vancouver, BC
August 8-13, 2010
905-567-8000
info@guitarworkshopplus.com,
www.guitarworkshopplus.com

■ National Flute Association Convention 2010

Anaheim, CA
August 12-15, 2010
661-299-6680, FAX 661-299-6681
conventionservices@nfaonline.org,
www.nfaonline.org

■ Country Music Week 2010

Edmonton, AB
September 8-12, 2010
416-947-1331, FAX 416-947-5924
country@ccma.org, www.ccma.org

■ Pro AV Golf Tournament

Caledon, ON
September 21, 2010
905-641-3471
nduncan@nor.com, www.proavgolf.com

■ 23rd Ontario Council of Folk Festivals (OCFF)

Ottawa, ON
October 14-17, 2010
613-560-5997, 866-292-OCFF, 613-560-2001
info@ocff.ca, www.ocff.ca

■ Niagara Music Forum

Thorold, ON
October 17, 2010
905-641-3471, FAX 888-665-1307
www.niagaramusicforum.com

■ PASIC 2010

Indianapolis, IN
November 10-13, 2010
580-353-1455, FAX 580-353-1456
percarts@pas.org, www.pasic.org

■ CINARS 2010

Montreal, QC
November 15-21, 2010
514-842-5866, FAX 514-843-3168
www.cinars.org

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Pedals To The Medals

by Alan Mann



Electro-Harmonix Cathedral Stereo Reverb

Boring multi-effect reverb pedals are a thing of the past with the introduction of the Cathedral from Electro-Harmonix. Its eight modes and truly innovative "infinite" reverb function make the potential for lush soundscapes and textures truly endless. Let's take a look at the Cathedral's various modes.

The Spring and Accu Spring settings are taken from the company's Holy Grail reverb pedal, both allowing you to blend wet and dry as well as tone depending on the sound you're after. The Hall setting allows you to set the reverb decay to exactly what you need as well as adjust the spacial perspective. Similarly the Room and Plate settings offer the same versatility, but give the effect of a smaller-sounding space.

The Cathedral's reverse mode allows you to produce a reverse reverb effect for each note, allowing you to control the amount of time between the attack and the fade-in of the reverse effect. The Grail Flerb setting is again taken from the Holy Grail, allowing you to control the flanger modulation and resonance, which would be fixed on the Holy Grail. The Echo setting transforms the pedal into a digital effect, allowing you to tap or dial in the delay time.

Truly, the most irresistible feature I found is the Infinite reverb switch, allowing you to play over a never-ending reverb wash without adding to or changing it. It should also be mentioned that like many other Electro-Harmonix effects, the preset mode allows you to save a setting for any one of the eight modes, easily accessible through the unit's toggle switch. The Cathedral is by far the best multi-effect reverb I've come across so far. Highly recommended.

Dunlop KH95 Kirk Hammett Signature Wah

Dunlop's Kirk Hammett signature wah pedal was developed in close collaboration with the iconic Metallica lead guitarist, repeatedly tested and tweaked to reproduce the classic tones off Hammett's revolutionary metal solos from the '80s through to the present.

Using Kirk's studio and live rig (a DCRISR rack wah,) Dunlop engineers took the guitarist's EQ, volume, and tone settings to capture the tone and response of his classic leads. The wah itself is very classic in sound and tone, with a smooth top end and thick bottom. The pedal's unique tonal characteristics are most evident in the top and bottom 20 per cent of the heel to toe sweep, with a very even response in its sweep and dynamic range.

The pedal features a raised glow-in-the-dark skeleton foot and Hammett's signature, as well as a two-tone translucent green paint job on the sides. Despite its pretty outrageous casing, the Kirk Hammett signature wah is still a very traditional and versatile sounding wah. Useful not only for metal leads, but also for blues and funk, the pedal can push any player's solos to the next level.



SolidGoldFX SuperDuperDrive

SolidGoldFX's SuperDuperDrive pedal is a combination of a drive and boost pedal, handmade in Montreal. Both the drive and boost features can be used separately or together.

Personally, I found the most effective configuration was to use the Drive Channel for rhythm and then kick on the boost to really make my solos punch. When used alone, the boost switch gives you the option of a simple clean boost. When the Drive switch is engaged, the pedal allows you to control its volume and presence as well as the amount of drive. The boost reacts well to various levels of gain, giving a very broad range of tonal versatility.

The presence control itself offers up a nice contrast, from a mellow, Clapton-like "woman tone" when rolled all the way back to



over-the-top highs when pushed full-tilt. The Drive knob is able to keep you at a nice "edge of break-up" tone, or push you to a full-on saturated metal sound. Definitely worth a look, the SolidGoldFX SuperDuperDrive would be an asset to any pedal board, live or in studio.



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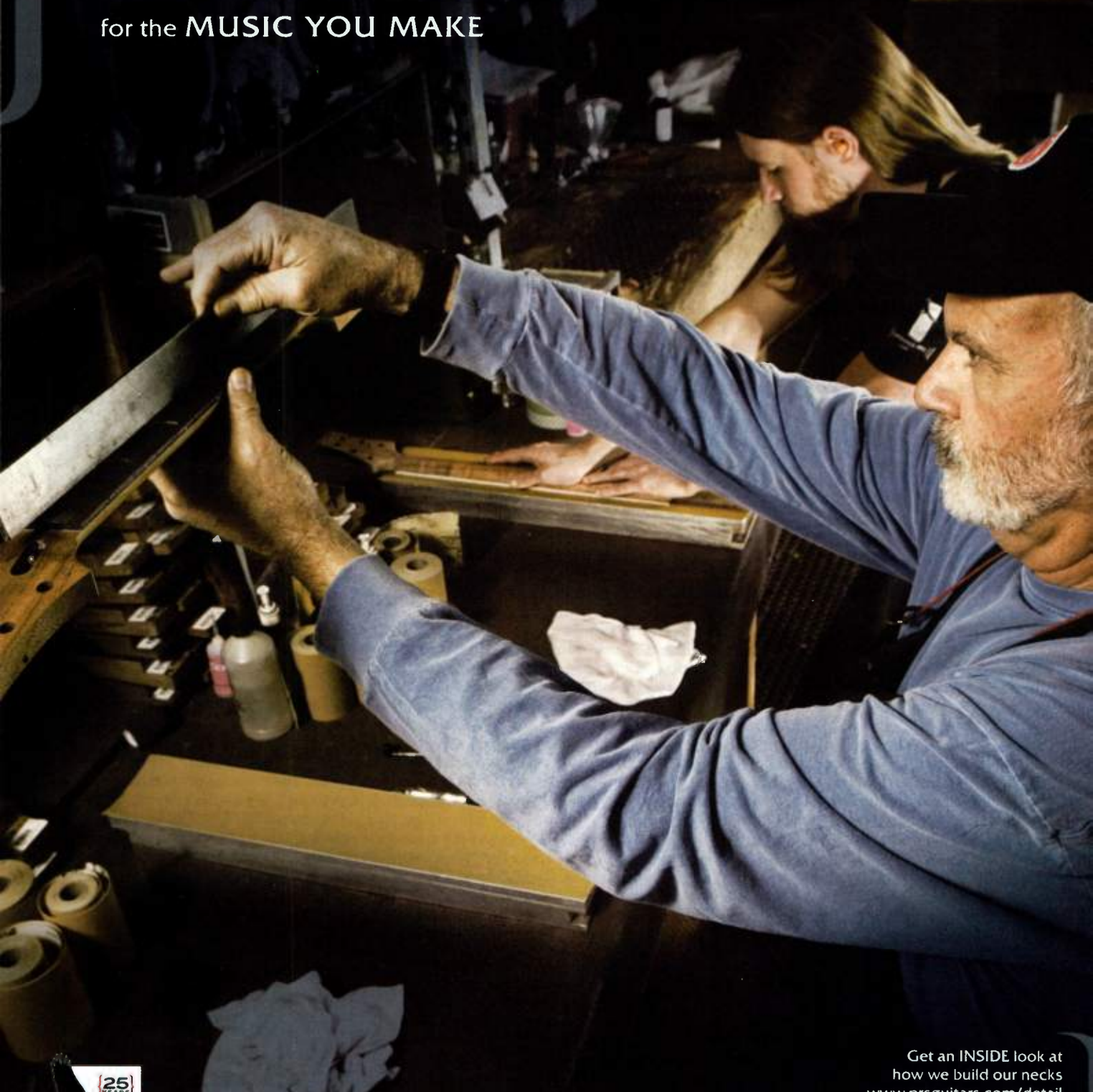
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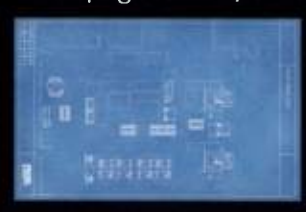
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Scott Middleton plays guitar in Cancer Bats (www.cancerbats.com). Be sure to check out their upcoming release, *Bears, Mayors, Scraps and Bones*, dropping April 13, 2010 on Distort (www.distortent.com).

PHOTO: VANESSA HEINS

by Scott Middleton

Making Those Hand Muscles BURN

Almost every rock guitar player begins learning pentatonic and chromatic scales in early practice regimens, and while very important, you can often get bored of playing the same patterns over and over. In order to keep things interesting, I try to write musical patterns that warmed up and challenged both my fretting and picking hands, while simultaneously coming up with ideas for riffs and songs. Here are some examples of riffs that began as a way to warm up and practice that I ended up using in my own songs with Cancer Bats.

Example 1 "Sorceress" Tuning: CGCFAD Anonymous

Ex. 1 comes from the intro of "Sorceress" from *Hail Destroyer*. The riff takes a fairly simple ascending pentatonic shape, but incorporates fast hammer-ons and pull-offs, so you're only picking the first note on every string. Start off by playing this shape slowly and build up your speed using a metronome, making sure each hammer-on is as clear and strong sounding as possible and that your vibrato on the last note of the

second bar is brief and in-time.

This exercise should really give your fingers (especially your pinky and ring finger), a much needed work out. The position shift in the fourth bar can be tricky to nail at first, but with practice, you should be able to hit the notes accurately and in-time with the rest of the pattern.

When I recorded this riff, I used a fair amount of amp gain and with just about every note (especially on the pull-offs and vibrato), I hit an artificial harmonic by sticking the side edge of my thumb over my pick so that it strikes the string immediately after, producing a squeal that sounds really cool once you're able to play the pattern at full speed. Don't be discouraged if your hand muscles get tired after repeatedly playing it because that's the point! Just shake out your hand and take a break for a minute and try again. It took me a fair amount of time to be able to play it comfortably and consistently and I still warm up with this riff before every show I play.

Where the previous example really focuses on giving the fret hand a workout, Ex. 2a (taken from the bridge of "We Are The Undead" from our upcoming album *Bears, Mayors, Scraps and Bones*) focuses primarily on picking hand technique. In the first two bars, the single string run should be played using alternate picking. This gives a more fluid feel and allows you to play a lot faster.

EX 2a * Use Alternate picking EX 2b * Use Only Downstrokes

occasional palm muting using only downstrokes that give a heavy percussive and jarring feel to the riff, especially with the addition of a rest on the last beat of the second bar.

In Ex. 2c, the riff changes to octave chords which slide down on the first beat of each bar adding some groove while still maintaining aggression with down picking and palm muting. Switching between alternate picking and downstrokes will really give your picking hand a great workout, especially when playing with a metronome at full speed.

Ex 2c * Use only downstrokes

Exercises like these have become pre-show rituals for me; they are both fun to play and beneficial in building dexterity, speed, and accuracy. I hope these ideas help keep things interesting for you while improving your playing and making your hand muscles burn!



by Chris Donnelly

Approaching Solo PIANO

Solo piano performances are often feared, underdeveloped, misunderstood, and underappreciated. Let's change that.

Firstly, to all hopeful solo pianists, here's a fact about our physicality: it's impossible for humans to multitask. When it comes to paying attention, our brains are wired to only focus on one thing at a time. They trick us into thinking we're multi-tasking by switching our focus between tasks very rapidly.

For pianists, this means we can't focus and actively improvise with both hands simultaneously. One hand always has to be on autopilot, even for only a few seconds; therefore, your hands must have an intrinsic vocabulary to pull from while they're on autopilot. They have to rely on muscle memory, otherwise they'll only play what they know: nothing.

On a related note, I see improvisation as a creative act of regurgitating vocabulary, just as we improvise spoken dialogue everyday. If this is true and we want to broaden our capacity at the piano, then much of a pianist's practice should be geared towards acquiring vocabulary. I would argue that the best improvisers are the ones who have spent the most time building, shaping, and maintaining an extensive vocabulary over many years.

Let me clarify "vocabulary." In most contexts, it insinuates harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic vocabulary, but I intend it to represent much more including phrasing, form, energy, touch, balance, shape, range, control, performance practices, and every music-making variable that could apply to improvisation and performing.

