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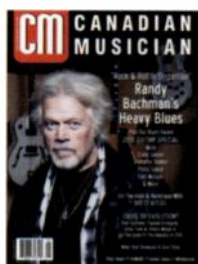
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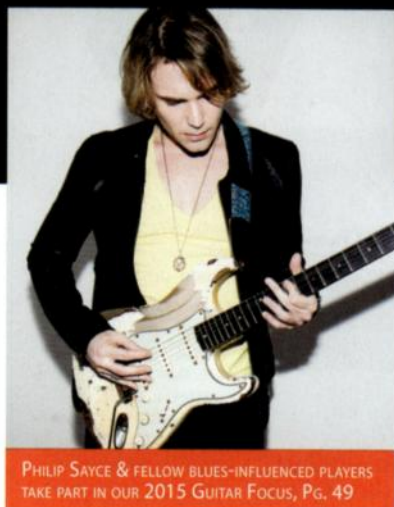


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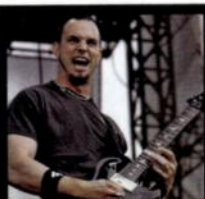
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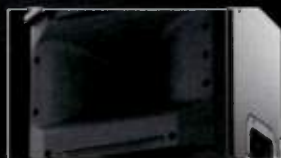
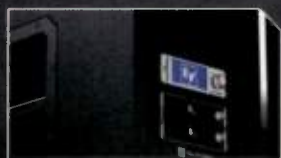
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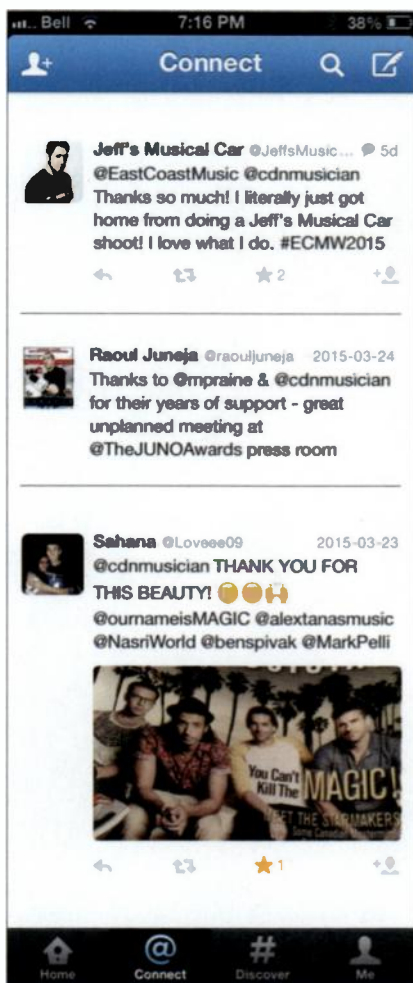


# FEED BACK

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## Join The Conversation On #Twitter

Follow *Canadian Musician* on Twitter for the latest industry news and fun and interesting finds from across the web. Connect with us @cdnmusician. Your tweet just might end up on this page.



## Tune In To Canadian Musician Radio

New episodes of *Canadian Musician Radio* go live every Wednesday at 8 p.m. ET at [www.canadianmusicianradio.com](http://www.canadianmusicianradio.com). At the site, you can also stream any of our previous episodes on demand and at your leisure.

Over the past few months alone, we've had some monster interviews with the likes of **Billy Talent, Randy Bachman, Joel Plaskett, Danko Jones** (pictured), and more. Reaching further back in the archives, you'll find spots with the likes of **Bruce Cockburn, Slash, Lights, Serena Ryder, The New Pornographers**, and many others. We also have our CM Academy sessions, where we check in with some of the industry's big behind-the-scenes players and have them share career-building advice to help listeners navigate the industry.

And remember, we want your input to help make the show even better. Reach out to us at [cmradio@nor.com](mailto:cmradio@nor.com) with ideas or comments – we'd love to hear from you.

## More Canadian Musician Content On YouTube

Whether you're at your desktop looking for a quick break from work or killing time on the bus with your mobile device, our YouTube channel has plenty of interesting and informative vids, from interviews with your favourite artists to helpful tips from industry insiders to behind-the-scenes looks at some of your favourite gear manufacturers.

Some of our recent clips include interviews with the likes of **Billy Talent, The Lazys, Protest The Hero**, and **Magic!**, as well as plenty of instructional content to give your career a boost.



PROTEST THE HERO'S MIKE IERADI & CANADIAN MUSICIAN'S MIKE RAINE.

## SUREFIRE SHOWCASING

Get The Right People In The Room & Navigate The Networking Circuit

By Sacha Miller & Sari Delmar

**M**usic festivals like CMW, NXNE, and SXSW offer a flurry of activity that can be overwhelming – not to mention exhausting – for any emerging artist to navigate. In addition to the dozens, even hundreds of nightly showcases that play host to the world's top agents, managers, labels, talent buyers, international media, publicists, and other touring artists, there is an abundance of conference panels and industry parties throughout the day.

Here are some tips to maximize your return-on-investment and help you navigate your way through the sea of opportunities.

### 1. First Off, Do Your Research

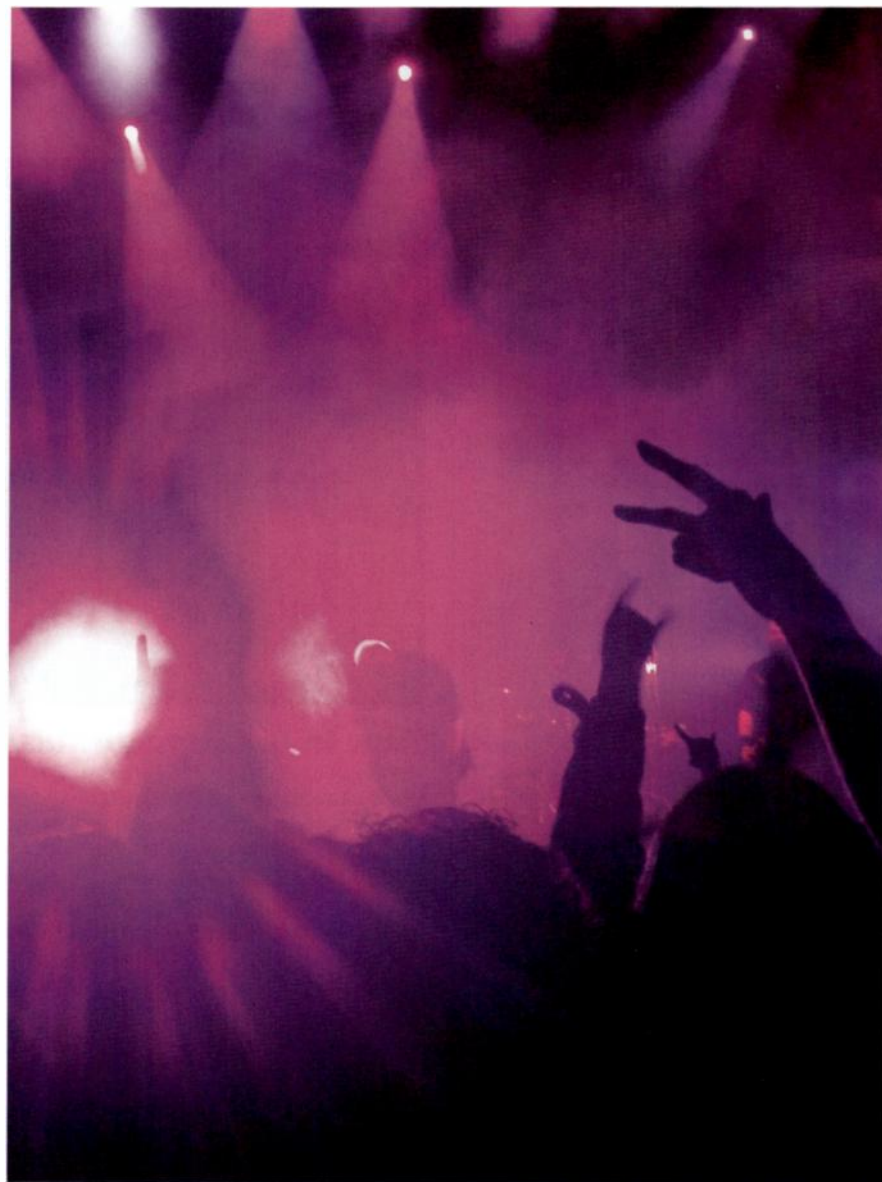
We recommend combing through the delegate list and panel speakers to see who will be in attendance. From this, create a target list of people that fit into your career plan. Do your outreach early while industry attendees are still mapping out their festival schedules. And use common sense; suggesting you meet up with an agent from The Agency Group at The Agency Group BBQ is an example of a path of least resistance.

### 2. Create A Cheat Sheet (and Satisfy Your Inner Stalker)

It is very likely that you'll have no idea what any of your targets look like. To avoid awkward eye contact with strangers and playing the dreaded guessing game, make sure to grab screen shots of the people you are looking to meet and save them in your phone. If you can't track down their Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, or Google Image (which would be unlikely), ask a production staff member if they have seen X Name Here, and they should hopefully be able to point you in the right direction.

### 3. Do Some Media Hunting

Where will you find them? Most likely at all of the buzzed-about events. Check out



journalists' "Bands not to miss" lists ahead of the festival to determine the acts they won't be missing. Well in advance of the event, request an attending media list from the festival publicist. They are used to this and usually quite helpful! Go through the list and select journalists that typically review or cover the genre of music you play. Send an invite to your show and offer to add them to

the guest list, as passes don't always ensure entry if a venue is at capacity. Always select targets that make sense. Keep in mind that media types are inundated with requests to cover artists, so make sure to stand out with an email that is both succinct and informative. (And of course make sure your recorded material is strong!)

"I like when an artist or band sends me one email that includes the time and date they're playing, and a link to their SoundCloud, Bandcamp, etc. Don't tell me you sound like 'Radiohead had babies with the Wu-Tang Clan,' because you don't, and that would be awful anyway. I want to hear what you sound like firsthand; if I like it, then I have the best possible reason to see your show."

**Stephen Carlick, Senior Editor, *Exclaim!***

#### 4. Do The Label Rounds!

Festivals offer a great opportunity for bands to meet domestic and overseas label reps and "get them in the room." Invite them early and ensure they are familiar with your name and music. Get creative with your outreach. If you have vinyl, send it. No music lover will throw away a vinyl record. Or have a pizza delivered with a copy of your album inside. The more original you are, the more likely you will stand out. Make sure the media is excited about your set. It is the industry's job to have a finger on the pulse and take note of what is garnering organic buzz. Play a killer set, and it just might be easier than expected. If all else fails, check out some of the great label showcases and just say hello.

#### 5. Manager Wanted?

If you are a manager or self-managed artist, these festivals are your time to shine. If you aren't, we suggest taking a few cues from these hard workers. Running around town throughout the day meeting with agents, labels, and talent buyers and then working their artists' showcases by night, there is truly not a dull moment. Have your elevator pitch prepared as well as a list of accolades and recent press coverage. Arm yourself with an easy download card, list of showcase times, or something you can leave in the hands of the industry you meet. Adding new members to your team is a delicate process. Things to consider: Do you get along? How many acts do they have? Will they have time for your project? Where do their strong suits lie?

"As a manager attending showcasing events like SXSW, my objectives are dictated by the artists I have performing at the festival. Does the artist have a new album about to be released that we are setting up? Does the artist need a U.S. booking agent? Are there specific music supervi-

sors that I want to put in front of a band? Am I looking for a music publisher in the U.K. to administer or sub-publish an artist's catalogue?"

**Graham Stairs, President, Pogguru Sound & Vision Ltd. & Shadow Cabinet Music Group Ltd. (Grand Analog, Delhi 2 Dublin)**

"South By is firstly about getting face time with people I normally don't get to see, specifically for me coming from a smaller market like Vancouver. Secondly, [it's about] advancing the goals of my bands in all facets – touring, PR, publishing..."

**Eli Wener, President, Hoax Artist Management (HUMANS, No Sinner)**

#### 6. Attracting The Attention Of Agents

Where do you find them? At their industry event, meeting with talent buyers, and supporting their artists. An agent wants to see that a band can draw an audience. Ensuring the industry listed above is in attendance at your showcase will make a great first impression, as will fighting to be on the right lineups. Of course you will look great if you bring out a bucket-load of fans and media as well. Hit the streets and urge the many people who head to SXSW "for fun" to stop in to your show!

Much like labels, it's an agent's job to notice an amazing live act that can bring people out and put on an unforgettable show. Invite them out with a straightforward email and link in advance but don't badger. They want to hear about your band through someone else, through a trusted source, so get more strategic.

"I'll be at your show – if the music is good and you've reached out to me personally, not along with who knows who else on a mass email, take the time to target. At SXSW though you really need the stars to align, everyone is being pulled in a hundred different directions, so if I couldn't make your show let's just find time to say hi – find a starting point."

**Adam Kreeft, Agent, The Agency Group (Hot Water Music, Protest the Hero)**

#### 7. Get Busy!

RSVP to everything! Depending on capacity and distance, it is always handy to have back up options for a given event. Industry events are a great place to meet

people and grab some free drinks and snacks. Make it a point to attend as many brunches, BBQs, and mixers as possible. The industry events are a great way to condense meeting windows without having to shout over a loud band.

#### 8. Always Be On The Move

Even though we are working at a music festival, there is never an excuse for being late to a meeting. Getting around quickly and efficiently will help maximize your time. Map out your schedule in advance and plan which neighbourhoods you will be in at certain times.

#### 9. Go With The Flow & Have A Great Time!

We had a (Canadian) blast at SXSW this year. Not only was it great to connect with industry friends from all over the world, we managed to develop new relationships that will lead to business development opportunities down the road. It's easy to feel as though you barely scratched the surface after a crazy week at SXSW, CMW, NXNE, and similar events. As long as you make a handful of great inroads and have a stack of business cards to follow up with, consider it a success! You can plan as much as you want to but part of the fun is the magic and unpredictability of a good festival.



**Sari Delmar (CEO & Founder) and Sacha Miller (Publicity Manager) from Audio Blood, a full-service artist**

**and brand development company based in Toronto, trekked around Austin this year covering SXSW for Canadian Musicians. Audio Blood's team of young, culturally engaged, and inspired tastemakers constantly proves to be on the cutting edge of music marketing and promotions in Canada. Audio Blood has earned its name as a go-to hub for groundbreaking events and talent by making genuine and honest connections in the music industry. Their client roster boasts Canadian Music Week, Universal Music Canada, Indica Records, HIGHS, M for Montreal, Festival d'été de Québec, WayHome Music & Arts Festival, and more. To learn more about Audio Blood's services, visit [www.audioblood.com](http://www.audioblood.com).**

## NXNE 2015

**SHARES  
FIRST SWARM  
OF PERFORMERS**

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NXNE



ALVVAYS (ABOVE) & MAC DEMARCO (BELOW) AT NXNE 2014.



**T**he first two rounds of bands have been unveiled for the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of North by Northeast (NXNE), which is taking place June 17-21, 2015 in venues across downtown Toronto. In addition to live music, there is also the NXNE Interactive music industry conference as well as comedy, film, and visual arts festivals.

There will be free outdoor concerts at Yonge-Dundas Square headlined by The New Pornographers and Action Bronson. Other bands confirmed for the festival include Rae Sremmurd, Best Coast, Real Estate, Ty Dolla \$ign, Angel Olsen, Vince Staples, Glass Animals, Blonde Redhead, Deafheaven, ex-Crystal Castles member Alice Glass, Zola Jesus, and many more.

New for 2015, NXNE will offer festivalgoers a chance to purchase advanced tickets for select shows. More artists and events will be announced in the coming weeks. For more information as it becomes available, go to [www.nxne.com](http://www.nxne.com).

## Ontario Announces \$14M In Music Fund Grants, Makes OMF Permanent



ONTARIO PREMIER KATHLEEN WYNNE DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE AT COALITION MUSIC.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne has announced that 123 recipients will receive more than \$14 million in grants from the Ontario Music Fund (OMF) this year. As well, through the 2015 provincial budget, the

Government of Ontario has announced its commitment to make an annual \$15 million commitment to the OMF.

First unveiled in 2013, the OMF was initially planned as a three-year, \$45-million grant program administered through the Ontario Music Office. The permanent continuation of the OMF has been a point of advocacy for MusicOntario and the Canadian Independent Music Association (CIMA) over the past year.

According to the provincial government, support from the first year of the OMF has helped create or retain 2,000 jobs and produced \$24 million in additional revenue for music-related businesses. According to government figures, the music recording industry generates more than \$429 million in revenue in Ontario every year and the province generates more than 80 per cent of Canada's total music industry revenue.

For more information, contact the Ontario Music Office: 416-572-0436, omf@omdc.on.ca, www.omdc.on.ca.



JULY TALK LIVE AT SXSW'S CANADA HOUSE.

## Canadian Musicians & Politicians Make Impact At SXSW

The 2015 edition of South by Southwest (SXSW) took over Austin, TX from March 13-22 and featured over 2,200 acts, including a large contingent of Canadians that took part in showcases put on by provincial and national associations and Canadian record labels. One of the festival's most enthusiastic attendees appears to be Toronto Mayor John Tory, who was there on a fact-finding mission.

Following the 2013 Music City Alliance partnership between Toronto and Austin, Tory and a group of city councillors, as well as music sector development officer Mike Tanner, were there to promote Toronto as a music hub for fans and artists, as well as to learn how Austin has achieved impressive music-based economic growth.

AB Co's Sari Delmar and Sacha Miller were on the ground at SXSW on behalf of *Canadian Musician*. For photos and coverage of their experiences, including a list of "Winners and Losers of SXSW 2015," go to the CM blog at [www.canadianmusician.com/blog](http://www.canadianmusician.com/blog).

For more information, go to [www.sxsw.com](http://www.sxsw.com).

## Feds Extend Sound Recording Copyright To 70 Years

In its 2015 budget, the federal government announced its intention to amend the term of copyright for sound recordings from 50 to 70 years. According to Music Canada, a 70 year term of copyright has become the international norm and the existing 50 year term in Canada has put Canadian artists at a competitive disadvantage. [www.musiccanada.com](http://www.musiccanada.com).

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# CHANGES

## CMAO Announces 2015 Nominees & Songwriting Conference

The Country Music Association of Ontario (CMAO) has released its list of nominees for its third annual CMAO Awards Show. This event, to be held May 25<sup>th</sup> in Markham, ON, will once again be hosted by Jason McCoy of the Road Hammers.

Tebey leads the pack of 2015 CMAO Awards nominees with six nominations while Tim Hicks follows close behind with five. Jason Blaine, Runaway Angel, and Small Town Pistols have four nominations apiece.

In other CMAO news, musicians can now register for the 2015 Road to Independence – Spring Tune-Up songwriting conference, to be held May 24-25. The two-day conference offers attendees interactive opportunities to learn, network, and expose their music to members of the music industry. The fee for the two-day conference is \$125, but SOCAN members receive a 10 per cent discount.

For more information, contact the CMAO: 647-231-2626, [info@cmaontario.ca](mailto:info@cmaontario.ca), [www.cmaontario.ca](http://www.cmaontario.ca).

## IFPI Report: Canadian Music Market Falls 11% in 2014



The IFPI has released its annual *Digital Music Report* for 2015, which provides an extensive overview of the global digital music sector.

The report notes that global digital music revenues matched physical format sales for the first time in 2014. Digital revenues rose 6.9 per cent to \$6.9 billion USD, representing 46 per cent of all global music sales and underlying the industry's transition over recent years. Overall global revenues fell slightly (0.4 per cent) in 2014

to \$14.97 billion. In Canada, the overall market fell by 11.3 per cent, with physical sales declining by 20.8 per cent and digital declining by 3.9 per cent.

Subscription revenues rose sharply in 2014, growing by 39 per cent, which offset an 8 per cent decline in digital download sales to grow overall digital revenues to \$6.85 billion. The number of paid subscribers increased 46.4 per cent to an estimated 41 million people worldwide. Subscription services now make up 23 per cent of the digital market and generate \$1.6 billion in trade revenues.

To read the full report, go to [www.ifpi.org](http://www.ifpi.org).

**... American composer Philip Glass has been chosen as the eleventh Glenn Gould Prize Laureate. Subsequently, Glass will choose an outstanding young artist to receive the City of Toronto Glenn Gould Protégé Prize of \$15,000. Also, the Glenn Gould Foundation has announced that it will double the award to \$100,000. [www.glenn Gould.ca](http://www.glenn Gould.ca).**



## TSYO Celebrates 40 Years & Goes Tuition Free

The Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra (TSYO), which celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April, has announced that, beginning in the 2015/2016 season, it will no longer charge tuition.

Students who pass the entrance auditions in September 2015 will receive expert coaching from select Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) musicians, masterclasses and rehearsals with TSO's guest artists, opportunities for public performances of orchestral masterworks, and over 100 hours of rehearsal and coaching.

On April 23, the TSYO celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a concert at Koerner Hall, led by TSYO Conductor Shalom Bard. Founded in 1974 by Victor Feldbrill, the TSYO is dedicated to providing a high-level orchestral experience for talented young musicians aged 12 through 22.

For more information, contact the TSO: 416-598-3375, [www.tso.ca](http://www.tso.ca).



## Guitar Workshop Plus Names 2015 Guest Artists

Guitar Workshop Plus (GWP) has announced the guest artists for its summer sessions. The two Toronto area sessions will take place July 19-24 and July 26-31, 2015, while the Vancouver area session will be held Aug. 11-16, 2015. The new-for-2015 San Diego session will be held June 21-26, 2014.

Artists taking part in the 2015 sessions include: Paul Gilbert (Mr. Big, Racer X); guitarist and clinician Andy Timmons (Danger Danger); bassists Stuart Hamm (Joe Satriani, Steve Vai) and Rhonda Smith (Jeff Beck, Prince); blues player Duke Robillard (Roomful of Blues, Fabulous Thunderbirds); jazz player Mike Stern (Miles Davis, Bill Evans); world renowned electric player Gary Hoey; fingerstylist Muriel Anderson; shredder Dave Martone; drummer Dave Langguth (Nelly Furtado); and more.

For more information, contact Guitar Workshop Plus: 905-567-8000, [info@guitarworkshopplus.com](mailto:info@guitarworkshopplus.com), [www.guitarworkshopplus.com](http://www.guitarworkshopplus.com).



QUIQUE ESCAMILLA RECEIVING HIS 2014 CFMA AWARD.

ROSIE MONDAY PERFORMING AT HONEY JAM 2014.

RICH KIDD & WONDAGURL AT IMSTA FESTA TORONTO.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



### Canadian Folk Music Awards Submissions Open

Submissions are now open for the 2015 Canadian Folk Music Awards (CFMA). The final deadline is June 30, 2015. The CFMA weekend takes place Nov. 6-8, 2015 in Edmonton and the awards currently boast 20 categories, with five nominees chosen for each. Complete eligibility requirements are listed at [www.folkawards.ca/eligibility](http://www.folkawards.ca/eligibility).

### Registration Open For 20<sup>th</sup> KoSA Drum Camp

This year, KoSA will be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary at its annual KoSA Drum Camp, happening at Castleton State College in Vermont from July 21-26, 2015. The camp offers participants a chance to learn from, perform with, and live with high-profile guest artists. Over the past two decades, KoSA faculty has included the likes of Neil Peart, Benard Purdie, Carmine and Vinny Appice, Greg Bissonette, and many more.

The KoSA 20 guest artist faculty will include up to 20 drumming and percussions masters, including John Blackwell (Prince, Justin Timber-

lake), Dennis Chambers (Santana, Steely Dan), Valerie Naranjo (*Saturday Night Live*), and KoSA founder Aldo Mazza.

Courses will be offered on a wide variety of styles, such as jazz, Latin, rock, funk, marching percussion, frame drums, Cuban rhythms, African drumming, and more.

