

CM

CANADIAN MUSICIAN

LIGHTS

*The
Superhero
Pop Music
Needs*

Vol. XXXIV No. 1



Printed in Canada

\$3.50

Raising Their Voices

The Good Lovelies, Eh440,
Micah Barnes & More

Cool Heads Prevail

Staving Off the Stresses of a
Music Career with Jadea Kelly,
The Beaches & Others

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Music Education in 2018



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INDIE INSIDER

Music BC's Phoenix Program
& The Need for Music Business
Education

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COVER PHOTO:
LIGHTS BY MATT BARNES

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CM January/February 2018 Vol. XXXIV, No. 1



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ADVERTISERS' INDEX

For more information on products advertised in *Canadian Musician*, please see page 71 or visit www.canadianmusician.com.

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ISSN 0708-9635

INDEXED IN THE CANADIAN PERIODICAL INDEX



4056 Dorchester Rd., #202 Niagara Falls ON L2E 6M9
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A New Year,

A New #CMRadio



241.

When we uploaded our final episode of *Canadian Musician Radio* for 2017 – our annual “What’s Hot for 2018” edition – that was the total number of episodes we’d produced since launching the show back in May 2013.

If you’d asked me to guess how many episodes were in the archive at that point, I don’t think I would’ve been far off, and yet hearing the number still took me by surprise. After all, that figure represents a lot of time and work – organizing and conducting interviews, compiling interesting news stories, editing hundreds of hours of digital audio, and bringing it all together each and every week for a steadily-growing listenership. A big thanks to my co-host, co-producer, and co-most things *Canadian Musician Radio*, Mike Raine, for all of his help along the way.

Of course, it’s been a lot of fun. I remember being pretty excited when we first put the distorted “Welcome to Canadian Musician Radio” clip atop our theme, the truly awesome “Strawberry Man” by Paper Lions (who also happened to be guests on our first-ever show).

And then there are the interviews. Granted,

Mike and I have had the chance to speak with and write about a who’s who of Canadian artists and industry luminaries in the pages of *Canadian Musician* over the years, but the more direct and sometimes-vulnerable nature of a back-and-forth conversation is a different animal. Sharing those candid conversations – Rush on the emotions surrounding their final tour, Paul Shaffer on finding his muse after his time with David Letterman had ceased, Iskwé on Canada’s troubled relationship with its indigenous communities – has been a true pleasure, and speaking for myself, a professional highlight. Other great ones come to mind – Serena Ryder, Shad, Lights, Randy Bachman, Terri Clark, and even honorary Canadians like Slash and Midnight Oil...

So yeah, I think we have a lot to be proud of with the show thus far and encourage you to check out some of our past episodes in the archives as there truly is something for everyone with even a minor interest in music and the business behind it; however, we’d be remiss not to realize there’s always room for improvement, and what better time to usher in some new ideas than the beginning of a new calendar year.

Some of those improvements are relatively straightforward – a new home page at CanadianMusicianRadio.com and a boost in our overall production value, for example. Others, though, will affect the very core of the show and what it is.

Rest assured, we’ll still be bringing you interviews with your favourite Canadian artists, and some you may not have heard about yet. That’s a big part of what we do and want to keep doing; however, there are countless podcasts where you can hear interviews with musicians talking about their music.

We want to dig deeper into the inner-workings of the Canadian and global music industries, bringing the spirit of what we’ve done for nearly 40 years in the pages of *Canadian Musician* magazine to this still-burgeoning and exciting medium. We’re talking new ideas that will affect the creation and consumption of music: candid and frank discussions with industry leaders, roundtables dissecting current challenges and opportunities facing the business, and a lot more.

Look no further than our 242nd episode, “Digging into Canadian Sales & Streaming Data from 2017,” for what this new direction will look like. Here, Mike had a chance to speak with Paul Shaver, the head of Nielsen Music Canada, and dissect some of the facts and figures pertaining to the sale and consumption of music throughout the past year. It’s full of interesting finds and, more importantly, looks at how you can capitalize on some of these figures and trends for your own career in 2018.

And we’ve got plenty more like it on deck, so subscribe to *Canadian Musician Radio* through your choice podcast provider and, as with any of our initiatives across all of our platforms, don’t hesitate to offer input and feedback to help us better cater our content to you and your career.

After all, that’s what we’re here for.

New episodes of *Canadian Musician Radio* go live every Wednesday at CanadianMusicianRadio.com. You can also access the show through the Apple Podcasts app, Stitcher, or wherever you source your podcasts.

Music BC's Phoenix Program & The Need for Music Business Education

By Michael Raine

There is no shortage of educational programs and events for musicians hosted or supported by the various provincial music industry associations (MIAs). Canada, it's often noted, does a pretty good job of supporting musicians' career education and development. But what about those who work with musicians – the managers, agents, labels, and others who play crucial roles in the music industry? These professionals, whose decisions can make or break a musician's career, are often left out of this educational focus in our national music industry. That's who Music BC wanted to empower with its intensive Phoenix Training & Professional Development Program.

Launched in 2017, Music BC's Phoenix program was created with support from Creative BC, FACTOR, and the Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University. It's based on a very successful program that has run in Australia and New Zealand for about the last 10 years and accepts just a handful of promising mid-level music managers and indie label owners. Through two intensive workshops, plus one-on-one mentoring and group work, it gives them the skills and insights needed to maximize their artists' careers and their businesses' potential.

"I look at the systems in Canada and obviously we're all super supportive of artists, but if you don't have the infrastructure in place to nurture those artists and be able to take them from one step to the other, we're almost doing a disservice to them," says Music BC Executive Director Alex Grigg, a former concert promoter and artist agent and the co-founder of Source Events, a special event management firm.

One of the music business advisors involved in the program is Terry McBride, the CEO and co-founder of Netzwerk Music Group, a Vancouver-based management firm, indie label, and publisher who works with Father John Misty, Mike Posner, fun., Rina Sawayama, and others. Prior to the Phoenix program, McBride instructed at Control, the Australian program it's modelled after. "After coming out of [Control], after four days, I'm like, 'Holy fuck!' and now I understand why the Australian music business, as a business, is far more successful than the Canadian business," he says. "Canada should be more successful being that we're right next door to the biggest marketplace in the world and I went, 'We don't have the infrastructure. We don't have this community of managers and label owners who all know each other, communicate with each other, and have this young group of people who have gone through this training to give them the tools to run a successful business.' It became obvious watching this process, just how everyone there was working *in* their business and probably 90 per cent of them by the end of the course were working *on* their business, not in it. They weren't lost in the weeds or lost in the fact that they must do everything for the artist. They changed their perspective to build a sustainable business ... with business principles and with tools and things to help them succeed."

Though it's said so often it's now cliché that "Canada punches above its weight," in terms of creating commercially successful musical talent,

McBride doesn't buy it, at least not when you look beyond the artists themselves. "I do think we hit above our weight because we're right next to the U.S. But I also look at how many Canadian artists are not managed by Canadian businesses and aren't signed to Canadian labels, but are viewed as being Canadian and, as such, come into that metric of us hitting above our weight. Take those out and I don't think we hit above our weight."

The missing piece, McBride and Grigg say, is that there is a significant lack of specialized training for music business owners in Canada. McBride says he sees firsthand with his Netzwerk roster the difference the Australian and New Zealand program has made compared to Canada. "I have a number of Australian artists on our roster who do really well from a worldwide point of view. I mean, that alone can be much, much better than what our Canadian roster does because there are artists on our Canadian [label] roster that we don't manage, so the expertise in how to manage just isn't there. The strategies just aren't there," says McBride. "A really good example from last year is the one that was in Australia. The managers for





Tash Sultana were there. What they got out of that has had a huge impact on that artist's career and now you have an artist who can sell out 1,500- to 2,000-seaters almost anywhere in the world and has done maybe 100 million streams. An indie artist from Australia! You know, the only success that Canadian artists mostly have is that they are managed by managers who aren't in Canada, get signed to a major label, and have top 40 success elsewhere."

The Australian and New Zealand program was created by Mariel Beros, a film producer who first created a program for the film sector before a government bureaucrat familiar with the music industry told her that it needed something similar. "We're also targeting mid-career [professionals], not entry level and the things that we focus on are not about the nuts and bolts of the music industry; it's how to do what you're doing better. We examine the various business models that occur within the music industry, but also the other great creative industries and outside of that, too," explains Beros. "The main question I get the advisors to ask everybody is, 'Why are you doing what you're doing and why are you doing it that way?' Then the final one is, 'What if? What if you're doing it differently, how is it going to impact your bottom line?' The final one is on financial modelling and we differentiate between financial statements and financial modelling. One is about the present state of affairs and the past, and one is about the future. What if you tour on this, this, and this date, and this number of venues and stuff, how is that going to affect your bottom line?' We also do a lot of reverse engineering, looking at where you want to be in two years' and five

years' time. So work backwards, what are you going to have to achieve to get there in that timeframe? So we look at the milestones you need to hit, as well. So it's not rocket science; it's common sense, but the thing is it's like, in the music business or any other small business, you're so busy working *in* the business that you often don't have time to work *on* the business."

Young Canadian managers and label owners, according to McBride, are "all focused on working in the business. They're stuck in the weeds and they're not working on any strategy. They're being reactive versus being proactive and they really don't understand what their business is, what the potential of their business is, and where they should be spending their time, effort, and energy that not only benefits the artist, but also benefits them. They've had no formal training. They've had no one sit down and mentor them." He says the Phoenix model is what's needed across Canada as it's the equivalent of an executive MBA program tailored to music professionals that covers everything from business development plans to financial management and data analytics to psychology.

"It gets into the strategies and it also gets into the data, so you basically know where to put your energy," says McBride. "There's a way within the streaming world to see an outlier and to create a hit and have it travel the world. Right now, that expertise, frankly, sits mostly inside the major labels, but it doesn't need to. I mean, if I think of what [Nettwerk] did with Passenger, it was that exact same strategy. As managers, what we did with Mike Posner. That's someone that Universal did not give a rat's ass about

and we had streaming in Norway and we had Shazaming in Russia and 18 months later we had a number one hit [with "I Took a Pill in Ibiza"] with 2 billion-plus streams around the world. But it took that knowledge inside my company to know exactly what to do with it. That usually does not exist outside of the major labels."

Taking that type of knowledge outside the major labels and across the country is the goal for Grigg and Music BC. "I do think nationally that there should be some cohesive plan to say, 'OK, it doesn't matter if you're in Toronto, Vancouver, or Halifax, we're all working within the same industry.' We're a big country and can you imagine if this was brought nationally and you start to intertwine with someone from Vancouver and someone from Halifax?" Grigg says. "Piecing all that stuff together will only make the industry stronger from a professional level. Again, we can produce as many acts as we want, but if the infrastructure is not there from the industry's standpoint, then we're doing ourselves a disservice not to be able to train them to take things to a global level. I think it's great that some artists make decisions to have heavy-hitter managers in the U.S. because they think that's the answer, but it doesn't have to be the answer. It could be happening right in our own country and these days it doesn't really matter where you are; the world is too small. All you need is a desk and a phone. But, you know, the mission and the goal here is to have a strong industry, which we do, but I think we could do a lot more to enhance and keep those professionals here. There are lots of transplant Canadians around the globe doing amazing things and it's ironic that there are a lot of heavy promoters and agents everywhere but imagine if we were to keep those all in our home country."

For McBride, he imagines that if Phoenix launched 10 years ago, "I think you would have 40 or 50 more managers and record labels that would be more successful, more focused, all helping each other, and you'd have a much better business community underneath those artists as the support system. The impact upon the artists could be profound."

.....
Michael Raine is the Senior Editor of Canadian Musician

CHANGES

Registration Open for Canadian Music Week 2018

Registration is now open for the 2018 edition of the Canadian Music Week conference and festival, which runs May 7-13 and spans seven nights of performances, with 500 showcasing artists at more than 40 live music venues in downtown Toronto.

The Music Summit conference has been expanded to four days and will run from May 9-12, 2018 at the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel. It brings together influential representatives from all areas of the Canadian and international music business to discuss and educate attendees on all areas of the industry. The Music Summit is designed for both industry executives and recording professionals and features dedicated programming streams focused on Social Music, Live Touring, and the Global Creators Summit, as well as featured keynotes, celebrity interviews, breakout sessions, and workshops.

CMW also features conferences for radio and digital media, as well as a trade exposition, a film festival, a comedy festival, five awards shows, and Canada's largest new music festival.

For more information, go to www.cmw.net.



SOCAN Foundation Launches Charitable Fund

The SOCAN Foundation has established the SOCAN Foundation Charitable Fund.

So far, the SOCAN Foundation has awarded over \$25 million to Canadian music initiatives over its 25 years. This represents more than 6,000 grants to individuals and organizations that have empowered and supported thousands of Canadian composers and songwriters across the country. While the SOCAN Foundation regularly awards and funds individual music creators and music organizations, proceeds from the charitable fund will be awarded only to eligible charitable initiatives that foster Canadian music, such as music festivals, songwriting camps, awards, and scholarship programs.

For more information, go to www.socanfoundation.ca.



GORD BAMFORD & DALLAS SMITH AT THE 2017 JUNO FAN FARE

JUNO Host Committee to Award \$25,000 in Micro-Grants

The 2018 JUNO Host Committee has announced that 25 \$1,000 grants are being made available for artists, venues, promoters, and music organizers to present unique musical experiences across the Lower Mainland and in communities throughout B.C. during JUNO Week 2018. The event will be held in Vancouver from March 19-25, 2018, culminating in The JUNO Awards Broadcast on CBC on Sunday, March 25th.

The 2018 JUNOs Experience Program is developed by the JUNO Host Committee and supported by Music BC and Creative BC. The goal is to: celebrate local music, build community, and support creativity; open opportunities for local musicians to connect with new audiences; present music in a variety of venues across B.C.; promote local music and create connections between local musicians, promoters, BIAs, and the music industry at large; build excitement for the 2018 JUNO Awards; and create inclusive, safe spaces where music can flourish, focusing on the diversity of the region.

For more information, go to www.letshearitbc.com.

... The Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame (CSHF) has inducted The Band's roots-rock classic "This Wheel's on Fire." The song was a key track on The Band's influential 1968 debut album, *Music from Big Pink*, and a version also appeared on their joint album with Bob Dylan, *The Basement Tapes*, in 1975. It was penned by bassist Rick Danko with Bob Dylan and has been covered by The Hollies, The Byrds, Siouxsie and the Banshees, and more. www.cshf.ca.

Bell Media, Music Canada & Re:Sound Partner to Improve Radio Royalty Collections

Music Canada, Re:Sound, and Bell Media have launched new advancements in cross-platform reporting. The new process aligns terrestrial broadcast data with digital to serve music industry stakeholders with greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability.

Bell Media radio stations are now automatically tracking complete sound recording data, including International Standard Recording Codes (ISRC), on new tracks from major record labels and independent label partners. With the elimination of manual processes, the new reporting system has resulted in cleaner data, which significantly benefits all rights holders, such as artists, background musicians, songwriters, and music publishers, through organizations (SOCAN, CMRRA, SODRAC, etc.) relying on broadcast data to get royalties to rights holders.

The new system is part of an ongoing project to develop administrative efficiencies by Music Canada and Re:Sound. Through consolidating multiple data sets, maximizing the use of ISRC, and other improvements, the project has so far resulted in faster payouts and 28 per cent more revenue for major labels and members of CIMA (the Canadian Independent Music Association), according to the organizations.

Music Canada & SOCAN Welcome Copyright Act Review

In mid-December 2017, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Navdeep Bains, in conjunction with Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage, launched the federal government's review of the Copyright Act with a motion asking the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology to conduct a study on the issue. The review of the Copyright Act was expected as the 2012 reforms mandated a five-year review in order to assess its effectiveness.

"Music creators, and all creators who depend on copyright, deserve a Copyright Act that protects their rights when their works are commercialized by others," says Music Canada President Graham Henderson. "This is our chance to address the value gap threatening the livelihood of Canadian creators and the future of Canadian culture."

Music Canada says it will be participating in the process to "ensure that creators are fairly compensated for the use of their works under the revised Act."

"Canadian copyright legislation is lagging behind that of other G7 countries, and I hope that, through this review, Canada will want to assume a world leadership position on copyright, as it does on other issues," adds SOCAN CEO Eric Baptiste. "In a sector in turmoil, especially with the arrival of new ways to consume and listen to music, more than ever we need strong copyright protection to ensure that music creators and publishers are fairly compensated for their work."

SOCAN will work with the various parliamentary committees that will review the current law to provide expertise.



The advertisement features four Audio-Technica headphones (M20, M30, M40, M50) displayed in a row. The M50 model is the largest and most prominent, showing its large ear cups and headband. The other three models are smaller and positioned behind it. The Audio-Technica logo is visible on the ear cups. Below the headphones, there are four small inset images: a person wearing headphones, a close-up of a microphone, a close-up of a mixing console, and a close-up of a person's face. The website address www.eriksonaudio.com is displayed on the left, and the Audio-Technica logo is on the right.

www.eriksonaudio.com **audio-technica**

CHANGES

THE AWARD GOES TO...

Alessia Cara Leads Canadian Grammy Nominees

PHOTO: CAMASUPHOTO



ALESSIA CARA AT THE 2017 JUNO AWARDS

Alessia Cara leads the Canadian nominees for the 2018 Grammy Awards. Justin Bieber, Leonard Cohen, Michael Buble, Sarah McLachlan, Daniel Caesar, and The Weeknd are among the other Canadians up for Grammys.

Cara is nominated for New Artist of the Year, while her song with Logic and Khalid, "1-800-273-8255," is nominated for both Song and Video of the Year. The song "Stay" by Zedd and Cara is up for the Pop/Duo Group Performance award.

The global hit "Despacito" by Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee featuring Bieber is nominated for Record, Song, and Best Pop Duo and Group Performance of the Year.

Buble and McLachlan are both nominated in the Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album category. Buble is up for the deluxe edition of *Nobody But Me* and McLachlan for *Wonderland*.

Cohen is nominated posthumously in the Best Rock Performance category for his song "You Want It Darker," and Best American Roots Performance for the track "Steer Your Way." Additionally, Arcade Fire is up for Best Alternative Album for *Everything Now*. Daniel Caesar is nominated twice with the song "Get You" up for Best R&B Performance and his debut album *Freudian* up for Best R&B Album. Alex Cuba is nominated for Best Latin Pop Album for *Lo Unico Constante* and Northern Cree is nominated for Best Regional Roots Music Album for *Miyo Kekisepa, Make a Stand*.

Other Canadian nominees include the cast and writers of the hit theatre production *Come From Away*, mastering engineer Joao Carvalho, and recording engineer Ryan Freeland.

The Grammy Awards will be broadcast live on Jan. 28, 2018. For a full list of nominees, go to www.grammy.com.



DAVID FARRELL

David Farrell to Be Inducted into Canadian Music & Broadcast Industry Hall of Fame

Canadian Music Week has announced that David Farrell will be the 2018 inductee to the Canadian Music & Broadcast Industry Hall of Fame for his achievements and longstanding career in the music industry at the annual awards gala at Rebel Nightclub in Toronto on May 10, 2018.

For more than four decades, Farrell has chronicled the ups, downs, triumphs, disasters, and constant changes of Canada's music industry. He is the former co-publisher of *The Record* and has been reporting on Canadian music and the industry for more than 35 years. For the last 10 years, Farrell has run the Canadian music industry website FYImusicnews.ca and its newsletter, which covers the industry's people, companies, and organizations.

For more information, go to www.cmw.net.

Calgary's Brad Saunders Wins Project WILD Grand Prize

Calgary's Brad Saunders won the \$100,953 grand prize in the 2017 edition of Project WILD.

Administered by Alberta Music and funded through Calgary country music radio station WILD 95.3, Project WILD is part of a seven-year, \$4.9 million program designed to kick-start the international music careers of three emerging Alberta artists annually, and give a boost to all Top 12 finalists selected by an industry jury.

The top three finalists were: Brad Saunders (\$100,953); Nice Horse (\$75,000); and Tanya Ryan (\$50,000).

For more information, go to www.projectwildcountry.com.



PHOTO: KAREN ATCHESON

DANNY MICHEL AT THE CFMAS

Danny Michel & Ken Yates among Canadian Folk Music Award Winners

Twenty awards were handed out over two bilingual evening celebrations at the 13th Canadian Folk Music Awards in Ottawa on Nov. 18th and 19th.

Danny Michel was honoured twice for his innovative album *Khlebnikov*, which received the Oliver Schroer Pushing the Boundaries Award. He was also awarded the Producer of the Year Award along with his collaborator Rob Carli. London, ON songwriter Ken Yates won two awards for New/Emerging Artist of the Year and English Songwriter of the Year for his album *Huntsville*.

Women feature strongly within this year's list of award recipients, including the duos of Cassie and Maggie, Mama's Broke (Lisa Maria and Amy Lou), and Moscow Apartment (Brigid Fry and Pascale Padilla) as well as solo projects from Abigail Lapell and Hannah Shira Naiman. Coco Méliès' Francesca Marie Comeau and Twin Flames' Chelsey June were also winners.

For a full list of nominees and winners, go to www.folkawards.ca.



On-Demand Streaming Grew 75% in Canada in 2017

Nielsen Music Canada has revealed some of the biggest stories and trends in Canadian music consumption from 2017.

Year-over-year in Canada, on-demand music streaming grew 75 per cent in 2017 with the week ending Nov. 30, 2017 marking the first week since Nielsen Music began tracking streaming in Canada that audio on-demand streams surpassed the 900 million mark. The Latin music genre saw the largest streaming increase, 163 per cent, due mostly to the popularity of the global hits "Despacito" and "Mi Gente."

The big increase in streaming helped offset a 16 per cent decline in album sales and 19 per cent decline in digital track downloads.

As usual, there were very significant increases for artists who died. The week of Gord Downie's death saw The Tragically Hip's overall consumption increase by 1,000 per cent over the previous week.



THE AWARD GOES TO...