With these two things in mind (multitasking and vocabulary), we've laid the groundwork for approaching a solo piano performance. Understanding our physical limitations when it comes to multitasking is important so that we can create realistic expectations for our music and ourselves. Once we understand that an extensive vocabulary is essential to improvising pianists, we can start formulating a basic strategy for our practice sessions. Here's one way to apply it:

Suppose you want to learn how to improvise with your right-hand while playing a quarter-note bass line over the blues. Before reading this, you may have thought that while improvising with the right-hand, you'd have to learn how to improvise a bass line with your left-hand too. That's not possible. First things first. Write out a 12-bar, quarter-note bass line. Here's an easy one:



Too easy? Write out a more challenging bass line that fits your skill and taste, but remember that a super hip bass line isn't what's important. You need to sort out some things first, like basic changes and hand independence. In any case, whatever you do, don't waver from what you've written. Otherwise, you're defeating the point of the exercise and wasting time.

Practice it a million times; it's all about repetition. Train your left-hand not to think. Learn it forwards, backwards, upwards and downwards. Learn it from the start, the end and the middle. Learn it in every way. Memorize the notes. Memorize how they look, how they sound, how they feel, and how they taste. Own it. Add your right-hand. Experiment with different melodies, rhythms, tempi, and improvisations. Try to throw off your left-hand. When you're comfortable, write another left-hand variation and repeat. Like this one:



Again, adjust to your own skill level and taste. This process achieves two things: First it develops your muscle memory and vocabulary. Second, it rids your left-hand of its bad habits; you're training it to play something that has been thought out and sounds good. But this only works if you're disciplined enough to stick to your patterns and immediately fix any mistakes and inconsistencies. This is not a creative exercise. You're infusing vocabulary into your muscles. Creativity would be an act of blending vocabulary. That doesn't help your left-hand autopilot. The point is to think creatively with your right-hand!

For future study, try putting your right-hand on autopilot!

Analyzing, acquiring, crafting, and maintaining vocabulary is an integral part of my practice routine, a major theme in my students' private lessons, and a frequent topic of discussion in my writing. It's also very challenging, not because it takes more brains to execute but because it requires a change of muscle and practice habits. After a few simple alterations, approaching solo piano will hopefully become much less daunting!



Roberto Occhipinti is a versatile bassist/producer based in Toronto. A Juno Award-winning musician, he has recorded and performed with artists such as Hilario Duran, Michael Occhipinti, Jane Bunnett, and Paquito D'Rivera, as well as leading his own groups. In addition to an extensive career as an orchestral, chamber music, and session player, he also plays old-school R&B with Soul Stew, has toured with Gorillaz, and is a Markbass endorser. www.robertocchipinti.com.

BASS

by Roberto Occhipinti

Latin 101: Taking The OATH

A producer once called me to play bass on a recording project with some "very fine country singers." I said, "Sure, which country?"

A cheap joke, but with a certain amount of truth to the question. When we talk about country music, it's pretty obvious which country we're talking about. Same thing goes for other types of music – reggae, Celtic, etc., but for some reason, the music of the Americas, North and South, gets lumped under the generic term "Latin Music." The music called Latin jazz is primarily from Brazil and Cuba.

Brazilian music like samba and bossa nova has long been a part of the jazz tradition, and Cuban music, like mambo, has been in jazz and pop since their origins in New Orleans. This is not to slight any of the music from other places in the hemisphere – on the contrary. There is a depth of music from other countries in the Caribbean and South America of which we often only skim the surface – music like bomba and plena from Puerto Rico, meringue from Dominican Republic, and cumbia from Colombia, for starters.

Due to space, I'll confine this discussion to just two of the most popular in jazz. Even within these cultures, there is more music from the various regions of Brazil and Cuba than can be encompassed by just Antonio Carlos Jobim, the Buena Vista Social Club, or the scope of this article. I'm often asked to show people how to play "Latin Music."

After I give them the rant (see above), I try to break things down to get to the specific concept of each style.

"music." This is what it sounds like to someone who plays this music for real. You know, just like Borat rapping.

Ex. 4 is a generic Brazilian bass pattern where the bass is mimicking a large drum called a Surdo with the emphasis on the fifth of the chord below the tonic. Very simple, but grooves like a *****!

Ex. 5 is a variation used at the end of phrases to set up a chorus, etc. This, as in all of these examples, is based on playing with the right rhythmic patterns in the drums and the other instruments.

Ex. 6 The lounge band is now doing a cover of "La Bamba."

Ex. 7 Now to Cuba with a basic pattern used in son, mambo, or any other generic term. It's simple, but works well in context with the clave pattern.

Ex. 8 Same thing, but with a push in the middle that lines up with the clave.

Ex. 9 is a classic salsa bass line, the one that everyone says, "Where's one?" (Hint: it's in the percussion, piano, and dancer's feet!) That's why you have to know all the other parts for it to make sense. (That's part of the oath, too.)

Ex. 10 is another classic, used in timba and other types of music from the Americas like bomba. (Notice I did not say Latin music.)

This is just a taste of a world of music that, like all

The musical notation consists of ten examples (Ex. 1 to Ex. 10) arranged in two columns. Each example is written on a bass clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb).
 - **Ex. 1:** C, Am7, Dm7, G7. A simple two-beat pattern.
 - **Ex. 2:** C, Am7, Dm7, G7. A basic rock beat.
 - **Ex. 3:** C, Dm7, G7. Labeled as a "side stick pattern".
 - **Ex. 4:** C, Dm7, G7. A generic Brazilian pattern.
 - **Ex. 5:** C, Dm7, G7. A variation used at the end of phrases.
 - **Ex. 6:** C, G, F. Labeled as a "clave pattern".
 - **Ex. 7:** C, F, G, F. A basic Cuban pattern.
 - **Ex. 8:** C, F, G, F. A Cuban pattern with a push in the middle.
 - **Ex. 9:** C, F, G, F. A classic salsa bass line.
 - **Ex. 10:** C, F, G, F. Another classic pattern.

Ex. 1 is a basic two-beat used in anything from a country two-step or fox trot to bluegrass or a medium jazz standard. It's a way to relate to the primary level of any social music: simple, functional, and if played with a good time feel, it will always be hip. (I suggest we take a "Hip"-ocratic Oath, meaning first do no harm ... to the groove!)

Ex. 2 is a basic rock beat played by everyone from James Jamerson to Sting. If a Martian asked you if this was a rock beat, you would have to say yes, but it is far from the only one and like all these patterns, can become pretty boring without some variation. Same with the rest of these beats...

Ex. 3 is what I call the "lame resort band version of Latin

music, deserves respect for its musical and cultural tradition. There are all sorts of books like *The True Cuban Bass Book* by Carlos Del Puerto and *World Music Brazil* by Jovino Santos Neto. I also suggest DVDs by drummers like Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, Duduka De Fonseca, and many more.

As bass players, we are the bridge between rhythm and harmony, so I suggest you learn to play the drum parts in addition to learning all the chords and melodies of any music you want to master. Mastering Spanish and Portuguese and being able to dance comes in handy, too. In the mean time, take the oath today!

Mike Herriott is a Toronto-based trumpet player, currently performing with *Jersey Boys*. He has toured the globe with shows and various ensembles, recorded with his own projects and well-known artists, and appeared as a soloist with orchestras and bands across Canada.



by Mike Herriott

PHOTO: NATASHA KOMODA, KIMONO PHOTOGRAPHY

Developing Your Range:

PART 1

The Myth

No matter how high trumpet players can play, we always want to be able to play higher. When we hear a lead trumpet soaring above the big band, we think, "Wow, wouldn't it be great to be able to do that." Then we think that whoever it is doing the screeching around up there must be some kind of freak of nature, and that the upper register is a place reserved for a select few. Extended range is not something that is limited to a select few, but is attainable by anyone who possesses the desire to achieve it.

The good news is that there is a way to develop your range. The bad news is that it takes time and work. While there are those that seem to come out of the womb with a double C in their bag of tricks, most of us mere mortals have to put some time into working our way up there. I like the Zen concept of focusing on the journey and not the destination – it's a lot less frustrating if you can think that way. It will take time to reach the double C but, if you stop thinking about it, you will be there and beyond before you know it.

The first and foremost priority when even considering trying to extend one's range is getting a good sound in the most comfortable range of the instrument. From here, we work up gradually over the course of several months.

The Concept

The most important step in learning anything new is getting the concept.

The first thing anyone should do, toward that end, is listen to lots of recordings – that pretty much goes for anything you want to learn in music. Take recordings of that which you wish to accomplish and spend lots of time with them; however, we don't want to just come screaming out of the gates and try to hit the high notes right off the bat. Here are a couple of very effective exercises that I have found help to reach that goal.

Exercise #1

The first exercise is very simple. Starting in the middle of your own comfortable range, play eighth notes, with the metronome beating quarter 60 per minute, alternating between the starting note and one whole tone above. Repeat this a few times and then raise your starting note one semi-tone and play the same figure again. While doing this, you must focus on making a big beautiful sound, and remember to support the air and keep it constant. Also, remember to take little breaks in this course of this exercise. I usually rest between the figures for as long as it took me to play the figure.

In doing this exercise, we must pay close attention to what is happening to the sound. A natural tendency for all of us when we play higher is to get tense. This is why this exercise is so effective – while concentrating on keeping the sound big and beautiful, we are also staying relaxed. As you get higher, you let the air do the work for you. Once you get into the upper register, you need to

tell yourself, "Well, self, if I could play that figure on those two notes, there's no reason why I can't do the same a mere semi-tone higher." As you proceed, maintain your focus on having the notes float on the air instead of trying to squeeze them out of your lips – always maintain a big sound with constant air!

Soon, you find yourself getting up to that region known as the high register. For many, this has remained unexplored territory for much of our trumpet-playing life, except for once in a while when we managed to surprise ourselves. This is where it is vital to keep your eye on the ball, as it were. Always focus on the quality of sound and never let it become forced. Also, we must be patient and trust that we are working up to it and not trying to attain it instantly. When you feel that the interval of a whole tone is starting to become a strain, leave the exercise for the next practice session. The next time you come back to it, you will find that it gets a little easier. Over time, you will find that your range has extended by a whole tone, a minor third, or more.

What ends up happening during the course of using this exercise is that your confidence will build along with your range. Your concept of what your range is will change as well. This is the key to extending your range: learning to not think of the notes as high notes. Also, in learning to use your air speed to play high instead of your lips, you will notice that your endurance is greater.



by Yale Fox

Yale Fox is a professional DJ and producer. He is also one of the world's only Social Nightclub Behaviourists. Visit www.fragglrockdjs.com.

Advanced Mixing Techniques For DJs

PART 1

In this column, I'm going to cover advanced mixing techniques, and share some trade secrets with you. I'll be sharing my perspective on the most important fundamentals of a mix – the volume and the EQ – from my perspective as a sound engineer and acoustic researcher.

Having the perfect volume in your mix is essential for smooth transitions between songs. Here is one of the critical issues. It is really important for you to know that having equal volume from each channel playing at the same time will result in a volume increase of +3dB. To prevent this from happening, most crossfaders have been well-designed. You'll see that directly in the middle of a crossfader, there is a -3 dB dip in the volume. If you move the fader across, the volume will appear to adjust itself, sounding more consistent. If you're mixing with upfaders, try and keep this in mind as you bring in the next track. If you lower the volume level on one of the tracks to compensate for the spike, it will sound cleaner.

Having uneven volume during a mix can be very disorienting – more so if it happens repeatedly throughout your set. Fortunately, there are ways to use phenomenon to your advantage.

Our brains perceive sounds that are louder to be physically further away to us than sounds that actually are. Part of music, and part of the art of DJing and shaping a party is through building and releasing tension on the dance floor. If you want the incoming track to have a more noticeable impact, you can intentionally bring one track in, but just make it slightly louder. This will deliver more punch. As the song plays out, you will have to slowly bring it back down to a slightly more suitable level. Also note that the best time to bring down the volume is usually during the verse

rather than during the chorus.

If you don't bring the volume down gradually, you will have to bring your next mix in louder. The result is that the volume of your set gradually creeps up to the point where it is unpleasant for the crowd on your dance floor. You may even begin to "clip" if the source volume is too loud. Clipping is a term that you will often hear in a nightclub.

Everybody hates clipping.

In this brief article, I will only be discussing digital clipping. This occurs with digital sources such as CDs, MP3s, or any other forms of audio on hard drives. A sound wave clips when the amplitude of the signal becomes larger than what can be produced by the sound system. Please see the diagram below.



The input volume has been moved up from a smooth, round curve to a square curve. Clipping decreases the high-end of your mix, and increases the low-end of your mix. The unpleasant result is called distortion, and it can actually damage certain unprotected audio systems. If your mixer is lighting up red, you have to turn it down – immediately.

When you cue your tracks in headphones, you should have them at exactly the same volume when flat. "Flat" means that all the EQ knobs are at 12 o'clock, and most closely resemble the EQ of the track as it was originally produced.

Measuring Volume

There are two ways of measuring volume. One is loudness and the other is

perceived loudness. Loudness is an interesting term; it is what we identify as *psychoacoustic*: a sensation produced inside our brains.

A sound wave is generated by an audio source causing molecules of air to vibrate. These vibrating particles are picked up by our ears and converted into sound in our psyche. Loudness is easily measured looking at the meters on your mixer.