For more information, contact KoSA: 514-482-5554, [info@kosamusic.com](mailto:info@kosamusic.com), [www.kosamusic.com](http://www.kosamusic.com).

### 2015 Honey Jam Details Released

Auditions for the 2015 Honey Jam showcase will be taking place at the Mod Club in Toronto on May 31. Those unable to attend the live auditions are invited to submit an online audition by May 20, 2015. Honey Jam is an all-female multicultural, multi-genre artist showcase open to all female artists between the ages of 14 and 25. The Honey Jam Showcase will happen at the same venue on Aug. 13, 2015. For more information, go to [www.honeyjam.com](http://www.honeyjam.com).

### IMSTA FESTA Songwriting Competition Announced

The International Music Software Trade Association (IMSTA) has launched the 2015 IMSTA FESTA Songwriting Competition. Submissions are now being accepted. Entrants can write songs in any

genre, with or without lyrics. Separate regional contests are being held in conjunction with the four IMSTA FESTA events in L.A., Chicago, New York, and Toronto. IMSTA FESTA Toronto takes place Oct. 17, 2015. The contest deadline is Sept. 26.

Late in 2015, the four first place winners will compete for the 2015 Song of the Year title and grand prize, which includes a free trip to a song camp at Black Rock Studios in Greece.

For more information, go to [www.imsta.org](http://www.imsta.org).

### Breaking Bands Now Accepting Submissions

Submissions are now being accepted by Ontario artists for the second annual Breaking Bands competition, which is held in conjunction with Big Music Fest in Kitchener, ON.

In addition to mentorship, touring opportunities, and other prizes, the winning bands will be the subject of a yearlong documentary leading up to their main stage performance at Big Music Fest 2016.

All entries must be submitted by June 6<sup>th</sup> and bands will be notified about their selection by June 20, 2015. The 20 finalists will perform for a jury of industry representatives at McLennan Park in Kitchener on July 10<sup>th</sup>.

For more information, including eligibility criteria, go to [www.bigmusicfest.com/breaking-bands](http://www.bigmusicfest.com/breaking-bands).

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# CHANGES

## ★ AND THE WINNER IS... ★



PHOTO: PAUL & ALAN SAMSON

LES HÔTESSES D'HILAIRE PERFORMING AT THE 2015 ECMA AWARDS.

### Hey Rosetta!, In-Flight Safety Among 2015 ECMA Winners

The 2015 edition of East Coast Music Week (ECMW) in St. John's, NL, which took place April 8-12, came to a close with the annual ECMA Awards.

Hey Rosetta's Tim Baker and Adam Hogan picked up the prize for Songwriter of the Year for their song "Kintsukuroi." Other winners included In-Flight Safety's album *Conversationalist* winning Album of the Year; Mo Kenney's *In My Dreams* received Pop Recording of the Year; Radio Radio's *Ej Feel Zoo* received Rap/Hip-Hop Recording of the Year; The Trews' self-titled record won Rock Recording of the Year; and The Town Heroes won the fan choice award.

Next year, East Coast Music Week will head to Sydney, NS from April 13-17, 2016.

For a complete list of award winners, go to [www.ecma.com](http://www.ecma.com).



PHOTO: TAPING RAVEN PRODUCTIONS

GOODWOOD ATOMS AT THE COMPETITION FINALS

### Goodwood Atoms Win Nimbus Recording Competition

The Nimbus School of Recording & Media hosted its seventh Nimbus Recording Competition Finals at the Roxy Cabaret in Vancouver. Described as a "spacey build-up folk-rock band," Goodwood Atoms took home the first place prize of \$500, as well as a single produced and mixed by Shaun Cole (Half Moon Run, Bend Sinister) and released via Business Class Records.

For more information, contact Nimbus: 604-875-8998, [info@nimbusrecording.com](mailto:info@nimbusrecording.com), [www.nimbusrecording.com](http://www.nimbusrecording.com).

### Chad VanGalen Wins 2015 Prism Prize



PHOTO: MATTHEW KODYSKI

On March 29, director Chad VanGalen was announced as the winner of the 2015 Prism Prize for Timber

Timbre's "Beat The Drum Slowly" music video. VanGalen, who was also nominated for his own song, "Monster," was on hand at the TIFF Bell Lightbox in Toronto to accept the Prism Prize trophy and \$5,000 award. [www.prismprize.com](http://www.prismprize.com).



FINALIST MEAGHAN BLANCHARD

### CCMA Discovery Program Finalists Announced

The Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) has chosen the top six finalists for the 2015 CCMA Discovery Program. They are: PEI's Meaghan Blanchard; Raquel Cole and Ray Gibson from B.C.; Calgary's Madison Krebs; Alberta's Sykamore; and Katia Zuccarelli of Toronto.

The finalists will be flown to Toronto for the 2015 CCMA Music Industry Discovery Week, running April 26 to May 1. The finalists will attend seminars, perform industry showcases, and also be paired with an established Canadian country artist for a mentorship program. At the 2015 Country Music Week in Halifax, held from Sept. 10-13, the finalists will perform at a public showcase. An industry-led jury will select the winner of the 2015 CCMA Discovery Award as part of the event.

For more information, contact the CCMA: 416-947-1331, [country@ccma.org](mailto:country@ccma.org), [www.ccma.org](http://www.ccma.org).



AN ARTISTIC RENDERING OF STUDIO BELL.

### NMC & Bell Announce Studio Bell

The National Music Centre (NMC) and Bell have announced a 12-year, \$10 million partnership to support the construction of NMC's new national home in Calgary's East Village. Named Studio Bell, the facility will open to the public in spring 2016.

The plan is for Studio Bell to become an international hub of music and technology. It will house NMC's 2,000-plus piece collection of artifacts, instruments, and music technology, with 22,000 sq. ft. of exhibitions devoted to telling the stories of music in Canada. There will also be a 300-seat performance space and recording studios.

For more information, go to [www.nmc.ca](http://www.nmc.ca).

... The Fair Play, Fair Pay Act of 2015 has been introduced in the U.S. Congress and is supported by a coalition of American recording artists, record labels, and music publishers.

Unlike in most countries, AM/FM radio stations in the U.S. do not pay performance royalties for music. If the bill becomes law, it could mean significant neighbouring royalties being paid to Canadian and other non-American artists receiving radio play in the U.S.; however, it would also decreased payments for artists whose primary radio exposure is in Canada. Because rights agreements are based on reciprocal trade, currently, the pool of money collected from Canadian radio stations for playing songs by American artists is dispersed to Canadian recording artists and record labels.



## Make Music Day Set For June 21<sup>st</sup>

June 21<sup>st</sup> is Make Music Day, which will see people take music into the streets, parks, and plazas of 700 cities across 120 countries. Make Music Day continues to grow in North America with more than 25 U.S. and Canadian cities hosting citywide events, including Quebec City, Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, and Sainte Agathe des Monts, QC, as well as Toronto, and Vancouver.

For more information, go to [www.makemusicday.org](http://www.makemusicday.org).

## Canadian Musician's STATE OF THE INDUSTRY SURVEY

As the landscape of the Canadian music industry continues to change at an increasingly rapid rate, *Canadian Musician* recently surveyed readers about some of the industry's hot topics.

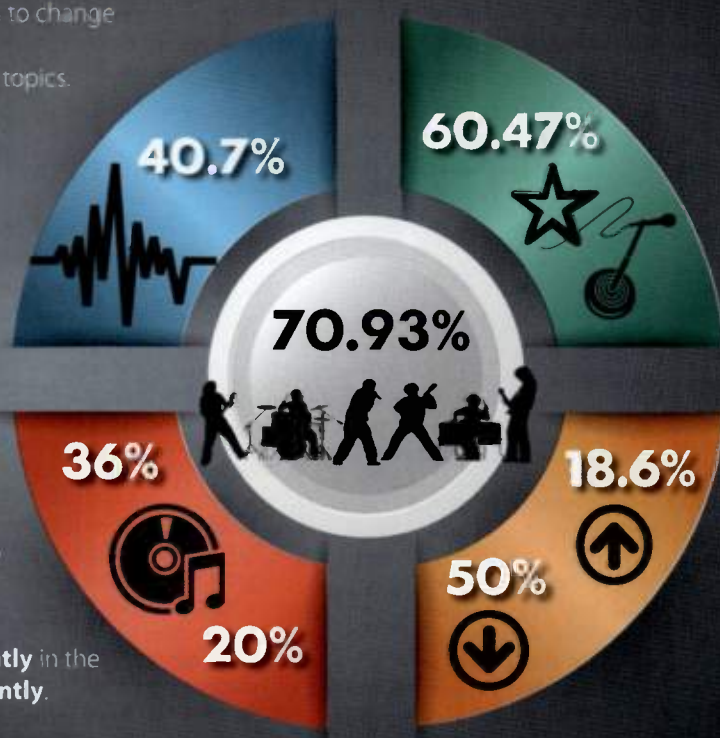
A wide majority of respondents, **70.93%**, earn the majority of their music revenue from **Live Performance**.

**40.7%** think **streaming services** have the *potential* to be a significant source of revenue for artists, but that it'll take a lot of time & advocacy.

With legacy acts decreasing, **60.47%** believe that **careers sustained primarily through live performance** will only be viable for a limited number of artists.

Full-lengths albums remain the primary way to release new music for **36%**, while EPs are second at nearly **20%**.

**18.6%** think recorded music sales will **increase significantly** in the next 5 years, while **50%** think they will **decrease significantly**.



For full survey results, go to [www.canadianmusician.com/news](http://www.canadianmusician.com/news).



## BILLY TALENT & THE LAZYS

For the full interview, listen to the April 8, 2015 episode

**CM:** You guys worked together on the hit single "Shake It Like You Mean It" and are now back in the studio together. Lyrically, how does that songwriting partnership work?

**Leon Harrison [The Lazys, singer]:** It comes down to personality. We get along so well that, generally, we're going in the same direction with phrasing and that sort of thing. It is more about a concept and, 'Oh, I really like this line and it really sums me up as a person...'

**Ian D'Sa [Billy Talent, guitarist]:** And it is

also understanding where these guys are coming from as opposed to where I am in my life and my career. These guys are that hard working band and at that same stage where Billy Talent was maybe 10 years ago.

**CM:** Ian, has working with The Lazys reminded you of Billy Talent's earlier years and brought you back to that place in your work?

**D'Sa:** Totally; we were literally the same, funny, *Seinfeld*-episode-type dudes that these guys are 10 or 12 years ago. It's uncanny.

**Harrison:** I'm staying at Ian's and I was watching one of their early documentaries [*Scandalous Travelers*] and it is literally the same band getting in the same crappy van and going through all the process – taking wrong turns, getting pissed, doing all the stupid stuff.



## HUMANS

For the full interview, listen to the March 11, 2015 episode

**CM:** When recording *Noontide*, were you thinking about how to translate the songs live with only two people? Or just make the album you want and the worry about the live show after?

**Peter Ricq:** That's totally how we approached it. We were both kind of wondering how we are going to do this live. We loved the direction that the album was going and when we talked to Nick [Kozub, producer/Shout Out Out Out], he said, "That's how I always do

it. I always just make the record and figure out the live show later..."

**Robbie Slade:** But the live show really is quite different from the album. There's one song, "Ennio," that we had been playing for a long time and when we went into the studio, we took a different approach to it because of Nick, and now, when we're playing the new version live, we even change that one.

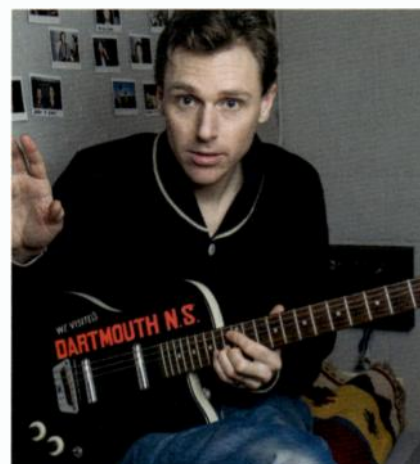


PHOTO: INGRAM BARSS

## JOEL PLASKETT

For the full interview, listen to the April 22, 2015 episode

**CM:** For the new album, *The Park Avenue Sobriety Test*, you have J.P. Cormier, Ian McGettigan, Mo Kenney, Erin Costello, and others all playing on it. What was your approach to these collaborations?

**Plaskett:** Probably about 60 per cent of the record was cut live off the floor with all the musicians playing at once and live lead vocals. Much of the backup vocals were overdubbed just because they're harder to capture in isolation in the set-up that I have. So, I kind of just let everybody feel their way through a bunch of the songs where we would work on it for two or three hours, just jamming it, and everybody just learned it that day. It is not like we rehearsed it for two or three weeks and then made the record. It is quite the opposite. It was like, 'Here's the song; let's record it.' It makes it kind of fun to listen to because it makes it a bit more lively and off-the-cuff. I think it harkens back to the records that I love from the '60s – Bob Dylan records and Neil Young records that have that kind of 'wing it' approach. Often I've found that the demos of things have more excitement than polished recordings and so I just wanted these to sound like hi-fi demos...

# EVENTS

Visit [www.nor.com/events](http://www.nor.com/events) for more events involving Music, Musical Instruments, Professional Audio, Lighting, & Production.



## MAY



IMSTA FESTA Toronto

**IMSTA FESTA Los Angeles**  
Los Angeles, CA  
May 16, 2015  
416-789-6863, FAX 416-789-1667  
[www.imsta.org](http://www.imsta.org)

**Canadian Association For Music Therapy Conference**  
Calgary, AB  
May 22-24, 2015  
[conferencecfp@musictherapy.ca](mailto:conferencecfp@musictherapy.ca),  
[www.conference.musictherapy.ca](http://www.conference.musictherapy.ca)

**Montreal International Musical Competition: Voice 2015**  
Montreal, QC  
May 25-June 5, 2015  
514-845-4108, FAX 514-845-8241  
[info@concoursmontreal.ca](mailto:info@concoursmontreal.ca),  
[www.concoursmontreal.ca](http://www.concoursmontreal.ca)

**Sing! Toronto Vocal Arts Festival**  
Toronto, ON  
May 28-31, 2015  
[info@tvaf.ca](mailto:info@tvaf.ca), [www.singtoronto.com](http://www.singtoronto.com)

## JUNE

**Piano Texas**  
Fort Worth, TX  
May 30-June 21, 2015  
[info-pianotexas@tcu.edu](mailto:info-pianotexas@tcu.edu),  
[www.pianotexas.org](http://www.pianotexas.org)

**MIDEM 2015**  
Cannes, France  
June 5-8, 2015  
[www.midem.com](http://www.midem.com)

**Muhtadi International Drumming Festival**  
Toronto, ON  
June 13-14, 2015  
416-848-3838  
[info@muhtadidrumfest.com](mailto:info@muhtadidrumfest.com),  
[www.muhtadidrumfest.com](http://www.muhtadidrumfest.com)



Billy Talent at NXNE

**NXNE 2015**  
Toronto, ON  
June 17-21, 2015  
416-863-6963, FAX 416-863-0828  
[info@nxne.com](mailto:info@nxne.com), [www.nxne.com](http://www.nxne.com)

**Guitar Workshop Plus: San Diego Session**  
San Diego, CA  
June 21-26, 2015  
905-567-8000, FAX 905-785-2831  
[info@guitarworkshopplus.com](mailto:info@guitarworkshopplus.com),  
[www.guitarworkshopplus.com](http://www.guitarworkshopplus.com)

**The Sled Island Music Festival**  
Calgary, AB  
June 24-28, 2015  
403-229-2901  
[info@sledisland.com](mailto:info@sledisland.com),  
[www.sledisland.com](http://www.sledisland.com)

**Montreal International Jazz Festival**  
Montreal, QC  
June 26-July 5, 2015  
514-871-1881, FAX 514 525-8033  
[commentaires\\_jazz@equipespectra.ca](mailto:commentaires_jazz@equipespectra.ca), [www.montrealjazzfest.com](http://www.montrealjazzfest.com)

**Saskatchewan Jazz Festival**  
Saskatoon, SK  
June 25-July 5, 2015  
306-652-4700  
[info@saskjazz.com](mailto:info@saskjazz.com),  
[www.saskjazz.com](http://www.saskjazz.com)

## JULY

**Big Music Fest 2015**  
Kitchener, ON  
July 6-12, 2015  
[www.bigmusicfest.com](http://www.bigmusicfest.com)

**Ottawa Bluesfest 2015**  
Ottawa, ON  
July 8-19, 2015  
613-247-2220  
[www.ottawabluesfest.ca](http://www.ottawabluesfest.ca)

**Halifax Jazz Festival**  
Halifax, NS  
July 8-12, 2015  
902-492-2225, FAX 902-425-7946  
[info@halifaxjazzfestival.ca](mailto:info@halifaxjazzfestival.ca),  
[www.halifaxjazzfestival.ca](http://www.halifaxjazzfestival.ca)

**Winnipeg Folk Festival**  
Winnipeg, MB  
July 9-12, 2015  
204-231-0096, FAX 204-231-0076  
[info@winnipegfolkfestival.ca](mailto:info@winnipegfolkfestival.ca),  
[www.winnipegfolkfestival.ca](http://www.winnipegfolkfestival.ca)



Vancouver Folk Festival

**Vancouver Folk Festival**  
Vancouver, BC  
July 17-19, 2015  
604-602-9798, FAX 604-602-9790  
[info@thefestival.bc.ca](mailto:info@thefestival.bc.ca),  
[www.thefestival.bc.ca](http://www.thefestival.bc.ca)



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## Rode NTR Ribbon Microphone

By Joe Mullen

Springtime has arrived and as I sit outside with my wife and son enjoying the new season upon us, I am thankful for many things. When a pair of the new active ribbon microphones from Rode showed up at my studio just in time to track for the new Odium record, I could not have been more grateful. Picture a levitating, extremely sensitive ribbon element precision cut with accuracy down to the micron ready and waiting to capture your output, picking up the most natural, transparent reproduction of those ever so precious differences in air pressure we call sound. That's the new sleek looking, splendid sounding Rode NTR. Join me as I take not one but two of these beauties for a test drive.

### Seeing & Feeling

Take one glance at the Rode NTR and you will notice its unprecedented blend of art and science. When you hold one of these mics in your hand, you really get the feel for how well they're built. The NTR has a good weight to it and the black matte finish adds a classy touch. I get the impression that it was designed equally for solidity and musical transparency.

The internal shock mount system is just as thoughtfully designed. You can actually see it through the equally aesthetically inspired solid metal screen. Overall, the microphone looks almost extraterrestrial in appearance. Meanwhile, back on planet Earth, the mounting bracket is super

efficient. It has a unique design where the XLR connector runs through the holder and a threaded washer marries the two. It's nice touches like that that make for a truly standout product.

### Testing

I had the pleasure of using the pair of NTRs as stereo room mics on a standard variety of instruments. Regardless of the instrument I was playing, the sonic detail had me immediately convinced that they really do sound as good as has been reported thus far. I was blown away by the completely clean sound of the room mic tracks. I remember monitoring just the ribbons and being astounded at the detail I was hearing. My kick was there in my headphones, even without my ever-present kick trigger monitor.

We had an acoustic song to track so I set these puppies up – one to the left, one to the right, and that was it. It was all oohs and awws from there. I can't stress enough just how pure and transparent the music sounded. I have never experienced something this clear and this spacious before – especially here in my home project studio.

I also had the opportunity to get the NTRs out on a piano before they had to go back. Before receiving the mics, I watched the demo video on Rode's site featuring a performance with just grand piano and vocal. There is no denying the heavenly nature of that track ("Home" by Katie Noonan), but could they really sound that good in my studio?

As it turns out, the answer is "yes."

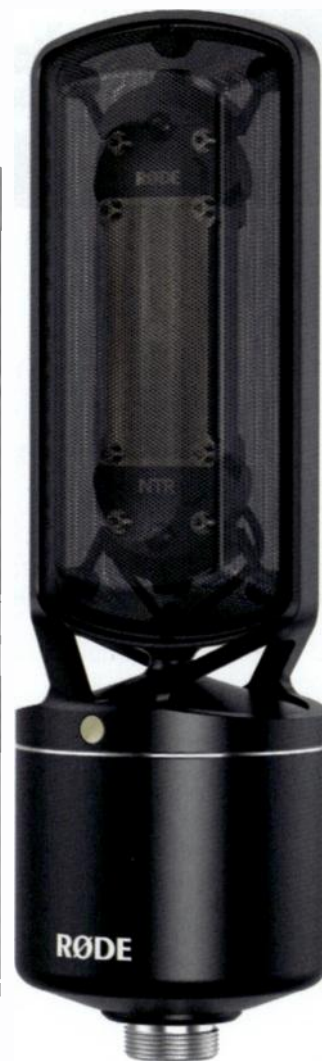
I also got to use these to track drums, which is an unusual application for ribbon microphones. I remember dialing in the comp/limiter to crunch the drum ribbon tracks down. That processing brought out so much more detail that I didn't even know was there! There was just so much transient information to pull out of the tracks, so you know what I mean about a really information-rich signal.

Also, they left no stone unturned when coming up with a transformer to complement this piece. Custom designed and manufactured, the output level quality and frequency response are one of a kind.

The price point of the NTR is definitely worth talking about. A lot. I had always thought that I would never be able to find this kind of response, performance, and character of tone without spending three times what this thing is worth. It provides that astute sound, capturing the room's acoustic behavior in a very intimate way, mostly due to the unearthly design of the ribbon suspension. It puts such an information-rich signal into the signal chain; it needs to be heard to be believed.

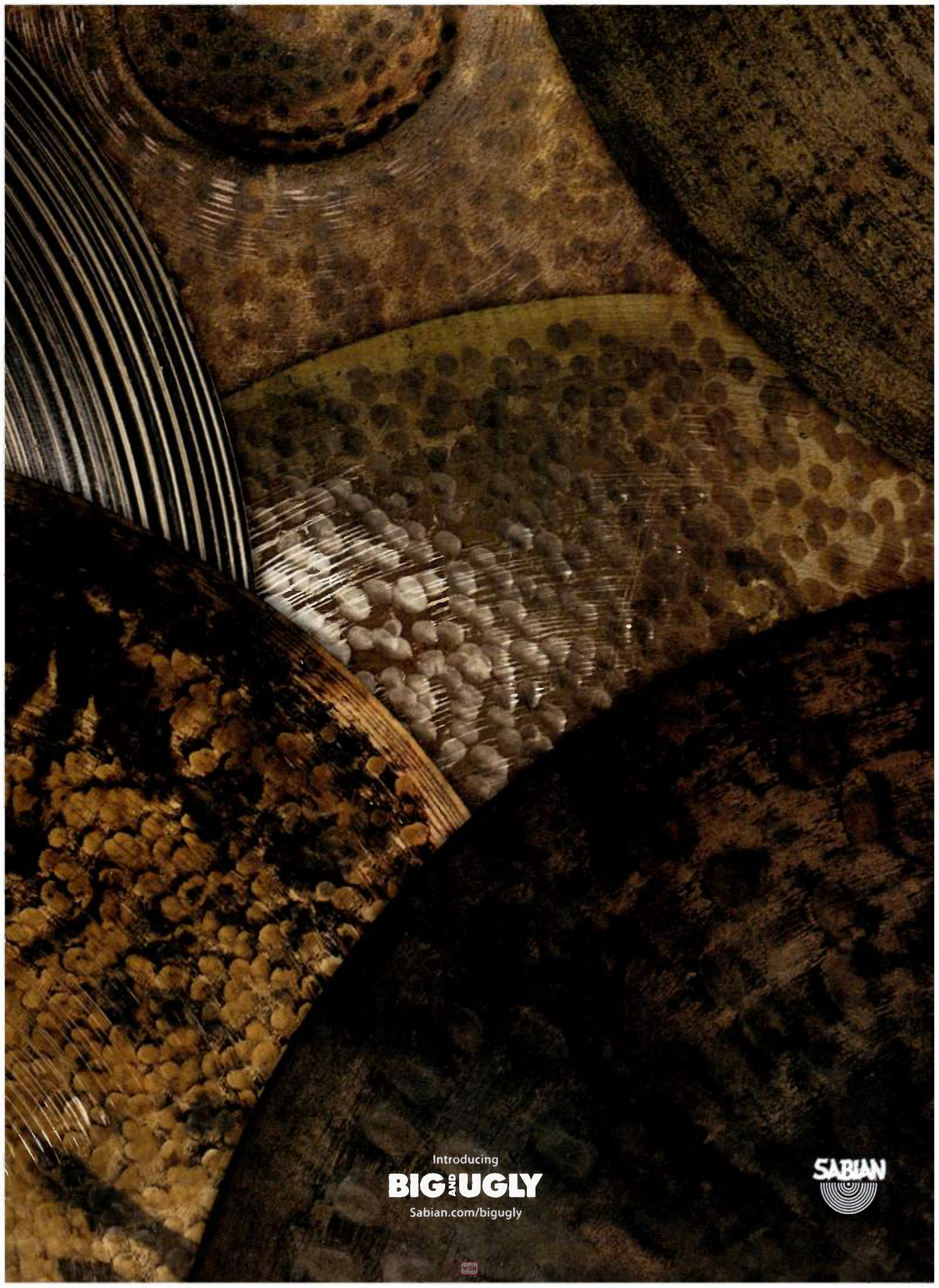
### Summary

Call them true creation preservers. I always say it is a true testament to a genuine commitment to quality and dedication to the end result when a company decides to keep everything in-house. The team at Rode has persevered



through many years of new challenges and trying to push the envelope in pro audio. Because of this, they have created a mic that is truly ahead of its time and I'm sure you're going to start seeing them all over the place. I could not have been more grateful for this opportunity.