Stompin' Tom Posthumously Inducted into Canada's Walk of Fame

The late Stompin' Tom Connors is among the six honourees who were inducted into Canada's Walk of Fame on Nov. 15, 2017, at the Liberty Grand Theatre in Toronto. The award organizers say Connors' legacy of uniquely Canadian songs extends far beyond the nearly five million records sold in his career, and deep into the hearts, homes, and classrooms of countless Canadians across the country.

At the same ceremony, pop singer-songwriter Shawn Hook received the Walk of Fame's 2017 Allan Slaight Honour, which recognizes young, inspirational Canadians who've achieved international success in the music industry.

For more information, go to www.canadaswalkoffame.com.



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CHANGES

MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

Guitar Workshop Plus Announces 2018 Dates

Guitar Workshop Plus has announced its 2018 schedule. There will be one Canadian session this year, running in Toronto from July 23-28. The remainder of the dates include: San Diego, CA from June 17-22;

Nashville, TN from July 15-20; and Seattle, WA from Aug. 19-24. Early bird discounts and gear giveaways are available until Feb. 15, 2018.

Designed for aspiring musicians of all ages, including teenagers, adult hobbyists, students pursuing music careers, and semi-professional and professional musi-

cians, the program offers students a setting for intense musical and personal growth. As well, this program allows for group development and courses are offered for all levels (beginner to advanced), ages (12 through adult), and styles including blues, jazz, rock, acoustic, and classical. There are also intensive bass, drum, keyboard, vocal, and songwriting courses.

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

Time Left to Enter Canadian Songwriting Competition

Submissions are being accepted for the second annual Canadian Songwriting Competition until Jan. 31, 2018.

Each online entry requires an original song, a copy of the lyrics, and an entry fee of \$30 per submission. Submissions are open to all amateur and professional songwriters who live in and/or are citizens of Canada. If there are multiple writers on a single entry, at least 50 per cent of the writers must be Canadian.

This year, there is a \$10,000 cash component to the grand prize and over \$40,000

in cash and prizes up for grabs in total.

For more information, go to www.songwritingcanada.com.



DEAD OBIES AT POP MONTREAL 2017

POP Montreal 2018 Accepting Showcase Submissions

POP Montreal is now accepting showcase applications for its 2018 edition, happening Sept. 26-30. The submission deadline is May 13, 2018, with a fee of \$30. Each year, the five-day festival presents more than 400 artists to more than 60,000 music fans and industry delegates.

The 2018 festival showcases will be held in 50 venues throughout Montreal. Artists from all genres will be accepted and artists are encouraged to apply regardless of geographic location.

For more information, go to www.popmontreal.com.



Canadian Musician surveyed musicians across the country to find out how 2017 was for their music careers and what their expectations are for 2018. Here are the results...

In 2017, 60% said performing live was their largest source of music-related revenue and 71% expect it will be in 2018

21% expect to make significantly more income from music & music-related work in 2018 compared to 2017, while 44% expect to make slightly more. Only 7% expect to make less.

Did you release recorded music in any form in 2017?

Yes, via a label	7%
Yes, via a music distributor (i.e. CD Baby, ReverbNation, etc.)	21%
Yes, self-released	21%
No	51%

How many paid shows did you perform in 2017?

None	30%
1-10	28%
11-20	16%
21-40	9%
41-60	7%
60+	9%

In 2017, what percentage of your annual income was generated by music and music-related work?

None	35%
1-25%	30%
26-50%	21%
51-75%	2%
76-100%	12%

What current/incoming trends do you predict will most significantly affect your music-related bottom line for 2018?

"With prices rising with everything in the economy, I have seen clubs/venues raising the pay for entertainment this last quarter of 2017. I feel it was somewhat idle the last 2-4 years. This is good!!"

"The increasing need for music for media productions."

"Online streaming services, while offering a wider audience, seriously limit the amount of revenue an artist can generate through sales."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

The Great Escape Accepting Artist Submissions

The Great Escape festival is now accepting artist showcase submissions for 2018. Held in Brighton, U.K., The Great Escape will be held from May 17-19, 2018. The Great Escape new music festival showcases 450 emerging artists from all over the world in 30-plus walkable venues across the city. The submission deadline is Feb. 12, 2018 and there is no submission fee.

For more information, go to www.greatescapefestival.com.



... The International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC) released its 2017 Global Collections Report, which highlights some positive trends worldwide in royalty collections for creators. Global collections are up six per cent to just under \$10.1 billion USD. For music, royalties are up seven per cent to \$8.9 billion. Global collections have risen for three years in a row and are up 19 per cent from 2012. Digital collections rose 51 per cent, driven largely by streaming subscription services, but digital is still held back by poor returns, in particular from video streaming services. The biggest collections market is the U.S. with \$1.95 billion. Canada places 10th with \$258.5 million in collections, up 1.5 per cent year-over-year. www.cisac.org.

Music Canada Live Skeptical of Ontario's Ticket Scalping Law

On Dec. 13, 2017 the Government of Ontario voted to pass the Ticket Sales Act as part of a larger consumer protection bill. The government says the new laws will protect music and sports fans by giving them fairer access to event tickets. Among other changes, the law makes it illegal to use ticket buying technology (often called "bots") to buy up large groups of tickets, and also caps the resale price of tickets at 50 per cent over face value.

Industry association Music Canada Live, led by Executive Director Erin Benjamin, says that banning bot technology is a "step in the right direction," but raises concerns about a ticket resale price cap. "Several years ago, the [formerly known as] Ticket Legislation Act was revised to remove caps because they failed to prevent tickets being sold above face value. Ontario has been here before. Regulating the price of tickets will once again drive illegal and fraudulent activity deeper into the dark corners of the internet, and will not protect fans. Concert goers will pay more for tickets and have less certainty that those tickets will be real. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to enforce and will encourage more out-of-jurisdiction, and increased illegal, resale activity. It is unclear how this time will be different."



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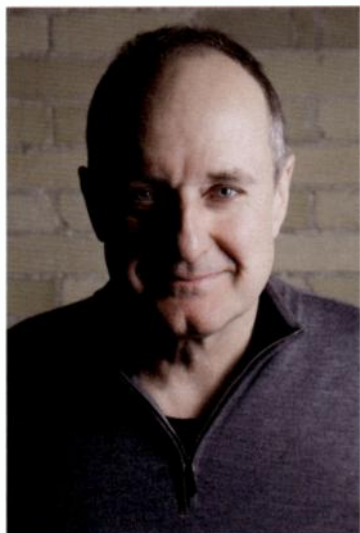
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APA CANADA'S RALPH JAMES

For the full interview, listen to the Nov. 29, 2017 episode

CM: How do you assess the health of the emerging and mid-level live music industry, given that a lot has been made out of venues closing over the last year or two in Toronto?

RJ: Toronto is unbelievable. There must be 50 live venues with bands tonight. There have been a few that closed and maybe they weren't well run. It's like the Darwinian theory of natural selection. Some of them didn't cut it. The competition is fierce, but the mathematics are very simple: how many people come to see you and at what price? If 500 people

will come and pay \$10 to see you, that's a \$5,000 gross. It's real simple math. The bands that are really great live, even without conventional airplay or whatever, can build a career and sustain themselves, but it's not pretty. If you don't love it and don't want to compete with everybody else, just keep it as a hobby. I mean, it is tough and the market here is terrific. Last week there were two nights of Guns 'n' Roses, two nights of Katy Perry, Janet Jackson, and two nights of Arcade Fire [at the Air Canada Centre] because the Leafs and Raptors were on the road. That's who you're competing with. But well-run clubs are busy too.



RIA MAE

For the full interview, listen to the Nov. 8, 2017 episode

CM: Your self-titled 2016 album, which was your major label debut, put you in front of larger audiences with the success of the single "Clothes Off." Did that change your approach to songwriting on the new EP, *My Love*?

Ria Mae: Funny you mention that because when I was writing the last album, I had a weird feeling it was going to be played for bigger audiences and I kind of wrote that way. So in that way there wasn't a difference. I definitely do this thing where I don't think of an audience necessarily in those first moments where I'm writing, but as soon as I have that moment of, 'Oh my god, this is catchy, there's something here,' then I immediately think of, can I imagine singing it on stage in front of a group of people? I sort of had that same process from the last album to this album, but I think the big difference is, for me creatively, I like to not know what I'm doing. With the last album, I didn't know how to work with a hip-hop producer and I didn't know how to communicate my ideas to him. I loved that and felt like I was in creative heaven with it. This time, instead of doing that, I wrote everything on piano, which I don't play at all – you can pick anyone on the street and they play better than me – and I was just putting my finger down on chords and writing that way because I wanted to not know what I was doing and not say, 'Oh, I'm playing an A minor so that means I should do an F after it.' Like, I just wanted to not know.

GORD BAMFORD



For the full interview, listen to the Nov. 1, 2017 episode

CM: You've moved back to Alberta after living in Nashville for a few years. Was it a creative or business decision to move there originally?

Gord Bamford: A bit of both. I think you're always trying to break into different markets and obviously I've enjoyed great success in Canada and now Australia and a bit into Europe. You just want to give it a swing, right? To go down and try to get things happening. But it's really, I don't know, I'm a little jaded towards the market down there to be honest with you. It's a little cutthroat and very political. You know, if you're not an American, it's tough to break into and it's a little sad or kind of a shame to have experienced that part of it, for sure, because we have such a great industry here in Canada and so many great artists that deserve to be on the radio down there and unfortunately it's just not happening.

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OSOG at Folk Alliance International



PHOTO: NILESH PATEL

Valerie June at SXSW



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Alessia Cara at the JUNO Awards

JANUARY

Eurosonic Noorderslag Music Conference & Festival
Groningen, The Netherlands
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www.eurosonic-noorderslag.nl

Blues Summit 8
Toronto, ON
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www.torontobluesociety.com

FEBRUARY

Orlando International Guitar & Music Expo
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www.guitarexpo.net

Folk Alliance International Conference
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February 14-18, 2018
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fai@folk.org, www.folk.org

MARCH

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March 12-15, 2018
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The 2018 JUNO Awards Broadcast
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MAY

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Music Biz 2018
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Sennheiser HD25-1 II Headphones

By Adam Gallant

Sennheiser is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its popular HD25 closed-back, on-ear headphones with the updated HD25-1 II. The original HD25s are favourites to DJs and field techs for their snug fit, tight bass response, and high attenuation of background noise. The HD25-1 IIs are a true reissue, sporting the same features that popularized the acclaimed original in the '90s.

The HD25-1 IIs are designed for professional use and built to last a lifetime. Their appearance is simple, sleek, and void of flashy branding. These headphones are highly maintainable, with all parts designed for easy replacement.

In Use

Despite their snug fit, these headphones are remarkably comfortable for extended periods of use. They are notably lightweight at 140 grams and the headband is splayed, meaning it can be spread open to two pieces which comfortably grasp the listener's head. The left earpiece also has the ability to rotate off the ear and hug the listener's head for secure, one-ear listening. This feature makes the HD25s ideal for DJs monitor-

ing via the room or camera operators needing one ear free for crew communication.

The pair we tested at the studio came with a 1.5-m straight cable with detachable 1/4-in. adapter. Coiled cables are optional and very simple to swap out with plugs on each earpiece – perfect for customization and maintenance, as I tend to prefer coiled cabling as it is less susceptible to handling noise. The ear pads are made of a high-quality synthetic leatherette, and optional plush pads are available.

The HD25-1 IIs have a distinctive sound with full-bodied low end. Their frequency response extends from 16 Hz to 22,000 Hz, and the total harmonic distortion is rated at 0.3 per cent. Their nominal impedance is 70 Ω . Capable of reproducing healthy amounts of low end, I found myself reaching for the HD25-1 IIs when overdubbing bass. The results were pleasant and I found that I did not need to fuss with my working mix as much as I do when tracking with my usual HD280s.

During prolonged use, I found the HD25s to be very usable at low volumes and not harsh in the least. Reducing fatigue is important for



the daily pro user and Sennheiser seems to have catered the sound of these headphones with this in mind.

Summary

In my experience, the HD25-1 IIs are the kind of headphones that will take a lifetime of abuse, hold up in any outdoor conditions, and suit casual commuters looking for isolation just as well as any professional looking for consistent, reliable performance in the studio or out in the field.

Beyerdynamic DT 240 PRO Headphones

By Adam Gallant

Beyerdynamic has released a very competitively priced pair of pro headphones this year. The DT 240 PROs are stylish circumaural, closed back headphones with low impedance. Marketed towards both consumers and content-creating professionals such as podcasters, videographers, engineers, and touring musicians, these headphones have a great aesthetic and simple design.

In Use

In the box, we have the headphones, detachable cable, plush bag, and 1/4-in. adapter. Their appearance is understated but attractive, void of any flashy design elements. The coiled cable is sleek and not the standard, heavy cable that's commonly included with headphones at this price point. The ear pads rotate for storage and the headband is quite comfortable. I found the fit on my head to be snug but not too tight, ideal for prolonged use. The circumaural ear pads have an adequate amount of air within them and the closed-back design provides good isolation from the outside environment.

Designed to be powered by laptops and phones just as easily as high-impedance headphone amps, the nominal impedance on the DT 240 PROs is a low 34 Ω . At 196 grams, the headphones are a little on the heavy side for their size, but this didn't affect my comfort even during long editing sessions.

The DT 240 PROs have a neutral sound, void of excess low end and low mids. The clarity in the high mids and highs provides a wide stereo listening experience, making these headphones ideal for editing percussive material in the professional realm and an exciting, casual listening experience in the consumer world.

Summary

Beyerdynamic is well known for quality headphones and has a string of industry staples in its catalogue. The DT 240 PRO's are perhaps their most competitively priced pair considering the impressive build and sound quality, which will appeal to a very broad range of users in both pro and consumer applications.



Adam Gallant has worked in all facets of digital audio production, from music composition to location and post audio for television and film. He currently owns and operates The Hill Sound Studio in Charlottetown, PE.

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UNIVERSAL AUDIO

IK Multimedia Syntronik Virtual Synthesizer

By Paul Lau

Syntronik from IK Multimedia is the holy grail of virtual synth plug-ins, and the company has recently updated its breakthrough offering with some great new features and expanded compatibility. I should say now that I may be slightly biased as at one time or another, I've owned a PPG Wave 2.3 as well as Roland, Yamaha, Prophet, and Moog synths like the 38 classic instruments sampled for this package. Let me tell you, this virtual instrument definitely brings back fond memories from over three decades of musical instrument history.

Introduction

Now, since the age of software emulations of hardware instruments, there have always been the comparisons and arguments of how realistic the virtual sound or sample playback is compared to the original; however, with advancements in the technology behind programming and sampling, I feel that, to a certain degree, the immortalization of these synthesizers via virtual playback has been accomplished and will continue to progress to an even higher sonic quality in the future.

With that, I am tremendously impressed with the work and time invested to capture over 70,000 accurate and high-quality samples to the tune of 50 GB of sounds. Call it something of a history lesson in some of the most popular, noteworthy, and unique synths ever created – and one that will bring a host of creative possibilities to your work.

Syntronik is made up of a compilation of over 2,000 preset sounds that have been derived from 38 classic synths. These synths have then been divided up into 17 instrument categories. For example, there's the aforementioned PPG wave 2.3 with iconic models from Yamaha, Roland, Moog, Prophet, Sequential Circuits, and Oberheim, just to name a few.

In Use

In regards to the advancements in technology that have made way for the current crop of detailed and realistic virtual instruments, Syntronik showcases IK Multimedia's new DRIFT technology that emulates the realistic response and sound of analog oscillators by randomly changing the characteristics of the multisamples (similar to the characteristics of the original). This results in very real, natural, and smooth sounds

that, in my experience, are remarkably authentic in relation to the physical keyboards being recreated.

The individual interfaces for each of the keyboard models being recreated in the software will look familiar if you've ever owned any of these beauties. What's more, the controls are actually all the same as found on the original hardware versions, yet laid out differently in knob or slider formats.

There is a filter section that has the circuit-level filter models of four amazing keyboards, which are the modeled emulations of the Moog Ladder, Oberheim State Variable, Curtis CEM3320, and Roland IR3109 resonant filters. Here, we can combine and mix oscillators with different filters to come up with some extraordinary sounds.

So when is too much, too much? Or is that ever the case? For me, Syntronik finds the perfect balance with true four-part edit-ability plus multi-stacking and multi-splitting capabilities. Syntronik allows you to stack up to four keyboard parts simultaneously for a really thick combo or a series of different sounds that are split on each keyboard using between one to four keyboards. The combinations are so open-ended that you're really only limited by your MIDI channels and creativity.

The note and chord arpeggiator allows you to create and/or use the simplest patterns to set tempos and grooves based on virtually any style of music. The complexities of creating sequences whether you're playing the notes or drawing them in makes it fast and easy to come up with some powerful melodies and bass lines that punch through and can enhance anything you're working on!

IK Multimedia is also well-known for T-RackS, its flagship collection of mixing and mastering processors, and its AmpliTube guitar and bass tone studio, so when it came to including additional effects for Syntronik, the company has included 38 different effects from the T-RackS and AmpliTube worlds. The drag-and-drop chain of effects is fast, effective, and super easy to use, with up to five effects that can be used at the same time and inserted on every instrument. The selection of modulation, dynamics, EQ, filter, distortion, amp, reverb, and delay effects is vast and well worth the price of admission.

With so many options for creativity and customization, the program offers a browser that searches using key words or categories to help



you find specific features or effects. The user interface is also resizable, which is quite convenient. And if you are familiar with IK's SampleTank workstation, it can turn Syntronik into an open-ended expandable instrument plug-in with tons of potential.

Syntronik sounds amazing, and remarkably true to its source material. It brings the user authentic sounds from classic synths while also providing editable tools that are super easy and inspiring to use. Whether you are a seasoned pro or just finding your legs with in-the-box composition and production, Syntronik brings a wide palette of sonic colours to explore and the potential to come up with never-before-heard sounds. This is a valuable tool that can really open up your creativity.

*Paul Lau B.Sc.
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Managing Director of PowerMusic5Records,
www.PowerMusic5.com
Member of the Cool Christian Pop Band Scatter17,
www.Scatter17.com*

Exponential Audio Stratus & Symphony Reverb Plug-ins

By Ryan McCambridge

You may not have heard of Exponential Audio, and in telling you, I may be breaking some sort of Masonic audiophile code. Their plug-ins are like a secret handshake amongst audio professionals. Those who know, know.

If you're feeling out of the loop, rest assured that you at least indirectly know Michael Carnes, who is the lifeblood of Exponential Audio, through his nearly 25-year career at Lexicon developing some of the most iconic digital reverbs out there. Carnes started Exponential Audio in 2012 and has since become a leader in reverb plug-in development. PhoenixVerb and R2, along with their surround counterparts, have become indispensable tools to many mixers, especially those in post-production. But with advancements in immersive formats and new ground being covered with their NIMBUS and R4 stereo reverbs, Exponential Audio has now released Stratus and Symphony, very likely the most sophisticated surround reverbs available.

The Basics

Both Stratus and Symphony will run as 64-bit AAX, AU, VST, or VST3 plug-ins and though they are natively surround reverbs supporting mono through to 7.1 channel formats, they have 3D versions as well, which handle immersive formats like Atmos and Auro-3D. Choices are very limited for reverbs that work in 3D formats; in fact, I'm not sure of any other plug-in reverb that was designed at its inception to be an "immersive" reverb. Even still, each of the reverbs' channels are de-correlated, so changing the channel format of an instance of Stratus or Symphony won't colour the sound, which is helpful when delivering in multiple formats.

In Use

As with Exponential Audio's previous generation of surround reverbs, Stratus and Symphony are differentiated by their algorithms and, loosely, their purpose. Stratus' ancestry is derived from NIMBUS and PhoenixVerb, focusing on naturalness and recreating spaces accurately. Symphony, on the other hand, follows the R4 and R2 lineage, which are lush and capable of rich modulation and chorusing.

While testing Symphony and Stratus side by side, the distinctions between the two were obvious and I could see unique applications for both. Carnes cites Symphony for use with music and score and Stratus for foley and dialogue, but he's also quick to note that mixers have found success in the opposite. As with all aspects of mixing, the content dictates which tools are best used, but broadly speaking, I would say that Symphony would shine in moments where there is enough space for the reverb itself to be its own element in the mix. Stratus, on the other hand, would be better for subtlety, where you're not necessarily trying to draw a listener's attention



STRATUS



SYMPHONY 3D

to the reverb. This of course doesn't mean that the inverse can't be achieved; however, Symphony is definitely a "bigger" reverb, which I could see being too substantial and effected for some situations. Symphony also differentiates itself with its gating abilities and a "Freeze" function that can infinitely sustain the reverb tail for interesting effects.

Stratus and Symphony are capable of an incredible amount of tailoring. This means that the energy of the reverb can be focused based on your mixing needs and elements of the reverb can be manipulated with a surprising amount of specificity. This includes granular control over both the early reflections, which are twice as dense as PhoenixVerb Surround and R2 Surround, as well as the reverb tail. This level of detail in the early reflections helps with realism through directional accuracy and overall perspective within the reverb. This is really where the evolution of digital reverberation lies.

I can't outline every parameter that can tailor the reverb, but aside from all of the relatively conventional reverb functions, Stratus and Symphony have some original offerings. Both plug-ins have width adjustment for the reverb tail, which can create some interesting widening effects, but Symphony also adds a width slider to the early reflections. There are also very extensive EQ options for the early reflections and tail, as well as an additional input filter, which can add clarity to the reverb by regulating the incoming frequencies.

The input is also one of the available sources for keying the "Tail Suppress," which creates interaction between the source and the reverb by attenuating the reverb level based on the incoming signal. This helps maintain focus on the source by mitigating reverb wash and only pushing the reverb level up when the signal itself isn't present.