Another useful term is a different kind of loudness, called *perceived loudness*. Certain frequencies are perceived louder to the human ear than other frequencies. These frequencies are roughly in the mid-range EQ. This phenomenon is based on evolution, as most human voices and most vocals are also conveniently located in this range. Over time, we have developed sensitivity to this frequency range, presumably because it made it easier to hear other individuals from within our own species.

You really have to listen to your monitors, because just looking at the meters can be deceiving. If your perceived loudness is too loud, it can sound like *screaming*. Mixing volume is obviously critical, but proper EQing is essential for smoother transitions. It is important to be aware of the input source volumes, and also the different frequency bands they each contain.

Your lows contain the low-frequency sounds, ie: the bass drums and the bass lines. The track's *groove* is found in the low range. It's important to beware: key clashes between songs become most apparent in the low-range frequency spectrum. This is an important fact and a common error. Try to keep it in mind, regardless of the genre you are spinning. It can be more evident in electronic music, because it typically features longer periods of mixing than hip-hop.



PHOTO: DENEK SHARP

by Sass Jordan

Experience



Everything

I have always been from the school of "experience is everything" as far as vocal techniques are concerned. There is nothing like the need to perform at peak condition for multiple nights to help force the old adage "necessity is the mother of invention" to kick in.

Having said that, I found myself in the position of having to sing AND speak a particularly demanding show off Broadway in NYC one year, leading to abject terror at possibly not being able to make it through the weekly performances without severely compromising my voice. It was the first time in my life I decided to visit a voice coach – and luckily for me, I picked a brilliant one in Don Lawrence in NYC. He saved my voice AND my job.

Don's approach to technique is all about the placement of the voice in the head, and then breathing properly to support it from the diaphragm. The voice needs to be placed right where the uvula is, and that exact placement opens up all the dimensions of the head, throat, and chest, allowing the voice to reverberate with

the dimensions of your skull, and the spaces in your personal "cavern," so to speak ...

"Awake"

A good example of the power of this technique is on a song on my latest release, *From Dusk 'til Dawn*. The song is called "Awake." I was going for an Eagles-type vibe, something that reminded me of my early singing days, when I was just starting to learn how to project the sound a bit further than the weak little baby bird voice I was using. The longer sustained notes in the chorus require the placement of the sound to be exact and the support from the diaphragm is KEY! Otherwise, you find yourself wavering and lapsing into vibrato just to hang in 'til the end of the phrase. It's so much harder to sing a note straight than it is to use vibrato, which gives you the leeway to keep finding your pitch.

Singing live is, of course, dramatically different from singing in a studio-type environment. You cannot control the variables of the sound on the stage – unless you use in-ear monitors, which I don't

like because they make me feel claustrophobic and cut off from the audience. I am an old-school singer in that sense.

You also have to factor in movement and just being a little more energetic physically, simply by virtue of the live stage. When I am in a studio, I can focus more on all the little details, which I tend to let go of more when I am in a live situation. In the live arena, the gut emotion is more important to me than perfect pitch or pureness of voice.

"Stronger"

Another song off *From Dusk 'til Dawn*, "Stronger," presented a challenge to me vocally. The chorus melody is tough to nail precisely, probably because it is a lot of movement in a short amount of time. In my experiments with trying to get it to work, I found all the difference was made by engaging the diaphragm to the absolute, and never letting go!

In the end, technique is all about being able to put the emotion that you want to convey into a tangible form, and not losing the thread or the

needle as you cut the cloth into the shape you want to explore – having the knowledge and the skill to do what you love, without running out of steam or harming your physical body in any way. Being a singer is like being an athlete – you have to stay in practice and exercise the muscles continuously. You have to warm up before you play, and you have to love it with all your heart, more than the applause and the kudos that you get if you're really touching people.

A great show can be like running a marathon of sorts, and knowing your material backwards makes it a hundred times easier – because then you can lead the band, instead of asking them to lead you.

Singing, when done properly, is one of the most exhilarating and brilliant experiences I've ever had. It can take you into a sort of Zen-like state, probably not unlike what runners talk about, where you forget everything but the flow of emotion and the pulse of your heart through the music. Find someone to help you learn the craft – and then fly!

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THE WEAKERTHANS'

WINTER IN WINNIPEG

BY ANDREW KING. PHOTOS BY TONY DAWE.



The Weakerthans are certainly no strangers to the long, drawn-out winters that settle over the prairies year after year, and with the release of 2007's *Reunion Tour*, offered their fans a taste of the experience. The album was written and recorded across three of those Winnipeg winters, revolving around a more focused theme of winter light, its beauty, and sparsity. Band frontman and lyric composer John K. Samson has said that "winter light has this very unusual and unique quality in Winnipeg, and is also something really treasured there. It's so cold and the days are so brief, so light became a real focus (for the record) as it does in people's lives."

Tracks like "Sun In An Empty Room," "Civil Twilight," and the gorgeous "Night Windows" each offer different takes on that focus, all hinged on Samson's descriptive and delicate poetry and the band's trademark rock anthems, sprinkled with elements of punk, folk, and indie.

While Samson's lyrics are often strongly rooted in his experiences and perspectives of the Manitoba capital, that's not to say that the band's catalogue appeals only to its residents – quite far from it. The Weakerthans have amassed a very respectable North American and global following, bringing the wonders

and woes of life in Winnipeg to attentive audiences on various continents. This past winter, though, wasn't spent on the road, instead finding the four band members keeping themselves busy in and around Winnipeg once again with a number of projects that will come into full fruition throughout 2010.

PSALM FOR THE FALCON LAKE LODGE

"We've been pretty busy," says guitarist Stephen Carroll, as though some might find it surprising. He and Samson, along with the other half of The Weakerthans – drummer Jason Tait and bassist Greg Smith – were all holed up for a week in a remote cottage in Falcon Lake, MB, recording an album behind Ottawa-based artist Jim Bryson. "We spent a week out there as his backing band, helping him arrange songs, being chased by deer, and enjoying ourselves."

Carroll notes some of the differences between this particular session and those of his band, as in this case, Bryson is writing the material himself with The Weakerthans acting more as session players. "We came in and learned to play his style a little bit. It was definitely challenging for me as a musician. The attack I usually play with in The Weakerthans had to be scaled back."



RIGHT: The cabin by Falcon Lake, MB where Jim Bryson & The Weakerthans recorded Bryson's upcoming, yet-to-be-titled release.

The project has long been discussed between the band and Bryson, and was finally moved to the next level when Bryson came through Winnipeg with The Tragically Hip in the later half of 2009. "We've always loved Jim's songs and enjoyed playing with him," explains Samson about the not-so-complex reasoning behind the project. "It was a great time."

Aside from this collaborative endeavor, the band has been hard at work on its soon-to-be-released live album/DVD pairing. Set to drop March 23, 2010, *Live At The Burton Cummings Theatre* will feature an 18-song set recorded at the hometown venue and cut between two consecutive shows. The band's involvement with the project was actually quite extensive, explains Carroll. "We were basically mixing, mastering, and getting our arms around this behemoth

of a project. We wanted to do a live album and concert DVD at the same time, where people would get both the film and the soundtrack." The album will also see release on double vinyl - something for which the band's fans are likely already aching.

Carroll & Co. immersed themselves in the project, taking an active approach in learning about the creation of a release like this one, including 5.1 audio mixes. "It was almost twice the work of a normal record, which I didn't expect to be the case. I sometimes wish we'd just written something new," he jokes. While there were a few issues with the audio - too much cymbals in vocal mics, or guitar mics picking up too much snare - the band seems quite pleased with the finished product. "You just don't foresee stuff like that outside of the studio environment, where you can't hear everything in isolation," Carroll explains. "That said, it's going to sound really great." And fans of the band would expect nothing less.



Check out a preview of The Weakerthans' *Live At The Burton Cummings Theatre* by logging onto www.canadianmusician.com/multimedia.

"I don't listen to our records after they're out. They kind of become dead to me, with the songs living on through our live performances." - John K. Samson.



PHOTO: JASON TAIT

THE WEAKERTHANS

GREATEST HITS COLLECTION?

"We thought this release would be an interesting document of the last 12 years of our lives," explains Samson as to why the band chose this point in its career to put out this type of project. "When you put all of these songs together, they do different things. That's one of the great joys of playing live – the song you wrote when you were 18 and the one you wrote when you were 35 can go together and alter each other's meanings."

In fact, Samson goes so far as to say that he doesn't listen to a Weakerthans album once it's been put out. "I listen for a couple of weeks, and then they kind of become dead to me, with the songs living on through our live performance." Indeed, the band puts quite the emphasis on its live performances, having toured the globe on several occasions throughout its dozen-year history, all the while releasing four studio albums.

Carroll says that Weakerthans fans, the passionate bunch they are, might complain about the lack of material from the band's 1997 debut, *Fallow*. Otherwise, he assures them, "there's a good balance after that," including several cuts from *Reunion Tour*, 2003's *Reconstruction Site*, and 2000's *Left and Leaving*.

As far as the decision to use material recorded at the Burton Cummings Theatre, Samson says the motive was fairly straightforward. "It was obvious to us that, if we did a live record, it would have to be recorded in Winnipeg. It was kind of sweet to have the chance to do it at the Burton Cummings

Theatre," he says, especially considering the set features "One Great City!" the band's tongue-in-cheek tribute to its beloved hometown, in which Samson sings, "the Guess Who suck/the Jets were lousy anyway," before softly crooning, "I hate Winnipeg."

Of course, the hometown crowd catches the implied love that comes from the somewhat sarcastic lines of the speaker of his poem, and shouts the words along with him louder than any other sung from the stage that day. Call it "lovingly ironic."

ONE GREAT CITY!

Life in Winnipeg, and the way that his hometown frames his perspective on other experiences taking place outside of it, is consistently featured in Samson's lyrical content throughout the band's entire catalogue. "A lot of writers have a theme they'll consistently return to," he explains. "The landscape in this part of the world is mine, along with these people who live here."

It's incalculable for Samson to think about the type of writer he'd be had his roots been planted anywhere else, and he's quite fond of regional writers in general – even those from the centre of the culture, specifically naming Don DeLillo's portrayal of New York or Michael Ondaatje's Toronto as influences. "These are people who have kind of lifted up their cities and shown them to people, and made people see them in a different way," he explains. "That's kind of the goal of the writing I enjoy and consume. It makes you re-evaluate your own world."

Samson describes his regionalism as a tool through which he can really get into relaying a story or specific emotion, though humbly admits that at times, it's more successful than others. Ultimately, though, he says: "I think it's the right and duty of anyone that stays in a place like this to point out its flaws, and try and fix them."

It's a theme that's omnipresent throughout the band's recordings, though never becomes tiring thanks to Samson's creativity and intentional ambiguity. Sure, tracks like "Wellington's Wednesdays" (named after the city's infamous, and now-defunct punk club) or "One Great City!" are overt in their portrayal of the city, but tracks like "Civil Twilight," with lyrics like: "My confusion corner commuters are cursing the cold away/while December tries to disassemble the length of their working day," are far more discreet. While there's no mention of a specific location within the song, it's logical for listeners to connect the dots as to where it's set. Could it be anywhere but Winnipeg?

Perhaps nowhere is this dedication to the city more evident than in Samson's most current project – a series of solo 7" singles each named after various roads in and around the city, the first being *City Route 85*, released at the end of 2009. "Each is a 7", giving me a limited amount of time, so I have to say something in only eight minutes," offers Samson. "I'm really interested in those limitations – they're a challenge for me."

(RE)CONSTRUCTION SITE

Those limitations that come with composing for his solo career are what differentiate that project from his work with The Weakerthans. He explains: "When I'm writing for The Weakerthans, I'm thinking about bringing songs to other people and letting them be fleshed out in that way."

With *Reunion Tour*, the band's songwriting process was quite different from that employed on previous albums. "With past albums," says Carroll, "we came together and jammed out the songs. We'd test out ideas or songs that were either mostly or partly put together, and we'd jam it out to see how it would work in a live setting before putting anything to record."

Reunion Tour, however, was mostly written in-studio. "We went into that session with maybe six or seven songs that were done, and by the time we left, we had 11 or 12." Ian Blurton, who produced the album and the two that preceded it (*Reconstruction Site* and *Left and Leaving*), was constantly trying to pull new material from the band during the sessions. It was an arduous process, to say the least, but one that resulted in some of the band's strongest material to date.

Carroll elaborates on the construction of some of the compositions: "With 'Song For A Medical Oddity,' for example, John had most of the lyrics written, and this really strange guitar line. It was passed around among the guys. Jason added a beat, Greg and I used chords that worked, and we built a song around it." "Civil Twilight," on the other hand, was based on a riff that Tait had sent to Samson, who then composed the chorus around it and brought it to the band to be fully fleshed out. Recalls Carroll: "The whole thing sort of came



TOP: Stephen Carroll & Jason Tait
ABOVE: John K. Samson



LEFT: Carroll, Samson & Greg Smith.
BELOW: Smith & Rusty Matyas of The Waking Eyes.



together in the studio."

While the next Weakerthans full-length isn't expected anytime soon, Carroll doesn't predict that the band will follow the songwriting suit set with *Reunion Tour*: "We're just passing ideas now. Once we've pushed out this live record and had a moment to catch our breaths, we'll start looking into it a bit more."