*Joe Mullen owns and operates JoeDown Studios in Hanover, ON. He plays drums in the metal outfit Odium and contributes regularly to Professional Sound and Canadian Musician magazines.*



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## Radial Engineering Bassbone OD Preamp & DI Box

By Hal Rodriguez

Radial Engineering's Bassbone OD pedal is a two-channel preamp with an overdrive circuit designed for bassists who need to conveniently switch between two different instruments or EQ settings. Whether it's a live performance or recording situation, the unit offers maximum control over your sound. Each channel is equipped with independent EQ and gain controls and the pedal is packed with many useful features such as a dry/wet mix control for the overdrive and a high pass filter to reduce feedback when using an acoustic bass.

### Features

Channels A and B sit side by side on the pedal with independent low, mid, and high controls and have their own LED lights to indicate which channel is active. At the bottom of each channel is a high-pass filter switch that can stay off or cut frequencies below 80 Hz or 150 Hz when enabled. Each channel also has a mid switch that can change the centre frequencies of the mid control from 1 kHz to 500 Hz or 250 Hz. On the left side of the pedal is the Overdrive section with its Drive and Tone controls and a Mix control that can blend the overdriven tone with the active channel's dry signal.

There are three footswitches on the pedal: an A/B switch to toggle between the channels, a Mute switch that silences the output except for the pedal's Tuner output, and the Overdrive switch to turn on the overdrive circuit. The Overdrive switch can also be assigned to turn on just the overdrive, or the overdrive and the effects loop together, or just the effects loop using the EFX switch in the overdrive section.

Cleverly hidden in the sides of the Bassbone OD are recessed switches and controls that can be accessed with a small screwdriver for other useful functions. Next to the input for Channel A is a recessed PZB switch that can boost the signal from piezo pickups by 10dB to optimize their sound when plugged into this



channel. Similarly, there is a recessed Drag control next to Channel B's input designed to warm up or brighten the tone of passive pickups. Other recessed switches on the pedal include a Blend switch that keeps both Channels A and B on, a Pre/Post switch that sends either the signal before or after the effects loop to the PA via the XLR output, a 180-degree polarity reverse switch to reduce feedback, and a ground lift switch. Finally, the pedal even includes a headphone out with recessed volume control for silent practice.

### Sound

The pedal's EQ controls were extremely responsive as slight turns produced audible changes and it seemed like no matter where I set the controls, the result was a tone that would excel in a specific musical style. Turning up the pedal's highs while using a Music Man-style bass with a bridge pickup produced shimmering bell-like tones for harmonics and double stops but didn't sound thin. When trying the pedal with an SG-style bass with a neck pickup, turning up the bass and playing with the Mid switch enabled resulted in round and robust tones suited for old school soul and reggae that were far from muddy.

The Bassbone OD's overdrive was very quiet at low and moderate settings and extremely musical. The overdrive tone was fat and warm and manipulating its tone control seemed to change its personality

enough that it's as if you had a few different overdrive pedals in one box. The magic really starts to happen when you use the circuit's Mix control, as it adds another dimension to the tone. I could dial in classic tones ranging from the warm rumble of Jack Bruce's tone to Billy Sheehan's aggressive biting distortion to unique tones I hadn't really heard before, depending on the EQ of the channel and how much gain I mixed in.

### Summary

The Bassbone OD is an extremely versatile and fantastic sounding preamp for bassists that are called on to play more than one kind of style in a gig or recording session. Radial has addressed potential problems by providing features such as the HPF switch and offers maximum control over one's tone with features like the PZB switch and adaptability with the XLR output and switchable effects loop. Its stellar overdrive and the ability to have tones optimized for two different instruments in a single pedal should make the Bassbone OD a highlight of any professional bassist's pedalboard.

*Hal Rodriguez is a Toronto-based musician, published writer, and music transcriber who has done work for premier guitarists like Oz Noy and Derryl Gabel. For lessons and transcription services, contact him at [halromusic@gmail.com](mailto:halromusic@gmail.com)*

# iZotope Ozone 6 Audio Mastering Software

By Joe Mullen

This could be the new paradigm of in-the-box mastering.

Many moons ago, when I was first getting into computer recording, I can remember opening up a new plug-in that really intrigued me while visiting a friend's studio. It had those cool green meters and could do some really powerful and unique things. This brief experience working with an early version of iZotope's Ozone gives me a unique perspective to discuss its evolution over the years, since I now have the opportunity to put it through its paces in my own studio.

Before even firing up Ozone 6, I attended a week-long training course for my day job and was reading the manual and included Mastering Quick Start Guide diligently during every break and lunch hour. (Everyone probably thought I was crazy.) Anyway, it's unbelievable where they have taken this thing over the years.

## Features & Experience

In a world where things are continually becoming more complex, there is great value in power and simplicity. The drag-and-drop module bank, which is brand new to Ozone 6, is just that. Not to mention, in the advanced version, you can use it in standalone mode.

If you are working on an album, for example, you can load up all of the tracks onto separate tabs (just like an internet browser) and then toggle back and fourth as you work on the final masters. The in-the-box trimming and fade functions are extremely smooth and intuitive as well – so simple, so efficient. It truly puts the complexity where it is meant to be – in the programming – so we can go right ahead and get creative. Also, with the advanced version, you can use the individual modules as separate instances, etc.

Another feature new to Ozone 6 is the dynamic EQ. It is a highly advanced, ultra-coded multiband compressor module with an extremely smooth dynamic graphic display. It allows you to make those surgical cuts to fix problems in a track or to make those wide band boosts that bring out

the musicality in the recording. Another incredible new feature is the ability to run third party VSTs within Ozone. It shows up with all of the other modules and can also be dragged and dropped. Unreal.

The Maximizer now has a gain matching feature that is a very helpful tool for getting a handle on what you are actually changing when producing a master. We all know that when something is louder, we automatically think it sounds "better." To address this, Ozone 6 has added a button that controls a gain-matching algorithm that will match the level of the output with the input so you get a true comparison of what is really happening to your master.

Another feature that I also really liked in the advanced version was the transient emphasis parameter. What it does is allow you to control the degree to which the limiter affects transient material. For example, if you decide to use the limiter, you adjust the threshold down and it starts to sound louder. And sure, it sounds louder initially, but as you listen you will find your ears starting to get fatigued. That's because you have made the track louder but at the expense of the transient material. These transients can get crunched and distorted more than the rest of the track, causing your ear to work harder to understand what is it hearing. Essentially, you can now adjust how much transient information will be allowed to get through the limiter, resulting in that increased loudness without ruining your drum sounds.

Additionally, the dynamics, exciter, and the EQ all have what's called the Learn feature. It will listen to the entire frequency band and find those all-important crossover points that are so hard to find – especially if you are like me and just getting into the finer points of mastering.

## Summary

Ozone 6 is mind blowing, and there's not too much else to say. I had no idea how powerful this software is. There is no doubt in my mind that anyone – even someone who has never mastered a track



ADVANCED MAIN INTERFACE



EXCITER



ADVANCED DYNAMIC EQ

in their life – will be able to get from a good mix to a solid pro sounding track very easily. Ozone 6 works with your track with a kind of artificial intelligence that you really need to experience. I feel that real creativity comes from simplicity and purity of intention. In an environment of exponential complexity and acceleration, that feeling of pure creation is easily lost. I found that Ozone 6 inspires me to learn and see how far I can really push myself as a record producer. You really can't ask for much more than that.

*Joe Mullen owns and operates JoeDown Studios in Hanover, ON. He plays drums in the metal outfit Odium and contributes regularly to Professional Sound and Canadian Musician magazines.*

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By Jeff Gunn

# Muting

**M**uting has proven to be an effective guitar technique in a variety of musical styles across the globe, from heavy metal riffs to Zimbabwean Chimurenga guitar lead lines.

Muting, also commonly known as palm muting (P.M.), on the guitar can be achieved in several ways. The most common muting technique is to rest the side of the pinky finger (c), including the side of the palm in the strumming hand, across the strings at the bridge of the guitar. Next, simply pick single notes or strum entire chords with a muted sound.

The second way to mute a note or chord is with the fingering hand. Push the finger(s) down slightly on the string(s) so that the finger(s) is not quite touching the fret board and pick the note(s) with the strumming hand.

Try both. First, use a clean tone with reverb. Next, add distortion. Muting not only creates a unique tone, but it is also useful for shifting dynamics in songs. Try using muted riffs and chords in the verse and regularly strummed chords in the chorus. Muting can also be useful when simulating the sounds of other instruments, such as the West African balafon, which requires muted and tremolo picking in the upper register of the guitar.

The following exercises highlight muted picking and strumming in a variety of musical styles.

## EX. 1

Using a West African feel, play this passage using strumming hand muting followed by fingering hand muting.

## EX. 2

Using a reggae feel, strum these chords using strumming hand muting followed by fingering hand muting.

## EX. 3

Play this rock passage with distortion using regularly picked notes followed by muted notes. Listen for the difference in sound.

## KEYBOARDS

Jon Matte is currently the frontman of Montreal-based band The Franklin Electric, where he is a vocalist, keyboardist, and trumpet player. Before founding The Franklin Electric, he studied music at Vanier College. Shortly after, Matte built an immense roster of production credits working with popular Quebec artists such as Patrick Watson, Bran Van 3000, and Bad News Brown. [www.thefranklinelectric.com](http://www.thefranklinelectric.com).

By Jon Matte

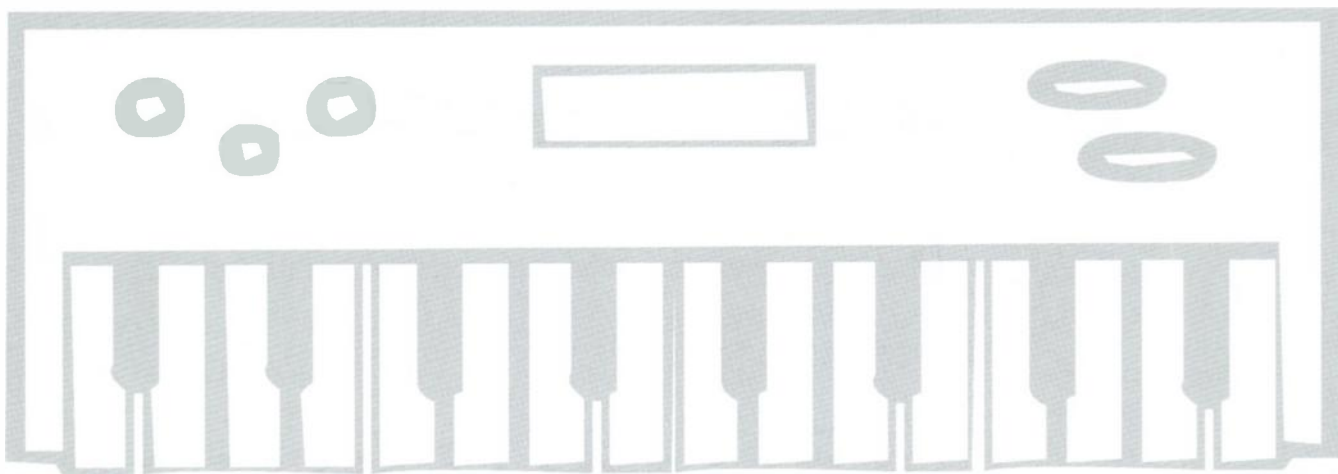


# Exploring Keyboard World

**O**h man! I am constantly discovering new possibilities in the world of keyboards, and what's really been exciting me lately is the blend of lush-sounding analog synth textures and the organic world.

understand why! I'm not the type of musician that is interested in devoting countless hours to programming and dialing in exact sounds on a small internal computer; I prefer to concentrate more on making music, so the Juno 60 has been great for that

was to find a great alternative to a real piano and at the same time not play on a plastic keyboard. I needed to be able to sit down and have a similar experience to playing a real piano, and more specifically, its touch. I found the Fender Rhodes had more of an



While producing our first record, I specifically fell for the Farfisa organ sound on my Nord Electro 3, with most of the drawbars down. It was great for textures that shadowed over an acoustic guitar track or piano part. The Electro 3 also included a bank of Mellotron sounds that were well done and sounded relatively close to the real thing – although, for the album, I was lucky enough to borrow my friend Pat Watson's real Memotron.

Now what truly blew my mind was the fact that you can blend two sounds together, such as a flute and strings, and control the amount of each sound as you desire. This feature was definitely something I enjoyed and, ultimately, why it was used on a couple of tracks from our first record.

My new baby is a Roland Juno 60, which seems to be in high demand these days. After performing a few shows with it, I can

simple reason. It is very easy to work with and allows me more time to focus on writing rather than figuring out the logistics of programming sounds, and that's why it has been included in a lot of the new songs we are working on for the next album.

The combination of the Strymon Big Sky pedal and the Juno 60 is something I am sold on. We are right in the middle of writing a new record and there are already three or four tracks featuring this duo. Live, the Juno comes with us now, and when it comes to bass sounds, there's a sub button that unleashes a huge low end, which I really enjoy. As for synth string pads, it's amazing and easy to use. You can very simply manipulate your sounds while playing live.

Another important member of the "Franklin Fam" is the Wurlitzer. It's been with us at every show over the past year and we would feel naked without it. My main goal

undefined sound and was not able to cut through the mix, whereby the Wurlitzer has more bite in the mid-range and a more defined attack.

The Wurlitzer is far easier to transport, which is incredibly important as we're on the road a lot. Lastly, the Wurlitzer gave the show a different experience compared to the record as it has a different personality compared to a standard piano. When you play into it, there is a definite bark and this helped give attitude to certain songs in our live show.

These gems are now constantly set up in our space and are key parts of the writing process for the new record. The idea is to explore all of your options in keyboard world – from longstanding favourites to newer discoveries – to ensure that your tools are decided by your end goal and not the other way around.



# Embodying Your Sound

**W**arm-up exercises often have a funny way of entering our playing. When I first started playing in Midday Swim, I needed a simple and structured warm-up that would really get at the root of our sound. Looking for the lowest common musical denominator, I realized that pentatonic modes were a great place to start. The soothing sounds of cascading pentatonic scales are not only good for the hands; they are good for the soul.

The formula utilized to form the chords was left intentionally basic:

Major Chords Pentatonic Intervals: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6

Minor Chords Pentatonic Intervals: 1,  $\flat 3$ , 4, 5, 7

Diminished Chord Pentatonic Intervals: 1,  $\flat 3$ , 4,  $\flat 5$ , 7

$\text{♩} = 120$

E. Bass

E. Bass

When played evenly, the sound should be majestic and harp-like. Never using the G string was intentional as I find the G string's tone to be unbalanced in louder settings. For an added challenge, try adding hammer-ons, pull-offs, and slides when connecting root notes. Also, try playing the entire exercise in one position, moving your hand only on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> scales.

Finding a warm-up that really embodies your project is a great way to really immerse yourself in the style. It will help to steer your natural tendencies on any given instrument in a particular direction. Choose the warm-ups you play wisely because they not only build chops, they build character too.

Can you boil your band's sound down to a particular warm-up or exercise? Challenge yourself to come up with the most fundamentally simple exercise possible.



## The Mystery Of Great Musical Drum Solos

It's always a challenge to answer the question: "How can I build a great drum solo?" With four limbs and so many drums, cymbals, pedals, and bells around us, the drum kit is an exciting and expressive instrument but can also be overwhelming when we start thinking about playing a solo.

### Range Of Expression & Technique

Being musical is a very broad topic. The way I see it is that if you create a bridge between the common characteristics of music and your solo, you will be on the right track. Start by thinking about the range of expression from the great book *It's Your Move* by Dom Famularo. Explore the differences between fast and slow, as well as loud and soft. Dynamics are so important in how you express yourself on the drum set.

### Forms

In all styles of music, we use mathematics to organize and structure the form that will serve as a road map for the band. In jazz, for example, we commonly use two popular forms: the blues and the standard. The blues has 12 bars and the standard has 32 (A-A-B-A). In pop music, we call the forms by different names like verse, pre-chorus, chorus, and bridge. Try to practice playing in form. You may want to sing a song that you already know and play something that goes with the melody you are singing. Create different themes that will support your ideas. Think more about the spaces between the notes during the phrasing. It's better to play simply

with a melody and a form in your head than to play very complex patterns without order or structure.

### Climax

The intensity of your solo is crucial in transmitting your emotions to the audience. It's really important to create a progression in your playing. Start by using only two drums and play as many ideas on those drums as you can. Your cymbals could be treated like a snare drum; try playing rudiments on them.

I love to start by playing a repetitive pattern on the snare and then on the hi-hats. Be aware of the short and long notes. A snare or hi-hat will give you short notes compared to a crash or a floor tom, which will give you long notes; this is the difference between staccato and legato.

There is also a difference in the projection of each instrument. For example, hitting a bass drum will produce more power and projection than hitting a splash cymbal; being aware of that will make you sound very clean and balanced. Start small and build up your ideas with more notes. Connect your playing to your emotions and imagine stories in your head while playing.

### Repetition & Transitions

Repetition reinforces your ideas. With just a single idea, we can play for a long time and develop it. To achieve that, you need to be comfortable with repeating your idea as often as needed to set your mind on it. While you are playing it over and over again, listen

to yourself and converse with what you hear. It goes like this; you play something, you listen to what you are playing, and become inspired to play something else. Then listen to the next idea and repeat the process.

Transitioning between ideas is also important because sometimes you want to play a longer solo and make it interesting. A solo is like a trip that you are taking and you bring the audience with you. Try to use different polyrhythms to change the pulse. Transition between different styles, such as jazz, Latin, rock, fusion, or funk. Some styles go better together but you can also surprise people by going places they weren't expecting.

### Ostinatos

Think about a pianist. Often we see the left hand playing a constant pattern while the right hand is improvising. We can do the exact same thing. We call that constant pattern an ostinato: playing a constant pattern that does not change with some limbs while the other limbs are improvising. In every single style, drummers have developed original ostinatos. Start with some cool ones played with your feet. They could be stylistic like the samba bass drum pattern, the baion, the jazz ride pattern, or the clave and tumbao. They could also be rudimental like paradiddles, doubles, or flams and drag patterns. You will develop great independence and this more complex development will impact the quality of your groove and time and push your comfort zone to a higher level.



# How To Practice Efficiently

## Part 2

In previous columns I have discussed how to both keep a practice journal and develop an effective scale practice regimen.

Now, I'll tie the two together and discuss scheduling: how to plan and organize a "day-specific" weekly practice schedule that guarantees you achieve your goals as efficiently as possible without burning out or getting bored.

Most regimens are not programmed to deal with the vicissitudes that keep us from achieving our goals: illness, boredom, injury and recovery, travel, and so on. That's often why they fail. But a good weekly practice regimen allows for variety and change. Most importantly, it is also designed to maintain the skills you have already developed. Even saxophone geniuses such as Coleman Hawkins or Paul Desmond worked long hours just to keep their existing skill sets available when improvising. The key is setting goals for alternating days to keep our attention over long weeks and months of consistent hard work. This is the core of advanced musicianship, and if you do it properly, you will be able to stay excited about practicing every day.

### Kata

I use the idea of *kata* from Japanese fine arts and martial sports such as judo as an organizational concept for woodwind study. Kata are solo forms and patterns you can do on your own in alternating sequence that not only train your mind and body, but also preserve and demonstrate the fundamental principles behind the art form. Kata train both body and mind, and what makes kata so effective is the large amounts of repetition and the focus on studying different forms on alternating days in order to avoid repetitive stress injuries and overdevelopment of certain muscles and skills at the expense of others. Doing this foundational study guarantees

efficient growth in all areas, as well as maintains existing technique. And, developed into a multi-day program including performance, composition, and improvisation, these kata will also guarantee you won't merely become a master of scales who lacks musical and emotional expressivity.

Each day should be organized around particular kata, which should include playing evenly/consistently through the entire range of the saxophone (*balance*), exercises dealing with specific musical problems you have (*focus*), being able to play scales/arpeggios evenly in all 12 keys (*control*: you should be able to play C# minor arpeggios as easily as C major), playing perfectly in time as well as evenly within a particular groove or feel (*timing*: funk, swing, etc.), as well as learning the songs, ideas, and patterns necessary to be competent in a genre (*language*: bebop, etc.). Having done this, we can then organize our days into a weekly schedule.

### Scheduling

We should always warm-up our embouchure and body every day with a good tone building exercise. Saxophonist Dewey Redman used to play every note from low B $\flat$  to high F# one at a time, in one long breath held out as long as possible (without hyperventilating!). Do this every other day in two different ways: once as softly as possible and once as loud as possible while still maintaining control over the sound. We can then follow this daily warm up with practicing scales in a single key a day (the kata of control) using every possible shape and tonic pattern we can. (See my scale/study regimen in the March/April 2015 issue.) Going through the scale study regimen in that issue in even a single key a day will work your mind very rigorously and guarantees superb results even after only a couple of weeks.

Then we move on to our alternating daily

schedule. For example, Monday-Wednesday-Friday might be dedicated to expanding our musical language, especially if we are improvising musicians. Instead of working on it every day, which can get boring, we focus on three weekdays, strengthening and focusing our attention span on a few daily details rather than getting lost in 20 different goals for only minutes at a time. Then our Tuesday/Thursday schedule can be dedicated to timing: transcribing jazz solos by ear, studying South Indian *solkattu* or Turkish *aksak* rhythms then applying them to our improvising, or supplementary sticking rudiments from George Lawrence Stone's book of snare drum exercises – using drum sticks and a practice pad to develop our hand strength and time feel.

Saturday and Sunday can then be dedicated to *focus*, e.g. working on specific problems related to your style or genre of playing: specific sections of a clarinet concerto, flute multi-phonics, and/or analyzing the various harmonic applications of John Coltrane's minor 3<sup>rd</sup> – perfect 4<sup>th</sup> "matrix." You can also then compose or improvise music that utilizes what you have learnt, as both are effective ways of combining the skills you have honed during the week. Weekends are also a great time to explore doubling on another instrument, either to learn a new one or maintain technique on your existing one(s). You could also spend time on either day improvising with other musicians and writing down ideas for further study. This is also a fun way to grow as a musician while learning about the many intangibles involved in performing with others.

Organizing your practicing around kata on alternating days is a dynamic and rigorous process. It guarantees efficient growth, minimizes risk of injury, and eliminates boredom. And, if it is done right, can be a lot of fun.