Deviating further from typical reverb customiza-

tion, Stratus and Symphony have "warp" sections that house a compressor/limiter, a bit crusher for reducing bit depth, and an overdrive circuit with several flavours of distortion and saturation. These functions were added to give character and allow the user to create low fidelity, vintage emulations in spite of the intrinsic sophistication of these reverbs. Tempo setting and host sync are also available, both of which are typical; however, the addition of pre-delay sync allows the pre-delay to be set as a note division to the set or synced tempo, alleviating the need to use a delay time calculator. Impressive.

Putting any of my negative opinions in print seems almost vapid given how insignificant they are. The GUIs are designed to be functional, in an effort to allow scaling and minimize CPU demand. Ultimately, I respect that Exponential Audio's efforts were put towards aspects that really matter, but those looking for a beautifully rendered hardware mockup will not find it here. This is perfectly fine in my books, but there are a few functions that weren't immediately obvious in their design. Of course, that was mitigated the more I used the plug-ins.

Some users might also find these reverbs overwhelming, though there are Tooltips to help explain each parameter and many exceptional presets, which can be searched and categorized. Though Stratus and Symphony are not designed for novices, those willing to put in the time with them will be rewarded.

Summary

It's no surprise that Exponential Audio has become a staple in post-production mixing. Part of what makes these reverbs so exceptional is that Exponential Audio is one of the few companies that seems to focus on its surround products as much as their stereo counterparts, if not more so. More importantly, Carnes recognizes that reverb is alive and sees it as more than just a means of artificially recreating space. He asks how reverb is being used in mixing and gives us tools that are as adaptable as the content is diverse.

I'm not one for dramatic statements but I have to give credit where it's due: Stratus and Symphony may very well be the best-sounding and most comprehensive reverb plug-ins available. They are so clearly the culmination of a career dedicated to the specific challenges of digital reverberation, and quite frankly, they are a stunning achievement that will certainly propel the quality of surround and immersive mixes for years to come.

Ryan McCambridge is a freelance producer, writer, and engineer whose credits include Rush, Birds of Tokyo, and Glass Tiger. He has taught sound design and production at workshops and universities and is the frontman of A Calmer Collision. For more information, visit www.ryan-mccambridge.com and www.acalmercollision.com.

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Aerosmith	Cheap Trick	Evanescence	Joe Jackson	Mark Knopfler	Randy Brecker	Styx
Al Schmitt	Chicago	FFDP	Joe Satriani	Mark Ronson	Randy Travis	System of a Down
Alan Parsons	Chick Corea	Fall Out Boy	Joe Walsh	Mark Tremonti	Rascal Flatts	Taylor Swift
Alice Cooper	Chris Cornell	FFDP	Joey DeFrancesco	Maroon 5	Ray LaMontagne	The Band Perry
Alicia Keys	Chuck Rainey	Fitz & The Tantrums	John Hiatt	Matt and Kim	Red Hot Chili Peppers	The Beach Boys
Alison Krauss	Cirque du Soleil	Fleetwood Mac	John Jorgenson	Marty Stuart	Rhonda Smith	The Black Crowes
Alter Bridge	City and Colour	Florida Georgia Line	John Legend	Matchbox 20	Rival Sons	The Doobie Brothers
American Idol	Clair Brothers	Foo Fighters	John Mayer	Megadeth	Rihanna	The Black Keys
Andy Grammer	Coldplay	Foreigner	John Patitucci	Meghan Trainor	Ringo Starr	The Corrs
Annihilator	Cold Creek County	Frank Filippetti	John Petrucci	Melissa Etheridge	Robert Plant	The Decemberists
Antoine Dufour	Colin James	Franz Ferdinand	Jordan Honsinger	MENOW	Robert Randolph	The Eagles
Arcade Fire	Creed	Frightened Rabbit	Jordan Rudess	Metallica	Rod Stewart	The Flecktones
Avenged Sevenfold	Crosby, Stills & Nash	G.E. Smith	Justin Bieber	Metric	Roger Hodgson	The Killers
Babyface	Crowded House	Garbage	Justin Meldal-Johnsen	Michael Bubl�	Roger Waters	The Lumineers
Barbra Streisand	Culture Club	Genesis	Josh Groban	Miike Snow	Royal Blood	The National
Barenaked Ladies	Cyndi Lauper	Godsmack	Journey	Miranda Lambert	Rush	The Rolling Stones
Blue Man Group	Daniel Lanois	Gomez	Juanes	MØ	Rusty Cooley	The Tenors
Beck	Dave Natale	Goo Goo Dolls	Justin Timberlake	Monster Truck	Sam Roberts	The Tragically Hip
Beyonc�	Dave Stewart	Grand Ole Opry	Kaiser Chiefs	M�tley Cr�e	Santana	The Prodigy
Billy Idol	Dave Matthews	Green Day	Kanye West	Mumford & Sons	Sarah McLachlan	The White Stripes
Billy Joel	David Bottrill	Guns N' Roses	Katy Perry	Muse	Scissor Sisters	The Who
Blue Rodeo	David Gilmour	Gregg Allman	k d lang	My Morning Jacket	Seal	Timbaland
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Biffy Clyro	Death Cab for Cutie	Half & Oates	Keith Urban	NBC Television	Sevendust	Tommy Emmanuel
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Bob Dylan	Depeche Mode	Hedley	Kenny Chesney	Neil Young	Shania Twain	Tony Levin
Bon Jovi	Derek Trucks	HAIM	Kenny Loggins	Nelly Furtado	Shawn Mendes	Toots & the Maytals
Bonobo	Devin Townsend	Havok	Kings of Leon	Nickelback	Sheryl Crow	U2
Bonnie Raitt	Diana Krall	Hinder	Kom	Night Riots	Shinedown	Usher
Bootsy Collins	Dimmu Borgir	Il Divo	KISS	Nine Inch Nails	Simple Plan	Van Halen
Brent Mason	Disney	Imagine Dragons	KT Tunstall	Of Montreal	Slash	Victor Wooten
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Bryan Adams	Dwight Yoakam	Jeff Beck	Linkin Park	Paul McCartney	Stanley Clarke	Whitesnake
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Butch Walker	Ed Sheeran	Jerry Douglas	Little Big Town	Paul Weller	Steve Earle	You Me At Six
Cannibal Corpse	Elton John	Jason Aldean	Luther Dickinson	Pink	Steve Lukather	Zac Brown Band
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CBC Television	Enrique Iglesias	Jimmy Buffett	Mariah Carey	Pink Floyd	Steve Stevens	

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By Joey Landreth

Harmony for Guitar

Part 2

Harmony for guitar is a pretty big topic with a lot of sub-categories. I want to talk about the basics.

I really believe that, with a good understanding of the basics of harmony, the guitar opens up tremendously. In part one in the March/April 2017 issue, I talked about how playing in an open tuning as a slide guitar player has opened up my understanding of harmony in a great way; it has forced me to look deeper into the relationships between the notes in the chords that I'm playing and the relationships between the chords in the progression that I'm playing and given me a much better understanding on how to manipulate them.

The Basics

When I teach, I almost always start in the same place. I want to establish an understanding that most everything is rooted in the major scale – so much so that when we are talking about different scales, we use a formula that maps out how said scale differs from the major scale.

Ex.: Dorian mode: 1 2 \flat 3 4 5 6 \flat 7. This is saying that a Dorian mode is a major scale with a lowered 3rd and 7th.

So in terms of harmony, we look at where a major chord comes from. If we are in the key of G (G A B C D E F#) and we stack the first, third, and fifth notes on top of each other, we get a major chord. If you do the same thing starting on each note of the scale (i.e. second, fourth, and sixth notes, and so forth), you get different chords on each degree. When you go through the process of harmonizing the scale (we talked about this last time), you get three major chords: the first degree, fourth degree, and fifth degree, or I, IV, and V.

Playing Around

Here's where the fun stuff begins. Pick three consecutive strings and a key. I like to start

with the B, G, and D strings, and for standard tuning, I like the key of G. It's important when practicing to set parameters so that you can keep yourself on track. If you're anything like me, without certain boundaries, within 10 minutes of running inversions, you're working on the intro for "Hot for Teacher." So, starting with those strings, I find my root position (that's the inversion where the root is the lowest note). In standard tuning, it will look like the first three notes of the F chord that gave us all so much trouble when we were first learning the guitar, only it'll start on the fifth fret. That fingering spelled out is 1 3 5.

Now find the first inversion. That's where we flip the notes around a bit to give us the same chord but in a different combo. In this case, it's 3 5 1. We're basically taking the bottom note of the root position and putting it on top. It should look like the top three notes (excluding the high E string) of the first C chord that we learned, or fourth string, ninth fret; third string, seventh fret; and second string, eighth fret.

We're going to invert this one more time to the second inversion. So we take the bottom note of the previous fingering and throw that puppy on top. It should look like an A chord but starting on the 12th fret, so fourth string, 12th fret; third string, 12th fret; and second string, 12th fret.

Getting It Down

Now, you want to know all these inversions without hesitation, so run them up and down the fretboard until you know them inside and out. Next, figure out where these same chords and inversions are for C and D – in other words, for the IV chord and V chord.

Find the root position for each one. I'll give you a head start! C (IV) starts on the 10th fret and is our F chord shape. D (V) starts on the 12th fret. When you're travelling up through the inversion, remember that anything above the 12th

fret is mirrored above your open strings, so the 13th fret is the same as the 1st fret but an octave apart, etc., so when you isolate your inversions for these chords, take them down the octave. Do the same thing you did for the G (I) chord. Run them up and down the fretboard until they are in your head and under your fingers.

Shaping Up

The last part of this is an exercise. I take a commonly known I-IV-V song like "Louie, Louie" and play the chord changes using only the inversions that we just figured out. I'll start by basing everything around the root position I chord. I want to keep my IV and V chord as close to the I chord as possible – a concept called voice leading – and I don't want to repeat any fingerings. After all, this is an exercise and we want to keep it challenging.

The first position will be:

- I chord, root position
- IV chord, second inversion
- V chord, first inversion

The second position will be:

- I chord, first inversion
- IV chord, root position
- V chord, second inversion

The third position will be:

- I chord, second inversion
- IV chord, first inversion
- V chord, root position

This might seem like a silly exercise but it gives you two things: a great and fun way to run inversions and access to some really nice voice leading on a very common chord progression. You'll likely start to see these shapes pop up in your playing without even knowing it.

Once you have mastered this, work on a different group of strings.



A Modal Approach to Chord Voicing

Do you ever feel like you're always playing the same chord voicings? Often when we first start learning how to play jazz on the piano, our teachers show us the standard rootless chords for the left hand, often referred to as "Bill Evans' voicings."

These chords are either built from the 3rd up (using chord tones 3-5-7-9) or the 7th up (7-9-3-5). This is a great place to start and gives you a concrete way to comp through tunes right away. These shapes give you everything you need to sound good playing through changes, as your chords include the most important chord tones, the 3rd and 7th, as well as colour tones, the 5th and 9th. If you start altering the extensions, such as lowering the 9th or raising the 5th, you'll really start sounding great; however, if you've already mastered these voicings and are starting to get bored playing the same thing, it's time to try a new approach.

A Fresh Start

To get started, pick a key. I would recommend starting with D dorian, as you won't have any black keys to deal with (yet). Then create a four-note shape starting with D in the bass – for example, D and G in the left hand and C and F in the right.

For the first shape, you may like to build a chord using the important notes to outline a Dm7 chord, which is why I've chosen the

C (7th) and F (3rd) in the right hand. Using the same fingering, move this shape up and down in steps through the D dorian scale. Make sure to maintain the same shape throughout. Because you are playing in one tonality, ALL of the chords you are playing will work over a Dm7 chord. Some of them will be more harmonious and clearly outline the chord, and some will be more dissonant, and might be used more as passing chords. Your goal is to feel comfortable moving through the mode, using the same shape so you have access to any of these chords while comping through a tune.

The Next Step

Once moving your voicing up and down in steps feels easy, try adding a fifth note to your chord, or moving the shape up and down in 3rd or 4ths. Then improvise, creating chord melodies while maintaining the same shape. Try a new shape each day, creating your own sounds within a certain mode. This exercise can be done both in and out of time, but it's usually good to start out of time to make sure you're maintaining the original shape, then work through a slow tempo on the metronome (60-80 bpm) and work up from there.

Try adding rhythm, such as the Charleston rhythm (dotted quarter followed by an eighth note). This voicing exercise works great as a 10-15-minute daily warmup. Make

sure to play through all the keys and all the modes. There's a world of possibilities within this exercise, and I encourage you to find as many creative ways as you can to change and vary your voicing practice.

Making Music

Once you've spent some time in a few keys and modes, put your new skills to practice in a tune. A great song to start with is "So What" by Miles Davis. This is a modal song; the form is Dm7 for 16 bars, Ebm7 for eight bars, and Dm7 for eight bars. You have a lot of time on only two chords and your job as the pianist is to make them sound interesting! Put the record on and play along, moving your shapes up and down in the two modes and exploring as many combinations of shapes and intervals as you can come up with.

Some other great tunes to practice these voicings on are: "Impressions" by John Coltrane, "Freedom Jazz Dance" by Eddie Harris, "Footprints" by Wayne Shorter, and "Maiden Voyage" by Herbie Hancock. Listen to how the pianists on these recordings approach comping through the tunes and the voicings they use, and play along with them. Practicing chord voicings by moving shapes around modally will open up your ears and give you new and exciting ways to explore harmony.

Good luck and have fun!



What's Your "Thing?"

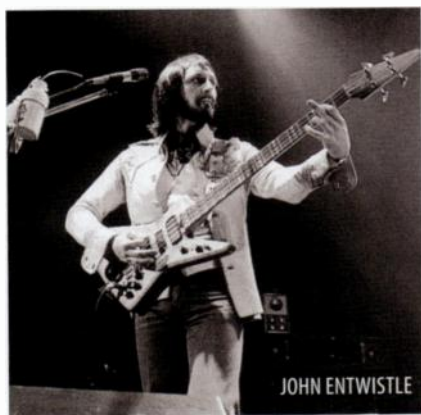
So when *Canadian Musician* asked me to write an article for their bass column, I thought, "Yeah! I'll do that!" Then I immediately thought, "Agh! I don't want to do that!"

Because what am I gonna write about? I'm not super interested in talking about gear, or scales or pedals or strings or whatever. But then Trent Carr gave me an idea. He suggested not writing about bass at all, but writing about what it's like to be a bass player in a band, specifically Headstones. This led me to thinking about what I do on stage and if any of it applies to you. Here's what I came up with...

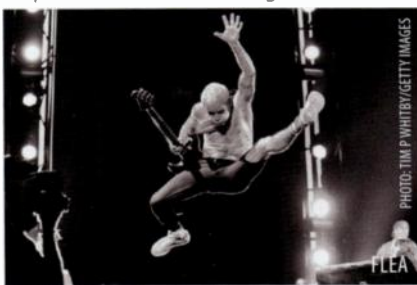
Other People's "Things"

I want to talk about performance. I'm not talking about doing a thousand windmills or scissor jumping off of the drum riser necessarily, but performance as in making yourself memorable by creating an iconic presence for yourself onstage. This is the thing that not only fans, but also agents, media, and labels all want to see in a show. I do too. Don't you?

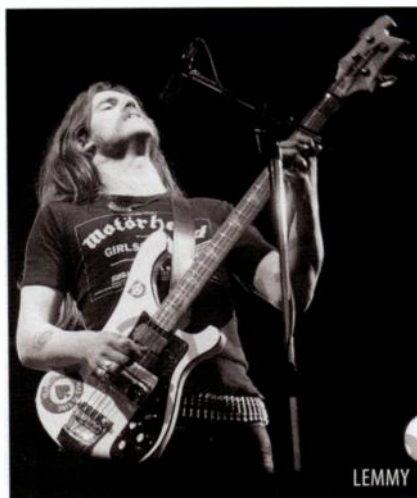
When you think of great rock bass players, there's usually a visual image that comes with that. Whether it's Flea or Entwistle or Lemmy, or (insert name here), if you watch their concert footage, they're all doing some very specific things that are unique to them.



Like, with Entwistle, he stood very still, with his bass up high, and played with little or no expression. That was his *thing*.



Flea of course, has a lot of different moves, but they're all iconic.



Lemmy, it was the Rickenbacker and that great stance, singing upward towards the mic.

Doing Your "Thing"

The thing about their "thing" is that it's consistent. We can rely on it, and really, we come to expect it from them.

You want people to remember you, and more importantly, you want to energize the audience with your performance. I feel that this is my job.

1. Try not to mess up (rehearse)
2. Be present (listen)
3. Be watchable

Make no mistake; they are watching you (unless you happen to play in a band with a particularly great frontman, in which case they're watching you only some of the time).

One of my things I used to do was take my shirt off at some point during the show. I started doing this because I sweat so much, but then it became a *thing*. I've asked fans what they thought of a particular show and they've responded with, "It was great, but you didn't take your shirt off!" So it's a double-edged sword, and I stopped doing it.

Now my attitude is to get comfortable and just really listen and get into the music. A Headstones show is such a high-energy sonic assault anyway, so getting amped up onstage is easy to do.

Also, I do some sensible stuff like stretch a little beforehand and stay hydrated.

By the way, if you're uncomfortable having people stare at you, just stare back at them. You do have the upper hand, literally and figuratively speaking. Try and remember they're only staring at you because you're up on stage being a total rock star.

So you know, whether your thing is stumbling around, or staring at your shoes, or gazing up at the lights, make it *your* thing. You're unique. Don't be afraid to try stuff and stretch out a bit, performance-wise. It's easier than you think and the only way to get there is by experimentation. Every gig, you can make some decisions about how you're gonna try this tonight, or how that worked last night, so I'll keep that again tonight, etc., and eventually, you'll find what works for you.

Before ya know it, people are saying, "Oh yeah, you know that bass player? He kind of leans up against his amp all the time?" Now that's not my thing, but if it's yours, own it!



Listening, Learning & Borrowing

The Product of Our Influences

The setting is the very small, snowy town of Gimli, MB, and the date is December 25th, 1998. Christmas Day. Little did I know that morning that this would become the most important day of my life; this is the day that I became a drummer.

Early Influences

At 5 a.m., my eight-year-old eyes shot open with excitement as I waited for the rest of my family to get out of bed. I ran into the living room and looked under the tree, only to feel an immense bout of disappointment pour over me. I had realized that there were no 20-, 18-, 16-, or even 14-in. barrel-like shapes wrapped up beneath the elaborately decorated spruce. I felt totally ripped-off, and decided to eat my sadness in stackable chips ... when I noticed a pair of Vic Firth drumsticks popping up out of my stocking. Holy smokes! Who gets sticks with no drums? Not this Zach Hanson-loving, wannabe drum girl!

My parents led me down to the unfinished basement with my 5As in hand, and there she was. My very own set of shiny white CB drums. After signing onto my dad's email account to let Zach Hanson know of my newfound drummer status, I began looking for that limb independence that is so crucial for every new drummer to obtain. After a few solid years of working through the basics alongside Hanson's *Middle of Nowhere*, I was ready to start a band. Travis Barker was my new hero.

Further Inspiration

What drew me to Blink 182 was the angsty, energetic rawness that I think all pre-teens crave, but what me kept inspired as a musician was the drumming of Travis Barker. His drum parts were so unique – especially for a pop-punk outfit – and his playing was technically flawless. Barker drew inspiration from every genre – jazz to hip-hop to marching band. He taught me the importance of having a stylistic voice within a band, and very early on in my playing, he made me realize how important it was for me to find mine.

Cue my next drummer obsession: Keith Moon.

Keith Moon was one of the best rock 'n' roll drummers of all time. To me, what separates the goods from the greats is when you can hear a drum part on its own and immediately identify who is playing it. No guitar, no bass, no vocals, just drums. Moon was such an original that he could play less than four bars in his signature style and you could instantly recognize that it was him. Keith Moon showed me that drumming is not solely mechanical; it is incredibly imaginative, colourful, and fun.

A Whole New World

Sometime after that, I ended up in the very unfamiliar world of jazz. I was the only drummer in my high school, so I played in all three jazz bands. I was extremely under-qualified. I couldn't read music, so I spent hours upon hours playing to the recordings

of Duke Ellington and, in turn, to the drumming of Sonny Greer. This was probably the best thing that has ever happened to me. Playing along to the Ellington recordings really illuminated the importance of feel, and demonstrated the drummer's major role in establishing the mood of a song. Greer had a way of listening and responding, supporting and never overstepping, that I admire so much. He knew when to be flashy and he knew when to sit back. His playing was so elegant, tasteful, and classic. I owe my sense of feel and ability to listen to the time I spent playing alongside Sonny Greer.

Full Circle

After 19 years of listening, learning, and borrowing from my favourite drummers, I've transitioned from an eight-year-old Zach Hanson-loving, wannabe drum girl to a 27-year-old serious musician.

Now, the setting is sunny Austin, TX. I'm there to play the SXSW festival for the fourth year in a row with my band *Mise en Scene*. I'm standing inside the Oklahoma tent, patiently waiting on Hanson to hit the stage for *Middle of Nowhere's* 25-year anniversary, and I reflect on everything that's happened since I picked up that record so many years ago.

Thank you, Zach Hanson.



Obligato Behind, Obligato Upfront!

The first thing to recognize about obligato is this: obligato is NOT obligatory! So simply leaving well enough alone is often a rational – and very musical – thing to do. Many aspects of obligato are intuitive and therefore, it takes time to learn to do this effectively, but here are some guidelines that will help.

First, it is usually best to back off from the vocalist completely for the first half-chorus or so – even the entire first chorus. This is a musical courtesy that will also enable you to get the vibe of the tune, listen to the changes/voicings, and, most importantly, see how the vocalist phrases.

Once you start playing, proceed carefully and adhere to the following general principles:

1. Do NOT trample on the vocalist! Stay behind, letting him or her sing the phrase, and then find your place in between as the next phrase comes up.
2. Do NOT play loud! The vocalist has the lead, so you must be sotto voce.
3. Think in terms of "call-and-response." "Simple" and "sparse." Often just a few notes will do the trick (and they can be as simple as a couple of guide tones).
4. Try to imitate the shape, contour, and/or register of the vocalist. You can also try to use contrasting shapes, contours, and/or registers, but these will likely work better at cadence points and not haphazardly through the tune.

