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Video Game Composers Discussion

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(Fallout)

Luci Holland
(Sleep Thorn)

Tom Salta
(Wolfenstein)

Wilbert Roget II
(Call of Duty)

Mikolai Stroinski
(League of Legends)

PRODUCER CROSSTALK

Jesse Lauter

*Jack
Antonoff*
*Innovator, Producer,
Songwriter, Musician*

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c414 XLS | c214 | c414 XLII | c314



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Jack Antonoff

Music Connection catches up with the most in-demand producer in pop music (Taylor Swift, Lorde, Sabrina Carpenter), whose band Bleachers has picked up where Springsteen left off, topping charts and touring the world.

By Rob Putnam

Photos: Chloe Pace



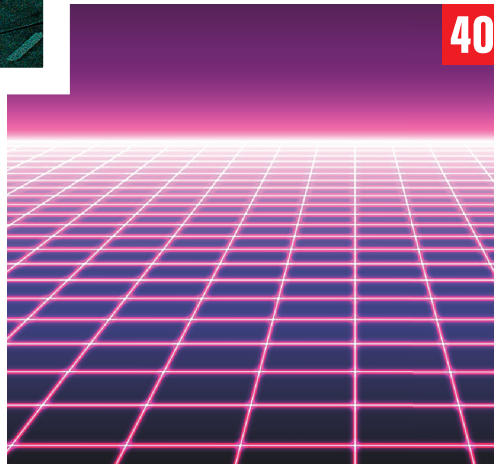
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By Andy Kaufmann

Video Game Composers Discussion 2024

Writer Andy Kaufmann interviews a handful of influential composers in the ubiquitous and lucrative world of gaming.

By Andy Kaufmann



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54 Directory of Mastering Studios

Compiled By Robin Rose



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Nefarious

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The Nefarious Effect: Creating revolutionary, eye-popping new designs on wooden instruments, Nefarious co-founders Marko Babineau and Frank Czajka's artistic vision, innovation and creative design are rooted in what they call "The Nefarious Effect." But it's not just a clever branding idea—it's reflective of the science that goes into the artistry. According to them, when a large amount of electricity is discharged, the insulator material starts to react. As this reaction occurs, branching fern-like conductive channels form extremely quickly, allowing the trapped charge to torch out in a large spark. During the discharge process, the powerful electric charge leaves (up to) 100 percent of branching fractals. The stunning result of these intricate details was on display at this year's NAMM show, where they attracted much attention for their first two prototypes, built by Rex Rose and named for Czajka's late parents, in a booth they shared with Megadeth bassist David Ellefson.

Quote from Marko Babineau: "For the last 20 years, we've seen nothing but retro relic guitars with paint taken off the edges with a chain and sander to create an antique look. That's all good, but ours have a whole different look from actually burning into the face of the guitar. Also, the Nefarious Effect has no effect on the resonance or tone of the guitar."

Origin Story: Long before Nefarious, both principals enjoyed lengthy careers in the music industry. Babineau worked for 25 years in marketing, promotion and artist development for Clive Davis, A&M Records and Geffen, directly impacting the careers of Aerosmith, Guns N' Roses, Neil Young, Nirvana and Elton John. Czajka launched his career working with A&M Music Publishing (Almo Irving) before working in A&R for Impact Records and then as a talent manager for Left Bank Management. Later working successfully in real estate,



Babineau took a client to a home and saw a raw wood guitar body. He met the seller, Czajka, who did the burn on the instrument as part of his side business of taking reclaimed wood and creating unique burn designs. Two months later, Nefarious was born.

Guitar Center Foundation Auction: Nefarious has contributed their exclusive Nefarious Patch Guitar—featuring a denim design and "patches" of famous band logos—for a charity auction which benefits The Guitar Center Foundation.

Nefarious' mission statement says it all: "The commitment is to dream, envision and execute everything the team can do. The reward is to see the hallucination come to fruition in our work." The Patch Guitar was produced by Flynn (foodogluthiery.com).