# Social Attributes Of Successful Musicians: How To Get Hired & Stay Hired

**Note: you don't have to play a wind instrument to get anything out of this article! Come in, sit down, stay a while! Can I get you an adult beverage?**

**D**iversity is the new default setting for professional musicians. In addition to the artistic and creative effort it takes to make original music, musicians are also responsible for an increasing number of jobs that were previously done by other people. Hustling for gigs, recording, editing, graphic design, and dozens of other duties compete for time that would more ideally be spent on the instrument. There's always something else to learn and master.

But I'm forever curious about the social attributes of successful musicians from just about any genre. This short article presents just a few of those intangible, ephemeral qualities that warrant study from time to time. This first one is the most important.

## Be a "Good Hang"

If you're in a band, you likely spend just a few hours together onstage and many, many more hours in vans, planes, hotels, and other cramped quarters with your bandmates. Imagine the smell. Imagine your bassist's constant FaceTime conversations with his partner back home. Imagine the constant inane chatter about every other band in your hometown who you say you hate but are actually just really jealous of. Still want to be a musician? Read on.

The full extent of your musicianship must include some intangible vibe that makes you fun to hang out with. In fact, just like in teaching and in stand-up comedy, you don't have

to be fun; you just have to be interesting. Being a "good hang" is some un-teachable combination of awareness, manners, reasonable respect for privacy, punctuality, and good humour that is learned but likely cannot be taught. Of course, there are countless high-functioning, successful bands made up of people who hate each other. Some even thrive on that antagonism; however, based on my experience, such relationships are toxic in consideration of long-term mental health and artistic prosperity. It's a familiar, overused cliché, but treat others as you wish to be treated.

## Be Available

A dear friend of mine is a great drummer and also a professional stonemason. (I'm sure there's a joke in there somewhere; feel free to pass it on to me.) I asked him if there were any correlations between each business. He said the key to success in either case is so simple it barely bears mentioning: answer your phone and show up on time.

For example, consider how frustrating it is to deal with a cable company, as you feel less important with each minute on hold. Similarly, we often use phones these days as anything but phones. I know a dozen people who haven't checked a phone message in many months. I need more than the space in this article to sort that out, but the point I'm trying to get across is to be available. Social media and smartphones make us 'technically' more available than ever before, but I feel such technology provides more opportunity for hiding. The lineup of best musicians is so long that the lineup of second best musicians isn't relevant. Call people back.

Time. Wow. I've lived in Newfoundland,

Ontario, and British Columbia and can confirm there are different conceptions of time. Maybe it's the cold east coast weather that makes people walk faster, but there's something real about the sloooooow pace of the west coast. I can think of four hundred and twenty possible reasons for that; suffice to say that punctuality is paramount to success.

## Cultivate Relationships

Part of being available means being available to yourself. Are you channeling yourself through the right systems of people and stimulus to advance your art? Are you making time to study new advances, techniques, artists, and promotional avenues to ensure you're worth being called?

It's never been easier to connect with people. Making those connections meaningful and subsequently last is another thing entirely. A very successful booking agent and friend shocked me when he said so many artists don't follow up with him. Being a successful freelance musician necessitates a certain constant activity off the bandstand. I myself really loathe social media. I find it a time-sucker. To me, the making of the art is forever more satisfying than the selling of it; nevertheless, I have to schedule time in which to attempt to manage my online life, be it following up or forging new connections.

The above information is really quite obvious, freely available, and entirely optional to use. If you take one thing away from these ideas, ask yourself, 'What have you done to advance your career today?' Keep a sticky note on your door to remind you. Your answer often determines the balance of your success.



# Where's Your Laptop?

"Where's your laptop?" is definitely a frequently asked question when we are setting up and tearing down. When I tell people that we don't use one, I am typically met with either confusion or excitement, and then asked again "...but really, where is the laptop?"

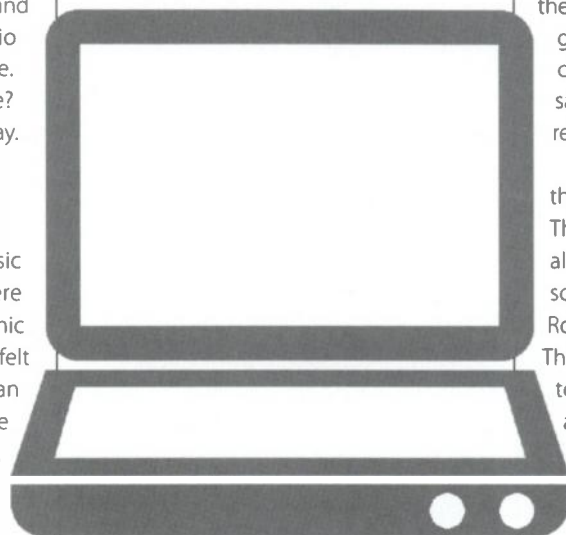
We are in an age where the majority of electronic music depends on laptops and software, both by producers in-studio and then again by performers onstage. So why do I choose not to go that route? It's simple: we have way more fun our way. It looks and sounds different.

## Rise Of The Machines

When I started making electronic music in 1997 at age 16, the "machines" were all that was really available for electronic music, so that's what I learned on and felt comfortable with. Today, computers can mimic everything, but back in the late '90s, electronic bands like Underworld, The Chemical Brothers, and Daft Punk never sported a laptop on stage. They were headlining major commercial raves (Cream, Arrival, Bounce) in my hometown of Montreal, and it was just never a thing.

I couldn't afford expensive gear, so I got whatever my savings could have me (legally) bring home. I started with a Roland MC-303 Groovebox – \$700 at the time and a total rip off. It's a piece of machine that claims to do everything but is a master of nothing, unlike the Roland TB-303, TR-808, or 909, which specialize in one thing really well. Although it didn't sound great, I was hooked nonetheless as it was new and different. The MC-303 can be considered the first Ableton in that way.

One of the main things to look out for when buying an instrument is sound quality and the limits of your machine. The reason the MC-303 left lots to be desired was because the sounds it contained were PCM samples. Since they are samples, they don't sound as good as the originals created by analog oscillators, modified by ADSR envelopes.



The bit rate input and output of your machines is important as well. For instance, my Korg electribe ES-1 sampler (released in 1999 for \$750) was sampling my high-res samples and converting them to 32 kHz, which is like cutting samples with a bad MP3. For comparison, CD quality is at 44 kHz. Now imagine you are performing live at a banging club and the only thing you have at your disposal is an MP3 at 128 kbps. It might go smoothly depending on the track, but let's say the DJ right after you is playing that exact same track on vinyl, the sound will be like night and day – a

crowd will always be more responsive to heavy low and high end sound frequencies.

## The New Age

I recently purchased the Elektron Octatrack (\$1,400) and it is truly a wonderful machine. It doesn't convert the sound you sample into it, so what you send is exactly what you get. It can even inform you on how strong the sample you are importing is with a small graphic of a happy face. The indicator, located next to the sample, ranges from a sad face to straight face to a happy face, reflecting the quality of your sample input.

Many artists have a preconceived notion that all they need is a high quality sampler. This is not necessarily the case as there are always exceptions to the rule. There are some things you just can't mimic, like a Roland 808 drum machine, for instance. The reason for that is, again, analog is better than sampling. A computer will also always be digital, which tries to imitate the real thing but can never quite replicate it perfectly.

The best thing to do is find gear that is best suited to create your dream sound and pair them up. For instance, an Akai sampler, 808 drum machine, and a Prophet 12 keyboard will cost you around \$14,000, which is not a feasible budget for most. I would recommend working backward from there and finding out what your laptop and affordable electronic music equipment can replicate best until you can afford the real deal.

In HUMANS, we aren't at a point yet where we have all the gear from our wish list on stage, and know it will take time. That being said, we make due with what we have and really enjoy it.



# Don't Put The Harm In Harmony!

## Part 1

**W**e live in a time when vocalizing has never been more popular in pop culture. Between reality TV shows, karaoke, YouTube videos, traditional schools, community and church choirs, and the arrival of a cappella to the mainstream (thanks to the likes of Pentatonix, the *Pitch Perfect* movies, *The Sing Off*, etc.), it seems more people are singing than ever before!

But harmonizing, of course, has long been an outlet for vocalists to express themselves and share their musicality in a collective and fun way.

Growing up as a pianist, it wasn't until I was asked to join a vocal group that I came to the realization that I wanted to be a career musician. And actually, singing harmony was the clinching factor in my decision.

I discovered what had been known for centuries: that harmony bonds people together and has spiritual properties that seem to naturally "resonate" within each of us as if we are hard-wired to respond deeply to these communal sounds.

From Gregorian chant to madrigals, barbershop to doo-wop, Motown to modern a cappella, small ensemble singing has been a sonic staple for humans

throughout the course of history. Across cultures and genres, people have gathered in small groups to vocalize. It seems virtually every melodic song on radio today includes some vocal harmony.

There's potential work for all singers as both live and recording session background vocalists. And certainly, there's great joy and creativity in small ensemble singing. It can be both rewarding as a musical experience and another way to earn income. So how does one become a great harmonizer?

Fluency in musical theory can certainly help, but from the musical forms mentioned, it's clear that everyday people can become expert harmonizers. Here are some thoughts from my experience on how you can become a vocalist who harmonizes with the best of them.

### Just Do It

Like anything, the more you do it, the better you become. Any excellent harmonizers I know are constantly experimenting and practicing their ability to harmonize. Here are a few ideas:

- Don't sing the melody to songs on the radio; sing the harmony! And more importantly, sing both the close harmony above the melody and the closest

harmony underneath the melody (which is often trickier to do as we are drawn to the higher frequencies).

- Get a multi-track application for your smartphone (that is if you don't have a more elaborate recording rig) and practice harmonizing with yourself!
- Sing harmonies with other competent musicians! Learn how to listen and maintain position within a chord structure (relative to the melody).
- Listen and break down the harmonies to some of your favourite songs. See how they were arranged, either by focusing on and singing them yourself or by literally notating the vocal arrangements.
- Look at existing notated music to analyze how vocal harmonies have been arranged. Learn the parts and sing along!
- Take some ear training to hone your awareness of various intervals and strengthen your overall pitch.

These have all been hugely beneficial to me through the years as a vocalist, arranger, writer, and producer.

Now these above tips may help you with your ability to harmonize, but there's so much more to getting the gig and being a great ensemble vocalist or background singer. We'll look at those in the next issue.

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# Randy Bachman

**"I** kind of like the mess of living on the edge/that's where you'll find me," Randy Bachman sings over a propulsive beat and heavy riff on "The Edge," the lead-off track from his latest album, *Heavy Blues*. He sounds rejuvenated, as if there is something to prove. But is there?

He could play "American Woman," "You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet," "These Eyes," and "Takin' Care of Business" until his dying days. They're classics – the kind of songs you can't remember hearing for the first time because they've always been in your consciousness.

"Don't do the same old crap and call it new," Neil Young told him. It's January 2014 and Bachman is in Nashville to be inducted into the Musicians Hall of Fame, being honoured for a career that affords him the ability to keep doing the same old crap. He's telling Young he has a new deal from True North Records but little idea of what a new album will sound like. "Stop, reinvent yourself, write new songs, get different guitars, get different amps," Bachman recalls Young telling him, continuing the dialogue: "It's great to be scared again like you were when you were 15 and you were playing at your high school in Winnipeg." The comment resonates. There is a clear admiration that Bachman has for Young's fearlessness – his ability to just not care what others want or expect as well as his desire to still be scared.

"You need to have that fear because we don't have fear anymore," Bachman says in his fast-talking style, as if he wants to get the whole story out in one breath. "You play the same notes over and over because people want to hear the classic hits and you've got to play them exactly the same. There's not a lot of improvising. That's why I did some jazz things for a while, just because it's scary and new and it puts you on the edge."

With Young's challenge on his mind, Bachman knew whom he wanted to play with. A few months prior, he sat next to The Who's Pete Townsend during the Stratford Festival premiere of *Tommy*. "Pete leans over and says, 'The drummer is fucking amazing; it sounds like Keith Moon.' I said, 'The drummer is a girl,' and he says, 'It can't be. Look at the program; it says Dale Brendon.' I said, 'No, it says Dale Anne Brendon.'" Bachman actually knew Brendon from a few shows he played with country artist Shelly Rastin, for whom Brendon had drummed. "I'm sure it's a girl," he reiterated to Townsend.



# an's

# avy

By Michael Raine



RANDY BACHMAN,  
DALE ANNE BRENDON  
& ANNA RUDDICK

## How The Guitar Icon Got Outside His Comfort Zone & Created His Most Exciting Album In Years

# Blues

Bachman picks up the story backstage, where he finds Brendon. "About 10 years ago, I told you I wanted to do something with you. Do you want to do an album? Just you and me, like The White Stripes; I'll be Jack and you be Meg and we'll just go out, because she plays such incredible, full drums. More than just drum beats. She plays like a maniac," Bachman recounts excitedly. His manager, on the other hand, was less enthused. "He freaks out and says, 'You can't do a Jack White, just drums and guitar; you've got to do a little bit more!'" (Bachman is a consummate storyteller, with nearly every question being answered by a retelling of past conversations and events.)

Though the duo idea moved to the backburner as other projects and commitments took priority, that re-introduction to Brendon collided with Young's challenge in the form of bassist Anna Ruddick. Her band, Ladies of the Canyon, caught Bachman's attention during their 2014 JUNO Week performance. Bachman, of course, was in town for Bachman-Turner Overdrive's induction into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame. (Again, what's there still to prove?) "It is four chicks who look like Neil and Crazy Horse, with long hair and flannel shirts and ripped jeans, and they're playing this incredible country rock and the bass player is Anna Ruddick. I go, 'That is my bass player!'"

The *Heavy Blues* project and the Bachman-Brendon-Ruddick trio, which go simply by the moniker "Bachman," are about power. It is about reconnecting with the bass and drums-driven power blues of The Who, Jimi Hendrix, and Cream. "Anna showed up at our first meeting in a [Who bassist] John Entwistle t-shirt. I asked, 'Do you like John Entwistle?' and she goes, 'He's my favourite bass player of all time. He was in the pocket but he also filled all these holes and was at war with Keith Moon.' I said, 'I love that; I'm sick of rhythm sections that are boom-chick, boom-chick, boom-chick, just playing eighth notes,' which is what I was playing on my

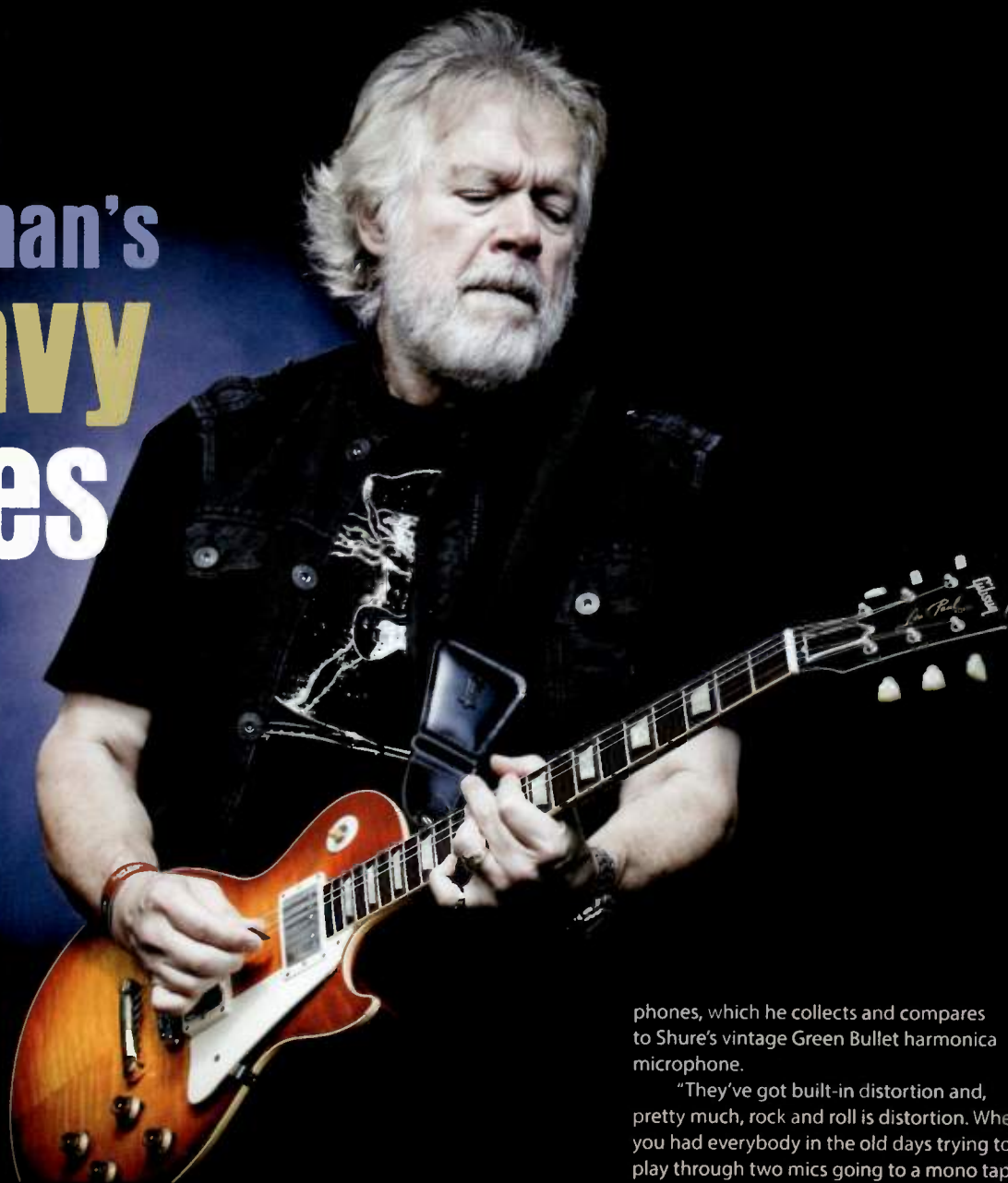


demos because it's so simple. So I said to them, 'When we record, I want you to play like John Entwistle and Dale Anne, I urge you to not play the drums; I want you to attack the drums. The drums are meant to be hit, not played.'

Bachman himself, over the decades, has developed one of the most recognizable guitar sounds in rock and roll. His most famous riff is so recognizable that his '59 Les Paul, commonly referred to as "the American Woman guitar," as well as the Garnet amp used on the song, were in Cleveland at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and are now being transferred to the newly constructed National Music Centre in Calgary. He's also a well-known collector and guitar obsessive – so much so that if *Canadian Musician* doesn't rein in the conversation, Bachman will gladly veer off into a 25-minute explanation of why Paul McCartney switched from a Hofner bass to a Rickenbacker in 1965.

For *Heavy Blues*, he wanted to completely alter his sound. He ditched the standard gear and immersed himself in the vintage Sears Roebuck & Co. catalog beginnings of the early blues players. "Before the blues guys could afford Les Pauls and Stratocasters, they all got Harmonys and Silvertones from

# Randy Bachman's Heavy Blues



the Sears catalog, just as when I was a kid in Winnipeg," he explains. "They were all made in Chicago and sold by Kay Guitars. So I went and bought a lot of those on eBay. The guitar I used the most on this, which I used on almost every song, was an old Supro Black Val-Trol and it has two pickups, one knob, and a three-way switch. That's the one I tried on every song and [producer] Kevin Shirley would say, 'That is the guitar. Never mind that one and never mind that one, but go back to that black Supro. For this song, this project, that is your sound.'"

The finer points of the *Heavy Blues* sound are a wormhole into which Bachman dives head first. "I am going through four amps; two Silvertone Piggyback amps from about 1959 and out of those I am going into what is called a National One Knob, which is an old National amp. It is slightly bigger than a lunch box – just a little speaker with one knob on it and it also has incredible dis-

tortion," he says at one of the more succinct segments of the explanation. "I also split my guitar through an old Roland Chorus but with the chorus turned off. It splits your guitar signals with the chorus off and there is a slight, like, millionth second delay between your guitar... I don't like a chorus but when the chorus is shut off, or it's on but the detuning is turned off, it gets you a full, fatter guitar sound, like Eddie Van Halen would do with Eventide Harmonizers."

Around the large glassed-in room at Metalworks Studios, Bachman and Shirley placed six microphones in a stereo spectrum at 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 o'clock. "So when I play these chords, they're coming from every direction. The first song, 'The Edge,' is me playing that one guitar and it sounds like I am doing a bunch of overdubs but it is all done at once." Keeping with the low-end vintage theme, Bachman opted for some of the old, inexpensive Realistic/Radio Shack micro-

phones, which he collects and compares to Shure's vintage Green Bullet harmonica microphone.

"They've got built-in distortion and, pretty much, rock and roll is distortion. When you had everybody in the old days trying to play through two mics going to a mono tape, everyone was distorting that mic beyond belief," he says, not passing up an opportunity for a history lesson. "Listen to a digital recording of Little Richard screaming and then the old vinyl; you can really hear the difference in the distortion. We grew up with distortion so I wanted a lot of distortion in there."

One more note on the tone of the album, specifically Ruddick's bass. She brought six of her own to the studio, but what she used, at Bachman's insistence, was the single-pickup Rickenbacker 4000 that Fred Turner played on "You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet" and other BTO tracks. Bachman insists that Rickenbacker basses were never the same once they switched to two pickups. He recalls that Ruddick – who was not a fan of the Rickenbacker's feel, saying it had too many frets – would play an alternate bass for a take and then Shirley would continually ask her to play it again with the Rickenbacker. Playing both takes back without saying which was which, he'd ask Ruddick to pick the one she liked. Each time, it was the Rickenbacker take.

(In a moment of unpremeditated generosity, Bachman gifted Ruddick the bass, only to realize he needed it for the "BTO sound" in concert. He scoured the Internet for a replacement, eventually finding one for a large sum on Craigslist in Seattle.)

Among media, Bachman fans, and fellow musicians, it is not Bachman's new sound or the all-female rhythm section that has generated the most buzz. It's the seven, star-laden guest guitar solos. Given Neil Young's influence on the whole project, it's fitting that he provides a characteristically ramshackle solo on "Little Girl Lost." The other solos come courtesy of Joe Bonamassa, Scott Holiday, Whitehorse's Luke Doucet, Robert Randolph, Peter Dinklage, and even the late Jeff Healey. The Healey solo on "Confessin' to the Devil" was taken from a live recording of he and Bachman playing B.B. King's "Early in the Morning" at Massey Hall in 2007.

The guest solos were not planned at the outset of *Heavy Blues*. The first guest solo came from Bonamassa, who works with producer Kevin Shirley regularly. Bachman didn't even know Bonamassa was contributing anything to the album until he mentioned it in passing over lunch. It was all Shirley's idea. "Kevin then sends me a solo and I go, 'This is incredible! Instead of me doing all my boring-self solos, how about I ask a few other guys?'" Bachman recalls.

While not one for understatement – "amazing" and "incredible" appear to be two of his favourite words – Bachman seems genuinely touched by his friends' contributions. "They gave me their own identity, their heart and soul, and some of their best licks. Nobody held anything back," he says. "All the playing from all the guys was such an incredible gift to me and that was so touching."

Part of the reason the guest solos work so well on the album, Bachman believes, is that they provide an ideal counterpoint to his own style. Describing his own work as slow and Eric Clapton-esque, the others "play absolutely, totally against me, with a brighter tone."

Over the course of a few months, Shirley would send the recorded tracks to the guitarists and they would send back their parts. Anything Shirley and Bachman received was on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. There were no do overs.