In short, aim for "continuity" and, if and when you choose to generate contrast, consider doing so: at the end of an A, B, or C section; at a repeat sign; on the way into or out of the bridge; or on the way out of the form.

5. Generally speaking, it is a good idea to avoid playing the same note as the vocalist, because he or she may want to pitch it or nuance it in a very personal way and your notion of that same note could end up clashing. Stay out of the way – and stay out of trouble – by picking another note.

6. Know when to stop! This is THE most important principle and it rests very much on intuition. Here is one example of how it might work: You do NOT have to demarcate the downbeat of each and every phrase. In fact, leaving that strategic point to the rhythm section – alone – can be very effective. This means that a "miss" at the very beginning of a phrase is every bit as valid as a "hit," because either can work!

Finally, as an alternative to the above principles, you might improvise a line underneath the vocalist (say, on the out-chorus). This can be effective, but it is a more "radical" alternative and must be done with care. Make sure that you "flow" underneath the vocalist without distracting undue attention from his or her lead.

The best way to develop your obligato skills is by imitating the obligato work of any good horn player you like; however, don't overlook what the compers (i.e. the piano play-

er or the guitarist) in any good small instrumental ensemble is doing because the same principles apply. In addition, listen carefully to any good big instrumental ensemble because there are always underlying parts (brass, reeds, woodwinds, and/or strings) in support of the melody and/or the soloists where, once again, the same principles apply.

One last thing. These principles may appear to be peculiar to working an obligato from behind; however, they are actually basic musical principles, which means they also work upfront, when you're soloing! For example, if you are playing a lot of active lines, consider switching into "obligato mode." This will not only reduce the stress of trying to play too much, but it will also encourage you – as well as the band – to listen to and focus on the essential vibe of the music.

Presto! Less work, more groove!

There are many good examples that I could suggest, but I will confine myself to just three (and these only because I happened to be practicing with them in the last couple of days):

John Coltrane – *John Coltrane & Johnny Hartman*

Frank Sinatra & Count Basie – *Sinatra-Basie: An Historic Musical First*

Frank Sinatra – *Only The Lonely*

So remember, obligato behind – and upfront!



Pack Your A-Game:

How to Maintain Peak Performance as a Travelling Musician

Part 3

In parts one and two, we talked about maintaining peak physical performance, but what about mental performance?

Many of the tours I do last for a year or more. Soon, I will be embarking on Disney's latest tour of *Aladdin*, which will likely be out for many years. I get asked all the time about how I maintain my mental focus and bring my best game every day.

Staying Focused & In the Moment

Let's face it. Some shows are more interesting and fun to play than others, but the secret is finding how to stay focused at all times and then maintain that constant focus throughout the run of the tour.

I have played some shows more than a thousand times, so I've had to devise some mental tricks to stay focused. If you're doing the same thing hundreds of times, it's easy to let your mind wander to who knows where. What do I feel like eating between shows today? Did I pay that cell phone bill? That singer sure is out of tune today...

There are any number of things that can take our focus in another direction, so the key is to find ways to stay "in the moment." I have studied martial arts and eastern philosophies over the years and have been able to use many of those teachings in musical performance. It really helps me to think about the old adage of "not seeing the forest for the trees."

When I'm first out with a tour, I am, metaphorically speaking, looking at mostly one tree, my own part. I'm looking at it from the standpoint of an overall part of the show. When I get farther into the run of the show, I need to start focusing more intently so as to stay in the game. I start looking at the tree in finer detail. I try to pick a branch or section of the tree. Then later I'll focus more on the bark of a section of the tree, then a small part of the bark. Then narrowing the focus further, I'll focus on the tiny bug on that tiny part of bark on the tree. I'll then focus on the wings of that tiny bug on the tiny part of bark, etc.

Obviously I'm speaking metaphorically, but you can see that once the focus of the bigger picture starts to get boring or hard to focus on, you need to start narrowing your focus to more minute details.

To give an example of how I do this with my own playing, I'll sometimes use my trumpet bell as the centre of my focus. I'll try to imagine how much vibration I am getting from my bell and if I can feel the vibrations as they travel through to the end of the bell. Then I'll focus on just the bell bead to see if I can feel the vibration of the bead. Then other times I'll focus on my mouthpiece and the air I'm blowing through it. I'll try to imagine spinning the air clockwise through the mouthpiece and then try to reverse it to counter-clockwise on the next page.

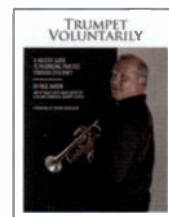
I know this sounds crazy, and I don't truly believe I can control which direction the air spins through the mouthpiece, but what it does is hyper-focus my attention to keep me "in the moment" and from allowing my mind to wander.

If these games or tricks get a little complacent, I'll try to concentrate on a different instrument in the orchestra. I try to focus on, let's say, the flute parts. Then I'll tighten the focus to the vibrato and concentrate on its depth or speed. Then I'll listen to see if the vibrato changes from fast to slower depending on the passages in the music.

There are an infinite number of things to focus on while playing – not to mention our own playing, of course – so you can find your own ways of staying focused and "in the moment."

Doing these types of mental exercises is a way to keep things fresher in your mind and keep more engaged with the music. Your performance will stay fresh and, ultimately, you will maintain a more professional attitude and stay employable for a long and hopefully prosperous career.

This is based on a lesson from Paul's new book, *Trumpet Voluntarily – A Holistic Guide to Maximizing Practice Through Efficiency*, containing more expanded information on this subject as well as 19 chapters with music examples and exercises. The book serves as a guide to teach the player how, what, and when to practice. It is available now through BuglesMedia.com.





Cross-Platform Collabs

A Q&A with FWLR on Collaborating with Non-Electronic Artists

Part 2

New Brunswick-based producer and electronic artist FWLR recently took part in the Songwriters Association of Canada's SongWorks 2017 Pro Writing Camp, which brought together a number of Canadian artists from different disciplines and locations to work and compose together. Check out part one for more on that experience, and read on about some of his other collaborations with artists from outside of the digital domain.

CM: What makes for an ideal musical collaborator/co-writer, in your opinion?

FWLR: I think you need to really objectively assess what you are and what you aren't great at. Not only will this guide you in your self-improvement, but you can also choose to get together with people who complement your strengths and – more importantly – weaknesses. For example, I am really good at subtractively writing lyrics. If you give me 100 lines of lyrics, I can tell you which ones are amazing and which ones are forgettable. So someone who is great at freely coming up with tons of lyrics quickly works really well with me. Something I struggle with is conceptualizing the song at the beginning stages, so I need someone with a brain that's less calculated and logical than mine. At the end of the day, it's all about understanding who you are as a songwriter so that you can work with people who complement you.

CM: When collaborating with other artists – specifically those without much experience in digital composition – how do you go about establishing common ground? Is it ever a challenge?

FWLR: I've never really had this challenge. I really love ignoring genre "rules" or stylistic barriers and I think that helps. If I did a purely experimental EDM track that was just crazy, I could see a vocalist having a hard time with that, but one of the things I love to do is combine the elements from those more underground styles with the more sensible characteristics of pop music. I always go into a writing session open-minded and with the approach that I am not married to any of the elements in the track. This creates common ground since I make it clear that if anyone has any ideas at all, we can try them all out.

CM: What about specific collaborations where you've got someone singing or performing an instrument on a track with you? Are those sessions generally seamless, or is there ever a learning

curve to getting people on the same page?

FWLR: Maybe I've been lucky, but when I work with people, they always seem to bring their A-game. Sometimes there are learning curves when tracking vocals over certain songs, but I try to encourage a fully open and honest environment. For example, if they are having a hard time staying on pitch over a super busy and synthy section, I'll suggest that we dumb the track down or create a guide piano track for the tracking process. If you leave judgment and reservations at the door, you can get over most hurdles easily.

CM: In your experience, what makes for a successful collaboration between electronic and "non-electronic" artists? Any stories of collaborations with particularly fruitful, or maybe surprisingly unfruitful results?

FWLR: In order to have a successful collaboration, I think you need to firstly have fun. This usually means establishing chemistry. One of the reasons why each day at the camp was a serious struggle for us to finish our tracks was because at the start of the sessions, we would always take it easy and get to know each other a bit better. I don't think I'd change that even if the deadline was tighter. It might take a bit more time rather than diving right into the project, but it gave us a chance to feel each other out and understand what we each brought to the table. All three of my days at the camp were very fruitful and I think it had a lot to do with the chemistry we established at the start. Also, just being a nice person and leaving your ego behind goes a very long way.

CM: What would you say were the most valuable takeaways for you, personally, from the SongWorks experience?

FWLR: One of the most valuable takeaways for me was the people that I met at the camp. They were all such amazing people and I would work with any of them again in a heartbeat. Another extremely valuable takeaway for me was the fact that now I know I can perform in that setting. Working in the TV industry, I have had my fair share of extreme deadlines, but writing, recording, and producing a full pop song in about nine hours with people you've never worked with before is a LOT of pressure. But that's really half the fun of it. I am really glad to know that I can survive the pressure and am really looking forward to my next camp.



Accepting the Obstacles

My journey through music began when I was a very young girl. I have vague memories of performing for my parents at the age of five, and I recall the satisfaction that I felt from their excitement and support. My enjoyment for singing and performing is something that my parents had attributed to my confidence as a child – confidence that had undoubtedly developed from many years of singing at church.

I performed through grades one to eight, partaking in talent shows and choirs. I was accepted into the vocal program at Mayfield Secondary School, located just outside my hometown of Brampton, ON. My time at Mayfield felt like a musical awakening. I fell in love with musical theatre and I started singing soul, jazz, classical, and R&B. I had many performances and remember belting for hours followed by uncontrollable laughter from hanging out with my friends.

While I was growing musically, I was also figuring out what type of instrument I was working with. My choir directors used to joke that if I stood outside our choir room during rehearsal, they would still be able to hear me. I had a very resonant voice but was undoubtedly over-singing most of the time.

After high school I was accepted into Humber College's Jazz Performance program and realized that this was the perfect musical foundation for me to establish while continuing to perform the music that I loved. I dove into my courses and I joined a working soul band during my first year. When I wasn't singing, I continued talking and laughing loudly. Looking back, I realize how I was overusing my voice in every way.

Identifying Obstacles & Finding a Workaround

I have a very vivid memory of preparing myself for a performance of Pink Floyd's "Great Gig in the Sky." It was hours before the performance and I was running through the song in a practice room. I was shouting to hit the high notes, and I was pushing harder and harder to sing. After the performance, my throat felt strange. I booked an appointment with an ear, nose, and throat specialist later to find out that I had a soft vocal node on the left side of my vocal chords.

The only thing that I knew about vocal nodes was to avoid them like the plague or else my career would be deemed over, but here I was, 21 years old with vocal nodes.

I slipped into a deep depression and began questioning all of the stages that it took for me to get to where I was. I tried to rest my voice

and back out of commitments, but the workload was heavy and the emotional load was even heavier. While realizing my improper vocal tendencies, I was also made aware that my speaking voice needed attention.

I enrolled into speech pathology therapy at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. I was undergoing therapy alongside smokers, thyroid cancer survivors, and a slew of others who were recovering from vocal damage. I continued my therapy while completing my studies at Humber, and was eventually told that I had yet another growth on my chords, this time on my right side. I was devastated. I thought I had dealt with these issues. Where were the youthful chords that I used to have? Why were they so weak? Why wasn't my voice doing what I wanted it to do? Why did life bring me here only then to realize that singing might not be the right path for me? So many questions and they all felt like dead ends.

A friend of mine had mentioned an opera singer/educator by the name of Kyra Millan. Kyra's years of opera training made her speaking and singing voice incredibly strong and resonant, and I was desperate for her guidance. My first lesson with Kyra consisted of many defeated tears. She could see that I had been struggling for years and that I was in need of direction. To this day, Kyra continues to be a big part of my vocal development.

The Takeaway

The honesty of this story is that my journey of managing my vocal issues is still something that I deal with on a daily basis. Improving my technique through warming up before performances, supportive breathing, connection to resonance, physical tension release, healthy living, and countless other maintenance tips have become a part of my lifestyle.

To this day, I continue to sing a lot; however, I have become so much more aware of what my body and my mind can handle, and above all, I have learned to be gentle with myself both physically and mentally.

As vocalists, we are athletes. Our voices get tired as we train and run marathons, and like athletes, it should come as no surprise when a part of our body is injured from being overworked. I am a big advocate for keeping an open dialogue between vocalists and musicians alike who struggle with performance-related injuries. If we continue to share our honest experiences, we will realize that we all struggle in our own ways, which will inevitably bring us together and encourage support within the community.

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SUPERHERO

By Adam Kovac

THE AMBITION BEHIND LIGHTS' SKIN & EARTH

When you're a child, there is no more intimidating question than the most common one: What do you want to be when you grow up?

Kids and teenagers have so little sway over their day-to-day lives, and yet here they are, having to give an answer that encompasses their entire future. It's no wonder they so frequently turn to the most powerful, larger-than-life figures for their responses.

Little kids reply with the fantastical: they want to be comic book heroes. Teens often go with something more grounded, if not just as hard to improbable: they want to be rock stars.

Growing up in Timmins, ON, Valerie Ann Poxleitner wanted to be both.

Tough times in the music and journalism industries mean that now, four albums into a wildly successful international pop career under the name Lights, she's on the verge of pulling off the trickiest dual career since Superman applied for a job at *The Daily Planet*. On her new record, *Skin & Earth*, Lights veers into full-on Rush concept album territory, telling a tale of finding love in an impossible place. It's a dystopian, *Hunger Games*-esque vision, with lyrics diving into territory the singer has, up until now, largely avoided.

The story, as originally conceived, is a complex and cinematic one that the album's 14 songs can only briefly sketch. To more fully flesh out Lights' vision, the record has an accompanying six-volume graphic novel series written and drawn by the artist



PHOTO: MATT JAINES

enigmatic, more heroic than reality.

Then there's the sci-fi imagery she's been using since her outer-space themed first music video for 2008's "Drive My Soul."

On her releases since, Lights has reined in some of that grandiosity. The songwriting was there and a sense of adventurous fun was never far from her music, but there was a sense she was holding something back, keeping her dorkier, more ambitious, more visual side from fully peeking through the façade.

On *Skin & Earth*, that sheen of normalcy is gone. Lights is finally ready to drop the subtlety and fully let her geek flag fly.

It started with a redheaded Riverdalian and a boy with an imaginary tiger friend.

"It's been a lifelong journey that's evolved," Lights says of her infatuation with the comic art form. "I started out reading *Archie* comics and *Herman, Far Side, Calvin & Hobbes*. I had stacks and stacks of those. I enjoyed the simplicity of how much you could tell with a few images and just a few lines."

From there, her tastes got more complex. In her current collection, there are the mainstream, household name superheroes (in 2017, who doesn't love Wonder Woman?) but there are also titles from the unusual suspects. She cites the Marjorie Liu-penned fantasy series *Monstress* as a prime example of the kind of female-created graphic novel that paved the way for *Skin & Earth*.

"Unbelievable storyline. I think there's a certain element to it that a woman would bring to it that a woman would identify with. Personally, I identify more with female characters, characters that are real and not necessarily superheroes. That's the way comics are going as well."

Every pop star needs an escape. Lights could have left comics as a hobby, a dorky interest reserved for the small slice of private life we leave for the famous. Doing otherwise would have been silly; after all, outside of niche acts like prog-punk nerds Coheed & Cambria, who would dare take on something like a crossover concept record/graphic novel?

And yet, for a decade, the idea was there.

"I'm a fan of both mediums so much. I think there's a lot of crossover in both

fan bases but I think it hasn't crossed over enough," she explains. "It was always a dream of mine to see a female artist make a concept comic tie in with the record."

When it came time to create her own book, Lights drew from what she knew. While not a biography, there are elements of her own life spread throughout the series. It's not a coincidence that in recent photos and the videos for singles "Giants" and "Savage," Lights has sported the same bright crimson hair as Enaia, the comic's main character.

"I didn't really want a superhero comic, I wanted something more relatable," she says. "My character ended up being a reflection of myself. Just totally a goofy, self-deprecating, lonely young woman who somehow, in a dismal world, still has this desire to look for help when everyone else has given up on it. It comes in an interesting way for her."

Through the journey, serious themes pop up; the story largely acts as a metaphor for struggling with depression.

"These are things I've experienced and I wanted to tell that story because I think it's an important story to tell. If you have depression, it doesn't mean you're weak or illegitimate; it just means you know how to see the world from both sides. You learn how to confront it and live with it and, eventually, overcome it."

For all the ambitious concepts at play, eventually the story had to coalesce into an actual record. To that end, Lights describes a "symbiotic process" in which gaps in the comic's plot inspired song ideas that, in turn, helped her work on the comic's storyline.

Busy with work on the comic and with translating that over to lyrics, she found herself giving up some control, letting producers work on the music while she focused on translating her sprawling tale. While she would add some guitar flourishes here and there, the musical side of things was largely out of her hands for first time in her career.

"I've always wanted control of songwriting sessions and knowing exactly what I wanted it to sound like, so everything ended up sounding kind of the same," she says.

herself. As we speak in early November 2017, she's on the verge of putting the finishing touches on the last of the books' 175 pages, the culmination of several years of work. The relief in her voice is palpable.

"Today, I've been working on the last issue. I literally have four pages left," she marvels. "I'm so close to being done, it's kind of surreal."

If turning synth-pop stardom into comic book heroism seems counter-intuitive, Lights has been dropping hints that this was coming for years.

First, there's that name. Like Diana Prince (Wonder Woman), Natasha Romanoff (Black Widow), or Selena Kyle (Catwoman), Lights realized early on the power of an alter-ego, an identity one can step into that's more mysterious, more



LIGHTS SKIN & EARTH

angrily against a former lover. "Morphine" deals bluntly with sex and sensuality in a way that the singer has often avoided.

"This character was the catalyst to talk about things I didn't really allow myself to talk about because I didn't think that people wanted to hear that from me or they would judge my personal life. I never thought I could write an angry song in the past or a song about sex in the past."

Of course, anger and sex are universal concepts. That made the greatest challenge in making the record just a little bit easier. While *Skin & Earth* might have borrowed its giant scope from prog, the plot and characters had to be condensed for an audience who may or may not read the comic companion.

In other words, Lights had to contend with the oldest headache of songwriting: bringing universality to intensely personal songs and subjects.

"Every single song has two meanings – a real-world meaning and a comic meaning," she offers. "Even 'Giants,' the single, the lyrics are, 'Bigger than the walls that hide us.' That's a direct reference to the comic, the two sectors divided by a big wall... All these direct comic references but when you listen to it on its own, it's a song about breaking out of what you feel is holding you back."

Concepts and scope aren't the only boundaries pushed on the new album. On previous releases, Lights held back on her vocals, often burying her voice in the mix and allowing catchy instrumentals to sell the hooks. "In the past, I wrote the song, it was done, and I went and sang it. No problem, that was it. This was the first record I tried to channel the emotion that was being captured in the vocal booth."

She enlisted the services of Benjamin Rice, an acclaimed vocal producer and engineer who has worked with major stars like Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, and Bruce Springsteen. His military background led to some intense, disciplined sessions, which saw Lights singing numerous takes until she got the parts perfect.

"It was the first time I really thought about it. Before that, I was just singing and just let it come out," she says.

With a character and their arc in mind, Lights says the need to open up and delve into her emotions via deep conversation wasn't as present as it was on past records. To that effect, she eschewed some of her typical collaborators for some newer faces.

"Secretly, the intentions behind that are probably, full disclosure, I really wanted to make collaborative sessions with strangers work," she says. "In the past, I've always written with people I knew really well, that I had countless hours of conversation with. There's only a handful of people I've worked with in the past I feel I'm able to be open with. So I took this idea and thought maybe this will help... so I don't feel I have to open up and spill my guts to a person I don't know. I can use this character as a conduit."

While the idea of singing a song in character might seem like an emotionally removed process, that the story had elements of her own life in it made it just the opposite.

On *Skin & Earth*, topics and emotions that were sidestepped on previous releases are front and centre. "Savage" finds her railing

I thought, 'This is the time when I really want to branch out and let other influences into my music.' There's a lot more soulful, almost hip-hop elements in the record and that's because I allowed myself to step back a little bit.

“For the first time, I was thinking about how it was delivered and how I was going to say each word, like every word matters. It does. Every word does matter, especially in pop music. The way you sing it, the way you deliver it, the texture of your voice determines how people receive that word.”

Rice's influence on Lights' approach is all over *Skin & Earth*. After years of underplaying her vocal instrument, she came ready to embrace her "inner diva," ready to emulate early influences like Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, and Celine Dion. It was a decision born of a confidence that came from some major life changes.

"That's how I learned how to sing!" she exclaims. "I think in the past there was a certain aesthetic I was trying to achieve with my vocals, which was sort of lo-fi electro-pop. Something really simple, very unshowy. I was trying to reduce my vocal so the production would shine. I was trying to prove I was more than just a singer... I think for the first time I've been confident and unabashedly a woman. Since I became a mother, I've been more of an empowered woman than ever."

The end result is a powerful, catchy pop album that can be enjoyed free of any need for a deep dive into the surrounding mythology.

"That was the big challenge, too. How do we make something that is entirely connected but can be enjoyed on its own? It's one thing to make a concept record that's totally in another world and is very niche. It's another thing to make a pop record that can totally stand alone and a comic that is completely stand alone, but come together in this augmented experience."

It has to be said that, if there was a perfect time to drop a comic book-themed concept record with a powerful female protagonist at its centre, the latter days of 2017 might be it.

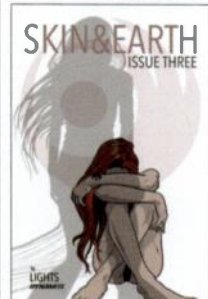
Earlier this year, *Wonder Woman* surprised pretty much everyone by not only being wildly financially successful, but in the wake of the torpid and dour DC Comics adaptations *Man of Steel* and *Batman vs. Superman*, tons of fun.