SOMEONE'S FAVOURITE CHORDS

Regardless of the banner under which he's writing, be it with his band or as a solo artist, Samson has a knack for writing a great song, in the purest definition. The Weakerthans' "Night Windows," a cut from *Reunion Tour*, was in fact the 2008 recipient of SOCAN's prestigious ECHO Songwriting Prize - one of many awards to shower the band since the release of its latest recording.

"There was a bit of internal debate as to the comfort level of receiving a prize like that over the other songs that were nominated," reveals Carroll. "It's certainly nice to be acknowledged among such skilled writers, but to be designated 'superior' to others makes it seem really arbitrary and subjective." The band actually shared some of the prize money from that particular award with one of their fellow nominees - and longtime friend of the band.

Samson was somewhat surprised that "Night Windows" was the track selected for the nomination in the first place - mainly because it's the one he might've chosen himself. "Usually, the ones people really like are the ones that make me go, 'Really?'" he says with a laugh. "But that's the one that I'm most proud of from that album. I found it the most difficult to write, and it really laid the foundation for the rest of the record."

With regards to his compositions, he finds it interesting to learn of other people's perspectives, "because it's really hard for me to look at these songs from a subjective standpoint." While he was quite pleased with the nomination, when it comes down to it, he feels that, "they're just prizes, and there shouldn't really be competition in the arts."

That's not to say Samson and The Weakerthans aren't grateful to be recognized for their achievements. "Those awards are just stepping stones to give us a bit more exposure," explains Carroll. "We take it all with a grain of salt and just go to the awards shows to have fun."

The band's humility doesn't stem from any lack of prestige with regards to these awards. After all, on top of the ECHO Songwriting Prize, we're talking about the XM Verge Music Award for Artist of the Year in 2008 (which came with a \$25,000 purse), some Western Canadian Music Awards, three previous Juno nominations, and a shortlist nod for 2008's Polaris Music Prize.

Specifically speaking to the emergence of awards like the ECHO or Polaris Prizes, which one could easily argue are based more on artistic merit and critical reception than album sales or mainstream affiliations, Samson is rather eloquent in his observations: "I guess that's kind of the way the industry has slid lately, kind of conveniently. I mean, these (nominees) are all bands that are working very hard. That's one of the new shifts in the way that music is disseminated and shared."

This new paradigm brings with it several previously unavailable advantages for artists existing directly under the mainstream cusp. "There's an opening for bands our size to go out there and invent their own industry in a way, and it's cool that other folks within the industry at large are recognizing that."

Carroll tends to agree, though wonders whether or not his band can truly be considered as one of the "cool new bands" with which such awards are associated. "I don't know that we're part of that scene anymore - we may be too big for the 'cool' factor," he says with a laugh. "But you'll always be too big for somebody else's 'cool.' It's a healthy process."

*"You'll always be too big for somebody else's 'cool.' It's a healthy process."
- Stephen Carroll.*

SOUNDS FAMILIAR, BUT DIFFERENT

While they have perhaps elevated themselves above the "indie" classification, The Weakerthans are still true to themselves and their craft as songwriters, leaving very few dedicated fans fleeing from their side over the years. What's more, they're now able to take their considerable success and use it to strengthen the music scene in the city that spawned them - and that they continue to support.

One of the interesting things that Samson favourably notes about his hometown scene is that, while other urban centres across the country carry somewhat of a trademark sound, Winnipeg seems to be void of one. "At large, in Winnipeg, you'll get a great hardcore band or a great French-Canadian band, or an awesome singer-songwriter that comes out of nowhere, and they'll all co-exist in the same scene, to a certain degree."

Carroll takes a similar interest in supporting likeminded artists, saying: "We try to help bands that we like and give them exposure. I think our fans are exceptionally attentive, and are true music fans that enjoy a wide spectrum of styles." It would seem that, considering the amount of different musical styles that have come together to shape the band's output thus far, Weakerthans fans carry eclectic tastes similar to those of the members themselves.

As for what the future holds, Samson says that the band will be brainstorming for their next release. "It's about two years off, and I know that's a long time for most bands, but for us, it's par for the course." While their live dates will be fewer during those months, they'll likely keep busy with various musical endeavors, be they collaborative or independent. Additionally, wherever those projects may take them, and regardless of how busy they'll get, The Weakerthans will surely always find solace returning to Winnipeg. ■



Andrew King is the Editor of Canadian Musician.

BY LYNSEY KITCHING

The first time I heard Xavier Rudd, I was on a tumultuous ferry ride from Paris to London, sitting with my head against the chair, face green, feet planted firmly to the floor, trying not to vomit from seasickness. The only thing saving me from spewing all over the deck was his calming voice.

I was travelling with an Australian who gave me his iPod for the journey and while scrolling through the unfamiliar names and titles, I, in a dazed state, selected the last name on the list, exposing myself to a wonderful gift from down under.

Though Rudd is a native of Australia, many Canadians feel a great connection to him, his message, and his music. A Canadian citizen, Rudd reciprocates the sentiments saying, "I have a strong connection to Canada and there are a lot of options to record audio in Vancouver. It's a different energy, but in a good way. The album I made in Canada reflects on a different energy than at home." He goes on to say, "When I'm writing music, it's like something comes through me. And it just happens. It's very fast and very strong. I don't write things down. I just let it sit within me and I think the ones that are meant to stay with me will."

One inner companion who is always with him is the spirit of a woman, whom Rudd says guides him along his quest. "I have native blood on my father's side and I understand that I've always had a woman with me since I was a little boy, an old aboriginal woman spirit. Whether it's my grandmother or great-grandmother, or whether it's a woman who's just with me on my journey, I don't know, but she's strong and a big part of my music."

Rudd explains how he connects with her: "I don't see her. I feel her in different ways. I know she's there. My elders have told me that I'm a messenger for their people. What I've been told makes sense, based on how I feel my music comes through me. I feel like it's not me, I'm just a vehicle for it. I don't think about it or try and change it, I just let it come."

BELOW: XAVIER RUDD

XAVIER

RUDD

PHOTO: JAMES LOOKER

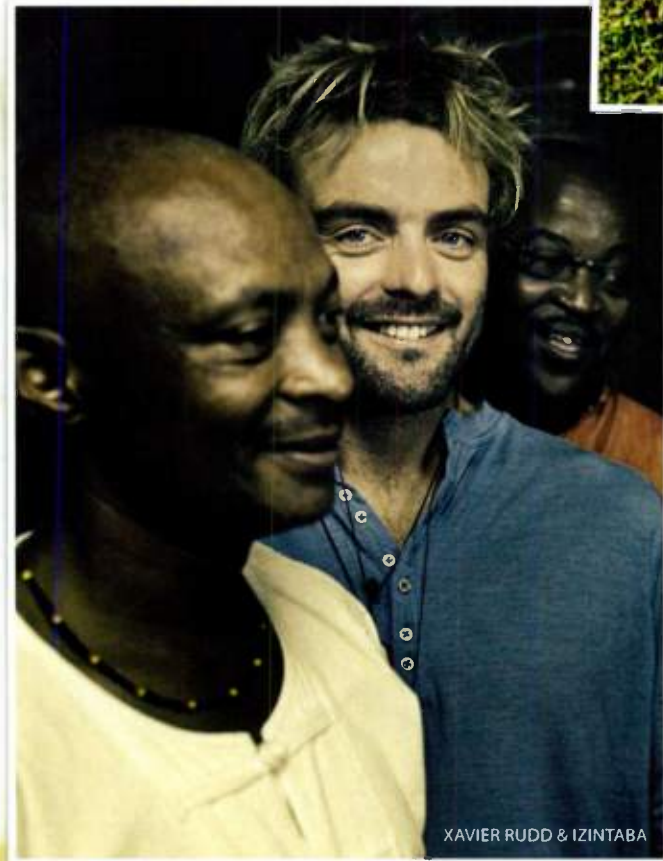
Rudd, being in tune with his heritage and teachers, has built a strong bond with those he cares about. "As I've gone through my musical journey, I've been connected with a lot of different clans and people around Australia, extending into Canada, and North America. I've been very lucky that way and I'd just like to pay respect."

The song "Guku" from his album *Dark Shades of Blue*, encapsulates both his connection to the aboriginal people, their beliefs, and their spirits. He remembers, "The song 'Guku' is a song written for an aboriginal brother of mine who passed away. When I was playing in America the day after his death, his spirit came through me in the middle of my song 'Messages,' and 'Guku' just fell out of me. I played it that night, and that was the song. It just happened live onstage and that was that. Now I always play it in the middle of 'Messages.'"

IT STARTED WITH A HUM

When there's music inside, it only has one place to go, and that's out. Rudd felt this need early in life, as it is his purpose. He says, "I think I'll write music until the day I die. It's something I've done from before I could even realize what I was doing. I've always expressed myself through music and song. It's just something that's with me, and it happens constantly. I don't really have a point where I don't have music coming through me. As I go on my journey, physically, emotionally, spiritually, my music takes on different shapes and forms, but essentially it comes from the same place. It's almost like a blanket of protection for me. I think I've always used it that way since I was a little boy."

PHOTO: KANE HIBBERD

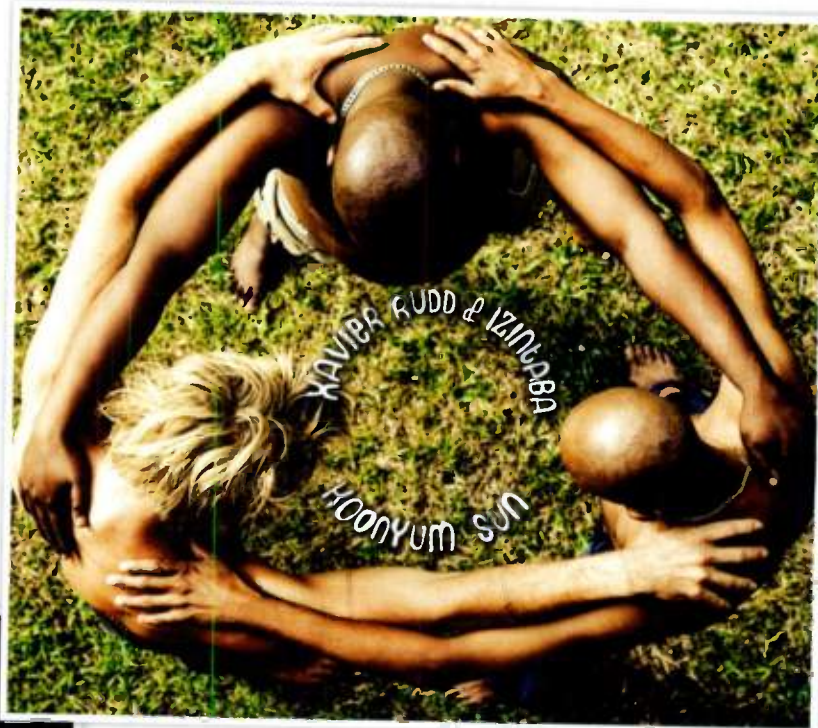


XAVIER RUDD & IZINTABA

It was at a young age when Rudd began experimenting with instruments, the first one being the one found within. "My first instrument was probably my voice. I'd always sing and create little melodies and things. As I grew, I just played whatever was there. My brother played guitar, so I would play that."

His musical talents multiplied rapidly, one of those accomplishments being the mastery of the didgeridoo, the most humbling of instruments. Rudd recalls, "I remember playing with the end tip of the vacuum cleaner when I was like four years old. My mom would say, 'Don't do that, you'll get sick.'"

To play the didgeridoo, one must have great patience and practice very hard. Rudd explains, "I've been playing fast for about 15 years. There is great technique to playing this instrument. You have to expand your diaphragm and the only way to do that is with time. The more air you can push, the faster



and more percussive you can play. Hold onto a rock underneath water and run back and forth," he laughs.

IN DARKNESS THERE IS LIGHT

Rudd sings songs of and for the people revealing humanness in its purest form. For this spiritual messenger, the darkness of the world and the secrets found within our history have caused great suffering and loss. He says, "If only we could take back time and have peaceful trade and respect and communication between all the aboriginal cultures of our planet and have equal influence on all of the decisions that are made on our planet. Time has taken that away, and it can't be replaced. We can go forward but there has been a lot of devastation, and I'm disappointed that there is not much effort to move forward. I would like to change that."

The first step towards change is realizing where the problems lie. Rudd's album *Dark Shades of Blue* symbolizes a time of confusion and reflection in order to grow. He says, "I think to the confusion I had around the time of *Dark Shades Of Blue*, wondering what some of the stuff that was coming through me was. I now understand, and this new album is about the future and the road ahead."

Looking forward, Rudd has recently released his sixth studio album, entitled *Koonyum Sun* and backed by South African band Izintaba, comprised of Tio Moloantoa on bass and Andile Nqubezelo on drums, formerly of the late Lucky Dube's band. Rudd says, "It's been a very, very heavy record for me. Spiritually it's been an amazing journey. The African influence is a great gift and I really liked working with those guys. It's a very powerful time for me, a time of change in every way. My spirit is always ahead of me and my music always comes first - then my life follows." ■



Lynsey Kitching is the Assistant Editor of Canadian Musician.