"Basically, we did mixes of all the songs and sent them out to guys; to Frampton, who was on tour until the middle of October; Robert Randolph, the same thing; Neil Young, who was in Israel at the time; and stuff like that. So we waited to get these tracks back from the guys. They sent them to Kevin Shirley and he comped them, he laid them in the track, and he sent them to me and I just went, 'Wow. This just blows me away.' But when I was doing my emailing with these guys, I just went, 'Look, I know

how you play' – Neil and Peter and Scott Holiday, and stuff – 'I want you to play and just pretend that this is your track. I don't want to tell you what to play. I am kind of like a movie director. I have hired you because you're an actor and you can act this part out, so dig deep in you and really make this part you.'"

While all the solos add a unique element to their respective songs, a standout moment is Robert Randolph's slide guitar on "Oh My Lord." Randolph and Bachman met at Frampton's Guitar Circus in Los Angeles and Bachman was stunned by his virtuosity and showmanship, comparing his performance to Hendrix.

"There are no solos in the original 'Oh My Lord,' so we just took the intro and [repeated] it a zillion times and let him play and play and play until he plays it out. But he never plays out, it gets better and better!" says Bachman. "On the last pass he does this little sitar kind of thing, almost like a clarinet playing Jewish Klezmer music. It just totally blew me away. I said [to Shirley], 'You know, we're not going to get any radio airplay, anyway, so let's just leave it in its entirety.'"

Lyrically, *Heavy Blues* features some of Bachman's most urgent writing in years. The opening lines of the title track – "You think that life is full of sunshine/breaking even and paying your dues/get ready for the hit/watch your step or you will slip/heavy blues is going to fall on you" – are characteristic of the album's sentiment.

"In the last four or five years, I've changed my life. I've sold [my house on] Salt Spring Island, I got divorced, I moved to Toronto, I got a new band. I still work with my old band, but a lot of changes went through me that were emotional and spiritual and mental and physical and everything else and that all kind of comes out in the music."

Additionally, Bachman's approach to writing influenced the album in a number of ways. For one, he doesn't come into the studio with complete songs. Instead, he comes with a first verse and chorus, opting to lay that down and repeat the first verse three times to see if the song is going to work. "Why waste your time and effort if it's going to be thrown off the album?" he asks rhetorically. After the test take, Shirley would immediately send him back to the booth to make up proper verses. "Out of this urgency, I think, came some of the greatest lyrics."

His writing process hasn't changed much since he and Burton Cummings were teenagers trying to find the magical formula of pop music.

"I do look at what's happening – who's out there and who's had a hit and I try to write their follow up hit. So every hit that's been had – Mike and the Mechanics, Celine Dion, name anybody – I've written their follow up hit," he says. The formula is fairly

straightforward; write new lyrics to a great song, write a new guitar part for the new lyrics, write a new melody for the new guitar part, and voila, you've got a new song.

"Way, way back with Cummings, we would sit and try to write follow-up hit songs. Of course, they never get to that person. You can't get it to anybody because you never have a really great publisher that peddles songs, like Tin Pan Alley. So you end up recording your own songs and suddenly you're a hit recording artist because you've written these really quite good songs, which are basically copies of other people's hit songs. When you do them yourself, it obviously doesn't sound like The Hollies or Crosby, Stills & Nash, or whoever you've written it for. It sounds like you. It is you and your buddies singing, so you end up with your own identity."

No doubt this is an oversimplification of what Bachman does, but the lesson stands. Writing doesn't need to be overly complicated. For *Heavy Blues*, a rare instance of Bachman taking lead vocals on every track, his limited vocal range influenced the album's grittier sound. Since his teenage years, Bachman has insisted that he only sings by default. He describes himself as a songwriter first, guitarist second, and singer third. With singing, there is no ego here.

"When I really want to write a great song that's melodic, like 'These Eyes,' that you need three and half or four octaves to sing, then it goes to a guy like Burton. When he sang 'These Eyes,' I think he was 18 or 19 and the vocal on that is amazing. Same with 'She's Come Undone.' He had an amazing voice. When you have that kind of vehicle to drive you to where you want to go, you plan a different route."

The route to *Heavy Blues* was more an off-road expedition than a highway drive on cruise control. Bachman sought and welcomed challenges, which is admirable, because when you're being honoured at every turn for past greatness, it is easy to hit cruise control.

"This is a big step out for me to do a whole album on my own and have Kevin Shirley there to produce me and pull me past my stop," he says. "Whereas, when I would produce myself, I would sing a vocal and go, 'I'm great, that's fantastic, and now I'm going to have dinner, watch *Jeopardy!*, and go to sleep,' Kevin would say, 'No. I am going to keep you awake until you give me a better guitar solo,' or something. He would push me past my stop sign and then he would amaze me because I never would've gone there on my own. It's very easy to get complacent."



Michael Raine  
is the Assistant Editor of  
Canadian Musician.



# DEAD ROADS & BACKSTAGE

## On Tour With Brett Kissel

By Andrew King

Brett Kissel is no stranger to hard work. Born and bred in rural Alberta, late nights on country music club and festival stages were often followed by early mornings in the barn and fields. That work ethic has been instrumental to the advancement of his music career, the trajectory of which has been nothing short of incredible over the past 18 months.

The Brett Kissel boom began with the late-October 2013 release of *Started With A Song* on Warner Music Canada. (At least figuratively, as Brett's first record, *Keepin' It Country*, actually dropped when he was 12 years old.) As is usually the case with hard work, the best part is seeing it pay off.

In the months since *Started With A Song* first dropped, Kissel has seen its title track and first

single break a record as the most-added song on Canadian country radio in its first week; took home a handful of statues from esteemed awards programs, including the 2014 JUNO Award for Breakthrough Artist of the Year; late last year, he joined one of country music's biggest stars, Brad Paisley, on a tour of some of Canada's major hockey barns. His most recent announcement was an invitation to perform at Nashville's iconic Grand Ole Opry.

Rocking everything from clubs and bars to soft-seat theatres to major outdoor festivals and arenas with 20,000-plus seats in just over a year gives Kissel, his band, and trusted crew a rather unique perspective on live performance. Fortunately for us, it's one he and some of his crew were happy to share.

## THE CAPTAIN: BRETT KISSEL

**CM:** You've played in virtually every type of live scenario a country band can, from crowded bars to theatres to huge outdoor festivals. Then, there was the late-2014 run with Brad Paisley. Are there any particular live scenarios that you enjoy more than others, or perhaps find more beneficial for your career?

**BK:** To be honest, a year and a half ago, I did look forward to certain shows more than other shows. I was more excited about playing festivals than bars; I had dreams of playing arenas. But over the past eight months, my outlook has completely changed.

Now, what I'm most excited about is the experience I'm going to get from the fans. Playing with Brad Paisley in the arenas, you have 14,000 people coming out, but as the opening act, you have to work hard to win them over. I'm entertaining while they're finding their seats, getting their beers... But if I'm playing a club for 500 people or a theatre of 1,000 that are engaged, hardcore Brett Kissel fans, it's a totally different atmosphere and much more exciting.

I'm excited to get onstage no matter what the scenario is, but it's interesting how much it's changed over the past 18 months.

**CM:** We're going to be speaking with your front of house and monitor engineers from the Paisley run, and I know you've had long-running relationships

with much of your crew. Generally speaking, what are the traits you look for in a sound technician?

**BK:** A lot of people have talent, but what I look for as the leader of the band is great personalities – people that combine great talent with great attitudes. All of the guys on my team are first-class, but I don't think talent alone can get you anywhere today.

**CM:** Regardless of the type of venue, what are some of the "musts" when it comes to how you want to sound onstage and for the audience?

**BK:** What's very important to me is that we create a great live experience for the fans, and it all stems from sound. Joel [Bird, FOH engineer] is one of the best. He's a very active mixer, and that's important to me – someone that understands the set list and even what the lyrics are saying. So if it's a softer song, he can bring the vocal up or bring the key acoustic instruments to the forefront, and then if the next song is a rocker, he can change his approach to make that song more effective.

As for monitors, I want my mix to sound like the album. I need to hear every instrument. Some guys are more acoustic and vocal, or kick, hi-hat, and vocal, but I want the whole experience – I want to hear what the fans are hearing.

I got custom-moulded ears for the summer and Brad Paisley tours. Be-

fore that, I was strictly a wedge guy because I wanted to hear the crowd. Now, with crowd mics, my ears sound like a million bucks.

**CM:** Do you try and have the live sound and performance mimic the way things sound on record, or do you mix things up as far as the mix and overall experience from the stage?

**BK:** I know exactly what you mean. Earlier on in my career, it was important to have things sound like the album. Now, we have the confidence that, having been playing [*Started With A Song*] for two years, we can top the album. When it comes to what Joel is doing, we want it very full, very round, very big – where you can hear everything individually and it's not just a big muffled wall of drums and vocal.

**CM:** Do any specific songs, or perhaps your material in general, present any challenges when it comes to delivering them from the stage?

**BK:** The fiddle. I find it's hard to make a fiddle sound good live, but it's one of the most prominent instruments on the album and in our show. Joel has found a way to make it prominent and sound so good – even just judging by a 15-second Instagram clip that a fan had posted. It's so special that he can make it sound so good when so many others make it sound pretty bad.

**CM:** The Paisley tour was another huge milestone for you in a short amount of time. Any lessons you learned on that tour that will stay with you on future road dates?

**BK:** The biggest thing I learned from Brad and his crew was attention to detail. Every arena is different. Just because you're on tour and doing the same set list three weeks in a row, everything else is different from date to date, so being willing to change everything from show to show to make sure the audience is always getting the best is very important. Brad was never satisfied until things were pretty much perfect, and as an opening act, if your headliner has that attention to detail, then we should, too.

**CM:** You've got a new release expected before the end of the year. Have you been road testing some new material?

**BK:** Yeah, definitely this summer. We'll have new music out for the summer touring schedule. Nothing excites me more than playing new songs and getting the face-to-face reaction from the crowd. The songs we have tried out are sounding better than we'd anticipated, and I think the crowd is going to love them, too.



Photo: Mike Hodge

# ROADS & BACKSTAGE



Joel Bird

## JOEL BIRD Front Of House Engineer

Joel Bird is a freelance live sound pro based out of Edmonton, AB. In addition to his work with Brett Kissel, he has mixed and tour managed acts like Tupelo Honey, Econoline Crush, and Social Code.

**CM:** You've been doing live sound for years with different artists. Is there anything particularly unique about your approach to mixing Brett or country music in general?

**JB:** I don't know if it'd be much different for me. I find that a lot of today's country music is kind of rock music, so the guys on stage might craft their tones to fit with a more country sound, but my mix is similar. I have a good understanding of what I need to do to put things into a place where I have a good start to work with.



Brett Kissel & Brad Paisley on stage

**CM:** If it's a larger festival or arena tour, you've got a huge rig supplied for you, but are there any tools that you always carry with you because you can't go without them?

**JB:** We definitely always have to have wireless transmitters and receivers for our instruments and for Brett to sing through. The show is so much better when Brett is able to move around and interact with people freely. Other than that, it's pretty straightforward with me – drums, bass, guitars, and vocals. It's not rocket science; it's just using the tools available the way they should be used.

I should add we've had a lot of success with the new digital desks, and being able to load in plug-ins and do all kinds of different things. It's a really exciting time; the next five years are going to be really cool for live audio.

**CM:** Does Brett's material or show in general present any unique challenges for your mix?

**JB:** My biggest concern for probably the last 15 years of my career has been to make sure that all of my band members onstage are happy. That includes monitors, backline – if they're having a great show onstage, regardless of what else is happening, I can make it work. That's the starting place. If they're happy, then I can go with it.

**CM:** Describe the overall sound you're aiming to deliver for Brett. Does he offer a lot of input on how he wants it to sound, or does he leave it to you to do your thing?

**JB:** Interestingly, it's a little bit of both. Brett is a very impressive person, both personally and his onstage figure. He could easily command a hockey arena and have 14,000 people totally captivated. As far as our live show goes, he definitely leaves it up to me, but he's not scared to give me input. If he walks out during sound check, he might ask me to bring certain

things up in the mix or try things out.

We were doing an early evening slot at [a major country festival], and there were about 10,000 people there. There were several bands performing before us being mixed the same way, with a really muddy sound and a really overpowering vocal. He came up to me before going on and said, "I don't want to sound like that." What he and I do together really works.

**CM:** Yeah, Brett had a lot of good things to say about your mix. He specifically mentioned your ability to mix the fiddle. Can you give us a bit of insight into your approach?

**JB:** Years and years ago, when I first started doing sound, I was involved in a television show shot in my home town of Prince Albert [SK], and it was called *Number One West*. The host was Brian Sklar, who went by the nickname of Captain Canada. He was a fiddle player. He'd always say one thing: "Get rid of that zingy-ness on the top end." That's something I always aim to do – controlling that top end so that, when you turn it up in the mix, it's as smooth as possible.

You might have to work on the violin a bit more compared to other instruments, but Brett's fiddle player, Tyler Vollrath, and his uncle, Calvin, they're fiddle masters. They know how the instrument should sound and make it easy for me to make it sound good live.

I consider the fiddle to be a voice, and if I can make a voice sound good, I can make a fiddle sound good.

**CM:** You've been mixing sound for well over two decades; any advice you can share with others looking to potentially pursue this as a career path?

**JB:** That's a tough one. It's unfortunate that the state of the industry isn't really performing the way people would like it to be. A lot of our live shows are few and far between. With that, there's always work for people that want to do sound. Down the street from my house, there's a seniors centre that has dances



Nick Hayes

Chase Tower

and little concerts and whatnot. There's a sound system there and somebody needs to mix it.

I went to school years ago and didn't really know what I was going to do. I hooked up with friends and started mixing sound. I was nothing special, but just kept working at it. After 26 years, it's probably the last 12 or 15 that I've been more successful to the point that people know who I am in the industry and appreciate what I do for them. It's not easy, but if you find people you mesh with and people you enjoy working with, that makes it a lot easier.

## NICK HAYES

### Monitor Engineer

Based in Saskatoon, SK, Nick Hayes has been mixing monitors for the likes of Adam Gregory, the Edmonton Folk Festival, and many of Western Canada's best-known venues. He started the Brad Paisley tour with his teammates; however, left partway through the run to welcome a child.

**CM:** Considering the size of the venues, how did your rig differ for the Brad Paisley run compared to previous venues you've played?

**NH:** With the Paisley tour, the big change was going completely to ears and getting away from the wedge and ear combo. It was a big change for [Brett], and we didn't have a whole lot of time going in to this as far as rehearsing, but had a few days and managed to dial in a pretty nice and full mix. We were using PSM 900s from Shure, which sound deadly.

**CM:** How about the venues specifically – did you find any significant differences between mixing in an arena compared to the other types of venues Brett has performed?

**NH:** I don't notice too much of a change. The nice thing with the arena shows is that they actually start on time [laughs].

I've been working on and off with Brett going all the way back to when he was a kid performing at talent shows. But he threw down some big performances [on this tour] and it was impressive. I like how focused he is when he is playing. Even on the tech side, there's a reason we have so much wireless, and that's because of how he wants to interact with the audience. He has a really clear vision of how he wants the show to come across, regardless of where he's playing.

**CM:** How do you shape your mix when working with Brett? What does he generally like?

**NH:** It's not just a pile of vocals with a band mix, and a lot of country is like that, with the vocals really on top. He wants a full mix with impact and balance. I'm always trying to stay on top of solos and stuff, too, to help him achieve a polished house mix.

As far as monitors in general, with country, it's centered on the vocal. It's about dialing things in around that. I also want to make sure the musicians are happy with how their instruments sound. I start with drums, and get the right tone and levels dialed in. Then I move to bass and so on. When I do that, I typically find the whole mix comes together easier because you know what each person is looking for; you're not just dialing in random EQs and whatnot.

## CHASE TOWER

### Monitor Engineer

When he's not out on the road with Brett Kissel or other clients, like Travis Tritt or Montgomery Gentry, Chase Tower works with Sound Art, a sound reinforcement company based in Winnipeg. Tower took over for Hayes on the second half of the Brad Paisley tour.

**CM:** Since you took over for Nick, how did you find the experience of "inheriting" the rig and settings and making

sure to be consistent with the band while also doing things the way that was most comfortable to you?

**CT:** Nick had a great starting point for me when I took over the run. More or less, I left things as they were for consistency's sake, adding in a few of my favourite plug-ins on the Avid SC48 to tailor the file more to my mixing techniques.

**CM:** Is there anything particularly unique about your approach when it comes to mixing mons for Brett and the band compared other artists you've worked with in the past?

**CT:** One thing about Brett is he is very particular and in-tune with his mix. He knows exactly what he wants to hear and he knows how to convey that to me, which I have a huge respect for. I've worked with [many] artists and they really don't know how to communicate what they want. Not with Brett. That's a breath of fresh air.

With Brett and the guys, it's heads up mixing. I can't have my head buried in the console; I have to know where I am at all times – eyes on them.

**CM:** How did you find this tour as far as doing what you do on a very large scale, compounded with some of the limitations – namely time – that come with being a support act?

**CT:** I've done many North American tours in the opening slot. [This time,] we were treated as openers above and beyond what I could have ever expected. The Sound Image [based in Escondido, CA] and Brad Paisley crews treated us like gold, giving us the space and time we needed to get up and going and have an amazing show. ■



Andrew King  
is the Editor of  
Canadian Musician.

# Crisis or Evolution?

## Discussing The State Of Canada's Music Industry

by Paul Gains

"I just wrote a song called 'I Will Be,'" Chantal Kreviazuk says in an incredulous tone, "And there are some people who say, 'When is an album coming?' I am like, 'Album? I just gave you a song. That's all I've got.'"

The Winnipeg-born singer/songwriter laughs heartily as she relates this tale but her statement fairly sums up the current state of the music industry.

As album sales continue to decline, singles are where the action is. A younger generation, in particular, is downloading at lightning speed but largely uninterested in an entire album.

Most astonishing is the fact that, despite the millions of songs available as downloads, the majority of them don't get listened to – not even once. According to a report by *MusicWithMe*, most people listen to only 19 per cent of the music on their iPod. It's a fact that artists like Kreviazuk – who, for the record, gladly pays for downloads – are only too aware.

"Why would I slave for a year in a studio so you can listen to one song?" she continues. "The album experience, for me anyway, it's become, 'Who can afford to do it? Where is the money coming from to make a record?' I don't get that."

The money that was once available from record companies has dried up. The number of major labels in this country has been reduced to three: Sony Music Entertainment Canada, Universal Music Canada, and Warner Music Canada, meaning fewer artists are receiving contracts. And those who do may well be subjected to "360 deals," whereby the label arranges record production, tours, and

merchandising then pays the artist a share. That's not the end of it.

In his book *The Killing of the Creative Class*, author Scott Timberg laments the loss of what he calls the "oft mocked supporting casts – record store clerks, roadies, critics, publicists, and supposedly exploitive record label folk" who through their knowledge have traditionally helped connect musicians to their audiences. When people download songs, they are also missing out on the liner notes that accompany physical products. This adds to the disconnect between musicians and music buyers.

"Certainly, I started my career before downloading took over. I sort of had five years of the glory days of selling CDs," says Jesse Cook, a JUNO Award-winning rumba flamenco guitarist. "There were stores that would actually let you come and perform because it was worth their time to let you. In fact, there were stores that sold CDs and even that seems anachronistic in this day and age."

"The last 15 years have been the other side of that coin, you know, trying to grapple with what is the new state of the music industry? What is the new paradigm and how does it work? It is something, I think, everybody is trying to figure out."

By his own admission, Cook has sold well over 1.5 million CDs throughout his prolific career. The first three of his



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albums quickly went gold in Canada, with *Freefall* attaining platinum status in 2001. His most recent studio album is 2009's *Rumba Foundation*, perhaps his most successful in terms of chart success but not sales, taking three years to go gold.

"It debuted at number one in the world music chart, and the songs from the CD were eight of the top 10 spots on the world music chart for a week," he recalls. "It was kind of like being The Beatles of world music in Canada. The CD itself was the number one CD for the entire year on iTunes, and at the end of the year, the number one world music CD. But it hadn't gone gold. *Freefall* was gold in two months and platinum within six months. It was a huge paradox that this incredibly successful record doesn't sell huge numbers."

A few years ago, Music Canada, the non-profit agency that promotes the interests of the major record labels, actually reduced the number of units necessary to reach gold and platinum status in Canada, now 40,000 and 80,000 units, respectively, to reflect the changing times.

The agency's president is Graham Henderson, formerly both an entertainment lawyer and the senior VP of business affairs and e-commerce at Universal Music Canada. Downloading and file sharing triggered this downturn in CD sales, he says, but he fears the growing trend toward streaming, where an artist receives a fraction of a penny per listen.

"I well remember 2003, 2004, the problem with an artist; we had invested almost a million dollars in her," Henderson recalls. "Her name was Jully Black. Her record leaked on one of the illegal services and then, when it came out, it sold 12,000 copies and faded. And yet here is somebody who was pretty much becoming a household name. There were plenty of instances like that."

"It looks like money is now being concentrated in fewer and fewer hands; there is no middle class in music anymore. In the '90s, bands could enter into the sweepstakes of the recording industry with a legitimate chance to make money as professionals. Maybe the band fails. Ok, you can make money as a session musician, or a touring musician, or go into other facets that are spinoffs of it. You had a shot. You could be k.d. lang and doing 'cow punk' and have a legitimate shot at entering the middle class. Can you say that today? I think the answer is a resounding no."

Two decades ago, David Bendeth, a former Canadian musician, moved to New York to take on the position of senior VP of artists and repertoire and staff producer for RCA Records. He had previously been VP of A&R for BMG Canada. He offers a much more blunt perspective.

"Look, there is no question that the CD has gone away, but it's gone away because of the fact that people can't lug 30 CDs with them and they are not going to," he declares. "That's just not the reality anymore. Nobody has a bag of CDs. That's kind of a dumb idea. We have a phone and that's how we play music these days. We have a portable MP3 player and that's how we play music. In fact, every car has one. I mean, move with the times; you can't sit around and mope about a format that is dead in the water."

Bendeth has also written songs for Jeff Beck, Joe Cocker, and more recently earned a 2011 SOCAN songwriting award

for co-writing Hedley's "Perfect." But these days, he earns a good living at the console at the studio he owns in New Jersey called House of Loud. Bands such as Breaking Benjamin, Paramore, Bring Me The Horizon, and The Vamps are among his clientele. Canadians need to come to grips with music downloads as a fact of life, he warns.

"In the rest of the world it's completely different, but in North America, it's a reality that you are going to have 30 or 40 per cent of your music stolen," he reveals. "You can go to any industry in the media and say that is going to happen. I mean, you can go right now anywhere on the internet and watch any movie that is now in a movie theatre. That's reality and people need to wake up and realize we have moved on and it's about how we deal with it."

He sees the subscription-based services, which offer unlimited music much like Netflix does with film, as the way forward. But the question remains, how does the artist get a fair share?

Over his 40-year career, Tom Cochrane has sold roughly eight million records. Earlier this year he released *Take It Home*, his first CD in nine years. It is

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IN PROGRESS



CHANTAL KREVIAZUK



JESSE COOK

# Crisis or Evolution?

arguably his finest work. Although he has kept busy with festivals, charity shows, and art, the decline in industry CD sales may have been partially the reason for his delay in returning to the studio.

"That's a practical consideration, and maybe in the back of my mind that is what I felt," Cochrane reflects. "You have got to do it because you want to do it. You don't do it because you're thinking the chart numbers are ok and it's doing well at HMV and stuff. I don't know how much that means these days. A buddy of mine, Sam Feldman, said, 'The record is a poster for the tour.' And so we have gone full circle back to the '50s when people released singles and radio was this new thing and kind of took on a presence.

"I was talking with my buddy [Rush guitarist] Alex Lifeson. Al said, 'We lived through the golden years, Tom.' I was one of the lucky Canadian male singer/songwriters. That will probably never happen again. That was a time and I was lucky to make a good living, residuals are good and all that stuff; it's not like I have to get out there. I hope people aren't going, 'Geez, poor Tom. He's out there struggling to do this.' I do this because I want to do it and I like to, but for younger guys starting out? It's a lot tougher."