With Oscar winner Brie Larson cast for an upcoming Captain Marvel movie and increasing calls for Scarlett Johansson's badass Black Widow to get her own standalone film, comic book heroines are having a moment.

It didn't used to be this way.

"There was a time when comics were just stereotypically for 15-year-old white boys," acknowledges Lights. "Over my years of going to cons, I've seen them expand and explode into the most inclusive environment you've ever experienced. The fans of comics and the fans of the hobbies are people from all walks of life."

As Lights says this, we are just a few years removed from the shitshow known as #Gamergate, an online tempest over feminist critiques of video games that ultimately resulted in death threats levied at female game designers, journalists, and critics.



Whenever there's a push for equality in any media, you can usually bet on an equally strong pushback. So far, though, Lights has been spared that kind of culture war nightmare. The reaction from both her fans and the comic world in general has been almost entirely positive.

"We've gotten some emails from comic shops saying not only has *Skin & Earth* brought in more female fans, but it's brought in first-time comic readers, which is actually a really cool thing," says Lights. "I think comics are an amazing medium and it's easy to dismiss them as a kids thing but they're not. It's an awesome medium on the forefront of talking about social issues."

With the record and comic out, the time has come to prepare for the next heroic feat: taking the songs out on tour. Lights says she's thought of some fun, interactive ways to incorporate the plot of *Skin & Earth* into her live shows, be it through lighting and simple costume changes or a more elaborate conceptual theatrical experience.

But that's the short term. Long-term, she has goals that, while they fall short of Lex Luthor-ish world domination, are still relatively grand in scope. If *Skin & Earth* succeeds, she's got eyes on TV shows, movies, and her next great love, video games.

"In reality, it comes down to money," she acknowledges. "I was able to make a comic because it cost me zero dollars. It was just pure fucking hard work on my part, but it was something I could create that would convey my vision with limitless production value in the pages and it's zero overhead, just time."

Should the funding present itself, her dreams are lofty, but then again, so was the idea of writing and drawing 175 pages while recording a matching concept album. If *Skin & Earth* proves one thing, it's that Lights doesn't think small. She has embraced the inner dork most pop stars would never let out in public. She's doing her part to reclaim entire genres of media from the bros and making them safe for everybody.

Lights might not be the hero pop deserves, but right now, she's the hero pop music needs.

Adam Kovac is a freelance journalist based out of Montreal.

RAISING THEIR VOICES

By Andrew King

As of right now, just a few days before Christmas, there's a chance that U.S. a capella group Pentatonix will have the best-selling holiday album for the fourth year in a row. That'd be an impressive feat indeed, but even three confirmed and consecutive years at the top is something almost unrivalled in the past several decades.

It's an interesting juxtaposition that, at a time when the charts are so dominated by tracks created mostly (or entirely) in the digital domain, a group whose output is comprised entirely of human voices is amassing such impressive achievements. Couple that with the success of media like the *Pitch Perfect* films or *Glee*'s six-season run and you've got strong evidence for the fact that people are just naturally drawn to the human voice.

With that, we wanted to profile a few innovative artists who are doing very interesting things with the oldest music-making tool in human history.

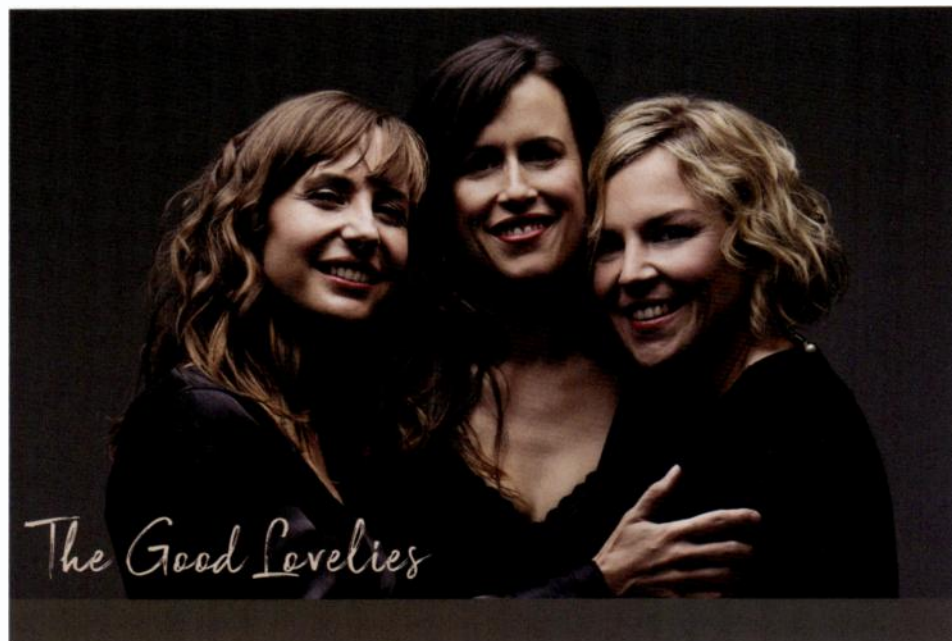


PHOTO: NIKKI ORMEROD

SHAPE SHIFTING

The Good Lovelies have built a prosperous career atop their unique blend of genres, eras, and of course, voices.

Their latest LP, *Shapeshifters*, finds the trio of Caroline Brooks, Kerri Ough, and Sue Passmore pushing their brand of country-tinged folk music to a new pop-inspired plateau while keeping anchored in the wholesome, harmony-rich sounds of their past releases. The result is an inspired and compelling collection that's sure to earn them some new admirers while satisfying their longtime fans; however, while Brooks is pleased with the balance they've struck, she says they weren't really looking to appease anyone but themselves.

"We sort of let go of a lot of that, 'Let's make sure it sounds like us' idea in the studio,"

she explains. "The way we sing together and blend our vocals – that's what makes it sound like us, as opposed to which genre we're playing in or whatever else we're aiming for."

For The Good Lovelies, voices are more than just voices; "they're instruments to us," Brooks explains. "Sometimes we're singing parts that might otherwise be a violin, or even horns. For us, it's about more than just getting lyrics out."

In that regard, *Shapeshifters* showcases a new incarnation of the group's now-signature sound, but one that still has clear connections to the ground they've covered in the past – from the simple feel-good melodies of their earliest work to the more varied and adventurous territory covered on 2015's *Burn the Plan*.

The Good Lovelies travelled from their respective homes in Ontario and Newfoundland to Nova Scotia in order to cut the record

with producer Dan Ledwell at his Echo Lake Studio. Brooks credits Ledwell as being a major catalyst in their pivot towards a more commercial pop aesthetic. Together, they worked to whittle down a wider pool of songs at various degrees of completion to the 10 album tracks.

"Some very obviously lent themselves to this pop feel and production style," she begins, "though there was a handful that existed more in another world, so when we tried to integrate some of the pop elements, it just wasn't serving those songs."

Those were put on ice for a future project – quality tunes that simply didn't fit the creative arc of this collection. Others, though, went through a bit of shape shifting of their own.

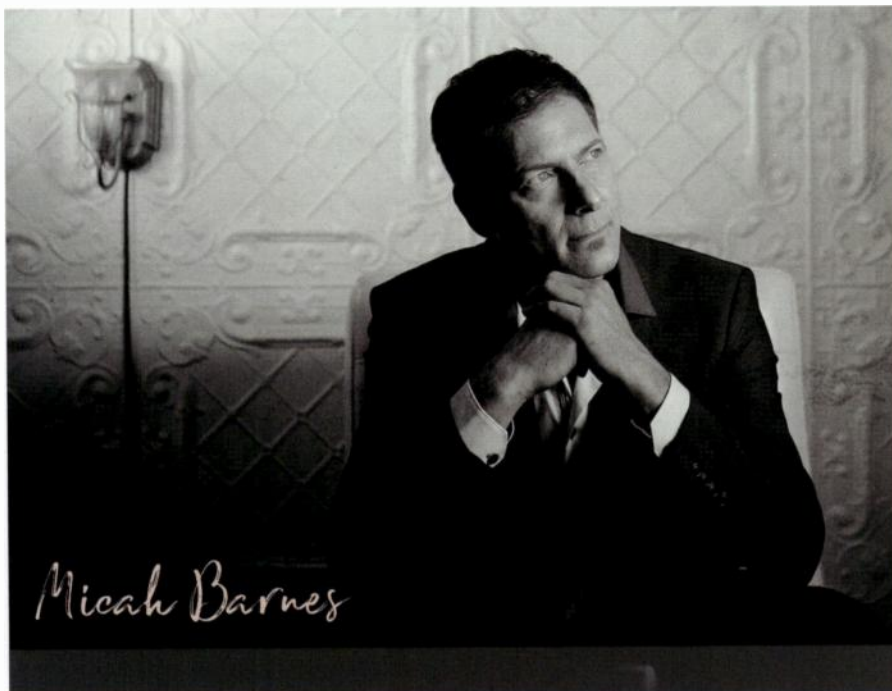
"Some evolved pretty dramatically in the studio," Brooks shares, "and there were challenges in, if you'd written something with a folky feel and then started integrating more pop elements, the vocal delivery might need to change or the phrasing might need to change."

Therein lies the fun for these seasoned songwriters and vocalists – "wrapping yourself into the song and making it exist in this world." In some cases, that even meant reining in the multi-part harmonies on which The Good Lovelies' brand has been built for a more dynamic overall vocal experience.

With the album wrapped and ready for its February 2018 release, The Good Lovelies are now amidst the process of translating their new material to the live setting, and in doing so, they've realized their Echo Lake experience has also given them a fresh perspective on some of their back catalogue material.

"We definitely want to integrate some of these newer elements into the old songs," Brooks says. "It breathes some new life into them, and we're not strangers to songs taking different forms in different scenarios."

The bottom line, she says, is that for a song to feel at home in The Good Lovelies camp, they should be able to hit the stage as a trio with an acoustic guitar and still make an emotional impact. As the songs on *Shapeshifters* prove, both in album and live form, these three voices interwoven with one another rarely deliver anything but.



THE ESSENCE OF A CITY

Micah Barnes is one of Canada's most accomplished and acclaimed jazz singers, though a few summers ago, he found himself as one of the millions of transplants residing in New York City. Barnes was in love, and between a burgeoning romance and longtime adoration of New York jazz, it was impossible not to be swept away in inspiration.

"Billie Holiday stopped me in my tracks when I was 12 years old. Literally changed my world," he begins. "I didn't know you could be an artist who would interpret a song and create such a rich, poetic, emotionally intense but also sophisticated and intelligent approach to singing."

That approach – and the many adjectives that comprise it – is what Barnes was looking to capture with *New York Stories*, his 2014 collection of original songs inspired by the city's seminal jazz scene of decades past. After all, the voices of Sarah Vaughan, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, and the like were integral to his development as a singer, and he saw the challenge of capturing their essence – and that of the city they (once) called home – as one of the biggest of his career.

"There are no jazz singers in the world as strong as those that come from New York," he says. "It pushes you to be the best. In the competitive world of jazz, you have to come correct or you don't come at all."

And so, living with his partner – a

Broadway performer – right above what was once the iconic Savoy Ballroom and a few blocks from the Apollo Theater, Barnes started writing. Limiting himself to a piano trio like those crammed onto the small stages of nearby clubs decades earlier – keys, bass, and drums – the music came relatively easy; tailoring his vocal approach to fit the music and its desired aesthetic, however, was a different matter.

"My vocal style was still very much like, rock n' roll, R&B – I was kind of a young Turk powerhouse singer," says the onetime member of world-renowned Canadian a cappella outfit The Nylons. "I was still working technically inside of that [Nylons] realm where I was pushing my voice to sound as passionate and intense as possible."

He'd been a self-described "lonely crazy person for a couple of decades," and while his technical prowess is unrivaled as a veteran performer and longtime vocal teacher, he credits his then-newfound romance with opening up his emotional range. "As I started to fall in love, I started to be able to sing differently – and I had to sing differently, because this music is very dynamic and rich and romantic. That's really what changed my voice."

New York Stories offers some striking contrast when compared with Barnes' work in The Nylons – not the least of which is ably handling sole vocal duties; however, his background in working so closely with other vocalists was valuable to one of the album's true standouts: his duet with fellow Canadian jazz great Jackie Richardson on "New York Story."

"It's like two really specific vocal worlds

have to come together," he says of what made for such a successful partnership. "There's just so much to consider. There's the musical personality – is it a comfortable fit? And then there's the timbre of the voices. With Jackie, her timbre is actually really similar to mine. You've got a black lady and a Jewish man kind of meeting each other in the middle with this timbre (laughs) and it ended up having this very romantic energy and sound to it, but we had to try that to know. It might have looked different on paper."

The track is arguably the one which best captures Barnes' desired sonic aesthetic, and that's a credit to both vocalists and how they play off of one another. "I just don't believe in rushing harmonies or arrangements; I believe in sounding it out first, and making sure the voices are reflecting the emotional world of the material," he offers, and in the case of "New York Story," that's simply undeniable.

In 2018, Barnes plans to go from small New York clubs to glitzy strip showrooms in an effort to capture the horn-heavy big band sound of vintage Las Vegas. Considering how successful he was at injecting the spirit of a city into his current collection, the next should have you feeling like you've just caught aces at The Sands.

FRESH & FAMILIAR

Through a bright and buoyant take on folk with a 1940s flare, Rosie & the Riveters have quickly established themselves as a new and noteworthy staple of the Canadian folk music landscape.

The group's 2015 debut album, *Good Clean Fun!*, is just that, and earned them some impressive achievements and acclaim. Its follow-up, though, finds the trio maintaining the vintage Andrews Sisters-inspired sounds and fun fashions while pushing into weightier lyrical territory.

As the name implies, inspired by World War II-era fictional feminist icon Rosie the Riveter, the band and brand were always a vehicle to celebrate, inspire, and empower women; subsequently, on the soon-to-be-released sophomore effort, *Ms. Behave*, Rosie & the Riveters couldn't help but take on some of the issues plaguing a healthy social discourse in 2018.

"These are issues that compelled us to write songs because they're things that still need to be discussed," shares Alexis Normand, one-third of the group alongside Allyson Reigh and Farideh Olsen.

"There's still progress to be made, and maybe that's the role of this record – like, 'We're not quite there yet as a society, so there's still room for this kind of dialogue.'"

Cuts like the title track embody a direct and unapologetic take on modern feminism while others are more playful and lighthearted in their delivery while still making similar points. "Ask a Man," for example, is a sarcastic dismissal of mansplaining while "Gotta Get Paid" cleverly tackles the wage gap, both wrapped in the ladies' signature upbeat arrangements and throwback three-part harmonies.

Perhaps the most powerful and timely offering, though, is the closing number, "I Believe You," which strips back the shtick and elaborate harmonies in favour of a simpler, more straightforward vocal approach that puts the focus right where it needs to be: on the words being sung.

The songs on *Good Clean Fun!*, Normand explains, were typically penned by a single member and then brought to the group to be properly "riveted." This time, though, the members were more collaborative, and even brought guest writers like Matthew Barber and Royal Wood into the fold.

"There was certainly an evolution," Normand shares. "There's much more trust between us, which means we can be more vulnerable with each other, and creating is a truly vulnerable activity."

That approach is certainly what propelled both the music and lyrics to new places, and *Ms. Behave* is all the better for it.

When it comes to arranging parts for the three singers, Normand says there are no set roles – it all depends on what best serves the song. "We kind of go at it naturally first, and then I'll go through and make sure the notes are accounted for and nobody's doubled up," she says, drawing from her background in music theory. "I took a lot of counterpoint in university, so there are these old-school rules where your vocal parts stay in the same general range. That can help us keep our parts straight, because we're always switching it up. It's not always one person on the soprano parts, for example. Like the leads, it switches every song."

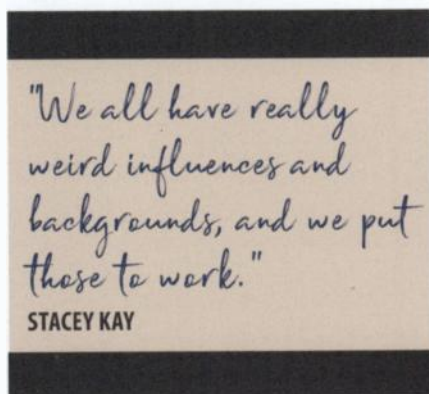
With songs being built from the ground up, she notes that choosing who takes the lead vocal part is typically left to who's most touched or compelled by the music or subject matter. "It's about which song speaks to whom the most," she says. "We never really fight about it; we're naturally drawn to different songs and go from there, but there was definitely more



PHOTO: CRYSTAL SKRUPSKI

discussion on that this time. We had to explore these themes together, and then each sit with it for awhile before coming to a consensus."

It's understandable that the musical and lyrical evolution between *Good Clean Fun!* and *Ms. Behave* has the latter sitting a bit closer to their collective heart. "We're much closer now as humans and artists," Normand says, "and because of that, we could be more vulnerable with each other, and the music kind of opens to that, too."



A CAPPELLA ON OVERDRIVE

When Stacey Kay was first approached to join what would become Eh440, she didn't necessarily jump at the chance. "To be honest, I thought in my head, 'This is lame,'" she admits with a hearty laugh. "I mean, I pictured *Pitch Perfect* and men in a barbershop, and didn't realize there's just so much more that this could be."

What it ended up being is a five-member vocal group – Kay, Janet Turner, and Tafari Anthony alternating between lead and backing vocals and the rhythm section of beatboxer Luke Stapleton and bass vocalist Joe Oliva – that incorporates countless styles, eras, and influences into a unique sonic cocktail all their own. Their debut album, 2016's *Boss Level*, showcases the wide spectrum of those individual components

"Joe always says we're five singers that have no business singing together," laughs Kay – and make no mistake, that's exactly what makes Eh440 such a standout act. Turner and Oliva were once members of a "traditional" a cappella group and were looking to push their creative boundaries. Through some existing connections and some pure serendipity, they put the pieces together and were soon a quintet creating a one-of-a-kind musical mosaic – all with just their voices and a few effects for good measure.

"When people ask me about my influences, I'm like, 'Tom Waits and Busta Rhymes,' which doesn't make sense at all, but that's been really helpful," Kay reveals. "We all have really weird influences and backgrounds, and we put those to work."

Boss Level's title track showcases the success of their union in spades. One would be hard-pressed to discern the all-vocal track from a slick new Black Eyed Peas production. What starts as an EDM-inspired rhythm track with a monstrously hooky vocal chorus soon kicks into Kay spitting some absolute fire on a super-speedy, syncopated rap that would put some of the genre's pioneers to shame. Follow that with a massive dubstep breakdown and you've got a bona-fide banger.

The slick production quality is the product of a few technological assists – for example, Oliva drops down an octave thanks to an effects pedal – but the source material is always a human voice, and the arrangements are incredibly imaginative.

Considering the unique nature of the band, Eh440's songwriting style is subsequently one-of-a-kind. In some cases, a lead vocalist might have a basic song idea and will ask Stapleton to lay down a beat into his iPhone – "essentially a karaoke track," Kay offers. "And then I'll take that and start writing on top of it."

In other cases, they'll just be goofing around with melodies – or, in Stapleton's case, a beat – that might catch someone else's ear. "I mean, I know I can't think of a beat that's as cool as something Luke might come up with, so I can always give him ideas, but we really want to get everyone's best individual ideas to the table, and then we'll rely on each other to bring an arrangement together."

When it came time to choose a producer for *Boss Level*, Eh440 used the same approach they did when putting the band together in the first place. "We thought, 'We're weird, so we need someone that works with weird,'" Kay offers, and it turns out Hill Kourkoutis knows weird.

Throughout her career, the multi-instrumentalist has performed with the likes of Serena Ryder, The Weeknd, Martha and the Muffins, and The Cliks. "She was right in the middle, where she accepted the weirdness, but also knew when to pull us back if it'd be something really cool in the end," Kay continues. "She always knew what my sound effect was. I'd have to act things out because I don't know how to musically say it sometimes, and she picked up on that. It was just perfect – having somebody that could understand this crazy language that we have."

They're really only limited to what they can do with their natural instruments, and as the breadth of material covered on *Boss Level* makes clear, that means there are virtually no limits to their creativity at all.

Andrew King is the Editor-in-Chief of Canadian Musician.



Cool Heads Prevail

THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF LIFE AS A TOURING MUSICIAN | BY LIAM DUNCAN

Last year, at the end of a month-long tour with my band, The Middle Coast, my girlfriend flew out to Victoria to meet me. We were going on a road trip back to Winnipeg. The night before her flight, she lost a lot of sleep stressing about catching her flight. That made me start to take notice of how stressed out travelers are in general. Airports are like public meet-ups for grumpy people.

There is a lot to remember when travelling, and always the possibility of things going awry. People are spending money, packing, planning and catching flights, and figuring out where to eat. There's a lot going on.

Having noticed this, I became interested in the way that artists handle touring and being on the road. Travel tends to go hand-in-hand with being an artist; whether you're on tour, travelling to write or record, or attending meetings, conferences, and the like, artists are often on the road upwards of 100 days per year. And when we tour, we aren't just catching a few flights and hitting a few cities and landmarks; we're often in a different city every day, getting there at a specific time with thousands of dollars in gear in tow.

On top of all that, artists are worried about ticket sales, finances, staying healthy, and where they are going to sleep. There is a lot to be stressed about, yet artists are forced to adapt.

The reality is that an artist's life is often filled with the kind of stress that many people would find very difficult to manage. Beyond the travel, you can be under creative pressure to make great art, you're under financial pressure to make ends meet without a steady income, you have to deal with the baked-in un-

certainty of the career, and you have to deal with the toll that a career in music takes on your relationships.

Like most people, artists typically only show off their positive experiences on social media. While this gives an impression of ease and stability, there is always a lot going on behind the scenes.

I spoke with a few of my favourite touring artists and asked them about their relationship with the road – how their experiences on the road shape their day-to-day, whether it inspires creativity, and how they deal with the unique challenges that come with the lifestyle.