"I'm just going to write songs, and hope that people like them."

So says Crash Karma bassist Amir Epstein about how his new band plans to survive and thrive in this new decade of the music business. While his plan certainly doesn't stray far from that put forth by most newcomers to the scene, Epstein and Crash Karma's case is a little different, considering they're off to a fairly marginal head start.

You see, while the band formed less than two years ago and has yet to drop an official release, its members are no strangers to Canada's festival main stages and top 40 countdowns. Joining Epstein in this new project are Canadian rock veterans Mike Turner, former guitarist for Our Lady Peace; former Tea Party drummer Jeff Burrows; and the infamous Edwin on lead vocals. There's no question that these guys can play, and they're certainly comfortable in the spotlight; however, this is a new time in Canadian rock – and the North American music industry as a whole. Is Crash Karma ready to reclaim some of the glory of its members' storied pasts?

The band is the brainchild of Epstein, who's perseverance, wishful thinking, and bit of intentional ambiguity led to the ultimate union of its four members. While he gives a fair bit of credit to his timing, Epstein says the key factor in the creation of the band was his willingness to do whatever it took to make it happen.

"You're not going to get what you want by sitting around and hoping someone will offer it to you," he enthusiastically explains. "Nothing in life works that way. You've gotta go for it." And go for it he did.

In 2008, Epstein sat down with Edwin to discuss the possibility of sharing musical ideas on a then non-existent project. "I was feeling brave," Epstein continues. "I feel I'm a good enough songwriter, and really wanted to work with him." During the discussion, he (somewhat prematurely) discussed the possibility of having Turner and Burrows enter the fold. "I kind of implied that I'd spoken with them, when I really hadn't," he says. Still, Edwin's curiosity piqued.

"When I initially sat down with Amir," remembers the singer, "there was no way I was going to join this band." Instead, he was politely humouring a fan – or so he thought. That was until the heavy namedrop.

Still, after that initial interest, Edwin didn't see the project lasting more than a few jam sessions. "I kept my toe in the water the whole time, keeping my eyes on the other guys," he shares. "I mean, I was in, but wasn't sure it was really going to happen." Aside from the opportunity to work with two musicians for whom he has great respect, the other factor drawing Edwin to the project was Epstein's undeniable energy and passion for its potential.

Finally, Epstein's somewhat far-fetched idea came into fruition in the studio, where, face-to-face for the first time and committed to seeing what would happen, Crash Karma began recording a few songs. "Right then," says Edwin, "when I started listening back to some of the verses we were recording, I realized this could actually be pretty cool."

The band's first single, "Awake," fared fairly well with Canadian radio upon its release, even before Crash Karma had a record under its belt or a label that would put it out if it did. Of course, a large part of this attention came from fans of the members' previous projects wanting to see what would come of this all-star collaboration. Sure, it's a bit of an "unfair advantage" that cynics and critics will be waiting to pounce on, but the band is comfortable with it, and feels that even though many fans will come through the door based on former merits, the music will keep them around.

"If you look up Crash Karma online, it's hard to find us without mention of the members," says Epstein. "So initially, it's hard to tell who's there for the members and who's there for the music." In reality, though, the two needn't be mutually exclusive.

"Even if there are people who immediately criticize – and there will be – there will be others that will be excited and anticipating," offers Edwin.



CRASH KARMA

BY
ANDREW
KING

"To our advantage, we have that story that'll make people turn their heads." That said, a number of Canadian stations added the single to heavy rotation without even knowing who was in the band, proving the music can be supported on its own merits.

As for garnering further attention and support from the stage, the band was hesitant to emerge on the live scene without being in prime performing shape. At first, the band lined up some quiet, out-of-the-way shows in Ontario, hoping to build up its collective chops to the level that should be expected from a rock band of this calibre.

"We made the record without ever actually 'playing' the record," explains Edwin, noting that it mostly came together in the studio. "That was on all of our minds during that first show." Perhaps surprisingly considering their familiarity with the stage, the members of Crash Karma were also a bit nervous about crowd reception. Says Edwin: "We already had a few people on our side before hitting the stage, which was nice, but after playing an hour of songs that nobody had ever heard before, the reception was very encouraging. It gave us the confidence needed to make the next show better, then the next one."

Since that first foray to the stage, though, the band has been scoring progressively larger gigs alongside the likes of Thornley, Collective Soul, and Stone Temple Pilots, to name but a few – and making strong impressions along the way.



As anyone listening to rock radio in the late '90s can attest, there's no doubt about the talent that each of the members of Crash Karma possesses. Still, questions from inside the industry revolve around the band's longevity. In a year's time, will people still be talking about Crash Karma because of its members' previous bands, or will they be talking about what they've been able to do with their current one?

"I don't write a song thinking, 'This should do well in the active rock sector of radio,'" jokes Epstein. "It's more, 'I wrote a great riff with a cool chorus, and am really excited about it.'" He pays little attention to figuring out how his band will fit into the current musical climate – "and maybe we won't," he adds. But that organic passion about the music he and his band mates are making is a strong indicator that these guys are doing things for the right reasons – and that comes through in the music.

There are certainly relics of '90s radio rock in the band's sound, and why shouldn't there be? After all, nobody was doing it better than three of the members of Crash Karma. Still, there's a new edge and contemporary feel to the band's current output – both musically and lyrically – that makes it quite plausible that this band is ready for 2010 and beyond.

With their debut set to drop mid-March on E1 Entertainment, Crash Karma will be embarking on a full Canadian tour to support it. The band will also be shooting a video for, and then promoting the hell out of its second single, "Fight." While only time will tell how well Crash Karma will fit into the contemporary rock scene, they're already proud of what they've been able to accomplish.

"It's been fun to watch it build," states Edwin, "and I'm happy to share it with these guys. If you'd have asked us about this five years ago, you'd have heard some laughs." At least for now, though, these four musicians are looking forward to their future as a unit. "It's really just four guys wanting to make a record," says Edwin in summation, "because really, that's what we all do best."



Andrew King is the Editor of Canadian Musician.

LEFT: Amir Epstein, Edwin, Jeff Burrows & Mike Turner



EVEN OUR HIP HOP IS HUMBLE

BY LUTHER MALLORY

Write a song about New York City, great! Write a song about Ottawa. weird and cheesy. That's not hardly fair. Canadians have always had this thing about Canada: we love it, but we don't support our own talent as much as we should. It's like we think American artists are the real deal while Canadian artists are just trying to be American. Canadian hip hop in particular has fought hard battles to be taken seriously by Canadians. We couldn't even get an urban radio station approved until 2001.

Right now, however, Canadian hip hop might be in a better place than ever. Our emcees leading the assault have something really great in common. Where the most successful American hip hop is generally bravado-filled and bling-heavy, most of our current popular emcees aren't about being the toughest, the richest, or the most shot at. Perhaps the stereotypes are true if even our hip hop reflects us as a thoughtful, positive, and well-behaved people.

D-SISIVE: THE INTROSPECTIVE

"I KNOW I WON'T MAKE THEM ALL THROW THEIR BONES UP. I JUST HOPE THEY DON'T LAUGH WHEN I SHOW UP."

I asked D-Sisive, aka Derek Cristoff, if this deeply self-conscious line from "The Intro" from his Juno-nominated debut record, *The Book*, was still, three albums later, a good first impression of his music for brand new fans. "I think it's a perfect representation," he says. "We're not all the fucking cool guy. The majority of us are not that person. I'm the first guy to be scared to death if someone looks at me awkwardly." He laughs. "So why wouldn't I put that in my music? It's me, and I just hope people relate to it."

Last year, D-Sisive's second album, *Let The Children Die*, was long-listed for the Polaris Prize and SOCAN awarded D-Sisive the 4th annual ECHO Songwriting Prize for "Nobody With A Notepad" late last year. "The Susan Lucci curse has been broken. Thank you so much," he writes on his MySpace page.

The Book, *Let The Children Die*, and *Jonestown*: D-Sisive's three albums that have been, amazingly, all released in just a year-and-a-half to critical acclaim and an ever-exploding fan base. People are most certainly relating to D-Sisive's music.

It's well out of the ordinary for hip hop to be as lyrically personal as this, like if Robert Smith or Morrissey made rap records. It's what sets him apart. "A lot of the time, the people who don't like my music aren't even dissing me. They just think it's too heavy but that's what I want to do with my music. I want to evoke some kind of emotion in everything I do because I'm an emotional person and I've been through a lot. I know my story isn't original. A million people have been through what I've been through but in hip hop, those people don't have music being made for them."

D-Sisive grew up in Toronto's battle rap scene. In 1995, when he was 15, the scene was centered around a club called Planet Mars in Kensington Market. D-Sisive was a freestyle rapper and would hit up the weekly open mic to battle other emcees. Word got around quickly about his skills and soon he was doing features on albums.

In 2000, DJ Serious featured him on a track called "Popped" that hit bigger than he was ready for. "I was used to getting props from the battle scene, but when you put something out that gets to reach a lot more people, you receive a lot more criticism. At that time, I don't think I was ready for negative attention."

Shortly after, in 2001, the death of his alcoholic father sent him on a six-year hiatus due to depression. A friend told him he should write about it. Finally, in 2007, he did and the result was *The Book*.

Today, D-Sisive sits comfortably on his couch, cup balancing on his knee in his apartment north of downtown Toronto. Hovering above his head is a giant painted portrait of his late father. He's a funny, very grounded, and easy-to-get-along-with guy. He's a pop culture nut and it shows up in his records, with references to Jeff Goldblum, Vern and Earnest, Rufus Wainwright, *The Office*, *The Parachute Club* – he even reminds us that "You don't make friends with salad," in the opening verse of his song "Brian Wilson." (It's a Simpson's reference for you non-nerds.) He uses the word "obsessed" quite a bit when referring to his pop culture idols and has an entire shelf devoted to David Bowie, aptly named his "Bowie shelf."

When I mention Rufus Wainwright, he excitedly breaks into a story about meeting



THE MANY FACES OF D-SISIVE BY LUTHER MALLORY.



him at an airport. "We get off the plane and we're at the luggage, and I'm just staring at him. I was like, 'You're Rufus.' 'Yes I am.' 'I just want to tell you I love you; I love your music.' I'm like 25 years old saying this. And this may affect my street cred, but I was like, 'Can I have a hug?' So, I'm in the airport hugging Rufus Wainwright, and it was one of those hugs where you make the fist on his back and I'm just trying to take in some energy here." He laughs. "My dream is to work with him. You can put that in the article and maybe he'll read it..."

Very few rappers have ever told me stories about hugging Rufus Wainwright and that's the best thing about D-Sisive. He puts nothing on in his music or in his life. He's an open book for the world to read. "People have stopped me in the street and come up to me and called me Derek. This guy was like, 'I feel like I know you. I feel like you're my friend.' If I can make somebody feel that way, not that I'm anyone to come talk to, but the fact that I can do that with my music and it makes them feel like they're my friend, it's cool."

D-Sisive's Favourite Emcees: Andre 3000, Eminem, Jay-Z, Mos Def

D-Sisive's Dream: To work with RUFUS WAINWRIGHT.

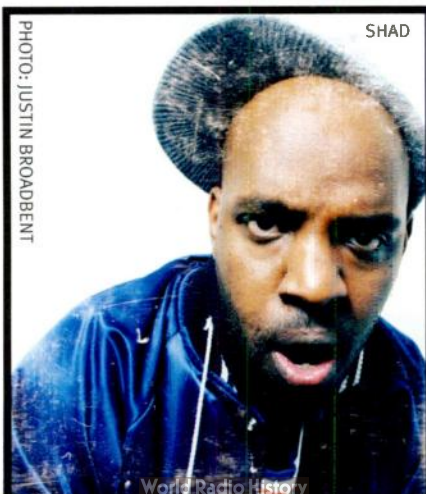


PHOTO: JUSTIN BROADBENT

SHAD: THE POSITIVE

"I think what you have to do is share what you have to give. I don't think there's a need to have a specific message. As an artist, you have to try and be honest and creative and I think music is kind of inherently positive in the sense that no matter what it is you're saying, you're trying to make something beautiful and compelling. If you focus on being honest and creative I think music can do a lot of good."

Shad was fantastically born Shadrach Kabango, which makes him cooler than all of us. Born in Kenya and raised in London, ON,

EVEN OUR HIP HOP IS HUMBLE



PHOTO: LUTHER MALLORY

KID TWIST



PHOTO: LUTHER MALLORY

KING OF THE DOT CROWD.

Classified definitely has the east coast disposition. He's friendly, welcoming, and easy to talk to. At the end of our phone conversation he says, "If you need anything else, just hit me back." What a helpful rapper!

I ask him about the biggest difference between Canadian and American hip hop. Half-jokingly he replies, "Our shit's better."

Favorite Canadian Emcees:

Maestro: Choclair

Favorite Hip Hop Records: *Illmatic*

by Nas; *Doggystyle* by Snoop Dogg

ORGANIK & KID TWIST: KING OF THE DOT

"I was a mouthy little punk and I was into hip hop young. I've got pictures of myself rocking Wu-Tang shirts in grade four," says Organik, the founder, organizer, and host of King Of The Dot, Canada's most revered battle rap league. Organik is a well-decorated freestyle emcee from Bolton, ON who has "won more battle competitions in Canada than you knew existed." The trouble with that statement is that it's true. Battle rap is an underground scene, adored by many but unknown by most.