While Music Canada is pressing the federal government for better protection for artists' copyrighted material, SOCAN has been actively pursuing all avenues to protect music licensing. Bars and restaurants have long been required to pay an annual license fee of roughly \$300 for the public use of music in their establishments. SOCAN is now contacting fitness clubs, yoga studios, and even dental

offices to collect tariffs, which add to the pool available to artists.

From that pool, SOCAN members, the creators, receive 86 cents for each dollar.

If these seem like desperate times, it's worth noting that some seasoned musicians recognize that there is a positive side. The playing field is open to more artists than ever before and the record companies are no longer the 'gate keepers' deciding who will make it in the industry or not. Artists are learning how to use social media and the internet to market themselves.

"Look at my buddy Kevin Drew [of Broken Social Scene]. He has toured all over the world because he has been able to network through the internet," Cochrane insists. "But we couldn't do that back in the day. We had to depend on agents and record companies. Universal has been very supportive to me.

"A lot of these kids have to do a great deal of it themselves. The middle class has sort of fallen away. You have the small percentage of artists – the Drakes, the Taylor Swifts – who do really well, but in terms of what they would have done 20 years ago, it's smaller for sure."

Both Cochrane and Cook, stars in their respective genres, realize that sales "off the stage" are now going to account for a larger percentage of numbers than in the past, and that touring is the primary way to earn money.

Cook has a new CD, *One World*, coming out on April 28<sup>th</sup> and admits that his particular audience likes to have something tangible following a concert. After his five-piece band has finished on stage, he signs newly purchased CDs for fans in the auditorium. Add in rehearsals, travel time, load in, sound checks, as well as costs to bring

musicians, roadies, and technicians along and touring is not nearly as lucrative to the average musician as it appears. But some bands can still sell a couple thousand CDs a month. It's about knowing your audience.

"We have been touring non-stop for years," says Cook. "Luckily, we are doing a large enough scale all over the world. What that means is we are not visiting the same city more than twice within one record cycle – hopefully once in a record cycle. Luckily, there are enough cities out there to go to and you can keep going.

It's a big world.

"It's funny, I have never actually sat down and counted them, but I would say we play over a hundred shows in a year. That's just about right for me. I know there are some people who do way more and they just live their lives on the road. But most of us have families, so we go out for three weeks, come home for three weeks, go out for three weeks..."

An intuitive businessman as well as a brilliant musician, Cook invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in producing his own PBS Television special believing that this would introduce him to a wider U.S. audience. Already, he says, he has been playing larger U.S. venues and bringing in bigger ticket revenues. Eventually, he hopes to recoup the investment.

"If my touring was not growing, my income would have dropped hugely," he declares. "Certainly my record royalties are nothing compared to what they used to be, even though from a chart position my CDs continue to do as well as they ever did. But the actual royalty pay, I can't remember the last time I got a royalty



DAVID BENDETH



JACK DEKEYSER

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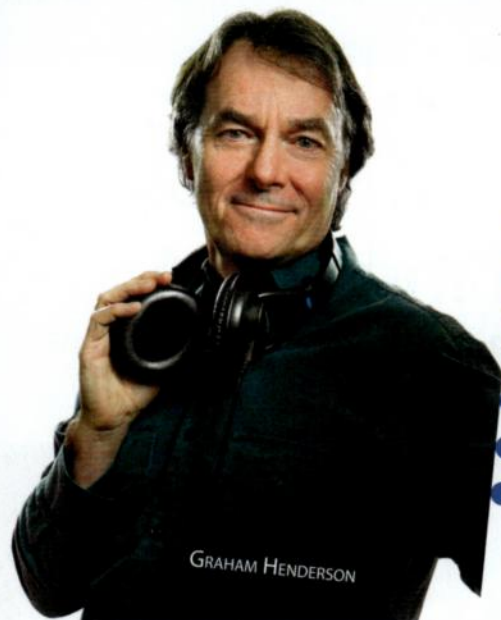
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# Crisis or Evolution?



cheque that was more than \$3,000 and there used to be a lot more zeroes behind that in the old days."

Though she is best known for her songwriting, Kreviazuk is also filling her calendar with concerts across the continent. She derives her income equally from both songwriting and performances and one fuels the other.

"Music is magic," she insists. "I can't think of many things as mind-blowing as music. I can't understand how it became a free service. I am stuck with that. It's a tough thing for me. I don't think it's enough to say, 'Here is a bunch of artists.' I think we need to go deeper. I think we need to cradle and nurture this relationship with the artist's consciousness. There is a whole piece that is just missing, throwing a bunch of artists and their music on a site and saying, 'Here. Pay for it.'"

All of the aforementioned artists have earned songwriting royalties in the past with a good distribution of CDs. But some genres aren't as well supported. Performers such as bluesman Jack DeKeyzer, a two-time JUNO Award winner and seven-time Maple Blues Award-winning guitarist, are on the road for well over 100 shows each year.

"My CD sales were almost all sold at shows for me," he reveals. "The distribution thing died out probably seven or eight years ago. So, yeah, changes are pretty obvious. Record stores have disappeared, but on the plus side, with the internet and Twitter and e-marketing you can reach so many people. Today, you can broadcast your music world-wide for the price of an internet connection."



Unlike other blues artists, DeKeyzer has avoided playing bars where there is no cover charge and where patrons are more interested in the television – venues he calls the "chicken wing places." Instead, he plays for a cover charge collected at the door. Besides, bars are still paying a token sum for musicians. And he is not afraid to turn down low-paying gigs that devalue his worth.

"At some point, once you have your musical skills together, you have to get your marketing chops together. Hopefully, with all that going on, you can make a go of it," DeKeyzer says.

"For sure, you definitely have to understand the business and, the way I understood it, we started playing for the door really and then it becomes your crowd, your audience, your marketing, and you know what your value is."

Musicians entering the industry would do well to follow DeKeyzer's example, but many find themselves in major centres where the competition is intense. The abundance of talent has fostered the "tip jar culture," wherein clubs may offer a spot without paying the band or charging a cover charge at the door. They invite bands to pass around a jar.

This has become common in many so called "music cities" including Toronto, Nashville, and Memphis. Cosmo Ferraro is the talent buyer at The Cameron House in Toronto, one of the places where, on any given night, elite musicians drop in to see up and coming acts. The venue has two rooms.

"If you want to sell tickets, you can do it in the back room," Ferraro says. "In the front room, we like to keep it free. A lot of people are walking down the street and hear music and wander in. And bands like



that too. They get to play for people that don't necessarily know them and they get to build an audience that way. They also get a percentage of the bar to complement what they get from the jar."

Clearly it is more difficult to earn a living in the music industry than it was in the "golden era," which many successful artists enjoyed.

"I am spoiled rotten because I was able to develop a fan base starting some 20 years ago now and still have them to play to," Kreviazuk concludes. "But I get a small glimpse into it and I tell you, it's hard. It can really beat you down. I'd probably tell my son to go and find another job (laughs) and find something he's going to get paid at."

"But when one is truly creative, and has the passion, and has that gumption, it's like a train. It's hard to stop that. I wouldn't really want to ultimately stop someone from exploring all the possibilities."

*Based in Cambridge, ON, Paul Gains has been a full time freelance journalist since 1995 and has written for The New York Times, Maclean's, GQ, The Toronto Star, The Globe and Mail, National Post, Time, and many other periodicals around the world. Thursday evenings, he enjoys playing his six-string Martin at a local Cambridge pub.*



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# Red, Green & Blues

## A COLOURFUL CAST OF PLAYERS IN OUR 2015 GUITAR FOCUS

By Ryan Shuvera

For this year's focus on the six-string, we've gathered a mix of guitarists with eclectic styles that share at least one thing in common: a tasteful tinge of the blues.

Colin James is, quite simply, a Canadian blues hero, though he's equally as capable in rock and swing. Luke Doucet of Whitehorse and Tom Wilson of Lee Harvey Osmond and Blackie and the Rodeo Kings bring hints of the blues to their unique styles of songwriting while Philip Sayce plays more firmly in the traditions of virtuosos like Hendrix, Clapton, and Cooder. Heath Fogg of Alabama Shakes blends southern rock with blues and soul while Matthew Rogers of The Harpoonist and The Axe Murderer goes for the "guts" of the genre.

Whether you're a blues purist or just like a shade of it, we've got you covered. Dive in and discover something new about your favourite blues guitarist, or simply discover your new favourite.



**CM:** Tell us a bit about the evolution from *Fifteen* to *Hearts on Fire*.

**CJ:** The main difference with the approach on *Hearts On Fire* would be that we kept a lot more of the recordings live. The songs dictated that approach. These songs were more acoustic-based and simple in their instrumentation. I really wanted a record you could put on and leave on without a lot of hard edges. It was so fun to play live in that it forced me to slow down a couple times in the show instead of bulldozing through the set. It's harder to do live, but really worth the effort.

**CM:** You're known for showcasing a lot of different styles and influences. Do you ever find it difficult to satisfy all urges? Are there songs that get cut from albums because they "might not fit"?

**CJ:** You know, as long as you take it project by project and are true to the one you are working on now, it works out. I love a lot of styles and have been really lucky that I have been able to exercise my love for the Little Big Band '40s and '50s blues, as well as some straight blues and the more pop-oriented contemporary things that I have written and co-written. I have been sitting in with a bluegrass band once in a while, playing my mandolin a bit, too. It is so important to keep learning and challenging yourself.

**CM:** You're also playing acoustic shows in between shows with the full band. Why did you decide to mix in these acoustic shows instead of doing an acoustic tour afterwards, for example? Does it provide some sort of sonic balance?

**CJ:** Yes! Sonic balance is a great way to put it. I love full-energy electric shows and have been doing them all my life. I still love them. The thing about the acoustic shows is that they have way more space, sonically and mentally. You can change it up on the fly without having to worry about a whole band coming with you. It also forces me to relate more to the audience, which has been really great. I am by nature kind of shy and these shows have forced me to be a bit more talkative.

**CM:** Do you think there is a welcoming or accepting environment for blues music in Canada?

**CJ:** I think so. The blues community in Canada really looks after its own and tries to provide a place to play in a lot of communities across the country. When I was first starting out, it was these small groups that would bring me in and let me try and build an audience over time. The Maple Blues Awards have also done a great job with keeping it visible every year in the media, which is not easy.



COLIN JAMES

With the release of the blues-rooted *Hearts on Fire*, his 16<sup>th</sup> studio album, earlier this year, Colin James has reaffirmed his status as one of the most accomplished and well-rounded Canadian guitarists of all time.

#### GUITARS

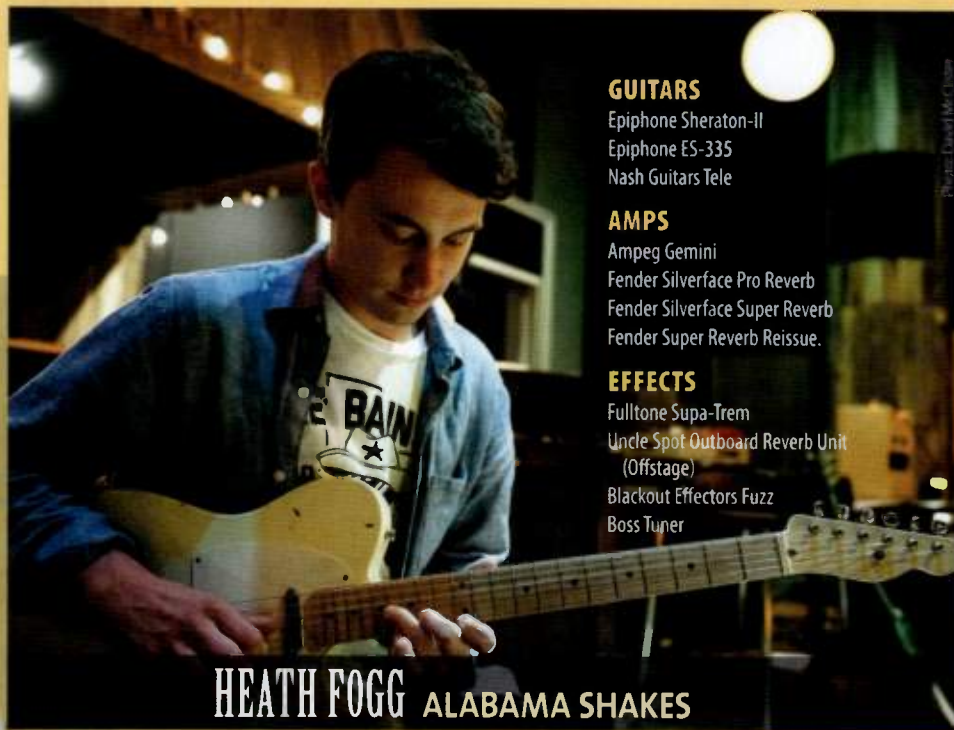
Fender Custom Shop Stratocaster with Texas Special Pickups (Lady)  
Fender Custom Shop Distressed White Stratocaster with Shep Tone Pickups  
Fender Red Stratocaster with Texas Special Pickups  
Fender Custom Shop Black Stratocaster with Texas Special Pickups & Clapton Mid Boost Mod  
Silvertone '60s Guitar (Bones)  
Danelectro Model U2 Mustard with Lipstick Pickups  
Danelectro Model U2 Black with Lipstick Pickups  
Red Vintage Supro with National Hotplate Pickup System  
Gibson Les Paul Gold Top with P-90 Pickups  
Fender Custom Shop Blue Telecaster with Shep Tone Pickups & Bigsby Trem  
Larri  e LM-09 with Element Pickup System  
Sawchyn Custom CJ Model with Element Pickup System  
Godin Black Acousticaster  
Gretsch Sparkle Jet with Bigsby Trem

#### EFFECTS

Dunlop 95Q Wah  
Road Rage Pro FX Looper  
Diamond Compressor  
Line 6 M9  
Retro-Sonic Distortion  
Maxon/Ibanez TS-9 Tube Screamer (x2)  
Diamond Tremolo  
Boss TR-2 Tremolo  
Keeley Katana Clean Boost  
Boss DD-7 with Tap Delay  
Boss DD-5 Delay (Slap)  
Axxess Electronics BP-01 Output Buffer Box  
VooDoo Labs Pedal Power Mondo Power Supply  
Trailer Trash 28x16 Board Frame  
Planet Waves Cables & Connectors  
Mogami Cables  
Switchcraft Connectors

#### AMPS

Marshall JCM-800 100 W  
Matchless 2x12 Cabinet  
Fender '65 Deluxe Reissue (Modified by Dave Vidal)  
Divided By 13 FTR 35 Amp  
Divided By 13 2x12 Cabinet



## HEATH FOGG ALABAMA SHAKES

The modest rock n roll guitarist from Athens, AL is just enjoying a whirlwind of a ride with his bandmates in Alabama Shakes. Fogg stepped out of the whirlwind for a moment to talk about *Sound & Color*, this year's follow-up to 2012's hugely successful *Boys & Girls*.

**CM:** What's the most recent piece you've added to your live set-up and how did it earn the spot?

**HF:** The fuzz pedal is a new addition. I played some fuzz parts on *Sound & Color* where the fuzz effect came from different sources rather than one particular pedal. It was challenging to find a fuzz pedal with the right amount of midrange to match the effect on the album. This Blackout Effectors pedal has a filter knob that really helps me dial in a tone with a lot of midrange, unlike most fuzz pedals I've played on.

**CM:** Did you find that your approach to writing or recording changed in any significant way in the three years between *Boys & Girls* and *Sound & Color*?

**HF:** The writing and recording for this album allowed me to take more of a backseat roll as opposed to the last album. Some of these songs were written by Brittany [Howard, vocalist/guitarist] at her house on MIDI keyboards, and sometimes my role was to take a keyboard part from her demo and translate it to the guitar without messing up what was great about the demo.

### GUITARS

Epiphone Sheraton-II  
Epiphone ES-335  
Nash Guitars Tele

### AMPS

Ampeg Gemini  
Fender Silverface Pro Reverb  
Fender Silverface Super Reverb  
Fender Super Reverb Reissue.

### EFFECTS

Fulltone Supa-Trem  
Uncle Spot Outboard Reverb Unit (Offstage)  
Blackout Effectors Fuzz  
Boss Tuner

**CM:** Brittany's talent and presence as a front woman is undeniable. What kind of influence has she had on your playing in the context of the group?

**HF:** Brittany makes it really easy on a guy like me. She is super creative, and a really great guitar player. It is really easy and fun to bounce ideas for guitar parts off of her. That goes for Zac [Cockrell, bassist] as well. As long as I listen to them play, I won't run out of inspiration.

**CM:** Being an accomplished guitarist himself, what kind of influence did your co-producer Blake Mills have on this batch of songs?

**HF:** Blake is the most talented guitar player I have ever been around. That could sometimes be intimidating when I was struggling with a part, but I think being around him helped me gain a better understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses as a guitar player and that influenced me to follow my own instincts.

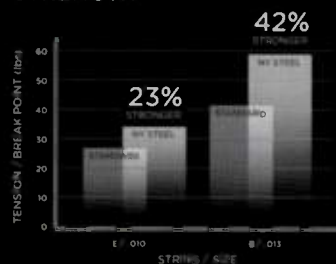


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## LUKE DOUCET WHITEHORSE

Luke Doucet and Melissa McClelland are the creative minds behind Whitehorse, but Doucet made sure to show some love to the gear that helped him deliver something special with the duo's second LP, *Leave No Bridge Unburned*.

### GUITARS

Gretsch 1957 White Falcon (x2)

### AMPS

Gibson 1959 GA-18 Explorer  
Victoria Reverberato Reverb  
& Tremolo Circuit

### EFFECTS

Radial Engineering Tonebone JX-2  
Build Your Own Clone Rehoued Danelectro  
Tremolo by Brian Duguay  
Build Your Own Clone Ping-Pong  
Delay by Brian Duguay



**CM: What's the most recent piece you've added to your live set-up and how did it earn the spot?**

**LD:** Finally, after 14 years of only having one Gretsch White Falcon, I found a second one. The other piece that I've added is a Victoria Reverberato. It's not actually an amplifier; it's just a tremolo circuit and a reverb circuit and it sounds incredible.

**CM: You played with Randy Bachman on his latest project. How did that come about and how did you find the experience?**

**LD:** We met at an event at Massey Hall. I was just sitting in the hallway warming up and he comes running out of the dressing room and says, 'What did you just play?' I said, 'I don't know,' and he said, 'No, no, no. What was that lick?' I said, 'I don't remember.' We just started talking and were passing a guitar back and forth in the hallway at Massey Hall and that was amazing. We became friends and wrote a song together and he

asked me to play on his record. He actually encouraged me to think outside the Whitehorse box and channel my inner Hendrix.

**CM: You played in a blues band with your father at 15. How did that influence the way you play today?**

**LD:** I probably don't mention this enough, but the person who influenced me the most was my father, Roland Doucet. I had a blues band that got a gig at a bar but we were all underage so the owner said we needed someone in the band who was of legal age, so I hired my dad. My dad had been a jazz guitarist living in New Orleans. His chord voicings were a lot like Robben Ford's or Joe Pass's and he'd be playing these crazy voicings and I'd be like, 'What is that?' I got a real crash course in jump changes and in understanding the number system for calling out the songs before you play.

**CM: You often talk about your interest in cities. Can you feel a different personality in each city while you're on the road and**

**does that change how you'll play on a certain night?**

**LD:** Well, because we make music that's informed by the past, when you're travelling through certain parts of America, you feel really close to the source of that. The importance of geography is much less an issue than it once was because of the internet, but when you're travelling through the magic diamond between Chattanooga and Memphis and New Orleans and Nashville and you realize the vast majority of Western music has come from this small area, it's hard not to be affected by it. At times, it's worth taking a moment to acknowledge who the audience is. So if I'm in Seattle, I'm thinking about Jimi Hendrix, Nirvana, and The Posies; if we're in Winnipeg, I'll be thinking about Big Dave McLean or Jay Nowicki or John K. Samson. And again, my father really taught me how to improvise, not just on solos, but to the mood of the show. So I'm always reading the crowd and trying to find the feel for each show.

A photograph of Philip Sayce, a blues guitarist, wearing a brown hat and a dark jacket, playing a light-colored electric guitar and singing into a microphone. The background is dark with some blue stage lights.

## PHILIP SAYCE

A not-so-secret gem in the world of blues guitarists, Philip Sayce has played alongside the likes of Jeff Healey, Melissa Etheridge, and Uncle Kracker. On his latest solo offering, last year's aptly-titled *Influence*, Sayce honours the legends whose traditions he is carrying on.

### GUITARS

Fender 1963 Stratocasters (x2)  
Gibson 1966 SG Jr.

### AMPS

Custom By Cougar Signature  
"Mother" Amplifiers (x2)  
4x10 Cabinet  
1x15 Cabinet  
Yamaha THR10

### EFFECTS

Vox Clyde McCoy (Script) Wah  
Cesar Diaz Square Face Fuzz  
Chicago Iron Octavian  
MegaVibe (modified by Oxfuzz)  
Klon Centaur  
Line 6 Delay  
Echoplex EP3 Delay  
Ibanez Tube Screamer TS808

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## PHILIP SAYCE con't.

**CM: What's one piece of your live set-up that you can't go without?**

**PS:** I'm very grateful to have two 1963 Stratocasters. I played one of them many moons ago in a store and it just had it. Unfortunately, it wasn't the right time for me to buy a guitar. About 10 years after that, a friend called me and said, 'A guy was selling a '63 Stratocaster and it made me think of you.' I said I wasn't looking, but he called me back and told me to check it out. He sent me a picture and it was the same guitar that I had played 10 years before. I recognized it instantly because it had a unique paint job and I said, 'I'll take it.'

**CM: You are a vocal fan of vintage instruments and equipment. What is it specifically about vintage gear that you find so attractive?**

**PS:** The sounds and the emotion and just the beauty that was put into music at that time. I mean, there's music being created in that same way now, but there really is something to some of those old instruments. Ultimately, I'm just looking for that sense of inspiration and have found it more often in instruments that are 40 or 50 or 60 years old.

**CM: Speaking about *Influence*, why was it important for you to make this album now and honour those who have influenced you?**

**PS:** My friend Dave Cobb was the producer for most of this album. He's got a real knack for creating cool vintage vibes and it was just very natural for us to want to honour this music that turned us on and, ultimately, for me, it became an opportunity for healing. Every time I go out and play, I try to do my best to honour and pay respect to the music of my heroes. That's my goal with music in general.

**CM: What was the biggest difference for you when making *Influence* compared to your previous album, 2012's *Steamroller*?**

**PS:** I made *Steamroller* in Nashville with Dave, too, but that came from a place where we were blowing stuff up. It had a certain anger, and that can be OK; there's also some really tender moments. *Influence* is very much the same thing but recorded a year later. *Influence* was really an opportunity for healing. Dave had reached out to me in a tough time and just said, 'Let's make some music.' We didn't know what it would become, but there's a lot of heart on it. I just want to be as honest as I can be during the creative process and that was the intention during *Influence*.

## TOM WILSON

### LEE HARVEY OSMOND, BLACKIE AND THE RODEO KINGS

Whether it's through music, painting, or prose, the multi-talented Tom Wilson will have you hooked. The Hamiltonian brings a blues mentality to everything he touches and is reaching new musical milestones with the latest from Lee Harvey Osmond, *Beautiful Scars*.

#### GUITARS

Gibson J-160E (with a stacked humbucker pickup & Fishman pickup)

Gibson J-200

**AMP** Fender 1966 Deluxe Reissue

Photo: Angela Ravetto



Photo: Kevin Housh

**CM: What's the most recent piece you've added to your live set-up and what about it earned it the spot?**

**TW:** I bought an old Gibson J-200 down in Nashville and I've wanted one for a long time. I had one in the '90s but sold it for drugs, but my guitar karma has come back to me and I woke up one morning in Nashville and bought a J-200. It's an older one and one that I'm going to be using live because it's not that rare, so I can beat the shit out of it.