Contact frank@nefarious1.com; marko@nefarious1.com

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Neil Miller

General Counsel
Merlin

Merlin, the independent's digital music licensing partner, announced **Neil Miller** as its new **General Counsel**. Miller exemplifies the values and mission of Merlin—building an ethical, sustainable, and indie-centric world—and brings a wealth of industry experience and a passion for working with creative companies. Miller comes to Merlin with deep roots in the music industry and extensive global experience. Most recently, he served as a Partner at international law firm Greenberg Traurig, LLP, where he advised prominent technology, gaming, social media, and digital entertainment companies. For more, contact crystal@thepresshouse.com.



Adinaldo "Adi" Neves

Director of Business Development, Wireless
DPA Microphones

Following its strategic U.S. collaboration with Wisycom, **DPA Microphones** is expanding its team with the addition of several wireless systems professionals to facilitate the tremendous growth trajectory of these leading pro audio companies. Included among its latest appointments is industry veteran **Adinaldo "Adi" Neves** as **Director of Business Development, Wireless**. A seasoned product management executive, Neves will spearhead DPA Microphones/Wisycom wireless business development. For more, contact vanessab@dpgagan.com.



Marcos Nieves

Area Sales Manager, D.C. Metro
DPA Microphones

Marcos Nieves has joined **DPA Microphones** as **Area Sales Manager, D.C. Metro**. Nieves arrives at DPA via the Wisycom partnership. With a wireless systems career that spans more than two decades, Nieves got his start in the industry at Systems Wireless/Bexel, where he gained ground-up knowledge of the inner workings of broadcast and production wireless. After being appointed as General Manager of the Bexel D.C. office in 2007, Nieves joined Jetwave Wireless in 2015 as Vice President and Director of Sales, during which time he helped launch Wisycom wireless products into the U.S. market. For more, contact vanessab@dpgagan.com.



Adam Muhlbaum

General Manager
Big Noise Music Group

Big Noise Music Group announced that veteran music executive **Adam Muhlbaum** has been promoted to **General Manager**, guiding the large-scale vision of the label's acts into the future. In his new role, Muhlbaum will focus on business development in licensing and brand partnerships while also overseeing administration and royalties for the L.A.-based label. With more than a decade of expertise spent supporting and marketing artists of all genres, he bridges the gap between helping Big Noise's roster of iconic trailblazers like The Used, Goldfinger, and The Veronicas continue innovating while shaping next evolutions. For more, contact kerriann@bigpicturemediaonline.com.



Jess Anderson

Sr. Director, Media
Big Loud Records

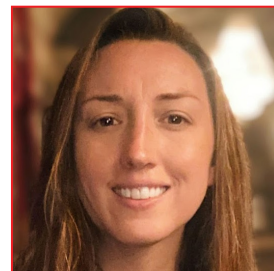
Big Loud Records announced the promotion of **Jess Anderson** to **Senior Director, Media**. "Jess continues to remain a powerful force in spearheading our publicity department," said Big Loud CEO/ Partner Seth England and SVP, Marketing, Candice Watkins. "We're grateful for her leadership in executing brilliant campaigns for our artists and organization, and for her exemplary collaboration with our independent publicity partners. It's our honor to recognize Jess with this well-deserved promotion." Anderson came in-house with the label in 2021. For more, contact press@bigloud.com.



Alyssa Kitchen

General Manager
The Capitol Theatre

The **Capitol Theatre** in Port Chester, NY has announced that **Alyssa Kitchen** has been promoted to **General Manager**. Kitchen's promotion comes after her position as Assistant General Manager and Director of Finance at The Capitol Theatre and her previous role at Relix Media Group. She holds the distinction of being the first female General Manager of The Capitol Theatre. Kitchen identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community, advocating for inclusivity and representation within her industry and beyond. She proudly serves to oversee operations and contribute to the venue's rich musical legacy. For more, contact mcmiskell@shorefire.com.