In the last three years though, the scene has exploded and its popularity continues to grow. It was Organik's idea, along with his business partner and co-founder Ryan PVP, to showcase Canada's best in battle rap and make a name for Canadian battle emcees.

For those who don't know, a basic rap battle consists of two emcees taking turns rapping a cappella, or to a track, for a pre-determined amount of time (usually about a minute) trying to one-up each other by cutting down the other rapper's style, clothes, mother, face – nothing is really off limits. It's a contest to see who's got the funnier, better, more cutting punch lines. It's a verbal boxing match.

Kid Twist is widely considered to be one of the best battle rappers in the world and certainly one of the best in the country. He considers himself, as explained on his website, to be "...the Pee-wee Hermanesque, helium inhaling, well behaved rapping ostrich." He pulls no punches, even on himself.

Kid Twist started out, like most emcees, freestyling. While working a boring job one summer, KT would kill time watching battles posted on YouTube and figured, "I can do this." He signed up for a Toronto battle event called "Proud To Be Eh Canadian Emcee" and faced one of Toronto's most high-profile battle rappers, Prolific. Kid Twist lost in a controversial decision while Organik, who was also competing,

ended up winning the event. When Organik started KOTD in 2007 he was quick to recruit the emcee who had impressed him earlier: Kid Twist.

Today's battle scene is under scrutiny from fans and even some old school emcees because, where most rap battles from 10 years ago were always freestyled, now everything is pre-written. Organik cites a famous battle (that can be found on YouTube) as part of the reason for the evolution. "Mic Assassin vs. Iron Solomon really showed the difference between someone who freestyles against someone who writes. Solomon wrote his verses and basically Mic got beat so everyone was like, 'I can not let that happen to me so I'm just going to write and prepare everything.'"

It was a survival of the fittest choice to evolve. Kid Twist defends written battles: "I think the average person can get into written verses more because if you watch the old freestyle battles, even from the people who are great at it, there's a lot of filler and the audience doesn't react. In the written battles, there's a punch line every time and people like that because it's more exciting and draws more and more people to the battles."

KOTD has grown so much in the last three years that Organik has set up divisions throughout the country to create opportunities for battle emcees in Montreal, Vancouver, Alberta, and others being developed. As popularity grows, so does the need to make KOTD bigger and better. "Quality control has become important," says Organik. "KOTD is representing the country now. We don't want Kid Twist losing views because he's battling some kid who's a class clown and thinks he can rap. We need to make sure it's the elite league in the country."

Despite the seemingly rude and hurtful nature of rap battles, competing emcees always have giant respect for their opponents before and after battling. "It's like being a comedian at a roast," says Kid Twist. "If you're the one being roasted, you have to have the right attitude about it." There's a great sense of community within the scene and even the American and British battle leagues hold KOTD in high regard as having some of the world's best.

At the end of our interview, because I asked him nicely, Kid Twist takes a second to freestyle and ruin my self-esteem: "I freestyle longer than marathons. You're white as fuck but your hairy arms make you look blacker than Barry Bonds."

Investigate some of the country's best battle rappers: Kid Twist, Organik, Charron, Hollohan, Loe Pesci, Pat Stay. Everything KOTD is available to watch at www.kingofthedot.com. ■



Luther Mallory sings and writes songs for Crush Luther, and is the Director of A&R for High 4 Records. He also writes a songwriting blog at www.luthermallory.com.



SINCE 1887

The Piano

CPI1

thē pē ä'nō

noun

- 1 the ultimate digital stage piano; *the culmination of over one hundred years of piano craftsmanship.*
- 2 its materials, interior and exterior design, assembly and touch, which all meet the finest piano standards.
- 3 an instrument designed to entice the ear and stir the spirit.
- 4 the embodiment of Yamaha's commitment to craftsmanship and quality.
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KEYBOARDS 2010



ABSYNTH 5

Native Instruments

Florian Grote, Public Relations Manager,

Native Instruments

www.native-instruments.com

"The most important development is ongoing: the integration of the possibilities current software instruments offer into stage set-ups; technologies that make it quick and easy to control software instruments from your favourite keyboard controller."

NI's offerings in this department include the instrument host system Kore 2 in tandem with various products in the Powered by Kore line, that take the workstation paradigm and integrate the possibilities offered by NI software synths and sample-based instruments to a live keyboard rig, without being unnecessary complex.



LAUNCHPAD

Novation

Giles Orford, Marketing Director, Novation

www.novationmusic.com

"Keyboards talking directly to software - not simply controlling it, but getting information back from software and giving feedback to the user where he needs it, directly on the keyboard itself."

Orford references Launchpad, and the fact that it's made Ableton Live accessible to yet a wider audience/customer base. "A modern grid controller that, combined with Ableton, is a solution that everyone can understand, and enjoy."



KURZWEIL PC3

Kurzweil

Dave Weiser, Senior Soundware Engineer/
Pro Product Manager, Kurzweil R&D

www.kurzweil.com

"Non-volatile user sample memory (Flash ROM, offered on the upcoming PC3K) is the biggest news as far as developments in hardware keyboards go. Ever since the advent of digital samplers, players have lamented the fact that they would lose any samples loaded into the keyboard with each power cycle."



LOEWEN (FAR RIGHT) WITH HER YSP! WSD! BAND MATES.



KRISTA LOEWEN



XXXX Gear

Indispensable Studio Gear: A Moog - for its huge range of textures and sounds, and its warmth.
Essential Stage Axe: Roland JX-3P

When we spoke to Krista Loewen, she was moments away from boarding a plane from Toronto, where YSP! WSD! were filming a video, back to Vancouver.

For Loewen, the most recent changes in her development as a player are a result of the band's songwriting process - the choices she makes informed by what makes the band, and its songs, stronger.

Though you wouldn't guess from listening, YSP! WSD! was not only Loewen's introduction into playing in a rock band, but the first time she took to regularly using electro-mechanical and digital keyboards. That said, Loewen's style, sound choices, and well-honed melodic sense figure heavily in the band's uniquely frenetic dance/punk. She describes that style as reflective of her formal training. The Abbotsford, BC native asked her parents for piano lessons at age six and studied Royal Conservatory until the age of 21 when she founded the band - writing parts based on melody and texture rather than sonic manipulation.

On the band's latest release, XXXX, Loewen stretches out a bit further in her choice of textures, depending on various Moogs, an ARP String, and Hammond for inspiration. "Hammond has always been my tone of choice," she says. "I'm partial to its warmth and depth."

While studying RCM, she practiced three hours a day, six days a week. "It was pretty rigorous. Practicing was something I always had a hard time with." Now, though, her

"Just because I'm capable of playing a Beethoven Sonata doesn't mean that our songs need me to showcase that ability. Doing what serves the song and your band best means sometimes taking a back seat role." - Krista Loewen

private practice regimen is less intensive, but the slack is picked up by regular band rehearsals.

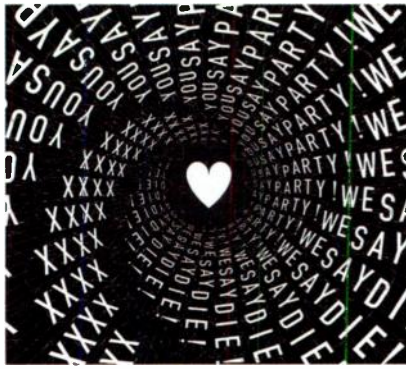
While her formal training provided a solid foundation, one of the main forces she cites in her development is the band's writing/arranging process, and overcoming issues within it. "Too much was happening at once," she explains, "so we all took a step back and tried to accommodate each other more, doing what serves the song best." For her that meant holding back to some degree, focusing on adding texture and atmosphere.

If there's one piece of advice she's received from other players that continues to resonate, it's not to let your ego adversely affect the writing process. Writing a good song, she says, doesn't require showing off the outer limits of your capabilities constantly. "Just because I'm capable of playing a Beethoven Sonata doesn't mean that our songs need me to showcase that ability. Doing what serves the song and your band best means sometimes taking a back seat role."

Still, Loewen's keys are front and centre on XXXX, the lush tones she chooses key to the band's sound: from the melancholic grandeur of "Heart Of Gold" and "Laura Palmer's Prom" to the understated string textures of "Make XXXX" through more heavily-layered organ and synth dependant tracks like "Lonely's Lunch" and "Cosmic Warship Avengers."

For her, regardless of the instrument, the relationship she has with it is key. Her current favourite, she says, is the Hammond: "I've not had nearly enough opportunity to play one to consider myself a Hammond player, but I love them. I love that you're working with the pedals, the dual manual, the Leslie – not abstract electronic things, but physical ones."

Though on tour acoustic pianos are few and far be-



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VADIM PRUZHANOV



KORG'S M3

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- Korg N264
- Korg Kaoss Pad KP3
- Roland AX7 (customized)
- Korg Triton Extreme
- Korg X50
- MIDIjet Pro Wireless MIDI System

As keyboard player for UK-based metal band DragonForce, Pruzhanov is known for his fiery stage performances. "Over

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KEYBOARDS 2010

Weiser believes that his company's PC3, specifically its sound set, best speaks to the needs of today's producers and players. "We set out with the notion of creating a 'solid gold Swiss army knife,' a sound set that does everything and does it well." As for what the future holds, he feels that keyboards will continue to feel more like musical instruments and less like electronic gadgets.

Yamaha

**Ben Harrison, Product Specialist,
Yamaha Canada Music Ltd.**
www.yamaha.ca

"In the Yamaha product line, the most exciting technology has been the introduction of the Articulation Element Modelling tone generator in the Tyros 3 product."

Harrison cites the technology for its accurate reproduction of the nuances of acoustic instruments, and the depth of control it offers the player over them. He also draws attention to Yamaha's 100-year history manufacturing actual acoustic instruments – a history that legitimately influences all of Yamaha's keyboard technology, from the Motif series through to the Tyros 3 and Yamaha digital pianos.

Korg

Michael Golden, VP, Korg Canada
www.korgcanada.com

"The integration of synth workstations with PC/Mac and interactive/intuitive real time sound and FX generating devices – advanced sound generation technology reproducing acoustic timbres, dynamics, and nuances better and better."

Golden also references Korg products like the Kaossilator, Kaoss Pad, and Micro Sampler as just a few of the lines inspiring the company's customer base.

the top" doesn't come close to describing DragonForce's sound, and although their dual guitars make for a blistering onstage attack, Pruzhanov doesn't let the guitars steal the show. Speed and technical prowess are as big a part of the band's studio work as they are of their live set, and Pruzhanov's ample chops are abundantly clear in video clips of his lengthy keytar solos.

In the studio and particularly onstage, his approach to soloing involves letting his mind wander – essentially letting muscle memory take over and firing away. That also informs his approach to writing parts as well. "Sometimes I try to think of something else and something will just pop up." Increasingly, however, Pruzhanov's primary concern when working up parts for the band's songs is crafting memorable melodic figures. "I'm not trying to deliberately move away from technical, progressive playing, but I'm trying to make it more melody-oriented than just shredding."

Speaking to *CM* from his London home studio, where he's currently working on material for the next DragonForce record, it's clear the level of energy he puts into the show is equal to that he brings to his efforts offstage. "I've been writing new DragonForce stuff and some solo stuff. It's been really exciting. There's just so much to do. With no touring, I just stay up all night writing and practicing."

He wasn't always this enthusiastic. Born in Ukraine, Pruzhanov relocated to London at age 14, but at the age of eight his musician parents enrolled him in a dedicated music school, teaching traditional western classical music. Simply put, he wasn't that into it and left the school three years later.

Soon enough, however, inspired by the likes of Genesis, Bryan Adams and Madonna, he picked up a small keyboard and continued to study on his own; picking out bits and pieces of melody and chord structure. Even so, he didn't see keyboards as being the coolest instrument in rock and moved on to guitar – again, teaching himself. Eventually he switched back, preferring keys as both a composition tool, and a means to push the boundaries of his sense of style and sound. "I realized that with keyboards there's so much more you can explore."

"I've been writing new DragonForce stuff and some solo stuff. There's just so much to do. With no touring, I just stay up all night writing and practicing." – Vadim Pruzhanov

Where some players build up a rapport with a single instrument, in Pruzhanov's case, his rapport with his instrument takes in his expanding keyboard rig as a whole. Having said that, he has his favourites. "At the moment I'm completely in love with my Korg M3. It's amazing. I can't say enough about it. I replaced both my Trident Extreme and X50 with one M3. I pretty much designed every single sound for the last performance on it."

His other current obsession: "Theremin, but I'm meaning to learn how to properly play it, not just make noises." As high-energy as his performances are, when it comes to practice, patience and a passion for accuracy are key. That's certainly true with the Theremin. "Your body has to be so still. You have to be very precise. I've seen some players play them and it's just breathtaking."