**CM: How does the writing process differ for you when you write for Lee Harvey Osmond as opposed to Blackie and the Rodeo Kings?**

**TW:** For Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, I write in more of what they would call an Americana tradition. I love it and it comes naturally to me. The way I write for Lee Harvey Osmond also comes naturally. I write in tones and I try to write songs with one, two, or maybe three chords and make melodies interesting enough over those chords and make the words really important to how people are going to hear those songs. That kind of thinking comes from the love of blues and a record that inspires me towards that is *Kind Of Blue* by Miles Davis. It represents everything that I want to do in music: write in

tones, with little movement and without showing off. I get into that headspace for Lee Harvey Osmond.

**CM: On that note, what should fans expect from *Beautiful Scars*, your latest album as Lee Harvey Osmond?**

**TW:** We push the envelope with the one and two chord songs, setting up the moods and allowing the songs to breathe even more, which is about allowing the song to take up as much space as possible in the time it's played. There are straight acoustic songs, which is really important to me because my belief is that any song that you're playing starts at the kitchen table and starts with a pack of smokes and a pot of coffee. If you can communicate

from the kitchen table, then you've got a good song.

**CM: You've mentioned a number of blues artists, like Howlin' Wolf, as inspirations. What is it about blues music or a blues mentality that draws you in?**

**TW:** Yeah, Howlin' Wolf has always been an inspiration. I went to Chess Records in Chicago for the first time with Colin Linden – one of the best blues guitarists in the world – and Stephen Fearing and it put a lot of things into perspective. Art to me is all about possibilities and all those blues guitarists weren't showing off or anything. What they did made it possible for the rest of us to follow.

## MATTHEW ROGERS

### THE HARPOONIST AND THE AXE MURDERER

Vancouver-based film composer Matthew Rogers is one half of blues outfit The Harpoonist and The Axe Murderer. Alongside Shawn Hall (vocals and harmonica, aka harpoon), Rogers's edgy guitar playing and unique set-up create the gutsy blues sound you find on 2014's *A Real Fine Mess*.

#### GUITAR

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#### AMPS

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Fender '64 Princeton  
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#### EFFECTS

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# Red, Green & Blues

## MATTHEW ROGERS con't.

**CM:** What's one piece of your live set-up that you can't go without?

**MR:** It would have to be my guitar with its unique set-up. I have a [Ubertar] Hexaphonic pickup added between the bridge and neck pickup. First of all, it goes out through two separate outputs. The bottom three strings go out one output and the top three strings go out another output. So I have three outputs going out of my guitar. I also have switches for each of those strings on the Hexaphonic pickup so I can turn any of them on and off. What I do with the bottom three strings is send those to an octaver and a few other things and then send that to a bass amp to get some bass out of them. Then I usually just have the top string on and I put a bunch more fuzz and delay and sometimes a whole ton of reverb so that if I'm playing something melodic on the top string, it has a different ring to it. Basically, I'm just trying to sound like more than one guitar player since we're just a duo and still want to fill up as much space as possible.

**CM:** The garage-blues rock sound is big these days thanks to bands like The Black Keys, but you guys bring more of a "classic" blues sound to the mix. What draws you to that?

**MR:** I think it's just the blues that Shawn and I both are attracted to. The earlier folk blues like Mississippi John Hurt and Lightnin' Hopkins, as far as guitar playing goes, is big for me. Shawn and I both really dig the blues before it became too much about taking long solos. We're attracted to more of the guts of the blues, as we like to call it.

**CM:** You guys also blend the old bluesy style with mix of other genres like hip-hop and reggae. What or who are some of your non-blues influences as a guitarist?

**MR:** I grew up listening to a lot of classic rock, especially psychedelic classic rock. That's been a pretty huge influence. I really like the new D'Angelo record and I think I have a pretty wide listening palette in general. I also studied classical music in school and I went to jazz school. I listen to a lot of world music and am really into a band call Tinariwen. They have a desert rock sound so you have to be in that headspace, but I really dig it.

**CM:** In a musical sense, what makes one a good axe murderer?

**MR:** I would say personality. Just that. Personality.

Ryan Shuvera is a music journalist and avid music fan. He loves to talk and write about all things music related. He has a passion for Canadian music and can be found lost in the stacks of used book and record stores when not writing. Follow him on Twitter @ryebread891.



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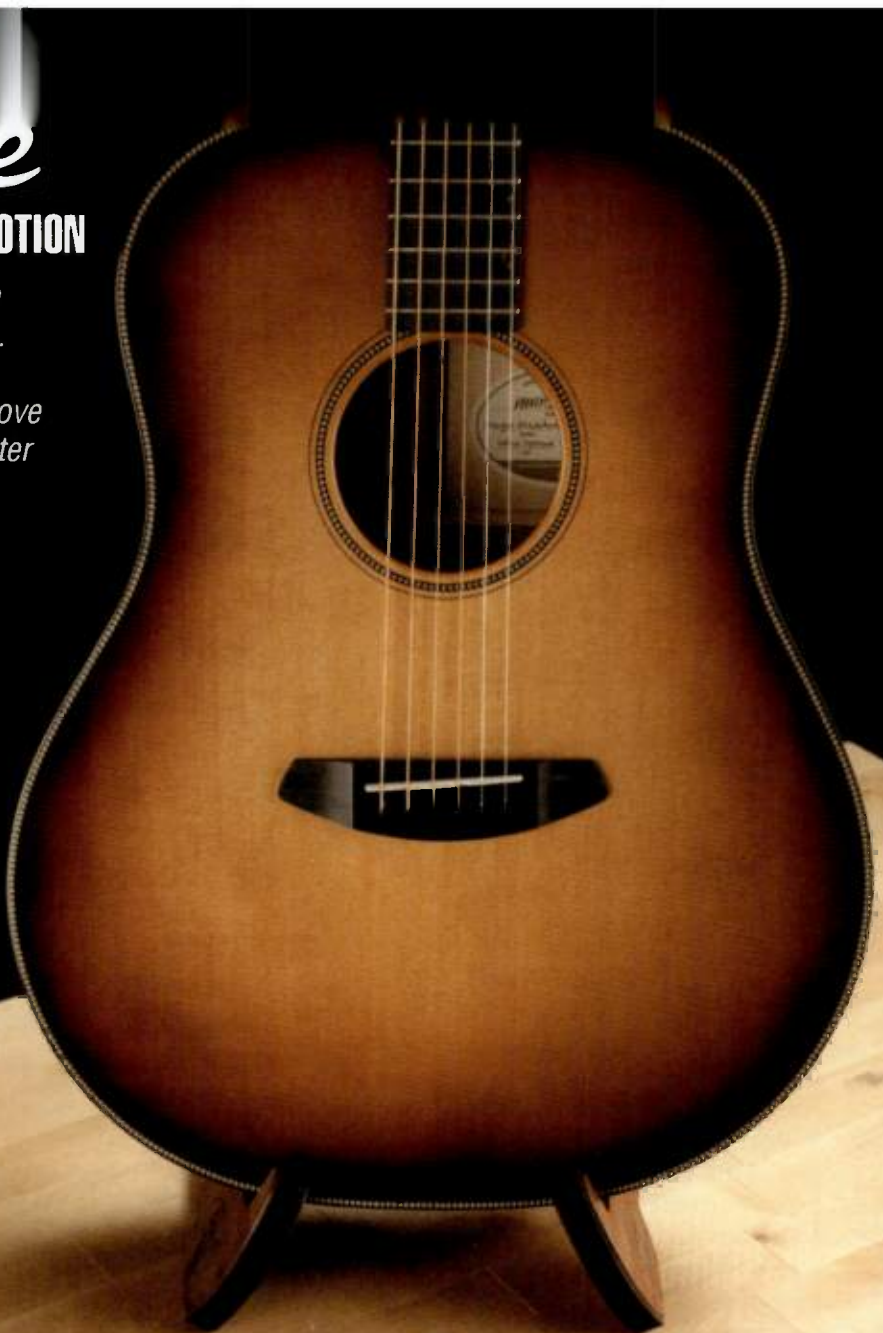
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By Sarah Burton

# Practical Advice For The Partially Insane

**T**he "writing process" is a hot topic in interviews. I usually come up with a story describing a methodological system of recording ideas and thoughts on paper and in studio – running them through a systematic series of trials and tests until they come out as a three-minute song that fits into a structure of tempo, melody, and story that is pleasing to the human psyche.

Mostly, this is a lie I tell to avoid the honest truth: I am a partially insane person who spews out thoughts and ideas like a broken water main, destined to destroy everything in its path.

When you suffer from idea diarrhea (ide-arrhea?), the challenge is in turning it into something succinct and beautiful that can be understood – understood by you, your audience, or hopefully both. Here are my "tips" for those of you who, like me, use art as a way to understand yourself, the world, anything.

## 1. Write It Down

I used to think that all the really good ideas would stick in my brain if I couldn't get to a pen and paper, that somehow they would last through my sleep, my subway ride, or my shift at whatever terrible job I was working. Wrong. Not only do good ideas float into the ether as quickly as they are formed, but those ideas that do stick are often the worst ones. Cocktail napkins, subway transfers, matchbooks, lip liner, and mascara are your friends. Write it down with whatever you can find.

## 2. Get An Editor

Don't be too big or too precious; don't use "artistic integrity" as a crutch. If you have a song that's "pretty good," you could probably make it excellent by letting someone with an

objective ear have a go at it. Any good writer will have someone edit their work. Songwriting is still writing.

## 3. Hate It

If you don't hate what you've done at least a little bit, there's something wrong. Walking that line between confidence and humility is where the sweet spot is. Self-loathing is just part of being an artist, so embrace it; let it be your coach – the thing that forces you to be better. Let it be your fuel.

## 4. Force It

Some writers are like a leaky faucet: the problem is not in having ideas, but in getting the words to come out with enough force and confidence to put something real on paper. Others are like the desert: you have to rip open the cactus to get the juice inside, even if it means writing the same word over and over again until other words start magically appearing. It sounds silly but it works! I don't believe in "writer's block." I do believe that we have too much ego to tap into our own brains sometimes.

## 5. Get Weird, Get Dark

Some of the best literature and music dives into the deepest mud of the mind and soul. People don't just want candy; they want someone to express the dark, smutty, disgusting, lurid, nihilistic feelings they can't express. How lucky are we that we can entertain people with our awefulness?

## 6. Throw It Out

Just because you finished it, doesn't mean it's good. Let it go. This time, if it's really good, it will come back to you.

## 7. Take A Break

My general rule of thumb (after spending an adult decade as the queen of procrastination) is that if you're still staring at a blank screen after 20-30 minutes, move on! Take a walk, meet a friend, go to the dog park, and imagine what it's like to be a normal person. Then go back to your studio/office/hovel/creative pit and see what happens.

## 8. Listen

Listen with your feelings. Try to imagine you are NOT a musician and you have no idea what instrument is making what sound. Just let it take you over. If it doesn't take you over, listen to something else until you get that feeling. The best music, like a good film, will move you to a place where you are not thinking about what is happening. Then listen like a nerd. Analyze it the way your grade 10 English teacher made you rip apart *A Separate Peace* – every note, every word, every sound has a different meaning (whether intended by its maker or not). Take note of where the simplicity lies and where the complications are. Take actual notes. And then burn them!

## 9. Nobody Owes You Anything

This is not meant to sound nihilistic or depressing. People often get lost in the idea that their art is somehow important. Maybe it's important to you, and that's fine, but the moment you start thinking that what you're doing really matters on a grand scheme, you are in for a world of hurt. There is something freeing in realizing that (to quote Monty Python): "For millions, this 'life' is a sad vale of tears/Sitting 'round with really nothing to say/While the scientists say that we are just spiralling coils/Of self replicating DNA."



# Wrist Pain Relief For Engineers

I'm sharing this column to help fellow music producers and engineers who may have the same problems I've had with wrist pain. Keep in mind I'm not a doctor, so please contact a medical professional before making any changes to your healthcare.

Something that a lot of people aren't aware of is that being a modern music producer/engineer involves a lot of tedious editing on a computer. One song can easily have hundreds of very small edits to make the performances sound the way you want them. It's great that we have the technology to do this sort of editing, but it does come with a toll to the person doing the job!

There are a lot of music producers or engineers, myself included, that have extensive wrist problems as a result of the years of editing on computers. I developed problems about 3-4 years into my professional career. It's kind of hard to describe what it feels like other than to say there's a bit of pain and discomfort while working on a computer or playing some instruments. I remember in 2004 it got so bad that I actually wasn't sure how I was going to be able to keep working. Needless to say, that was a pretty scary time. I went

to the doctor, and after several tests, all she could really tell me was that I didn't have tendonitis. She described the problem as a "repetitive strain" injury.

## Brace Yourself

Fortunately for me, my sister is an athletic therapist who runs The Elliott Sports Medicine Clinic in Burlington, ON, and she suggested I get a wrist brace to immobilize my wrist while I was working. When I started wearing the brace, I had immediate relief and could instantly start working again. See the image for a close-up of the brace. Corflex makes the one I use, though there are many similar products on the market.

After I got the brace, things got a lot better and as time progressed, I found I didn't have to wear it as often. My wrists still felt a bit stiff and there was always a bit of discomfort but it was more manageable.

One day I was working with a friend of mine and she noticed the brace and mentioned I should try glucosamine, which is a supplement made for joints. I picked some up at a local health food store and noticed an improvement with how my wrists felt after about a month. Fast forward another couple of months



and a chiropractor friend of mine, Dr. David Koivuranta, mentioned some supplements made by Isonix. They make a "joint health" supplement with glucosamine and some other goodies that were supposed to be really effective. It was a lot more expensive than normal glucosamine but I figured I'd give it a try. After a month, everything was feeling better – like night and day. I still wear the brace as a preventative measure but it's rare that I feel any discomfort now.

The main reason I'm sharing this with you is that you should

be aware of what all those tiny edits are doing to your body and try to prevent the damage from happening in the first place. As music industry professionals, we work long hours with few days off. Eventually, all that strain we're putting on our bodies catches up with us. I'll probably always have issues because, to a certain extent, the damage is done, but if it hasn't gotten that bad for you or you're just starting out, do yourself a favour and consider a wrist brace as a preventative measure against future problems.



# What's Inside Your Work Trunk?

**E**very trade requires its own set of tools and equipment to perform a precise, skilled task. Just like plumbers and electricians, audio techs need to bring specific tools to their jobsite. Based on your specific task, be it FOH, mons, patch, or system tech, your tool requirements will differ; however, the basics stay the same. Here's a small taste of what the pros will have on-hand in their flight case, regardless of the gig.

## The Basics

If you show up to a gig with anything, can it please be a flashlight, a permanent marker, and some tape for labelling. Please, and really though, this is the bare minimum. You need to have the ability to label your cables and equipment, for your own sanity and that of the people you are working with.

I suggest traveling with a large supply of your own pencils, pens, markers, and highlighters. On larger shows I travel with a metal clipboard for printed pages like patch sheets and other paperwork. You should always have PVC electrical tape on hand, lots of black and white, and one of every colour of the electrician's code. It's also good to have 2-in. black duct tape or black gaff tape at all times and it doesn't hurt to keep an assortment of colours of gaff and spike tape.

## The Essentials

Most touring sound technicians will bring their own mic kit; it's what gives them their signature sound. A more honest statement is

it's what helps them achieve their own sound night after night. This isn't about going out and buying expensive, obscure microphones; it's about finding a healthy blend of dependable workhorses that are tried and true, and easy to replace.

Every sound tech should own a good pair of reference headphones. The make or model is not what's really important; however, they should hold at least some standard, and you should have taken the time to get used to what they sound like. On the opposite side of the coin, you can't forget about hearing protection. Toss in some extra earplugs; your ear drums will thank you.

You should also have a wide variety of patch cables on hand, and I'm not talking about instrument cables – things like XLR female to female, or 1/4-in. TRS to XLR male, or a 1/8-in. TRS to Y-split RCA can come in really handy when you get to a venue that is in short supply of much-needed patch. Some other small things you might want to have laying around would be USB keys and batteries. When you really need to save that mix or your MC is about to go live on a wireless unit with a dead battery, why get stuck in the dark when these things take up so little space?

## The Life Savers

Just as a surgeon uses his tools to save lives, techs use their tools to save shows. I could go on for days telling stories about soldering guitars back together in vans parked behind the venue, or building the cables I needed from other cables during sound check. The point is, having the right tool for the job on hand and

available can mean the difference between playing one less song and not playing at all. Different gigs will require different tools and specialty equipment, so think ahead and pick out your tools to best suit your needs. You need to be smart about this because tools can take up a lot of weight and space; however, if your guitar player asks you for something as simple as an adjustable wrench and you don't have one, I hope you've at least spent weeks researching a good excuse that doesn't result in you looking lazy or unskilled.

## A Taste of Home

I like to find a balance between work and home. What we do can be stressful at times, so I always pack a few things to help relax. Everyone has their own thing. For me, it's incense and hot sauce; for others, it's coffee machines or plush toys. And I see lots of photos of significant others and children and pets taped to trunk lids. Some of these items can cause others to chuckle or question one's sanity; however, it's amazing how far some of these little tastes of home can go.

Whether you're going out for the night or the next three months, if you want to be resourceful and professional, then bring the gear that helps you do it. A lot of this stuff should seem like common sense, yet I still go to gigs and see techs that are not properly equipped. People who work in specialty trades, like audio techs, require specialty tools to perform their jobs. If you don't show up to work with the equipment you need to accomplish the task at hand, you're going to get chumped.

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By Rebecca Apostoli

## Effective Grant Writing Common Pitfalls & How To Avoid Them

Canada has a long history of nurturing and supporting its artists. From the Governor General's Arts Awards and the Canada Council for the Arts to organizations like FACTOR and the Canada Music Fund, we truly are a blessed nation to have this support and patronage. Every year, around \$40 million in music funding is made available via a combination of industry and governmental sources; however, many artists find it challenging to access this funding to further their careers.

Here's an industry sourced list of mistakes to avoid and best practices you can integrate into your artist management toolbox to ensure you put your best foot forward and get the funding you need to reach your goals.

### 1. Not Researching Thoroughly

It's important to understand how the granting system works in Canada, which includes being aware of the major players and how their organizational mandates vary. Knowing what types of funding are given out by each body will allow you to target the programs you might be eligible for and those that are best suited to your project.

### 2. Failing To Plan Is Planning To Fail

Make sure you are aware of and hit funding deadlines to coincide with events in your album cycle. Plan ahead, give yourself plenty of time to complete your application, and always try to submit early if you can.

**Tip:** Sign up for all the various funders' email lists so you get notified when new projects and deadlines are announced.

### 3. Skimming The Eligibility Criteria

All funders publish a set of guidelines that accompany their funding applications. Study these carefully. Guidelines will determine if the program is a good fit for you, depending on where you are in your career and which specific activities you're hoping to fund. If you don't understand or have questions about the guidelines, get clarification from a trusted source.

### 4. Not Completing Applications Properly

Failing to carefully read and complete the application is a huge mistake. It's not uncommon for artists to make errors or typos, or miss required

questions, sections, or even whole pages of an application. This is dangerous as you could inadvertently disqualify yourself by failing to complete the application satisfactorily. It also appears plain sloppy and unprofessional. Always have someone else look over your application before you submit.

### 5. Selecting The Wrong Focus Song

Selecting a focus track can be deceptively difficult. What you consider your best song might not actually be the most effective means of capturing a jury's imagination. Songs should feature a very short intro, get to the chorus quickly, and leave the listener hooked and wanting more. Quality wise, submissions should aim for as close to a "produced" product as possible. There is no tried and true formula for selecting focus tracks, but it never hurts to get a second or third opinion.

**Tip:** Throw a listening party. Invite a bunch of your friends and family over to listen to the songs and let them vote for their favourites – and watch for nodding heads and tapping toes.

### 6. Not Including Support Documents

Most applications will require you submit a variety of supporting documents, which can be anything from multimedia and press kits to social media links to letters of support. Give yourself adequate time to gather these and supply all the assets required in the specified format. Aim to present your act in the most polished and professional light possible by ensuring the assets are high quality, align with your brand, and strengthen your application.

### 7. Not Communicating With The Funder

Applicants often make false assumptions about program requirements, eligibility, deadlines, and a multitude of other points. In all stages of the grant application process, from research to application to completion, there are times when you should be contacting the funding body to get clarification. Some examples include checking eligibility criteria that seem unclear or contradictory, making changes to your original application plans after submission or approval, and requesting extensions on final reporting deadlines.

### 8. Taking Rejection Personally

So you didn't get the grant. Remember that it's not a personal slight against you or your music. Committed artists will usually find a way to make their music or project happen regardless, and rejections actually present a great learning opportunity. Follow up with your program coordinator to get jury feedback and integrate that feedback into your next application.

### 9. Not Completing The Grant

So you got the grant! Congratulations! In order to receive the remainder of your grant money, you may need to complete your initiative and submit your report. You will have to remain accountable to your initial application and the goals you set out. Did you succeed in your objectives? Why or why not? Did you stay on budget? Don't miss these deadlines as the consequence for not reporting or submitting poor reports can mean having to pay back the entire grant or not being eligible for future funding.

**Tip:** Ensure you save all your receipts and never pay for things in cash. If you lose your receipts, you have no proof of purchase. Keep your records organized and updated for easy reference at the end of your project cycle.

### 10. Not Saying Thank You

Receiving information, feedback, or funding support from organizations requires artists be grateful and do their part to recognize the gift. This can mean putting the appropriate logos and word marks on your finished album to providing testimonials for the funder's marketing materials to advocating for increased funding and recognition of Canada's unique music culture. No one is entitled to funding, but everyone is given the privilege and opportunity to apply. Recognize this and support the organizations and industry that supports you!

For more information and tips on grants and funding, check out the *Canadian Grant Writing Guide for Musicians* from Music Grants Canada, [www.musicgrantscanada.com](http://www.musicgrantscanada.com).



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# HOT GEAR



## Shure PG ALTA Microphones

Shure has introduced the PG ALTA line of entry level microphones, including vocal and instrument microphones, drum kits, and a studio kit.

The series includes the PGA181 side-address condenser microphone; PGA98D and PGA98H gooseneck mics for drums and horns, respectively; the PGADRUMKIT5 with one PGA52 kick drum microphone, three PGA56 drum microphones, and one PGA57 instrument microphone with accessories; the PGADRUMKIT7 with one PGA52 kick drum microphone, three PGA56 drum microphones, one PGA57 instrument microphone, and two PGA81 instrument microphones; and the PGASTUDIOKIT4 with one PGA52 drum microphone, one PGA57 instrument microphone, and two PGA181 side-address microphones.

For more information, contact SFM: 514-780-2070, FAX 514-780-2111, [info@sfm.ca](mailto:info@sfm.ca), [www.sfm.ca](http://www.sfm.ca).



## Bergantino CN410 Bass Speaker Cabinet

Bergantino Audio Systems has released the CN410 lightweight 4 x 10-in. bass guitar speaker cabinet.

The cab uses a precision-tuned ported architecture built with lightweight poplar plywood to help reduce weight, but with a baltic birch baffle designed for a cohesive and powerful acoustic wave front. It's finished in a carbon fibre Tolex covering with a rigid black metal grille. Components include a custom-designed, phase-coherent crossover with a tweeter control, power handling of 800 W RMS, frequency response of 44 Hz to 15 kHz, and 4-10-in. neodymium magnet woofers, which are designed to provide a full and punchy low end.

For more information, contact Bergantino Audio Systems: 512-873-8043, [sales@bergantino.com](mailto:sales@bergantino.com), [www.bergantino.com](http://www.bergantino.com).

## PRS S2 Vela

The S2 Vela from PRS Guitars follows in the tradition of the company's Mira and Starla models in its vintage-inspired personality and tonal textures.

The Vela features a new offset body shape and its electronics include a PRS-designed Starla humbucker in the bridge for a bright, punchy tone, and the new Type-D singlecoil in the neck. The coil-tap on the tone control allows the bridge pickup to split into singlecoils, expanding the guitar's tonal range. There is a PRS plate-style bridge with two brass saddles that were designed to compensate for intonation and an aluminum plate. This bridge is top-loading for easy restringing.