These conversations were rewarding and interesting, but a few of the artists also mentioned how cathartic it was to actually talk about how hard this job can be.

SOMETIMES THE HARDEST PART IS COMING HOME

One of the most interesting themes that emerged through these conversations was the difficulty artists have with getting home. Upon reflection, this shouldn't have been surprising, but initially I figured I would be hearing a lot more tour horror stories.

The truth is, artists get pretty good at being on tour, and are often in a state of high-functionality all

the time. Re-entering the atmosphere can be a bumpy ride.

"I've only been home for about two weeks now," explains Kylie Miller of Toronto's The Beaches, "so I'm still getting my bearings with being home again. On the road, you have this schedule every day and you know where you need to be, so being nomadic becomes the norm. It's a weird feeling coming home and not having a regimented schedule. I have nothing much to do except relaxing, seeing friends and family, sleeping, and eating, which is obviously good for my health, but it feels weird.

"I had a hard time unpacking my suitcase, because I was so used to living out of it. It sat there until I finally ran out of clothes and had to do laundry."

Even if there are problems and stressful situations on the road, it's not hard to fall into a routine.

For me, it's wake up, do three sets of pushups, stretch, and shower. Beyond that, the days are fairly repetitive. Drive, radio, load-in, sound check, supper, show, load out, hang out, sleep, and do it again. While there are always obstacles, this schedule is very stimulating.

I spoke to Jadea Kelly, a singer-songwriter from Toronto and a relentless touring machine, about her experiences having to readjust to regular life.

"The biggest obstacle for me as an artist has always been coming home," she offers. "I've been on tour for basically two years now, living out of a suitcase and house sitting whenever I'm back in Toronto."

For her, it's a rather weighty experience. "I come home from tour, and I sink into a deep depression," she says candidly. "I've struggled with anxiety my entire life and it's always heightened when I come home. I'm always 'high' on tour. Drinking and partying and full of adrenaline, and doing what I love, and when I come home it's hard not to sink into a dark place. It can take me a week or two to shake it off."

For artists, touring is full of validation that you don't always get at home. You get to be on stage, playing the music you love – and having people tell you how amazing you are for it – selling merch, and feeling great.

"You are in a state of survival on tour which forces you to be in the moment," Kelly adds. "It forces you to really be with the people you're travelling with. And then you're on stage every night and performing and doing what you love to do... I'm always my happiest self when I'm on tour."

RELATIONSHIPS ON & OFF THE ROAD

One of the most rewarding things about being on the road is developing relationships with people you wouldn't otherwise see.

I've reconnected with friends from school, spent time with family that the rest of my family doesn't see, and made friends with musicians and music lovers all over the country. These people turn into real friends that I actually see fairly often.

The hard part, and this heightens some people's difficulty



with being at home, is you end up losing touch with some of your old friends.

"I think that, especially when artists start to do well, it gets harder to keep relationships," Kelly offers. "A lot of my friends at home start to become the kind of long-distance friends that you have around the world, because I only see them every once in a while."

When I brought this up with other artists, everyone could relate. Even Miller from The Beaches, who at this point has only embarked on one lengthy tour, could relate to feeling this disconnect.

"I think I notice it with people my age. Everyone is in school or working part-time jobs and that's not something I've ever done. I don't even know what that is like. But luckily, I have four of my best friends also in the same situation."

This too was a common theme; it's not like artists don't have deep friendships, they just typically share the deepest friendships with the people they tour with.

"All my best friends are people I've been touring with for seven or eight years," says Kelly.

"It goes past friendship and it becomes like a weird family," Miller tacks on. "We get the best and the worst of one another and it's really great."

There's no question the relationships you develop with the people you tour with are incredibly deep and meaningful; however, it's important and valuable to maintain close connections with people at home, too, and especially people from outside of the music world.

"I have even found it hard to go on dates and stuff, because music and touring is pretty much all I think about," admits Micah Erenberg, a touring artist from Winnipeg.

Especially as your friends get older, get jobs, and have families, being an artist gets less and less relatable; in fact, a common stressor in many artists' lives is having to talk to the people they leave at home about what they're doing.

"I hate, hate, hate talking to external family members about what I'm doing," says Kelly. "I feel like people who aren't in the industry have different meters for success. I'm the only child who pursued music in my family and they support me making music but they also see the effect it has on me emotionally and I know that it's hard for them. There's no textbook for having a kid in the music industry. I think it's hard for [family] because they want to see you have kids and relationships and you have to sacrifice some of those things in this career."

On top of maintaining friendships, artists are also maintaining romantic relationships.

Anyone who has been in a long-distance relationship knows how difficult it can get at times. FaceTime and phone calls are simply not adequate replacements for hugs and date nights.

Beyond that, I think that it's rare for the two parties to miss each other equally. When you're an artist on the road, you're doing exactly what you want to be doing: playing music, being creative, and traveling. Your significant other is doing regular life, less the person they care about.

"At times, I've come off the road and realized that I just haven't been present in my relationship," Erenberg admits. "Like, I literally wasn't there, but I also just didn't feel like I was in it anymore."

"I think [being on the road] definitely makes you push for quality time," notes Michael Bernard Fitzgerald, a touring artist from Calgary, "and that sometimes poses challenges, too, because quality time requires both parties. You can come home and be craving quality time, and your partner or friends just want to watch TV. My stance is just to try to do your best with people and be compassionate with them, and that's all you can really do."

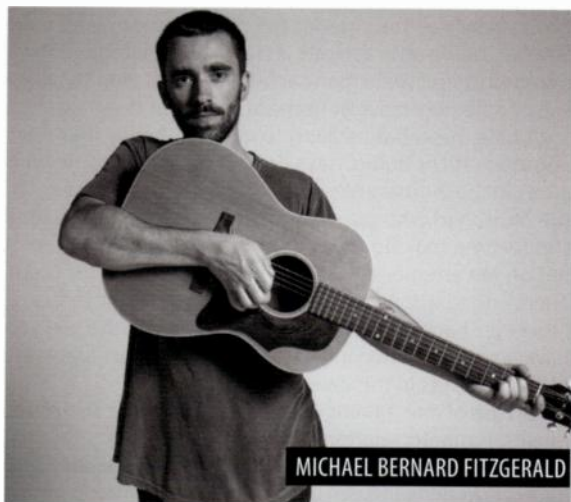
For many artists, maintaining relationships on and off the road becomes the biggest stressor in their lives. And sometimes, for better or worse, that can be inspiring.

Being Creative on the Road

While touring is something that a lot of creative people do, it's not always something that creative people enjoy. Some people love it; others find it frustrating.

When you're touring, you're taking in a lot of experiences and emotions, and that can result in a lot of creative ammo. At the same time, you're on a schedule in an unfamiliar place, which makes it hard to get into a creative headspace.

"Being a creative person on the road kind of sucks for me," says Roman Clarke, my bandmate in The Middle Coast and a great songwriter in his own right. "I'm a very space-entertained person. At home, I have all my recording stuff all



right there in a little circle, and everything I want is at my fingertips. When I'm on the road, I'm a big baby about not having that stuff. I feel less inspired and creative, which is frustrating sometimes."

One of the most frustrating things about touring is having ideas that you can't immediately go and work out. You may have a great idea in the middle of an eight-hour drive, but you can't work it out because ... you're driving.

"At the same time," notes Clarke, "when I get home, it takes me a few days, but then there's kind of an explosion and I'll make a ton of music."

Miller says she's noticed a similar phenomenon. "I didn't write much on tour, but now that I'm home, I want to get back into the studio and write. Something about playing the same songs over and over again makes me want to get the creative juices flowing. My sister Jordan loved it though. She kept a journal and wrote a bunch of lyrics on tour, which was a new thing."

That brings me to my point. Some artists find ways to be creative on the road and actually find the road and all that comes with it very inspiring.

"I get ideas and inspiration on the road for sure," says Erenberg. "I love driving the van, and it's hard to be the one behind the wheel when you get an idea. I end up pulling over a lot. And then there's a week after every tour where I'm just going through voice memos. I think touring is like creative prep. You might not get a full song but you get a lot of ideas and inspiration."

Also, your ability to be creative on the road is, to some extent, facilitated by where you are in your career.

"When I was traveling with Lights, opening those shows up, she would have her techs and her tour manager, and she would be all set up so that she could chill at the hotel with a guitar or chill in the green room," explains Fitzgerald. "She really made a point of being able to do that. In the touring that I've been predominantly exposed to, I end up shouldering a lot of the tour management and a lot of the driving, so to actually afford yourself the time to sit down and pen something is sometimes just not an option."

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DEALING WITH STRESS & STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

Most touring artists have some crazy touring stories.

For example, my band was once playing a couple of shows at Sunshine Valley Ski Resort. The shows were a blast and we all got to ski and snowboard for a couple of days. This was at the tail end of the tour, and the next show was in Saskatoon. We were planning on driving to Medicine Hat the night before our Saskatoon show to cut down on the eight-hour drive, but we hit a snag.

While I was tearing up the mountain (kind of) on my snowboard, the one and only key to the van disappeared from my pocket and ended up somewhere on the vast mountain, fully buried in slushy spring snow.

When we got to the bottom of the mountain, we had our gear all spread out around us and no way to get it into the van, let alone drive the van off the mountain, let alone get to our next gig.

I don't think I've ever been more disappointed in myself; however, with the help of my bandmates, I figured it out.

CAA came and opened up the van, and then CAA came to the rescue again with a flatbed truck. I got the driver to deliver the van to the Dodge dealership in Canmore. We grabbed a hotel and first thing the next morning, I went down to the dealership.

As luck would have it, the dealership had one program-mable key, and \$250 later, we were on the road. We even made it to the gig on time.

Frankly, this isn't even the craziest or most uncomfortable experience we've gone through; it's just a classic example.

These kinds of situations are basically commonplace, and there are lessons to be learned from them.

"It sounds cheesy," says Dylan MacDonald, my other bandmate, "but it really teaches you to relax and not sweat the small stuff. In everyday life as well."

I've been touring with Fitzgerald for over a year now, and he has 10 years of touring experience on me. One of the most important lessons I've learned on the road with him is that if you remain calm and just take the time to figure things out, they tend to work out.

Fitzgerald is a bit of an eternal optimist, and I asked

him how he maintains that when faced with the adversity that touring brings. "I don't feel like that 100 per cent of the time," he explains, "but it definitely tips that direction. There's times when you get in a fender bender, or you get a bad email, or an extra bill... There's a lot in the balance when you're touring. There's the people, the thing you're actually passionate about, there's the financial part of it, there are so many things at work and I find that you just have to be an optimist. It makes the airport easier, it makes the car rides easier, it makes everything easier."

"It's something you just learn over time – that it is going to work out. One way or another, it's going to work out. It may not be the way you wanted it to work out, or it may be 10 times better, but it's going to work out."

The fact is, even when you're at home, you're faced with uncertainty every day. Artists live strange lives, so it makes sense that we adjust to it.



IS IT ALL WORTH IT?

I hope these stories don't give you the wrong impression; these artists all love what they're doing.

"I would never trade any of it. I love it more than anything," affirms Kelly. "Last night, I wrote an amazing song in L.A. and I have three more sessions this week. The fact that we get to work in the music industry and be surrounded by creative people all the time – it's the best job in the world."

All of these conversations were inspiring to me in different ways. I love hearing how different artists deal with the challenges that this career path offers up and the way that those challenges can be used to inspire creativity.

At the end of the day, it comes down to having a positive outlook and faith that everything will work out.

Looking at touring and the challenges it presents as collecting inspiration helps you process those experiences creatively. Allowing yourself to live in the feelings that you experience on the road and at home can be great creative fuel.

That attitude, along with a calm demeanor and the faith that things will work out, makes for successful, productive tours and a fulfilling home life as well.

Liam Duncan is musician and writer based in Winnipeg, MB. He likes to make music with his band The Middle Coast. Check them out on Facebook.

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A person wearing a dark coat, jeans, and brown boots is walking away from the camera on a paved path. In the background, there is a range of mountains under a cloudy sky.

PLANNING YOUR PATH TO SUCCESS

Canadian Musician's 2018 Focus on Music Education

By Samantha Everett Motusoff

When it comes to figuring out your path in the music industry, it can be a rocky road that's constantly curving unexpectedly. That's why we're here to highlight some of the many options for music education - either for formative instruction or ongoing learning - that can accelerate and ameliorate your journey to whichever destinations you've set on your career course.

Growing up in rural Quebec with dial-up internet and only my parents' record collection and Beatles books to dive into, my education was based on whatever I could consume. I found solace in online music message boards, where I learned all about local music, promoters, and where to discover new music. Whenever I'd go to the big city, I'd come back with an armload of rock bios and punk zines that I'd pour over.

Being a female in the music scene, I was determined to belong,

but also avoid terms like "poser" or "groupie," so I decided I'd study anything music-related, in whatever fashion I could. (Mostly reading.) When I couldn't afford to buy tickets to shows, I'd interview bands for my blog and learn from them directly. This was how I first learned about veganism, anarchy, and racial oppression. So much of my knowledge was based on the hundreds of artists I'd interview and book.

I often tell my college students how I would have *killed* for an opportunity to have met anyone in the music industry, much less be able to study the subject in any capacity, when I was starting out. I had no mentors; just blind confidence and no fear of failure leading me to my ultimate career path.

The gist of this little story is that you don't have to be limited to what you discover on your own. The world is your music oyster, and through a little networking, Googling, and sheer bravado, you can reach your goals.

PIT STOPS ON YOUR PATH

Here are some of the many education options available to musicians and industry types.

ARTS-FOCUSED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Performing arts high schools are institutions with a specialized focus on learning music, theatre, visual arts, writing, or production. There are many across Canada; however, they're mostly concentrated in urban centres. Students do a regular grade 9-12 course load but will have a portion of the day (usually 1-2 hours) dedicated to their specific creative discipline. Many are inter-disciplinary so that students become trained in related fields. Students must typically pass an audition process and competition is fierce, as many teens have outside training. Tuition is usually covered by provincial taxes though there are often associated expenses (like dues and extra training) that are difficult to measure.

PRIVATE MUSIC LESSONS

Music lessons can vary from group to individual solo sessions and vary dramatically based on teacher and institution. The sky's the limit when it comes to which instrument you can learn, from bassoon to vocal, though guitar and piano lessons are the most popular. The Royal Conservatory is one of the more esteemed schools that focuses on both performance and theory, though you may find an amazing guitar teacher from a flyer at your local music store. There's really no age limit when it comes to lessons; children, adults, and seniors can participate equally with widely different motivations for learning.

COLLEGES & INSTITUTIONS

Studying music industry arts or learning entertainment management through a structured college or business program has been around since the 1970s; however, programs are popping up all over Canada to support this field of study. These vary from intensive one-semester programs to three or four years of courses. Many programs include an internship meant to get the student real-world industry experience. Some offer certificates or diplomas, though may not be recognized by future employers. In some cases, these highly-specialized career programs can be very costly, though student financial assistance information is often available.

UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

Most music degrees are two- to four-year programs that focus on theory and performance in mostly classical or jazz performance styles and instruments in a structured class semester by accomplished professors and at a high academic level. Most courses are intended to enable students to become professional performers over running their own business or becoming an artist manager. Many students attend on scholarship and academic excellence from previous institutions is part of the competitive application process. Pay attention to class size (academic compared to performance classes) and the reputation of the institute when deciding. Expect standard university tuition fees.

The major advantage to **self-learning** is also its downfall: it's self-directed, so if you're not committed to finishing a book or mastering a new song, no one else will make you.

VIDEO & OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

Many find it easier to hit YouTube to learn their favourite song rather than scouring the net for accurate tabs. Now, you can even "attend" university courses at your own leisure. A major advantage to many of these videos is that they can be accessed for free (though be skeptical of the quality and accuracy of the information).

For those on the industry side, there is a wealth of knowledge to be discovered through websites like Linda.com and Alison.com where you can learn how to run your own business, but also study things like photography, graphic design, and marketing. Many public libraries have free membership portals and web resources through your card.

SELF-LEARNING

Speaking of libraries, many offer lending libraries of instruments and the Toronto public library even has recording studios to rent by the hour included in your free membership. Libraries can become your best friend for music biographies, CDs, magazines (get your *Billboard* online through their portal), and more. Just on your phone, you can download a drum kit app and have at it. You can pretty much find any book or resource through Amazon, but who's to stop you from noodling on a sitar until something sounds good or picking up a second-hand mixing board and applying tutorials from GarageBand forums? Netflix has amazing music documentaries that will inspire and educate you about the highs and lows of popular music. Even watching music awards shows can be beneficial as it's important to know what's gaining popularity in the mainstream. Follow your favourite musicians on Instagram and check Pitchfork.com for what's trending during the commercials.

MENTORSHIP

Mentorship can be effective at various stages. From one-off meetings to relationships that last for years, this style of learning consists of connecting with someone with more expertise than you and getting guidance or advice specifically tailored to your situation. This can be in a formal conference-style situation or just chatting over a pint. Though some agencies offer mentorship packages, most mentorships begin with a conversation. Mentorship can come from musicians you admire, publicists, promoters, artist managers, or any industry, really. There just has to be a genuine interest in helping the person being mentored reach their short- or long-term goals. Mentors can be found through provincial music associations, attending concerts, or a cold-call email asking for a coffee. Even Facebook Live videos can connect you with an industry leader where you can ask for advice or guidance.



Dan Hand of Black Lamb Music

INTERNSHIPS

Internships vary drastically; however, most consist of a co-op-like placement where you are working an entry-level position at a company two or three days a week related to your interests. You do not need to be in school to get an internship but some labels and organizations only accept interns from them. Overall, these are not paid positions, though some companies may offer a

small stipend to cover daily transportation. Prepare to do the menial tasks and get coffee for the higher-ups in return for being a fly on the wall and learning by proxy. Some internships immediately thrust individuals into active company roles, like graphic design or digital advertisement, though! Internships can range from week-long shadowing up to six months in length. Be prepared to work as if you're getting paid and you will go far. Interns are often the first people to be interviewed when a position comes up as they already know your work ethic and personality. You can find these opportunities through Work in Culture, Indeed.com, Facebook music groups, school bulletin boards, or word of mouth.

MUSIC CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

Conferences offer an intensive style of learning where presenters and panels discuss a particular subject for 45 minutes to an hour, followed by a short question period. There can be a myriad of topics crammed into a single day, from songwriting to sync licensing to touring to celebrity interviews. These are great opportunities to pick and choose which topics you're specifically interested in. You bounce from room to room wired

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Dan Hay of Amos the Transparent & The Spark Academy

on coffee and bump into people in the hallways, which is often the best networking of the year. These often happen simultaneously with music festivals. These happen all over North America throughout the year and range from being totally free to having tiered pass options.

Check out the "Capitalize on Music Conferences" feature in the March/April 2017 issue of *Canadian Musician* for more.

SETTING YOUR COURSE

Now that you know your options, how do you decide what's right for you, and how do you tell if those decisions are paying off?

ARTS-FOCUSED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Parents are usually the first to introduce children to the possibility of attending an arts high school. "They planted the seed at age 11," says Jacquie Neville of Toronto-based band The Balconies. She attended Canterbury High School in Ottawa for music.

"Growing up, I was playing violin since I was six years old," she says. One of the advantages her parents valued was that the program was affordable as it was part of the regular municipal school

board. The choice was easy as it was the only school that could satisfy her growing interest in creative expression in the city. "I saw Canterbury as a promised-land for perfecting my craft and being around people like me," she says. "I'm pretty sure I cried when I was accepted." She wasn't restricted to just one instrument and was able to sample the other programs including drama, choir, and musical theatre with peers just as eager to learn as her.

A pivotal moment for Neville that determined her career path was when she wrote and performed a song for the entire student body. "I thought, 'How lucky am I that I go to school and learn an instrument and get graded on this?'" she says. "That's when I realized I wanted to perform my own music forever." As part of her artist development, excellent teachers taught her the importance of practice and dedication to her craft - skills she applies daily to her band today. And as for recommending the program to future students, "Absolutely!" she says. "There are so many amazing qualities from attending a performing arts school that are transferable regardless of if students choose a career in the arts," she says.

Neville now teaches lessons in violin, vocals, and

songwriting using skills she acquired from Canterbury.

Things to consider before applying are the student's ability to prepare for an audition, actual skill assessment, and parents' commitment to supporting the program as it's far more intensive than regular high school. Students are required to complete their daily course load and practice their instruments or vocal exercises for hours after school. Also consider that outside lessons may be required, instrument rentals and purchases, and the student's ability to pursue the program.

If a given company's website doesn't say anything about **internships**, ask anyways. The worst they can say is no!

PRIVATE MUSIC LESSONS

This can include anything from a handful of lessons to tackle a specific concept to decades of ongoing instruction. Whether students want to learn Taylor Swift songs or write a rock opera, a private teacher can guide your career. But when do you know you're ready?

"Right from the moment you start getting interested in playing music," says Dan Hay of The Spark Academy. "The beginning stages are the most crucial time to have private lessons," he says, drawing from over 20 years of private teaching. He adds that guitar lessons are just the tip of the iceberg for learning about the music world in general. Internet searches or music store ads are a good launching point for finding teachers in your area; however, referrals from past students are the best way to discover your ideal match. Lessons aren't just for children - a common misconception, explains Hay. "The majority of my students are adults who really want to learn."

Factors to consider could be if the teacher uses theory books and strict lesson plans or if the lessons can be catered around your interests. "It's important to meet with the teacher beforehand and look at the environment you're going to be learning in," says Hay.

Liking each other is also key. "I want to see if we click in personality and interests," Hay says. He explains that the first few lessons, for him, are more conversations to identify goals (like recording an album) than strictly learning... and even if they don't know, adding that sense of guidance.

As a musician who has toured internationally with bands like Amos the Transparent and The Fully Down, Hay's students look to him as a mentor, which is why he is adamant that teachers have real industry experience and careers in order to best guide their students. Lessons can often include discussions about how to record an album or get signed to a label. Students may discover that they are passionate about a different instrument than originally planned or that they're more interested in the production side of music.