Bringing character to his songs is key, he says, by alternating between thick

**VADIM PRUZHANOV, FRONT,
WITH DRAGONFORCE.**



V-COMBO VR-700

Roland

**Paul McCabe, President & CEO,
Roland Canada Ltd.**
www.roland.ca

"From Roland's perspective, our V-Piano represents an important step in the continued evolution of the piano. With it, not only have we addressed some of the inherent limitations of simple PCM (sample-based) instruments; we've created the opportunity to actually transcend the acoustic experience – offering musically expressive sounds that aren't limited by what is possible in the physical world using mechanical technology."

That, McCabe says, is right in line with Roland's continuing focus on performance-oriented instruments, from the classic Jupiter and Juno lines to the current Fantom and V-Series. And while McCabe won't be specific about upcoming initiatives, he gives a nod to the direction he sees the continuing evolution of instruments taking by emphasizing Roland's ongoing commitment in this area, and new offerings like the V-Combo VR-700.

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by Nathan Jones

Make A New FRIEND

Being out on the road is probably the best part of being in a band. You get to hang out with your buddies, meet all sorts of new people, and hopefully, put on a rockin' show.

The one friend you need to make, and will have to deal with whether you like it or not, is the sound guy. Most house techs are pretty friendly, love doing what they do (we certainly don't do it for the money), and want to make the show run as smoothly as possible. Here are some tips that should help:

Sound Check

After showing up and figuring out the bill's order, a good thing to do is decide if any backline is going to be shared amongst all bands. It's not necessary, but sure speeds up changeovers. Often, there is only time for one band to do a proper sound check. In a perfect world, that wouldn't be the case, but it's often just a line check, so be prepared for your first tune to be your sound check.

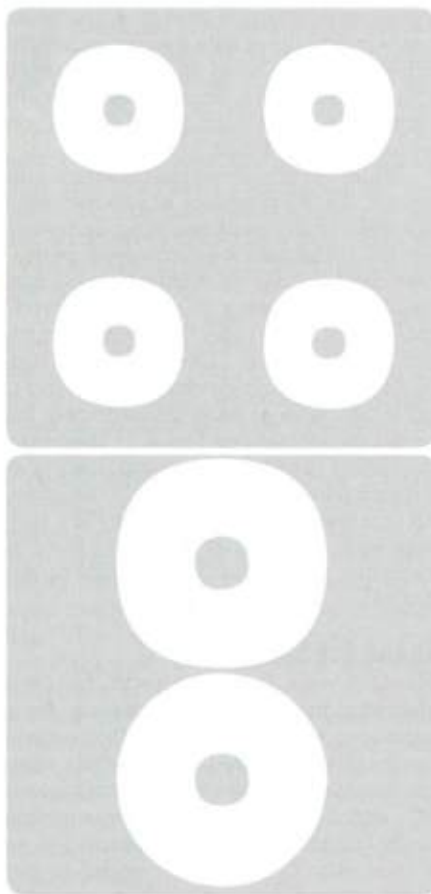
Speaking as a member of a touring band, I've played some interesting venues and have come to accept that monitors are a luxury – good monitors even more so. Often times, there is only one monitor wedge for the entire band, or multiple wedges but only one mix. Hey, it's better than nothing right?

Obviously the un-amplified instruments are going to take precedence in the mix (vocals, keys, horns, acoustics, etc.) so to help everyone else, be prepared to shift the angles of your amps or just move things around slightly. A guitar cab turned slightly towards the drummer or leaned back against the wall pointing towards the ear can make a world of difference. Side washing or tilting cabs upwards also makes a huge difference for the front of house sound. It allows the tech to put more of the guitars in the mains instead of having it all be direct from the cab, which in a small club can be the difference between night and day.

Equipment

The best rule for the road is: if you absolutely need it for your performance, then have it with you. If there is a certain

microphone your vocalist likes, maybe it's time to buy it. If you're using an old keyboard or synth, it doesn't hurt to have a few adapters handy. The most common inputs to a mix desk or DI are XLR or 1/4", so figure out the outputs on your gear and make sure you can adapt to either of those formats. This ensures that when you show up to a venue, you



can actually plug your gear into a DI or the mix desk. (While you're at it, a DI helps, too!)

Vocalists are always the guys asking for more monitors, and with good reason. A few ideas to make things easier for everyone (these are things I've seen different touring bands do and have loved them for it): bring in-ear monitors or your own monitor wedge. The in-ears are great; you can get as much of the mix as you want without any fear of feedback. They do require a separate mix from the board, but most techs would be delighted to accommodate you. A moni-

tor wedge with a microphone in/out also works well. The wedge would be dedicated solely to the one vocal, but then you have complete control of your level. You, the vocalist, have the luxury of not being affected by the Gear Acquisition Syndrome (GAS) that affects your other band mates, so it couldn't hurt to invest a little bit of cash in helping you hear yourself. After all, you know your guitarist's amp is only going to get bigger...

Little things often make a huge difference – that extra power bar, the short patch cable, extension cords... Most places will have this kind of stuff on-hand, but personally, I ask that the band supply it before I use the house stuff because it's the little stuff that goes missing and gets expensive to replace. Then, the one time that the house doesn't have it, you do!

The Show

So you've started playing and realized that you need an adjustment to the monitor mix. (Congratulations! You actually have a monitor!) Simplest solution? Ask.

Most techs are going to be watching the stage and watching you to make sure you're doing alright. A simple point at what you need boosted (more keys?) and then a point to the monitor, with an up or down motion, and we usually understand what's going on and will do our best to fix it.

If you can (and I'm as guilty of this as any other guitar player), refrain from adjusting tone and volume in the middle of sets/songs. The tech is working to make a mix that works the best for the FOH and changing volumes and tones affects that.

My biggest pet peeve (I'm sure I'm not the only one): please be respectful of the house's gear. A lot of venues don't have a budget to replace busted mics, monitors, or whatever, so please don't destroy them. After all, hopefully you want to play at the venue again.

After everything is said and done, everyone wants the show to go well and sound good. The tech is not only a representative of the venue, but also a member of the band for a night, so if everyone works together, you get a better show!

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Important dates:

- Recordings for preliminary round must be received by June 30, 2010.
- Final live auditions will be held September 20 to October 1, 2010. The Canadian Forces will assume travel, meal and accommodation costs for candidates invited to the final auditions.

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1-866-991-0422

DHHMusic@forces.gc.ca

www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/musi/ar/index-fra.asp

Dates importantes :

- La date limite de réception des enregistrements pour la phase préliminaire est le 30 juin 2010.
- Les auditions finales auront lieu du 20 septembre au 1^{er} octobre 2010. Les Forces canadiennes assumeront le coût des dépenses de voyage, de repas et de logement pour les candidats invités aux auditions finales.



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Drawing on over 100 years of piano-making experience, Yamaha has designed the Arius series digital home pianos to deliver authentic grand piano feel and sound, with incredible expressive control. With three models available (YDPS31, YDP-140, YDP-160), Arius digital pianos maintain Yamaha's highest standard of quality at an unexpectedly affordable price.

www.yamaha.ca



KickPort Drum Accessory

■ The KickPort is designed to improve the sound of any bass drum. The KickPort offers easier tone control, tuning, head selection, and mic placement.

In addition to traditional venting that allows the movement of the air in and out of the drum, the KickPort slows the air exiting the drum by restricting and compressing the flow of air through its tube, and then allows the rapid expansion or relaxation of the air through its flared opening. At the same time, the KickPort enhances the low frequencies and dampens the vibration of the head.

For more information, contact KickPort International: 707-762-2100, sales@kickport.com, www.kickport.com.

Paiste Alpha Series Cymbals

■ Paiste has launched the new version of its Alpha Series of cymbals, which is enhanced by new Metal and Rock models. The new look is accomplished by craftsmen who hand polish the cymbals to a mirror finish in the final production stage. Prior to that, certain processes give Alpha cymbals their initial shape and strength, such as traditional hand hammering.

The Rock Ride is now available in a 24" size, while Metal Crashes in sizes 17", 18", 19", and 20" add another level to the series. The 14" Metal Edge Hats model features Sound Edge waves on the bottom cymbal.

For more information, contact Yamaha Canada Music Ltd.: 416-298-1311, FAX 416-292-0732, support@yamaha.ca, www.yamaha.ca.



Roland OCTAPAD SPD-30

■ Roland has announced the OCTAPAD SPD-30 digital percussion pad, featuring eight trigger pads, built-in sounds, multi-effects, and external trigger inputs. Using the latest trigger technology from Roland's V-Drums, the pads on the OC-

TAPAD SPD-30 feature a natural and responsive playing feel. The eight separate trigger surfaces provide dynamic response, trigger consistency over a pad's entire surface, and the elimination of cross-talk.



The OCTAPAD SPD-30 includes 50 kits and hundreds of drum and percussion sounds. Onboard effects include 30 types of multi-effects that can be used on individual kits, and Ambience with an Equalizer and Limiter that can be applied to the overall OCTAPAD SPD-30 sound.

The Phrase Loop recording feature allows the player to loop record sounds in real time, and then overdub additional parts or sounds. The external trigger/control inputs allow players to connect additional pads, and a hi-hat controller to create a portable mini-electronic kit. The OCTAPAD SPD-30 is compatible with Roland RT-Series acoustic drum triggers, creating additional options for drummers who want to add electronics to their acoustic drum set.

For more information, contact Roland Canada Ltd.: 604-270-6626, FAX 604-270-6552, www.roland.ca.



The Nord Piano

■ The Nord Piano is a stage piano with 88 keys and a weighted hammer action. It is lightweight at only 29.7 lbs, and designed with the performing musician in mind. There are plenty of memory locations in a bank/program configuration to provide quick access from the panel to the player's favourite sounds.

Velocity response can be suited to playing style thanks to the control on the panel. A Key Transpose setting is adjustable, by either saving a transpose setting to your program or by setting a transposition value in real time from the panel. The Nord Piano comes equipped with several acoustic and electric pianos and harpsichords. Other pianos are available as free downloads from the Nordkeyboards.com website. The sounds are stored in a Flash memory with a 512 MB capacity.

For more information, contact Music Marketing: 416-

789-7100, FAX 416-789-1667, info@musicmarketing.ca, www.musicmarketing.ca.



Ortega R2009-15th & RCE1415M-STB Guitars

■ Ortega Guitars built two limited models for 2009. The R2009-15th comes with a bright, solid alpine spruce top and figured cocobolo back and sides. As well, a Fishman C4T System is added.

The RCE1415M-STB brings up some features not normally found on a traditional built nylon string. Ortega gave the guitar a 15" curved maple fretboard, a neck to heel connection at the 14th instead of 12th fret, a feedback friendly 80 mm body depth, and figured body wood made of maple covered by a solid engelmann spruce top and finished completely in stained blue.

For more information, contact Ortega: +49-9161-788100, FAX +49-9161-788100, www.ortegaguitars.com.



Scratchophone DJ Mixer

■ The Scratchophone is a portable scratch instrument, featuring a turntable, a special tonearm, scratch mixer, and a pair of speakers. It can be used with a cordless power supply.

The Scratchophone can be carried and used in a wide variety of applications, like jamming with friends, playing live onstage, and even scratching on your sofa. Features include the tangential micro-tonearm for non-skipping scratching, the rotary fader box to play in any posture, and a high-torque direct drive. The Scratchophone can also be personalized with a logo, tag, or tattoo.

For more information, visit www.scratchophone.com.



D'Addario Kaplan Cello Set Strings

D'Addario has released the Kaplan Cello Set, a natural extension to the D'Addario cello line. Kaplan cello A and D strings utilize a solid steel core and tonally adjusted damping. The titanium-wound A and nickel-wound D strings (formerly known as "Kaplan Solutions") allow heavy bow pressure and the set is rounded out by new stranded steel core/tungsten-wound G and C strings. The Kaplan Cello set is available in medium tension and full size, while individual strings are available in all three tensions and full size.

For more information, contact D'Addario Canada: 905-889-0116, FAX 905-889-8998, info@daddariocanada.com, www.daddariocanada.com.



AKG C 414 XLS Microphone

AKG has released the C 414 XLS. The new C 414 XLS offers nine pickup patterns that enable it to choose the setting for every application. For live sound applications and fixed installations, all controls can be disabled, and the peak hold LED displays even the shortest overload peaks. The mic has three switchable bass cut filters as well as three pre-attenuation levels that allow lead vocals and solo instruments to be placed in dense mixes.

The C 414 XLS maintains the sonic character of the C 414 B-ULS, the longest-lived C 414 model. The C 414 comes complete with a carrying case, a pop filter, a windscreen, and spider-type shock mounts. In addition, AKG offers the XLS in stereo sets. The stereo sets are created by AKG's matching method for three-dimensional recordings.

For more information, contact Soundcraft Canada: 514-595-3966, FAX 514-595-3970, information@soundcraft-canada.com, www.soundcraft-canada.com.

TC Electronic PolyTune Guitar Tuner

TC Electronic's PolyTune guitar tuner is now being shipped worldwide. The PolyTune is a polyphonic guitar tuner, which tunes all strings simultaneously. Simply strum and PolyTune will tell you which strings need tuning.