For more information, contact Paul Reed Smith Guitars: 410-643-9970, FAX 410-643-9980, [custserv@prsguitars.com](mailto:custserv@prsguitars.com), [www.prsguitars.com](http://www.prsguitars.com).



## Yamaha TF Series Digital Mixing Consoles

Yamaha's TF Series of compact digital mixing consoles feature 40 or 48 inputs, TouchFlow operation, recallable D-PRE preamps, presets for fast set-up, advanced processing, live recording capability, remote control apps, and compatibility with digitally networked I/O racks.

The consoles are designed to allow engineers to respond to the music and artists on stage with speed and freedom. The TouchFlow operation is designed to make it easy for engineers to quickly achieve their ideal mix. The recallable D-PRE preamplifiers support high-end sound quality and high performance processors and effects. Advanced live recording features and seamless operation with high-performance I/O racks make these compact digital mixers suitable for a wide range of applications.

For more information, contact Yamaha Canada Music: 416-298-1311, FAX 416-292-0732, [info@yamaha.ca](mailto:info@yamaha.ca), [www.ca.yamaha.com](http://www.ca.yamaha.com).

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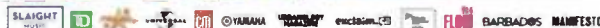
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# HOT GEAR

## Radial Trim-Two Passive Stereo Isolator

Radial Engineering has introduced the Trim-Two, which is a passive stereo isolator designed to simplify the use of laptop computers for keyboard players, DJs, and audio-visual presenters by providing a "ready access" volume control for on-the-fly adjustments when performing live.

The design begins with dual 1/4-in. jacks, left and right RCAs, and a stereo 3.5 mm input. These are wired in parallel to allow the signal to be split off to feed an alternate signal path, such as monitors. Inside, two Eclipse transformers do the work of isolating and balancing the signal. These "passive engines" deliver a linear frequency response from 20 Hz to 18 kHz and are capable of handling up to +15dB signal levels.

For more information, contact Radial Engineering: 604-942-1001, FAX 604-942-1010, [info@radialeng.com](mailto:info@radialeng.com), [www.radialeng.com](http://www.radialeng.com).



## Nord Electro 5 Keyboards

Nord has released its Electro 5 lineup. The Electro 5D 61 and Electro 5D 73 feature semi-weighted waterfall keybeds with 61 notes (key range is C-C) and 73 notes (key range is E-E), respectively. The Electro 5 HP 73 features a Hammer Action Portable 73-note keybed (key range is E-E).

All three models feature 1 GB of piano sample memory and the Sympathetic Resonance technology from the Nord Piano has been implemented to improve levels of realism. The Organ section now features a Principal Pipe Organ mode and the Leslie 122 simulation from the Nord C2D, while the B3 Tone Wheel Bass feature provides 16- and 8-in. bass drawbars in the left hand. The Electro 5D 61 and 5D 73 models both come with physical drawbars, while the Electro 5 HP 73 comes with Nord's electronic LED drawbars.

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



## Evans Reso 7 Drumheads

Evans Drumheads has released its new Reso 7 drumheads, designed to provide an abbreviated sustain while maintaining a full tonal response. They can be used to get a shorter sustain without the need for additional muffling devices. The 7 mil film also provides a warmer response. The new Reso 7s are available in sizes ranging from 6 to 18 in.

For more information, contact D'Addario Canada: 905-947-9595, FAX 905-947-4336, [info@daddariocanada.com](mailto:info@daddariocanada.com), [www.daddariocanada.com](http://www.daddariocanada.com).



## Grundorf Gig Chair

Grundorf Corporation's model 70-001 Gig Chair is meant to reduce stress and strain when sitting for extended periods of time and is specifically designed for musicians and DJs who stay in a relatively stationary position while performing.

In addition to its adjustable depth back-rest, the Gig Chair features a thick, padded, five-position seat cushion that can be set from 21.5 to 31 in. For guitarists who need to support their instrument with their thigh, the Gig Chair features a slip resistant foot rest. The chair is constructed with steel material and has a durable black powder coat finish designed to maintain its appearance under the rigors of touring.

For more information, contact Grundorf: 712-322-3900, [sales@grundorf.com](mailto:sales@grundorf.com), [www.grundorf.com](http://www.grundorf.com).



## Deering Goodtime Banjo Ukulele

Deering has released the Goodtime Banjo Ukulele. It is a concert scale uke that features the same Deering Goodtime three-ply violin grade 11-in. maple rim that is found on all of the Goodtime banjos.

The Goodtime Banjo Ukulele's other features include a 11-in. renaissance head, extended fingerboard, patented Deering bridge plate, Aquila super nylgut strings, maple neck, 17 frets, and 16 hooks and nuts. Its overall size measures 23.5 in. and it is also available in a left handed version.

For more information, contact Deering Banjo Company: 619-464-8252, FAX 619-464-0833, [info@deeringbanjos.com](mailto:info@deeringbanjos.com), [www.deeringbanjos.com](http://www.deeringbanjos.com).

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# HOT GEAR

## Fishman ToneDEQ Acoustic Preamp

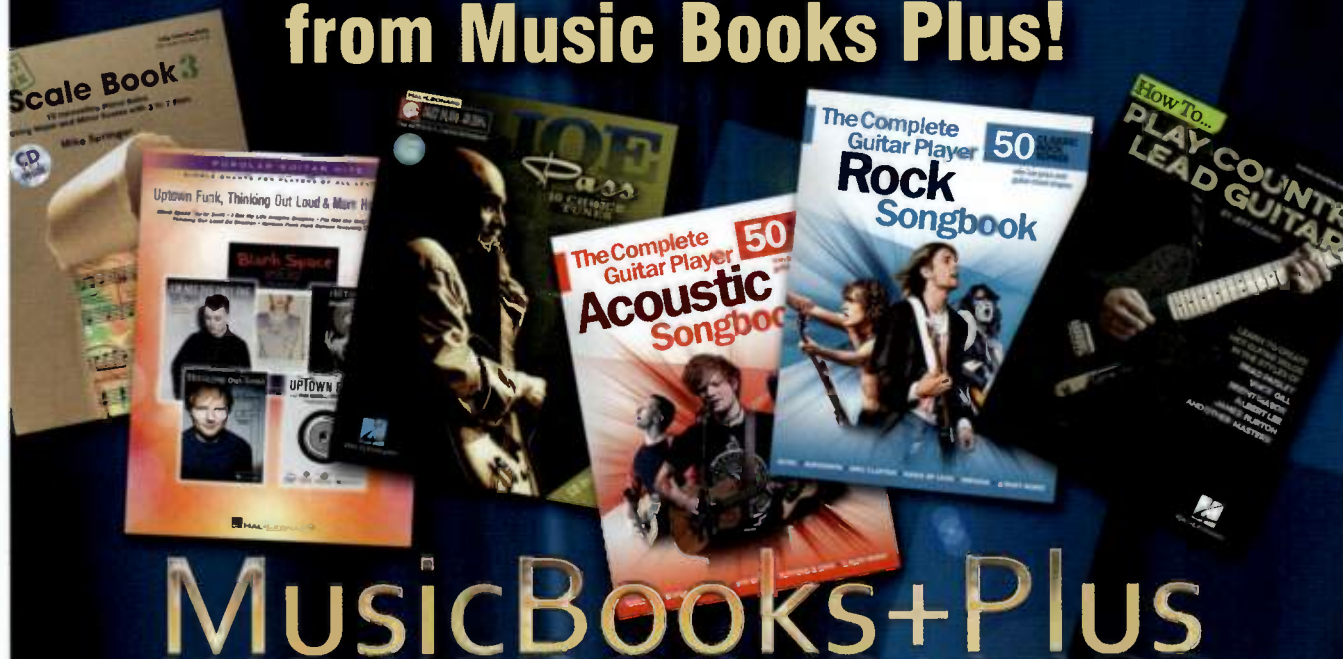
Fishman has released the ToneDEQ acoustic preamp with effects for performing acoustic musicians. The ToneDEQ combines a high quality preamp, four-band EQ, dual effects section, tone controls, a compressor, level booster, and a balanced DI in one device.

End-to-end analog circuitry from preamp to output in the ToneDEQ is designed to provide a richer tonal quality. Digital effects are mixed in parallel to maintain signal purity. A low noise 1/4-in. amplifier output and XLR DI output with automatic ground-lifting and selectable pre/post EQ settings are also included.

For more information, contact Kief Marketing: 604-590-3344, FAX 604-590-6999, sales@kiefmusic.com, www.kiefmusic.com.



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## CAD Audio CADLive Vocal & Instrument Mics

CAD Audio has expanded its CADLive line with a number of new vocal and instrument microphones.

The CADLive D32 is a supercardioid dynamic handheld vocal mic with a QuietTouch on/off switch and neodymium capsule. Also a supercardioid dynamic handheld mic with a neodymium capsule, the CADLive D38 is designed to be clear and articulate. The CADLive D89 supercardioid dynamic instrument mic is designed to produce a powerful, articulate response in live sound miking situations. Also equipped with a Trueflex diaphragm and PowerGap high gauss neodymium magnets, the CADLive D90 Supercardioid dynamic vocal mic is ideal for high SPL live situations.

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

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# HOT GEAR

## Warwick Stuart Hamm Signature Bass

Warwick has introduced a signature bass for Stuart Hamm, based on the company's Streamer Broadneck. Compared with the Streamer Broadneck, the upper body horn has been shifted slightly toward the 12<sup>th</sup> fret. At the same time, the lower body horn has been altered to make access to the upper frets more comfortable.

Hamm asked for decreased distance between the body and strings to facilitate his unique playing style. For this reason, the instrument incorporates a cavity in the area of the bridge, which has been set deep in the body to create the necessary string pressure.

For more information, contact Korg Canada: 514-457-2555, FAX 514-457-0055, [www.korgcanada.com](http://www.korgcanada.com).



## Vater Buzz Kill & Buzz Kill Extra Dry Drum Dampener Gels

Vater has announced the return of the Buzz Kill drum and cymbal dampeners and the release of the Buzz Kill Extra Dry.

Buzz Kill is a drum/cymbal gel dampening system designed to control unwanted over ring and tone. If needed, each gel can be cut to achieve the desired amount of dampening. Buzz Kill can be used on both batter and resonant heads. The gels are reusable and can be easily cleaned with water when dirty.

Buzz Kill Extra Dry features more weight and mass, which makes it an ideal choice for larger drums. Both Buzz Kill and Buzz Kill Extra Dry are clear to avoid any visual distractions.

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



## Ahead Mach 1 Pro Bass Pedal

Ahead has released the Mach 1 Pro single bass drum pedal. The heavy-duty design features fully adjustable beater angle and spring tension and Eccentric Quick Torque adjustment so that the user can fully adjust the pedal to suit their playing style. The speed and feel of the Mach 1 can be altered by adjusting the cam. Close the cam for a lighter stroke and open it to increase torque and return speed. Also included is a two-way beater. The beater angle can be customized by loosening the top set screw and the beater stroke is adjusted by using the sliding clip. Users can also adjust the multi-positioning hoop clamp to get a more comfortable setting.

For more information, contact Big Bang Distribution: 818-727-1127, [email@bigbangdist.com](mailto:email@bigbangdist.com), [www.bigbangdist.com](http://www.bigbangdist.com).



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# HOT GEAR

## Levy's MGJ2 Guitar Straps

Levy's Leathers has released the MGJ2. This line includes nine vibrantly textured jacquards. Each strap is lined with complementary, super-soft, tucked edge, leather backing and tri-glide adjustment to 56 in. The straps are 2 in. wide and are also available in an XL model that adds 12 in. to the overall length.

For more information, contact Levy's Leathers: 800-565-0203, FAX 888-329-5389, [levys@levysleathers.com](mailto:levys@levysleathers.com), [www.levysleathers.com](http://www.levysleathers.com).



## IK Multimedia iRig2 Guitar Interface

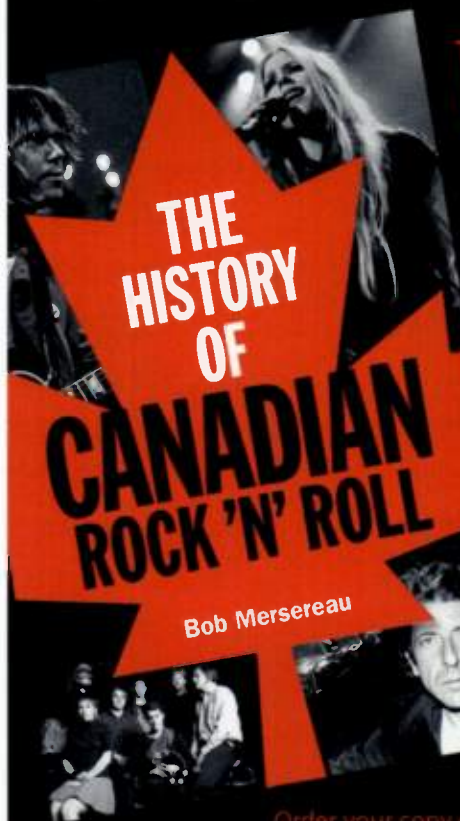
IK Multimedia has launched the iRig 2 guitar interface for iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch, Mac, and Android devices.

The biggest update is its new 1/4-in. amplifier output, which opens up new opportunities when paired with AmpliTube, IK's guitar and bass multi-effects processor. iRig 2 now lets musicians use AmpliTube's library of modeled virtual stompbox effects, amplifiers, and other gear as a part of their physical rig.

iRig 2's added switch allows dual-mode operation: FX lets musicians send a processed signal to their amplifier's 1/4-in. output from apps like AmpliTube. THRU sends a clean signal, letting musicians use their mobile device as a tuner, recorder, or other utility while using their classic analog rig.

For more information, contact Music Marketing: 416-789-7100, FAX 416-789-1667, [cindy@musicmarketing.ca](mailto:cindy@musicmarketing.ca), [www.musicmarketing.ca](http://www.musicmarketing.ca).

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Applied Acoustics Systems has released Strum GS-2, the latest version of its guitar track production plug-in with a new streamlined interface, a new equalizer and compressor module, and new multi-effect processor.

Strum GS-2 reproduces the sound of acoustic guitars and also the playing techniques of a guitar player in order to make the production of guitar tracks in a DAW environment a straightforward endeavour. Strum GS-2 embeds a chord recognition and voicing module, which automatically voices chords played on the keyboard as a guitar player would on the fretboard. There is an auto-strum function and special strumming keys. Rhythm figures available from a large collection of MIDI loops are on hand to supplement chord progressions.

For more information, contact Applied Acoustic Systems: 514-871-8100, FAX 514-845-1875, [info@applied-acoustics.com](mailto:info@applied-acoustics.com), [www.applied-acoustics.com](http://www.applied-acoustics.com).



## Schecter Banshee Elite Guitars

Schecter's Banshee Elite offerings feature a swamp ash body with a flamed maple top, nine-piece maple/walnut neck with an ebony fingerboard, 24 X-jumbo stainless steel frets, mother of pearl offset/reverse dot inlays with brass circles, and a neck-thru construction with easy access to the higher frets.

The Banshee Elite is offered in six-, seven-, and eight-string options and also offers the choice of a Hipshot hardtail bridge or the Schecter-exclusive Floyd Rose 1500 Series bridge, which features stainless steel parts, a new push-in arm, and knife points that are re-tooled for better tuning and smoother tremolo play. They're loaded with Schecter's hand-made USA SuperCharger pickups with an option of a Sustainer in the neck position.

For more information, contact SFM: 514-780-2070, FAX 514-780-2111, [info@sfm.ca](mailto:info@sfm.ca), [www.sfm.ca](http://www.sfm.ca).

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Please forward your résumé to  
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### Show Services Technicians

As Westbury National continues to grow, opportunities open up for individuals with the right skill sets to keep our vitality sharp and strong, and new avenues expanding.

Westbury National is currently accepting résumés for audio, lighting, staging, and video technicians and support staff. If you're ambitious, dedicated, and have an eye (or ear) for detail, you're moving in the right direction. As a member of the Westbury National team, you'll work with our tremendously talented in-house technical and support staff plus some of the best freelance show technicians in the business. We offer a stable company, a 100% Canadian owned and operated landmark for over four decades. Who knows? It could be you who leads us into tomorrow!

Applicants should submit a general résumé as opposed to one tailored specifically to the business. Industry relevant education and professional experience required.

### Apply Online:

<http://www.westbury.com/careers/show-services-technicians>.

### Sound Assistant - Cavalia

Reporting to the Head of Sound, the Sound Assistant is responsible for assisting the Head of Sound regarding the installation of the sound

equipment and of the technical site, as well as maintaining and repairing these installations for the purpose of the show. The Sound Assistant is directly responsible for both the sound equipment for musicians as well as the wireless equipment on stage.

### Responsibilities

- Work as a team to plan, coordinate, and execute the set-up and tear down of the sound equipment and the musicians' equipment during transfers;
- Work with the Head of Sound to maintain, repair, and troubleshoot equipment if necessary, in order to keep all the equipment in good condition;
- Responsible for the safety and the cleanliness of the technical site (backstage, technical workshop, etc.);
- Operate the console monitor, manage the wireless and the sound equipment backstage during rehearsals and shows;
- Ensure that rehearsals and shows operate smoothly and safely;
- Take part in the set-up, renewal, and maintenance of the sound equipment in collaboration with the technical department;
- Lead "fly-in" staff and local employees;
- Load and unload trailers according to established plans;
- Participate in all necessary safety training courses as well as training for emergency rescue procedures;
- Perform all other tasks required by the show and necessary for the good functioning of installations

### Qualifications / Required Skills

- 2 to 5 years experience minimum in a similar position;
- Experience on tour is an asset;
- Experience in managing a team;
- Knowledge of techniques and digital audio equipment such as Yamaha PM5D;
- Knowledge of radio frequency systems (communication, microphones, and headphones);
- Knowledge of communication systems "Clear-Com";
- Knowledge of the consoles Digidesign VENUE system;
- Excellent communication skills with musicians;
- Ability to operate a forklift and articulated boom lift;
- Ability to work at heights;
- Ability to perform physical tasks;
- Bilingual (French and English);
- Interested in touring full-time with the show and authorized to travel and work in foreign countries.

Interested candidates should send their resume to:

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By Ken Kelley

## BRENT TYLER

**What:** Folk, Roots, Soul

**Where:** Calgary, AB

**Visit:** [www.brenttyler.com](http://www.brenttyler.com)

Drawing influence from musical luminaries like Jack Johnson and Dave Matthews, the music of Calgary's Brent Tyler is breezy, relaxed, and, perhaps most notably, incredibly melodic.

Growing up, Tyler divided his time between sports and music before ultimately choosing to pursue the latter as a hobby. At age nine, he taught himself how to play guitar, something that has no doubt been a factor in his uniquely fluent, percussive-style of guitar playing.

To date, Tyler has two full-length efforts (2002's *Better Way* and 2010's *In Rhythm*) and one EP in 2014's *This Breath*, to his credit. He is due to release a new studio album, *Love Myself*, in May and it's likely to impress.



## DAVID CATALLO

**What:** Classical, Flamenco

**Where:** Guelph, ON

**Visit:** [www.davidcatalloguitar.com](http://www.davidcatalloguitar.com)

Inspired by the stylings of John Williams and Paco de Lucia, the output of Guelph classical-flamenco guitarist David Catallo manages to showcase impressive rhythmic techniques and overall technical prowess.

For the last dozen years, Catallo has studied at the Royal Conservatory of Music as well as under acclaimed musicians including Emma Rush and Brian Katz, to name but two. His studies have served him well and their influence can be heard throughout his debut effort, *La Fuente y El Arroyo*. The album boasts an eclectic mix of flamenco-rooted compositions as well as world music-inspired classical pieces. Catallo's undeniable talent will surely be discovered by the masses before too long.

## T-STYLEZ

**What:** Hip-Hop

**Where:** Toronto, ON

**Visit:** [www.tstylezmusic.com](http://www.tstylezmusic.com)

Although Canada has often played second fiddle to the United States when it comes to charting bona fide hip-hop stars, we've proven time and again that our artists are just as worthy of the attention as any of their American counterparts. With his smooth lyrical delivery bolstered by clever word play, Toronto's Trivelle "T-Stylez" Simpson just might be Canada's next hip-hop superstar.

Over the last three years, T-Stylez has proved himself a prolific, vital force to be reckoned with. The rapper's 2012 debut, *The Rise of Music*, was followed by *The Red Clay Chronicles* in 2013 and *Element 13*, released last year, each of which showcase his impressive flow and lyricism. Keep an ear out for T-Stylez; big things are in store for this artist.

Ken Kelley is a freelance writer based out of Moncton, NB. In addition to writing for various media outlets in Canada and the United States, Ken is also a founding member of Moncton rock band The Monoxides.



# London Calling!

## New Primacoustic London™ Kits for Every Room!

A conversation with renowned producer/engineer Dave Rideau

Dave, tell us about your studio...

Stone River Studios is my personal mixing room where I now mix 80% of my projects. It is a fusion of digital and analog technology.

Who are some of the better known clients you have worked with?

Janet Jackson, Usher, George Benson, Sting, Al Jarreau, TLC, Kirk Franklin and Earth, Wind, and Fire.

What do you do there as opposed to a commercial studio?

I LOVE commercial studios... it is where I have spent most my career. But changes in our business have forced producers to find ways to get projects done for less without sacrificing quality. Recording in big rooms with the interaction of musicians then editing and mixing in a well designed home studio seems to give us the best bang for buck.

What acoustic problems did you have?

I had a decent sounding room before but at higher volumes certain gremlins raised their ugly heads, mostly evident in the low-mids.

How did you configure the panels?

I have a wall directly to my left where there is no opposing wall to my right. I decided to go floor to ceiling with 3" thick panels to make this wall "disappear" as much as possible. Then I configured 12" x 48" Broadway 2" panels on the parallel walls with space between them to control the first order reflections. I then added a MaxTrap corner bass trap.

Did you do the set up yourself?

I did. I like doing this sort of thing. I actually got my first job in the industry as part of the crew that built Westlake Recording Studios in Los Angeles.

What improvements have you noticed?

The room sounds great! The sound-stage is more focused and I noticed a big improvement with a tighter low end. I barely playback at louder levels but when clients are over it happens. Now it sounds much less congested.

How does it translate to other rooms?

The main test I measure my mixes by is how they translate to the mastering rooms I use. The ultimate compliment you can receive from a mastering person is "I didn't have to touch my EQ". That happens more often since I treated my room with Primacoustic Broadway panels.



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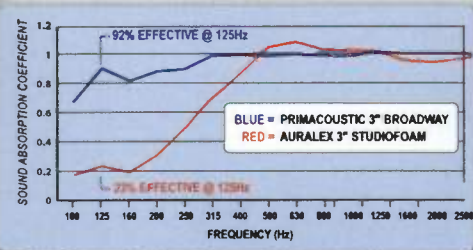


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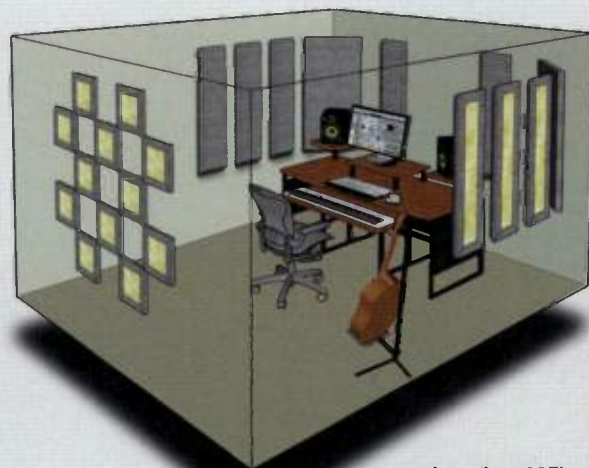


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