Students can tell it's the right path if they're excited about the process and results. "It's not fun to teach them if they don't want to be there," says Hay, adding it's best to ask about policies before signing any contracts.



HARRIS



Alumni and Faculty contributed to the Leonard Cohen Tribute on CBC, Neil Young's concert from Omemee, Shania Twain's Grey Cup show, Gord Downie's JUNO winning 'Secret Path', The Weeknd's #1 'Starboy' and OSCAR nominated 'Earned It', The Tragically Hip's final concert film and Alessia Cara's Platinum album 'Know-It-All'.

HARRISINSTITUTE.COM



Jacquie Neville of The Balconies

COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES & OTHER FORMAL INSTITUTIONS

As a college instructor myself, I have seen the advantages and disadvantages of these programs. People often enroll right after high school, still unsure of their specific career path. Dan Hand of Black Lamb Music attended Oshawa, ON's Durham College for music business management. "Going to one place to get a primer on [the whole industry] before stepping foot into the real world, you can't knock that," he says of his three-year program.

Dedicate time to research the speakers and topics at **music conferences** to determine which ones are most relevant to your pre-established goals.

Many students are not prepared for the discipline and dedication required to excel and often drop out after the first semester. One of the biggest myths when it comes to these programs is that you'll land a job in your field with that framed piece of paper. Before investing in such a program, potential students should determine their career goals and then choose a course of study that relates to them.

"I wanted to learn how to be better at my own band, but when I started diving in on the artist management stuff, it was clear that I wasn't going to stop that career path," says Hand, who manages acts like Diamonds and Havelin.

These programs can be very expensive and are designed to prepare you for a career in a specific field from experienced instructors; moreover, the instructors could be great mentors, career references, or even employers. Courses focused on dense subjects like accounting, copyright, and publishing are very challenging. "The lessons were great because they taught you the basics of terminology and helped you understand why bands go on tour," says Hand.

Talking to past alumni is key to getting an honest perspective on the programs. Checking out LinkedIn profiles for past graduates is an easy way to see if alumni actually work in the fields they studied. "People from [my] program are still very active in the music industry ... I was able to make solid connections and friends that have lasted ever since," says Hand.

There are open houses where you can meet the instructors, ask questions about the curriculum, or talk to a financial officer for tips on how to afford the programs. Questions to consider: What are regular school hours? Do students get reading week or time off for holidays? How long is the program? How many hours of homework are expected? What are the teachers' credentials? What have past grads gone on to do? Are there internship options? Are there school activities related to your studies?

"Our program booked a lot of events," says Hand. "There was a record label that put out local CDs, a newspaper, [and] I ran an open mic at the coffee house... It was good on-the-ground beginner experience."

SELF-LEARNING & THE INTERNET

If you're a self-starter, this could be a rewarding route for you. The major advantage to self-learning is also its downfall: it's self-directed, so if you're not committed to finishing a book or mastering a new song, no one else will make you. It's

simple to create a routine of absorbing music news and articles, but it comes down to time management and discipline.

Watching music documentaries, listening to podcasts, reading magazines - these are all probably things you do with your leisure time to begin with. Consider how to better incorporate this avenue of learning into your everyday routine. Maybe you carve out an extra 15 minutes before work in the morning to read a book or 30 minutes to watch a webinar.

Music and art are creative undertakings, so if you're not feeling it after a long day of work or looking after kids, it's easy to lose inspiration. It's also challenging to measure success, so setting small, attainable goals for yourself on a calendar and updating them as you go along will help your growth. This is a method I teach my students: working backwards from a goal will help you arrange these. So for example, if you want to record a song yourself, list the steps it'll take you to get there: write lyrics, write music, practice that music, bring it to your bandmates or hire a sessionist, learn new audio software through an online tutorial, etc. You then tag weeks or months affiliated with each thing you need to do and can create a structured timeline to reach your goals. Update your timeline on a regular basis and you'll be amazed at the progress you've made.

MENTORSHIP

Finding a mentor can seem incredibly intimidating, but it needn't be. "It flatters people a lot of the time," says Jen McKerral, music outreach officer at Cultural Industries Northern Ontario. "People should be more brazen in approaching people they admire to get advice."

It can be as simple as sending an invite to go for coffee or sitting down with someone for a speed meeting at music conference. It's important that you have some sort of connection to the person that you're

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Jen McKerral of Cultural Industries Northern Ontario

requesting advice from over just firing off a cold email - though sometimes that works!

Maybe you go to a professional mixer and hit it off with a publicist or marketing coordinator and exchange contact info? Maybe you approach a fellow musician in the same genre who has toured more extensively than you before a show? "Some of the most valuable resources an artist can have is to go to the older artists who can help them avoid making new mistakes," says McKerral. These people could also have connections, ideas, and recommendations that you haven't considered.

That said, you must have goals in place. "Know where it is you want to go," says McKerral, who mentors artists as part of her position. "My job is to help you figure out how to get there but you should never rely on someone to set goals for you. You need to know your own capacity to carry a project out." Mentorship can take place in person, over Skype, via email, text... You're not bound by location. "Even though they're in a different city, they can be connected and create long lasting relationships," says McKerral.

She especially sees the value in bringing mentorship and educational opportunities to artists in remote parts of Canada who can be isolated from what's going on. "The biggest challenge is the distance from the industry," says McKerral. "That's why we bring people from the industry to northern communities to have that face-to-face contact," she says of the industry events she programs. "We demystify it."

INTERNSHIPS

Working with interns for the last few years in various roles, I can attest to the value and difficulty in selecting the right internship. "It seems very daunting and scary, [but] I would always suggest people find an internship first," says Hand over jumping into a college career program.

When it comes to research, make sure you like the artists a

If you're interested in a certain **college or university**, check out an open house, where you can meet the instructors, ask questions about the curriculum, or talk to a financial officer.

company represents or the services it provides, and how they conduct themselves both online and in person. Take time to research company values and culture.

When seeking an internship, don't limit yourself to just labels or large management companies. They get lots of requests and some only take students from certain schools. Do some online research about other organizations that are related to your interests. If a company website doesn't say anything about internships, ask anyways. The worst they can say is no!

Questions like: 'What are the expectations?' or 'What will my role be?' are key. Be clear about what it is you're interested in learning about. Sometimes, internships are specific to topics like marketing, graphic design, or event support; others, they're more general in nature. Are there opportunities to shadow other team members? Have past interns been hired after successful internships?

When you do get an internship, don't be above getting people coffee or answering phones. Just being in an environment you're interested in can be more educational than years in school.

Hand himself is an example of an internship success. "The most valuable part of Durham for me was in getting [an] internship at Underground Operations." His internship turned into a full-time job with the label, working with artists like Protest the Hero, Lights, and Abandon All Ships.

MUSIC CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

Put simply, conferences are meant for artists and industry members of all levels to learn together with organizers bringing in keynote speakers or experts to help your career growth. Dedicate time to researching the speakers and conference topics to determine which ones are most relevant to your pre-established goals, like finding a booking agent or getting better distribution.

Again, for a thorough look at music conferences and how to take full advantage of the opportunities they offer, check out the March/April 2017 issue of *Canadian Musician*.

Regardless of where you're at in your career as an artist or music industry professional, ongoing education is vital to achieving, maintaining, and growing your success, so seek out what interests you and don't get disheartened if you don't reach your goals immediately. Passion for music should be life-long, as should your journey of knowledge.

Samantha Everts-Matusoff is a Toronto-based artist consultant and grant writer at YouRockRed with over 10 years of music industry experience. Her proven skills in artist development services have led her to speak at a variety of conferences and festivals, including Iceland Airwaves and Canadian Music Week. She also teaches artist management at Trebas Institute and is the funding coordinator at Coalition Music. For more info, visit: www.yourockred.com

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One Person's Trash...

As a songwriter, I spend a lot of time "in my head." I typically work alone to compose music, write lyrics, and establish an arrangement for my songs. Those steps are lonely, and without a sounding board, it's easy for emotions and impressions to swing like a pendulum: "This is great!"... "Ah, it's okay"..."Nah, this stinks." As many solo songwriters know well, this cycle from excitement to uncertainty and back again can go on and on in a tiring process that, at times, leads to much self-doubt.

One way to break this cycle is simple enough: in some shape or form, solicit input from others to gauge what you are creating.

Recording with The L.A. Rhythm Section

As soon as I booked the session with Kenny Aronoff and James LoMenzo, I was off on a mission to pick the "right" songs to record. In the running was a ZZ Top-ish rockin' blues song I wrote called "Sorry John Henry." I felt that the song had potential, but it always left me on the fence. Should I record this? Is it good enough? I wasn't sure about the arrangement, but I liked the groove, but I didn't care for the lyrics, etc.

I eventually caved and somewhat reluctantly recorded a rough guide track of "Sorry John Henry" and passed it along to Kenny and James before our studio session. As it happens, the song resonated with them, and after the first take, Kenny said, "This is how a blues recording should sound!" Ok, that's encouraging!

They both began offering input on the arrangement. James suggested we extend the outro, Kenny offered a tweaked drum breakdown in the solo section, etc. Within

minutes, the song was elevated, and I felt excited about it again. I recall saying out loud, "I almost didn't show you this song."

In the end, I came out of that recording session feeling very energized about the track. And as mentioned, I never did care for my original lyrics, so with a renewed spark for the song, I did a complete re-write and re-titled it "Ragged Hand," with a plan to release it by fall 2018. This is a simple story, but a good example of how others helped transform my work – work I may have otherwise trashed – and helped me hear it from a fresh perspective.

The Co-Writing Session

The second story I'll share is about a co-writing session with Montreal-based songwriter Rob Lutes. On this particular writing session, Rob and I had just begun to arrange and tweak a new song called "When You Wake." In working to finalize the lyrics, I specifically remember being challenged to come up with a fourth line in the second verse that we both liked. The first three lines of the verse are:

When your day spins like a wheel
Same road, same scene, same signs
When you turn back for home

I said, "Ok, we need a rhyme for 'home.' Rome, foam, sown ... like seeds being sown. Nah, that's no good." I quickly dismissed the idea and Rob said, "No, that works. How about 'Let this seed be sown.' You know, as in, 'let this be known.'" Perfect! So "Let this seed be sown" became the fourth line of the verse (and my favorite line of the song).

When you turn back for home

Let this seed be sown
I'll be here when you wake in the morning

Chances are that neither one of us would have written that line alone. Although in searching for a rhyme I stumbled on the words "seed" and "sown," I was thinking too literally at the moment and I was quick to trash the idea. Rob was quick to pick up what I had rejected, and when he framed the idea in a more metaphorical way, it worked. A fresh perspective saved what would have otherwise been tossed aside.

The Takeaway

There are a lot of positive aspects to working with others. In some capacity, I feel it is necessary for songwriters (everyone really!) to move beyond the solitude that often accompanies the art form. As highlighted in the co-writing story, at any given moment, we can have the seed of a potentially cool idea; yet, when working alone, it can be easily missed or dismissed. A co-writer can serve as a sounding board and sometimes that one "throw away" idea might become your favourite part!

That said, many writers, myself included, do tend to write a lot of material alone. The lesson I learned from the recording session with Kenny Aronoff and James LoMenzo is that, if writing alone, at some stage, it is important to share your work and solicit feedback from those you trust and whose views you value. Here, too, a fresh take can revitalize your interest in the work. The key is to not just share the "gems" that you feel are perfect, but to share the compositions that leave you on the fence – the ones you might have otherwise thrown in the trash!



Hiring a Mix Engineer

Whether you're an artist, producer, label rep, tracking engineer, or even a mix engineer, at some point, you're going to have to hire someone to mix a project for you.

There are times when you will be too close to a project and will require a second set of ears. Perhaps you've just spent the last three months in the trenches with the artist and need a different perspective, or you're just looking for a certain *je ne sais quoi* for the final stage. Maybe the label, manager, or artist wants to attach a name to the project for more visibility in the industry. There are many different reasons why you might want to look outside of yourself to find someone new to collaborate with.

Name vs. No Name

There are many pros and cons here. A name engineer can bring a final professional polish to the project. You are guaranteed a certain level of quality but if you're not paying top dollar, you might not be getting what you bargained for. Some name mix engineers will take gigs at a lower rate and let their assistant do the mix, allowing them to gain experience. As bad as the idea of passing off the work sounds, this could be a good thing. An assistant will know most of what their superior does and will work extra hard to move up in the world, but you aren't necessarily getting the person you thought you were. Beware of great deals from high-end mix engineers and remember that you get what you pay for. If you want to make sure that it is the name engineer mixing your record, don't go bargain hunting.

If you're not concerned with attaching a reputable name to your project, then you can open yourself up to the option of

non-celebrity engineers. There are a plethora of amazing engineers in the world who for whatever reason may not have awards or plug-ins named after them. The main benefit with engineers in this category is that you can generally push your weight around as the client. No-name engineers are more likely to work with you to achieve your vision rather than applying what they've known to work on hit records in the past.

The only real difference between a name engineer versus a no-name engineer, other than budget, is that you might already be a fan of their reference material.

Test Mixes vs. Reference Material

I personally cringe any time an artist asks me for reference material; regardless, I have an entire reel of work prepared that they can listen to and decide if they like my previous body of work or not. There are so many variables involved in reference material that it is difficult to tell where you stand at times. Many elements of the reference material don't always present themselves and can influence the quality both positively and negatively. You can't be sure of the circumstances during recording or the artists' desires.

I always welcome the opportunity to do a test mix for a new client and as someone that is hiring a mix engineer, don't be afraid to ask for one. This gives both the artist and the engineer a chance to work together and see how the relationship is going to be. The most obvious benefit is that you get to hear the engineer's mix style on your material where it will be most relevant. The secondary benefits can include the ability to become familiar with the engineer's workflow and perspective.

Attended vs. Unattended

Most mix engineers will allow you to attend the mixing sessions if requested – but don't.

You want your mix engineer to do the best job possible, and they will do their best work when they are most comfortable. They need room to try things and make mistakes just like any artist would. The worst thing that can happen to an engineer during a mix is having someone second-guess their decisions while there are still being made. When you hire a mix engineer, you have to trust them to do the work you hired them for. If they don't live up to your standards after you've clearly communicated what you want from them, then it is time to hire a different mix engineer.

Once a mix is completed, I do recommend attending a mix revisions session. By this time, the engineer has had the chance to realize their vision for the song and will be more than open to sitting with you and crafting the final details that make it something you can both be proud of.

There are a lot of things to consider when hiring a mix engineer, but at the end of the day, you just have to look at all the information you have available and go with your gut. Be sure to ask yourself if you can communicate comfortably with the person you're hiring. Ask yourself if you're going to be able to get your ideas across to them clearly. Does the engineer understand your genre and the vision you have for your project? Will the project budget engage the engineer to give it their full attention, or will they be phoning it in or have an assistant do it?

At the end of the day, you are hiring someone to do a job for you, so be sure they are the right person for you and your music.



What's In Your Tool Kit?

One of the best ways to prepare for a gig is to put together a tool kit that covers as many technical issues as you think prudent. Of course, what you decide to put in will depend on the types of gigs you're working and the types of venues you're working in, but there are some general tools that are good to have on you in any live sound situation.

I've put mine together over 40 years of troubleshooting audio system issues. This is the list of the tools that I take to every show:

Test & Measurement Tools:

- AudioJog Pro8 cable tester
- AC outlet polarity tester
- Battery-powered multimeter
- Galaxy CM130 SPL meter
- Petersen StoboStomp 2 instrument tuner
- Leica Distro Classic 80 M laser distance meter
- 10-ft. Imperial/Metric measuring tape

AC Distribution:

- SurgeX SA966 Advanced Series Mode surge eliminator
- Furman AR1215 voltage regulator
- AC extension cords, IEC power cables, power bars, and AC stage boxes
- Sennheiser EW100 Series AC adaptor

Tools, Adaptors, Spare Parts & Misc. Supplies:

- Screwdriver with interchangeable bits
- Combination wire cutter/stripper/crimping tool
- Small locking pliers, hole reaming tool, and fuse removal tool
- Miniature screwdriver, nut driver set, and miniature awl
- Allen wrench set up to 3/8-in., Torx bits, right-angle Phillips screw driver
- Metric and imperial socket set with ratchet driver and extension
- LED flashlights, Sharpies, pens, and pencils
- Drum keys
- Guitar maintenance toolkit
- Assorted XLR, 1/4-in., 1/8-in., and banana plug connectors and adaptors
- Nylon cable ties, cable shrink wrap, and tape head cleaning swabs
- 10/32-in. rack screws and miscellaneous fasteners and washers
- Assorted picks, fuses, guitar hardware, pots, strap pins, etc.

- Vacuum tubes: 2 x 6L6GC, 3 x 12AX7, 1 x 12 AT7, 1 x ECC83
- Co-axial and Cat-5 inline couplers and USB to PS/2 keyboard adapter
- Video adaptors: DVI-F to VGA-M, DVI-M to VGA-F, and DVI-M to HDMI
- 45-watt pencil soldering iron
- AA, AAA, and 9V batteries

Administrative Supplies:

- Clipboard, paper, input list, stage plot, tech rider, and contact list for performers and venue
- Masking, gaffers, and coloured electrical tape
- 8 GB USB memory stick

Audio Hardware:

- Closed-ear headphones
- Sony PCM M10 digital recorder
- Countryman 10S active stereo DI
- Radial JDI Duplex Mk 3 passive stereo DI
- Spare microphones, stands, and analog audio cables
- FireWire, USB, and assorted digital audio cables
- QSC TouchMix-30 Pro console with LaCie 500GB SSD

Road Cases:

- Gator GX-20 rolling cable & accessory storage case
- Gator GX-42 molded case for mics & stands
- Audio Hardware custom stand & equipment case
- 2 x Gator G-Shock 4L rack cases
- A Milwaukee waterproof part/tool case and assorted microphone cases

Customize, upgrade, and maintain your tool kit to fit your needs. While the above-listed road cases have served me well for the past decade, I'm currently designing a pair of custom road cases on wheels to serve as the new rolling home for all of the above. I plan to build these myself out of Baltic birch plywood to minimize the footprint and organize my road kit for ease of use and deployment.

Finally, remember that this is a small community; if you're honest, dependable, work hard, keep up with the technologies we use, and rise to the challenge, you will earn a reputation as a "go to" live sound professional. When that happens, you will succeed.

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Social Media & Today's Musician

Every band I know uses social media to some extent, but few seem to know how to use it to its full potential.

It takes time to build a strong social media following, so you need to be grabbing your audience's attention with interesting little vignettes of your musical lives starting today.

Facebook is the perfect platform for bands because it is all about telling stories.

Twitter is for quick hits of news and information.

Instagram tells stories through photos.

Snapchat tells stories that disappear in seconds and are gone forever. Call it a virtual shoulder tap.

Most of your fans do not live a musician's life, and to them, what you see as normal can be exceptional. The average fan works a typical day job, sees mostly the same people, travels a few times each year, and has never been on stage, backstage at a festival, or in a recording studio.

They view your life as glamorous, creative, exciting, and out of the ordinary. You have the power to give them a glimpse into that world, to lift the curtain on a life they can only dream of. So, tell them a story. Make it in a few parts. Make them crave the conclusion and they will be hooked.

Quality Posts

What I see far too often is an artist begging for fans to come to a show. I get a Facebook shoutout usually eight hours before show-time saying something like:

"Hey, gang we are playing at Club X

tonight. Who's coming?"

No images, no story, no incentives, nothing. Just a feeble plea to attend.

Maybe it's a Tuesday night and the show starts at 9 p.m. and the band comes on at midnight. Do you expect anyone to come or care, really? Who can drop everything they have planned on a few hours' notice and run out to a club, only to get home at 2 a.m. and be ready for work the next morning?

So, what should you be Tweeting?

Well, as Gary Veynerchuck points out in his great social media book *Jab, Jab, Jab, Right Hook*, you should be jabbing rather than trying for that knock-out punch every time.

Jabs & Hooks

What's a jab you ask? A jab is a tap on your fan's shoulder. It's a share of something interesting, different, and cool.

Maybe a band you admire just released a killer single. You telling your fans is a jab. What's the playlist on the drive to the next gig? That's a jab. List the wildlife seen on your drive through Banff. Another clever Jab. You just found the coolest guitar in a pawnshop in Winnipeg. Take a photo and share. Jab.

Get it? A jab is your way of staying close to your fans, to let them into your life a little and slowly they begin to believe they know you and love you even more.

After dozens of jabs, along comes a show that most folks living regular 9-5 lives could make. It's on a Saturday afternoon at a community festival. It's time to throw the right hook. Begin your story.

- Share the Weather Network's post of the temp and conditions if it's going to be glorious and hot.

- Ask them to share a photo of the cute/odd/crazy outfit they plan to wear to the show.
- Tell them what each band member likes to drink (super good if it happens to be one of the festival sponsors' beers) and ask what they are planning to drink at the show. (It is practically guaranteed that somebody will buy you your favourite beverage and deliver it to the stage.)
- Offer to sign a copy of your album and pose for photos with fans after each show.
- Ask them to take photos of the band performing and send them to you. Say the best-of-the-best will be shared.
- Ask them to live stream that night's performance on Facebook Live or Periscope. Give them a mission and let them in on being a part of the show. They are going to do it any way – why not make it seem like it was your idea?
- Finally, ask them to buy a ticket and come to the festival.

After that, show photos of the band loading gear, arriving at the park, the drummer with a burger, some friendly dog, the view from the stage, the backstage area as you meet and greet other acts.

There is your story. No money paid to advertise, your fans are entertained and intrigued, and best of all, no begging.



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HOT GEAR



Riversong Tradition 2P GA Stage TP Guitar

Riversong Guitars has released the Tradition 2P GA Stage TP guitar, the company's most technologically-advanced offering to date.