PolyTune has a chromatic tuner with a +/- 0.5 cent accuracy. MonoPoly, another new TC Electronic technology, recognizes whether you play one or more strings and switches between the polyphonic or the chromatic tuner on the fly. PolyTune offers visibility using an ambient light sensor, which automatically matches the intensity of the LEDs to its surroundings. True Bypass allows for the signal to flow unaffected when the pedal is bypassed and for silent tuning once engaged. The PolyTune pedal chassis features a diecast aluminum box, heavy-duty footswitch, and 108 LED display, all built to endure life on the road.

For more information, contact TC Group Americas Inc.: 519-745-1158, FAX 519-745-2364, jenk@tcg-americas.com, www.tcggroup-americas.com.



Fishman Aura Sixteen & Image Gallery III

Fishman is shipping its new Aura Sixteen Acoustic Imaging Pedal and Aura Image Gallery III for Mac and PC. The Aura Sixteen ships with 16 pre-loaded images, allowing acoustic musicians to reproduce the sound of their instrument as miked in a professional studio.

Now available for Mac and PC, Aura Image Gallery III software provides over 800 free images of actual instruments recorded with select world-class studio microphones. Users can sort and search by make/model, body style, or even wood type. By connecting a compatible Aura

product, users can download and store sets of Images to take with them on-stage or in the studio.

For more information, contact Fishman Acoustic Amplification: 979-988-9199, FAX 978-988-0770, info@fishman.com, www.fishman.com.



Peavey Butcher Guitar Amp

Peavey has introduced the new Butcher guitar amplifier with a 100-watt, all-tube head. The Butcher is a two-channel amp with five 12AX7 preamp tubes and four EL34 power amp tubes. Both the Clean and Crunch channels feature independent three-band EQ, plus master volume and preamp gain controls so guitarists can adjust the interplay between the preamp and power amp on each channel for an array of gain possibilities. Both channels include a separate, footswitchable gain boost, while the Crunch channel also has a 12-way Punch selector that adjusts the low-end attack.

The master section widens the range of possibilities with two footswitchable master volumes, so players can set one as a default and use the second as a solo boost. Features also include a half-power switch, which drops the output to 50 watts, three-band EQ on each channel, global presence, a built-in MSDI microphone-simulated direct XLR output, and more.

For more information, contact Peavey: 601-483-5365, FAX 601-486-1278, domestic@peavey.com, www.peavey.com.



Walden Madera Guitar

Walden has released its all-solid wood Madera line, built with 100 per cent FSC-Pure certified tonewoods such as sitka spruce, western red cedar, and South American mahogany.

All woods on the Madera are tracked from forest to the finished instrument, guaranteeing its sustainable origins. Walden chose the name Madera for its association with the Spanish word for "wood." Guitars in this line can be recognized by a distinctive headstock embellishment shaped like the Chinese character meaning wood.

For more information, contact Coast Music (A Division of JAM Industries Ltd.): 514-457-2555, FAX 514-457-0055, info@coastmusic.com, www.coastmusic.com.

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53	SAC	www.songwriters.ca	sacadmin@songwriters.ca
16	SHURE (SF MARKETING)	www.shurecanada.com	info@sfm.ca
45	SONOR (COAST)	www.sonor.com	info@coast.ca
2	TREBAS	www.trebas.com	info@trebas.com
77	VIMBC	www.vimbc.com	susie@vimbc.com
73	VIOLET DESIGN (FDW-WORLDWIDE)	www.violetus.com	contact@fdw-w.com
17	WALDEN GUITARS (COAST)	www.coastmusic.ca	info@coastmusic.ca
64	YAMAHA – ARIUS	www.yamaha.ca	info@yamaha.ca
47	YAMAHA – CP SERIES	www.cpseries.com	info@yamaha.ca
61	YAMAHA – GUITAR	www.yamaha.ca	info@yamaha.ca
4	ZILDJIAN (B&J MUSIC)	www.zildjian.com/Z3	bjmusic@kmcmusic.com
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HotGear



Levy's No. 1 Stretch Strap

■ The original No. 1 Stretch Strap is now being manufactured and distributed by Levy's Leathers. The rubber and polyester webbing of this 2 1/2" guitar strap was developed by engineers in Germany. It is finished with leather ends and is available in black only. Pictured is model MNO1.

For more information, contact Levy's Leathers Limited: 800-565-0203, FAX 888-329-5389, levys@levysleathers.com, www.levysleathers.com.



RapcoHorizon Road Hog Series Cables

■ The RapcoHorizon Company has released The Road Hog Series, which includes instrument cables, microphone cables, and speaker cables, all designed for heavy-duty use. This series is suitable for the touring musician.

Each Road Hog cable is equipped with pure copper conductors encased in a thick jacket that lays flat and coils easily. The instrument cables feature a pure copper 20 ga centre conductor and a 95 per cent serve shield. The Road Hog microphone cables are designed with dual 24 ga pure copper conductors and a 95 per cent pure copper serve shield. Rounding out the Road Hog line are 14 ga speaker cables with stranded twisted pair conductors for low noise operation. For further protection against wear and tear, the entire Road Hog Series comes with a lifetime warranty.

For more information, contact Rapco Professional Sound Company: 416-656-8462, FAX 416-656-8695, www.rapcohorizon.com.

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Paul Reed Smith Ted McCarty SC & DC 245 Guitars

■ PRS Guitars is honouring its mentor with the Ted McCarty SC and DC 245 models. Made in the spirit of the original PRS Sunburst Series, the two models feature a short 24-1/2" scale, special bound fretboard, original PRS birds, Santana headstock shape with curly maple veneer, and 1957/2008 pickups or optional soapbar pickups.

For more information, contact Paul Reed Smith Guitars: 410-643-9970, FAX 410-643-9980, custserv@prsguitars.com, www.prsguitars.com.

**From the mind of
one of the world's
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David Dearden

**Audient Co-Founder
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David Dearden, a pioneer in recording technology, flawlessly combines an analog console augmented by DAW powered fader automation in the new Audient Zen mixing console.

From designing consoles in London in the 60's to building John Lennon's studio and console for the *Imagine* album, Dearden has gone on to create some of the world's finest consoles.

Teaming up with Gareth Davies to form DDA in 1980, the pair went on to launch Audient in 1997.

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■ Beat Thang comes equipped with thousands of sounds, a sampler, 16-track sequencer, digital FX, and waveform editing. Users can spit out beats on the plane, in the park, or live at the club.

The flexible and functional Beat Thang has six hours of portable play time to sample, remix, and perform from anywhere at anytime. Two headphone jacks make it suitable for beat sessions for two. The button illumination feature lights up the control panel for easy viewing in dark nightclubs. Features include 256 MB of RAM, two high-speed SD card slots (32 GB), pitch and modulation wheels, and a 3.5" colour video LCD screen.

For more information, contact Beat Kangz: 305-576-1171, www.beatkangz.com.

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Stanton M.207 Mixer

Stanton has announced the M.207, the first of the company's new line of mixers. The M.207 takes the fader area of the SA-5 mixer, and combines it with post-fader, BPM-synchronized digital effects. Those effects are controlled by the FX Glide control surface, the same touch sensitive technology used in the SCS.3 series of MIDI controllers.

Performance of all three faders can be completely customized, with variable curve control, fader reverse, channel reverse, fader start, and hamster switch all accessible via the front panel.

Other features include balanced and unbalanced master outputs with record/session output, three line/two phono/one mic inputs, three-band EQs with full frequency kills, assignable effect section with nine BPM-synchronized effects, five-bank sampler with BPM-synchronized recording and multiple playback modes, flexible cue section, and completely adjustable fader response with Fader Start.

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Keith McMillen Instruments K-Bow

■ Keith McMillen Instruments has released the K-Bow – a Bluetooth sensor bow created to work with the included K-Apps software. K-Bow boasts the ability to free string players from cables and traditional sounds. It allows the player to control surround sound and videos with the wave of a bow.

The unit features a 3D Accelerometer that measures the playing force and angle of the bow. Its Hair Tension Sensor detects how hard the bow presses against the strings. The Grip Pressure Sensor gives a measure of how hard the bow is being gripped. It will also measure the distance from the fingerboard via the antennas embedded in the bow. By interacting with the included fingerboard emitter, an infrared light sensor shows the distance from the bow frog to the strings of the instrument.

For more information, contact Keith McMillen Instruments: 510-502-5310, www.keithmcmillen.com.



DR Strings Drop-Down Tuning Guitar And Bass String Sets

■ DR Strings has announced its new line of electric guitar and bass strings specifically designed for players who employ drop tuning, named DDT. DR's DDT line was designed to enable players to maintain stable and consistent tuning under any alternate tuning situation.

DDT Electric guitar sets are available in various gauges for alternate tunings: medium DDT-10 (10, 13, 17, 26, 36, 46); big-heavy DDT-10/60 (10, 13, 17, 36, 52, 60); extra heavy DDT-11 (11, 15, 19, 32, 42, 54); xx-heavy DDT-12 (12, 16, 20, 38, 52, 60); and mega heavy DDT-13 (13, 17, 22, 42, 56, 65).

DDT Bass guitar sets are available in the following: medium DDT-45 (45, 65, 85, 105); heavy DDT-55 (55, 75, 95, 115); extra heavy DDT-65 (65, 85, 105, 125); medium 5 DDT5-45 (45, 65, 85, 105, 125); and heavy 5 DDT5-55 (55, 75, 95, 115, 135).

For more information, contact DR Strings: 201-599-0100, FAX 201-599-0404, drstaff@drstrings.com, www.drstrings.com.

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Please visit our website www.mhc.ab.ca/employment for further details concerning this position (Competition #910069). Deadline for receipt of applications is March 5, 2010, after which the selection process will commence; however, this competition will remain open until a suitable candidate is found.

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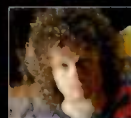
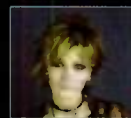
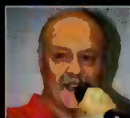
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by Ben Conoley



SEX WITH STRANGERS

Where: Vancouver
What: Alternative/Electronic
Visit: www.myspace.com/sexwithstrangers

Warning: Sex With Strangers have a funny name. Despite this, they are a highly enjoyable band, and you'd be doing yourself a disservice if you ignored them. The future-leaning quintet from Vancouver plays a unique mix of new meets dance rock – think a danceable version of a Depeche Mode/Killers hybrid. Sounds ridiculous, right?

However, the band's new album, *The Tokyo Steel*, should see them continue to make natural gains towards a larger audience. The band was founded by vocalist Hatch Benedict and bassist Magnus Magnum, who previously played in punk band Harvey Switched, which would later change its name to The Switch. After releasing the well-received 2001 – *A Rock Odyssey*, the band found itself three years into a hiatus. That's when Hatch and Magnus brought guitarist Wedge Beavers and singer Isabelle Dunlop onboard (drummer Dallas Archangel would join later). Their eventual creation was 2007's *A Future Tragedy*, followed the next year by *The Modern Seduction*.

The band is interesting and fresh enough to be attractive to hipsters, but not to the point of excluding the mainstream, no doubt in large part thanks to The Rapture and The Strokes. But hey, don't just take my word for it. *Spin* recently named them one of their seven must hear bands. But please, take my word for it too...

THE DISENGAGEMENT

Where: Antigonish, NS
What: Rock/Alternative
Visit: www.thedisengagement.com

Nova Scotians The Disengagement may not be at the top of their game yet, but now would be a great time to start paying attention to the band before they turn into the great songwriters they're likely to grow into, if only because nothing beats telling people that you were a fan "back when..."

The band's subdued indie rock isn't far off from that of Elliott Smith or Built To Spill, with some songs taking a more up-tempo approach. It's when they decide whether they want to keep making occasional attempts to sound like the Foo Fighters that will really determine just how good they become. Largely, though, The Disengagement play subdued indie-rock with just enough bite to stop you from wanting to engage in some serious shoe-gazing.

The band released its second album, *Masters In Escapism*, in September 2009. Since then, it's been kissing college radio charts from Antigonish to Kamloops. The band has a kind of sound that you don't hear too often from band's hailing from Atlantic Canada, so it's nice to see it coming around. The Disengagement plans on touring Canada throughout 2010, which should give most of you a chance to check them out – so do it!



MARSHALL LAWRENCE

Where: Edmonton
What: Blues/Acoustic
Visit: www.doctorblues.com

Maple Blues Award nominee Marshall Lawrence walks the fine line of playing traditional delta blues while throwing in enough of his own touch to put a unique signature on the much beloved style of music.

Since his debut album, *Where's The Party*, was released in 2003, Lawrence has become one of the country's leading new blues payers, who are collectively injecting their own vibrant energy into the blues. While previous efforts have seen him playing electric guitar, 2008's *The Morning After* was recorded solely with an acoustic, further demonstrating his willingness to continue to experiment with new ways to deliver what some might say is a timeless sound. It worked well enough, and he continued to use acoustic guitar for his most recent album, *Blues Intervention*.

While fans of the genre are no doubt familiar with Lawrence's music, he has what it takes to win a crossover audience – a quality not found too often within popular music, but something Lawrence could very well possess.



Ben Conoley is a freelance journalist living in Fredericton, NB. He has written for *chartattack*, *Exclaim!*, *Alternative Press*, and more. Ben is also a proud member of the *Polaris Music Prize* jury.

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