Jim Lucchese

President
Berklee College of Music

Berklee has announced that **Jim Lucchese**, a pioneering music industry executive and a dedicated artist advocate, will become its fifth **President**, effective January 1, 2025. Lucchese brings to this role 20 years of experience innovating artist-focused services. A Boston-born musician who has served Berklee in many advisory roles over the course of his career, Lucchese is uniquely positioned to lead Berklee in providing unmatched learning experiences for today's students and realizing the institution's vision to build the future of arts education. "It is an immense honor to become a part of the Berklee community," said Lucchese. Contact tdonahue@berklee.edu.



Martijn Tel

Chief Financial Officer
BMI

BMI has announced the appointment of **Martijn Tel** to the position of **Chief Financial Officer**. He reports to President and CEO Mike O'Neill and will be a member of the Company's executive leadership team. Tel will be based in BMI's New York office. "Martijn's wealth of experience, particularly working with companies with ambitious growth plans, makes him a perfect fit for BMI now," said O'Neill. "I look forward to working with him and our team as we continue to implement strategic initiatives designed to fulfill BMI's mission to grow the value of music for our creators and copyright owners." For more, contact jthomas@bmi.com.



▶ CORT ARTISAN C4/C5 DELUXE BASS GUITARS

Cort Guitars launches the Artisan C Deluxe Bass Guitar Series, available in both 4-string or 5-string. Cort, founded in 1960, is a company from South Korea that is a "guitar-making brand with an unabated passion for the guitar. Based on long-standing guitar production knowledge, experience, and faith in quality and value, we constantly study to create the best guitar in the world. Cort's mission is to deliver the best instruments to passionate musicians around the world." And the C5 bass I played delivers.

The Artisan C5 Deluxe is a serious bass. With a body made of lightweight resonant poplar, it has a beautiful piano-like sustain. The deep cutaway allows easy access all the way up the neck to the 24th fret. The hard maple neck is a sturdy bolt-on, and has a fretboard made of a wood called jatoba. Jatoba wood, also known as "Brazilian Cherry," is exceptionally stiff, strong, and hard, looking and feeling very much like rosewood but a little more forgiving than ebony. The headstock and tuning machines are on the smaller side, and the bass feels nicely balanced.

The bass plays beautifully and evenly. Two of the finest names in electric bass electronics complete this instrument: Bartolini and Mark Bass. Two Bartolini MK-1 pickups offer big bass sounds, versatility and hot output. A Markbass MB-1 preamp controls Bass, Mid, Treble, Master Volume, Pickup Balancer, and an active/passive switch. It's not that common to be able to bypass active pickups and play passive. This is a wonderful feature, not only for the tonal variation, but also could be a lifesaver on a gig if your battery fails. An active bass with a dead battery is basically a large canoe paddle! The electronics offer a massive amount of tonal variation.

The MetalCraft M4 Bridge has a very interesting feature. Its dual-string loading system enables strings to terminate either at the top of the bridge or through the body. This sample instrument came with the strings routed through the body, which is my preference, but it would be interesting to hear the difference with strings routed just through the bridge. D'Addario EXL165 strings came on the bass and were a great fit.

Available in Candy Red, Candy Blue, and Black, with black hardware, the Artisan C Deluxe is a great looking bass with a sleek, modern aerodynamic look and feel at a modest price point. Build quality is excellent, made in Indonesia.

Artisan C4 Deluxe Street Price: \$449; Artisan C5 Deluxe Street Price: \$499

cortguitars.com

▼ SENNHEISER MD 421 KOMPAKT MICROPHONE

Long considered one of the finest dynamic microphones ever made, the Sennheiser MD 421 has been a favorite of recording engineers and broadcasters since its release in 1960. It was so successful and well-designed that it has only had one significant modification, the MD 421-II in 2002. Sonically similar, this mic is manufactured in a more economically efficient fashion. Building on the legacy of this reliable stalwart, Sennheiser is launching the MD 421 KOMPAKT. Essentially a mini-421 and 3.75" shorter, this mic has the same components, and is the most readily visible update of the 64-year-old design. Offering versatility for any recording or live sound application, the smaller size and arguably more rugged built-in clip make this an appealing alternative to the traditional design.