Riversong teamed up with Fishman Electronics and installed an OEM Triple Play wireless guitar performance/MIDI system. This makes the guitar like a touch-sensitive pad that can play any sample and interface with programs like Ableton Live or any MIDI device. The knob on the front works as a digital encoder and can control any parameter of the analog or MIDI signal by running the guitar output through a channel on a DAW. The Triple Play software can run on its own or operate as a VST plug-in.

The Tradition 2P GA Stage TP guitar is designed to look exactly like Riversong's Trad 2P GA but with a twist. At less than 2-in. of depth, the guitar feels fast and the top is responsive and braced just like an acoustic. With adjustable neck angle and a new intonation system, the guitar is built for performing musicians.

For more information, contact Riversong Guitars: 250-319-5050, info@riversongguitars.com, www.riversongguitars.com.



Pearl malletSTATION Electronic Mallet Controller

Pearl Drums has introduced the malletSTATION, a full-sized three-octave adjustable range electronic mallet controller designed for all players in any genre.

The adjustable low note range function allows users to set the fundamental diatonic note of the instrument to what they need. The malletSTATION is powered exclusively by Mac, PC, iPad, iPhone, and Android devices through USB bus power, allowing for mobile performance with minimal set-up and equipment. It features KMI's Smart Fabric Sensor technology, allowing the silicone bar material to have an extremely sensitive, natural response, including mallet dampening and after-touch control, and it can be tailored to the user's individual playing style.

The EM1 features a master control section with three programmable faders, four programmable buttons, and the fixed function low note and octave shift buttons. In addition, three assignable pedal inputs allow for flexibility in performance such as sustain, expression, or any MIDI parameter.

For more information, contact Erikson Music: 514-457-2555, FAX 514-457-0055, info@eriksonmusic.com, www.eriksonmusic.com.

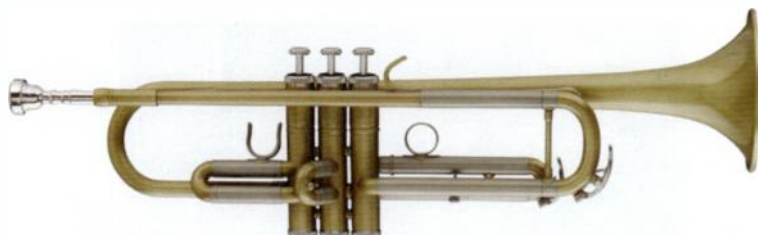


König & Meyer 210/8 Microphone stand

König & Meyer (K&M) has released its 210/8 microphone stand.

This black steel microphone stand consists of tubing assembly and an extendable boom arm with a zinc die-cast base, long folding legs, and a square swivel joint with a large wing nut. The boom arm features a two-piece telescopic design and stretches from 16.7 to 28.5 in. The height of the stand adjusts from 36.4 to 64.2 in. and it weighs 2.98 kg.

For more information, contact SFM: 514-780-2070, FAX 514-780-2111, info@sfm.ca, www.sfm.ca.



Blessing BTR-1460M Trumpet

E.K. Blessing has introduced the BTR-1460M trumpet, which features a new matte finish.

The BTR-1460M has a unique, distressed finish created by hand to give each instrument a distinct look. The trumpet features a 0.46-in. ML bore, 5-in. bell diameter, rose brass lead pipe, yellow brass body and two-piece bell, nickel silver outer slides, and Monel valves. The company says it's an ideal companion to the 1541 flugelhorn in look and spectrum of tones.

For more information, contact St. Louis Music: 800-727-4512, FAX 866-587-2263, info@usbandsupplies.com, www.stlouismusic.com.

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HOT GEAR

Yamaha EAD10 Electronic Acoustic Drum Module

Yamaha has released the EAD10 electronic acoustic drum module, which enables drummers to capture the sounds of an acoustic drum set with one microphone/trigger component attached to a digital processor.

Designed for recording, rehearsal, and performance, the EAD10 addresses common challenges facing drummers who want to record high-quality drum performances easily and affordably, thanks to its central module and combination microphone/trigger sensor that mounts on the bass drum. The microphone captures and reproduces the natural, dynamic sound of the entire kit, while the module adds a number of effects, including flange, phase, and several varieties of reverb.

For hybrid drum expansion, the central module features a snare trigger input and two three-zone trigger inputs that are compatible with the Yamaha DT50S snare trigger and DTX Series pads.

For more information, contact Yamaha Canada Music: 416-298-1311, FAX 416-292-1171, www.ca.yamaha.com.



Mission Engineering 529 USB Power Converter

Mission Engineering has released the 529 USB Power Converter.

For a long time, the de facto standard for guitar effects pedals has been 9 V DC from a disposable PP3 battery or an external 9 V power supply. The thinking behind the 529 USB Power Converter was that it would be easier to power effects pedals from USB, as has become common with other devices.

The 529 takes a 5 V USB input and converts it to 9 V pedal power ports. There are four isolated 150 mA outputs for powering conventional effects pedals plus a 500 mA high-power output for devices with higher current requirements. The USB input can be almost any type of USB power device. A USB wall charger such as that used with a phone or tablet will work, and one is included with the 529.

Also, a USB rechargeable battery pack can be used and almost any off-the-shelf USB battery pack will work. A smaller 1 A pack is enough for a few pedals.

For more information, contact Mission Engineering: 866-333-1828, FAX 866-333-7260, info@missionengineering.com, www.missionengineering.com.



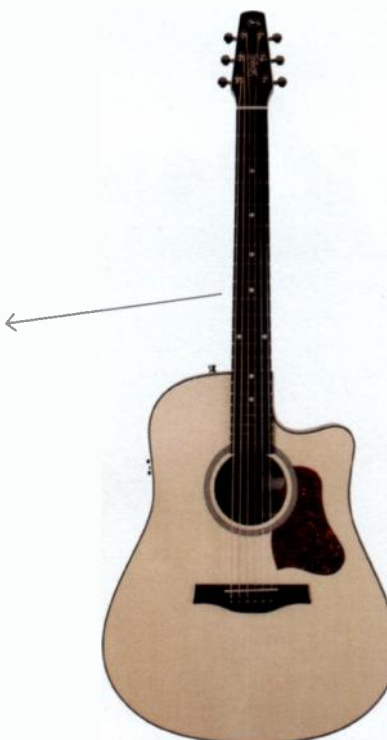
Seagull Maritime Solid Wood Series Guitars

Seagull Guitars, a member of the Godin family, has overhauled its Maritime Solid Wood Series (SWS) for 2018.

The Maritime SWS series guitars, which are designed to be classic in approach but modern in sound and construction, feature all-solid-wood construction with select pressure tested spruce top and mahogany back and sides for a projecting tone and Richlite fretboards for a bold and clear sound. The new line features a variety of acoustic body shapes in natural semi-gloss custom polished finishes. A shadowed burst finish on the body and headstock refreshes the line's aesthetics. Other special features include cutaway models and a Godin EPM Q1T preamp.

The new models include the Maritime SWS SG, Maritime SWS SG Q1T, Maritime SWS CW GT Q1T, and Maritime SWS CH CW Q1T.

For more information, contact Godin Guitars: 514-457-7977, FAX 514-457-5774, info@godinguitars.com, www.godinguitars.com.



MARITIME SWS CW GT Q1T

HOT GEAR



IK Multimedia iRig Keys I/O Keyboard Controllers

IK Multimedia is now shipping the iRig Keys I/O 25 and 49 keyboard controllers, which feature a built-in audio interface.

The iRig Keys I/O is designed to provide a flexible way to complete music production in the studio from start to finish using one piece of equipment. iRig Keys I/O comes with either 25 or 49 full-size keys, offering a synth-action keybed, and integrates a professional, high-definition 96 kHz/24-bit audio interface with a class A preamp, allowing users to record their instruments and microphones (including condenser mics requiring 48 V phantom power) via its combo 1/4-in./XLR input. It also provides velocity-sensitive multicoloured pads, programmable touch-sensitive sliders and buttons, and assignable knobs.

When used live, the 1/4-in. balanced stereo output can be used to run the signal directly to a PA or mixer.

For more information, contact Hal Leonard: 414-774-3630, FAX 414-774-3259, sales@halleonard.com, www.halleonard.com.

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Numark DJ2GO2 DJ Controller

Numark has released the DJ2GO2 pocket-sized, full-featured DJ controller.

Featuring a built-in sound card and Serato DJ Intro, the DJ2GO2 is the company's smallest full-featured DJ controller. It fits easily on a laptop without taking up unnecessary space and is ideal for performing small gigs, prepping for gigs, and as a backup.

The DJ2GO2 has a built-in sound card with master gain, headphone output for cueing, and channel gain knobs. It also has two channels with a crossfader and pitch faders for easy blending. Its pad modes provide access to performance controls typically only found on larger controllers. The DJ2GO2 comes pre-mapped with Serato DJ Intro and is upgrade-ready to the full version of Serato.

For more information, contact inMusic Canada: 877-981-9910, FAX 581-981-9913, ordercanada@inmusicbrands.com, www.inmusicbrands.com.



Levy's Utopia Magnolia & Wild Rose Guitar Straps

Levy's Leather has introduced the Utopia Magnolia (MS317EM) and Utopia Wild Rose (MS317ER) guitar straps. The Utopia Magnolia straps are available in sand and purple while the Utopia Wild Rose straps are available in sand and burgundy.

The Utopia Magnolia straps are inspired by the magnolia flower, and their designer, Danica Levy, says she wanted to create a more feminine counterpart to the Wild Rose straps.

The Utopia Wild Rose straps are inspired by tattoos of roses. The first is made in sand so that the linear design is highlighted and also mimics the skin as a canvas. The second is done in burgundy to capture the boldness and beauty of the roses.

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



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D'Addario Select Jazz Tenor Saxophone Mouthpieces

D'Addario Woodwinds has released the Select Jazz tenor saxophone mouthpieces.

These 100 per cent precision-milled (not moulded) vintage-inspired jazz mouthpieces are made of solid rod rubber using D'Addario's computer-controlled mouthpiece making technology. They are designed to give a classic sound and response with even intonation across the full range of the saxophone. They feature medium chambers and facing lengths and are available in four tip openings: 6, 7, 8, and 9.

For more information, contact D'Addario Canada: 800-268-6855, FAX 905-947-4336, info@daddariocanada.com, www.daddariocanada.com.



Roland VR-730 Live Performance Keyboard

Roland has released the VR-730, which is part of its V-Combo line of live performance keyboards.

The vintage-styled VR-730 has a 73-note waterfall keyboard with semi-weighted action while being lightweight and easy to transport. Specifically designed for the needs of working keyboard players, the VR-730 features a wide selection of Roland's top organ, piano, and synth sounds, seven simultaneous effects, and easy-access controls for greater expression while performing.

The VR-730's 73-note waterfall keyboard is well-suited for traditional organ players, offering quick-firing response for executing classic techniques like trill, sputter, glissando, and percussive hits. The organ, acoustic/electric piano, and synth engines are organized in three intuitive panel sections, providing fingertip access to essential tones. The keyboard weighs 21 lbs. and can run on AA batteries if needed.

For more information, contact Roland Canada: 604-270-6626, www.roland.com.

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HOT GEAR

Majestic Prophonic Brass Shell Snare Drum

Majestic has released the Prophonic Brass Shell snare drum, which is crafted entirely from 1-mm brass.

This thin shell features a double beaded design for strength and a traditional orchestral metal drum look. The special fold-back of the formed bearing edge ensures shell integrity while the snare bed is slightly deeper than most for optimum cable response. The sensitive character of the drum makes it an ideal instrument for pianissimo to mezzo-forte dynamic ranges.

The multi-link strainer system has four smooth independent triggers in addition to a master throw off, which allows the performer to adjust their timbre quickly and easily. The drum features four different snare cable types, a Remo Fiberskyn Diplomat batter head, and a Diplomat Hazy Resonant snare side head.

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Waves Bass Slapper Plug-In

Waves Audio is now shipping the Bass Slapper plug-in.

This plug-in lets users recreate, on their keyboard, the realistic nuances of a seasoned slap bass player, with full control of each note and articulation, including thumbing, popping, hammer-ons, pull-offs, open strings, and dead notes.

The Waves Bass Slapper includes an extensive sample library of special bass guitar sounds, including slides, mutes, and harmonic strums. It also offers intuitive position and articulation controls that let users determine precisely where to play on the fretboard, which strings to thumb or pop, when to play legato or staccato, and more. Bass Slapper also includes studio-grade stompbox effects, detailed tone controls from vintage warmth to modern punch, and a choice of clean DI or authentic amp sounds.

For more information, contact Waves Audio: 865-909-9200, www.waves.com.

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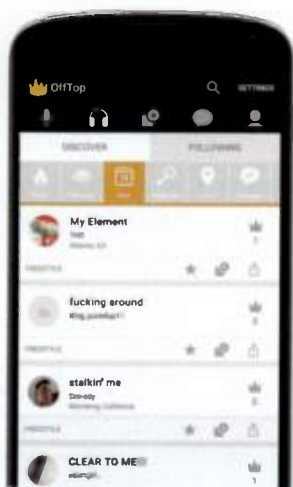
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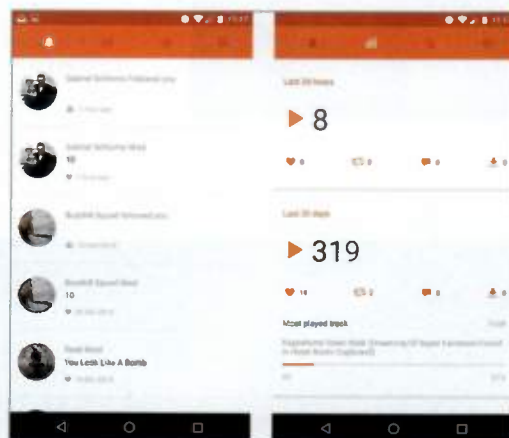
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TECH TOOLS

The **SongBook Chordpro** app manages song collections with lyrics and chords. Users can tap on any chord name to see its variants and it comes with comprehensive chord libraries for many instruments, including guitar, ukulele, banjo, and piano. It boasts a wide array of features, such as the ability to transpose songs, auto-zoom, auto-scrolling, metronome, external display, Bluetooth pedal support, and more. Large song collections can be sorted in categories, filtered by tags, or organized into playlists (sets) for performances. The app is fully offline capable, so no internet connection is required. www.linkesoft.com/songbook.



The free **OffTop** app is designed to be a collaborative mobile studio to record, rap, or sing over beats. Users upload their own beats or choose from a library of rap, hip-hop, R&B, or electronic instrumentals. Producers can upload instrumentals directly to the app to find new artists, hear raps or songs recorded over their beats, and gain exposure for beat sales. Vocalists record freestyle or written verses over the rap and hip-hop instrumentals. Sound quality is designed to mimic a studio and there's live headphone monitoring. The notepad saves all of the written verses and rapid fire mode will shoot the user words to stay inspired. Recorded tracks can be sent to the producer and shared with the community of over 50,000 rap and hip-hop artists for feedback. www.offtop.co.



SoundCloud Pulse is a dedicated companion app for SoundCloud's music creators on Android and iOS devices. The app is designed to make it easier for users to share their sounds and tracks, interact with fans, and track their performance on SoundCloud's network. The app lets creators share songs either publicly or privately and get up-to-date stats and interactive graphs on the performance of those songs. Artists can also follow and block other users, manage comments, and reply to comments on their tracks. www.soundcloud.com/mobile/pulse.



The **Producer Tools** app is designed to be like a mobile studio assistant for producers, DJs, and musicians. It includes a delay calculator, frequency-to-note translator, chord finder, harmonic mixing wheel, and equalization guide. It's all optimized for working with DAWs like Ableton Live, FL Studio, and Logic. There is a free version of the app and a more feature-rich premium version. www.producertoolsapp.com.

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We are currently seeking a talented, resourceful, confident candidate to join our team as Sales Representative for our Erikson Commercial Division, handling the Quebec territory as a whole. Erikson Commercial, which operates under Erikson Pro, is a Canadian distributor of installation audio and video solutions that span across installation commodity products, assistive listening, system control, and automation. Our market caters to audio and video systems contactors and integrators.

The Sales Representative will be responsible for growing brands within the prescribed territory by contacting prospective customers and strengthening relationships with existing clients.

Specific responsibilities will include, but are not limited to:

- Servicing existing accounts by maintaining inventory levels, performing staff training seminars, merchandising goods, and coordinating store promotions when needed;
- Cold calling to prospects and existing customers;
- Following up with new/existing customers, leads, and opportunities;
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of products and ensuring customers are informed of current and new products;
- Attending trade shows, educational seminars, and sales meetings as required;
- Completing administrative tasks in a timely manner, including weekly activity reports;
- Providing excellent customer service and developing strong customer relationships;
- Actively participating in weekly conference calls and sales meetings to improve sales efficiency and success;

Requirements:

- Completed college;
- 5 years Commercial Audio sales experience, ideally in distribution, manufacturing, or at the dealer level;
- Knowledge of territory and dealers would be an asset;

- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation required and must be able to travel regularly between customers located throughout Quebec and attend North American trade shows;
- Able to work with all client levels, including dealers, end-users, consultants, etc.;
- Self-motivated, self-starter who is well organized and enjoys a challenge;
- Experience with and a strong commitment to customer service is essential. Must provide excellent customer service;
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- Can handle difficult situations with diplomacy and tact;
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- Strategic thinker - can think out-of-the-box and on your feet;
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- Exceptional verbal, written, and presentation skills;
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- Demonstrated organizational ability and follow-through;
- Demonstrated ability to work in a fast-paced, dynamic environment;
- Demonstrated ability to work autonomously with minimal supervision;
- Strong attention to detail;

While we appreciate your interest, please note that only qualified candidates will be contacted.

Please contact: Human Resources – Kessia Funes, Kessia.Funes@JamIndustries.com



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MyTone Records is a Vancouver-based record label formed in 2017 by Dan Foslien, Travis Skjold, and Katt Shield. We manage all aspects of our artists' careers, including songwriting, recording, engineering, production, touring, brand partnerships, merchandise, endorsements, television, and publicity. We are always looking for new talent. www.MyToneRecords.com

WEBSITES

www.musicbooksplus.com – Features over 14,000 products including books, instructional videos, CD-ROMs, software. Some of the areas covered are: Music Business, Songwriting, Publishing, Recording, Audio Production, Instrument Technique, Voice Training, Internet Promotion ... and much more. Secured online ordering, 30-day guarantee, free electronic newsletter, monthly specials, worldwide shipping, Gift Certificates.

JIM BEAM



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HAMILTON • TORONTO • OTTAWA • MONTREAL • HALIFAX

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DEC 12 WINNIPEG, THE PARK THEATRE

JAN 18 LONDON, RUM RUNNERS - LONDON MUSIC HALL

JAN 25 TORONTO, DRAKE UNDERGROUND

FEB 1 OTTAWA, THE WHISKEY BAR

FEB 8 MONTREAL, LA VITROLA

FEB 15 HAMILTON, CASBAH

MAR 1 VANCOUVER, THE ROXY

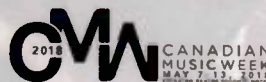
MAR 8 EDMONTON, BLUES ON WHYTE

MAR 15 CALGARY, COMMONWEALTH

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By Ken Kelley

ADAM WENDLER

What:

Folk

Where:

Goderich, ON

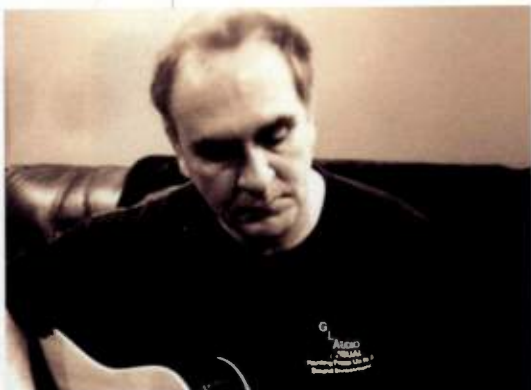
Visit:

www.adamwendlermusic.com

Ontario singer-songwriter Adam Wendler released his latest record, *Never Go Unknown*, in July 2017. The record was produced, engineered, and mixed by JUNO Award winner Siegfried Meier (Kittie, The Reason) and showcases Wendler's knack for catchy melodies, heartfelt lyrics, and dynamic vocals.

Evoking the spirit of Bob Dylan, Wendler's musical journey began following his high school graduation, when he was bitten by the travel bug. A trip to Europe subsequently led him to New Zealand, where he lived for a year and began honing his guitar playing and style, mastering the fingerpicking technique he employs on both of his solo records.

As he continues to forge ahead as one of Canada's most exciting voices in folk music, the New Year will see Wendler return to Europe for a late-January tour through Germany.



Being from Canada's East Coast, it shouldn't be surprising that Newfoundland native Tom Pinsent would eventually find his way to music. While he began playing as a high school student, he continued nursing his passion throughout an illustrious career in the armed forces and a subsequent journey into business.

In 2014, Pinsent released his debut record, *GT's Lounge*. That album's lead single, "Life Goes On," received airplay both here at home and throughout Europe. In late November 2016, Pinsent released *Living Chains*, his second effort that more than capably shows how his sound has both evolved and matured in the two years between records.

TOM PINSENT

What:

Pop

Where:

Grand Falls, NL

Visit:

www.tompinsent.com

MAUREEN WASHINGTON

What:

Jazz

Where:

Victoria, BC

Visit:

www.maureenwashington.ca

With an impressive nine albums to her credit, Maureen Washington's storied musical career began in the relatively remote town of Prince George, BC. Her vocal diversity has allowed her to explore and thrive in genres including the blues, swing, jazz, and funk.

Now based in Victoria, BC, Washington continues to explore new musical avenues while piling up performances at the Victoria International JazzFest, the Prince George FolkFest, and the Pender Harbour Jazz Festival in addition to shows with blues legend Joe Lovano, the Blind Boys Of Alabama, and others.

Washington's latest album is *Harvest Moon*, a carefully curated selection of cover songs made popular by Neil Young, Billie Holiday, Leonard Cohen, and others.



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