Upon visually inspecting the MD 421 KOMPACT, there are two major functional changes. First, the Five position bass roll-off switch is noticeably absent. Most music engineers will not miss this feature at all. In my experience, checking that switch had the sole function of making sure that it was in the Music setting and had not been accidentally switched to the Speech setting. Next, the clip for the MD 421 has long been the bane of many engineers' existence and has been a source of complaints for decades.

The MD 421 KOMPACT deletes the old-style slide in and click fast clip, (which could accidentally release the mic), and features a non removable clip—a serious improvement! This feature is further enhanced by the optional MZH Drum Clamp that securely screws into the MD 421 KOMPACT clip to create a fail-safe mechanism for drum miking.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with these Sennheiser microphones, they are most commonly used on drums, guitar amplifiers, woodwinds, brass and percussion instruments. They are industry standard to record tom toms and bass drums. Being a dynamic mic, they would not be first choice to record an orchestra, or as drum set overheads where the more traditional Condenser microphones would be best used.

Virtually sonically identical to the Sennheiser MD 421-II, The MD 421 KOMPACT handles exceptionally high sound pressure levels and delivers clean sound reproduction. Its compact size offers enhanced versatility for any recording and live sound environment, and redesigned mounting clip enables easy, worry-free mounting. Feedback rejection helps maintain focus on the source audio for accurate sound reproduction and a wide frequency response range of 30 Hz–17 kHz makes this an outstanding choice for any application where a dynamic microphone will shine. Microphone \$279; Mic with clamp \$299; Clamp \$19.95

sennheiser.com



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▶ SHURE SM4 HOME RECORDING MICROPHONE

Brand new is the Shure SM4 Home Recording Microphone, a large-diaphragm condenser microphone aimed specifically at those desiring a high quality yet affordable microphone for home use. This simple microphone has no switches or buttons, and is designed to be easy to use. It aims to achieve professional-quality recordings regardless of setup, environment, or experience level. Like all condenser microphones, it does require 48-volt Phantom Power from your microphone preamp.

Promising great results for at-home and studio recording of both vocals and instruments, it has a dual-diaphragm capsule, internal pop filter, and a new RF shielding system, designed to minimize electronic interference that may be present in a home recording environment. Shure has taken care to design the SM4 to reject RF noise from wireless devices including smartphones, laptops, and Wi-Fi routers.

Sonically the SM4 displays a nice balance of low and high frequencies. It has the pronounced treble clarity that users expect from Condenser microphones, and sounds much more bright, open and hi-fidelity compared to well-known Dynamic microphones. Proximity effect, the amount of bass frequencies that increase greatly when close to the mic, has great differences by just small movements closer or further from the mic, so you can really sculpt the amount of low-end depending on how close you place the SM4 to your sound source. The Cardioid pickup pattern provides rejection of unwanted sound from the sides and rear of the SM4 is good, which in a home recording scenario will be very important.

The SM4 has a nice hot output and can take a lot of level—also important as the SM4 does not have a built-in pad. Shure makes a variety of affordable in-line pads and Hi-Pass filters that can be purchased separately should you find that you need one.

The SM4 is available in two different kits. The SM4-K includes an SM4, standard mic stand mount and carrying bag. The SM4-K-Kit includes the microphone, a shock mount, a magnetic external pop filter and a zippered case large enough to carry everything. The shock mount is nicely machined yet lightweight, and the SM4 screws into it very securely. The pop filter attaches to the shock mount, so it is further acoustically decoupled from the SM4. It all looks very nicely made, elegant and professional. The Shure SM4 is a versatile, good sounding and affordable microphone for home use, and a great utility microphone for professional recording studios.

SM4-K includes SM4 Microphone, swivel-mount mic clamp, and zippered carrying bag. \$199

SM4-K-KIT includes SM4 Microphone, shock mount, detachable magnetic pop filter and zippered carrying case. \$269

shure.com



◀ THE FENDER ON-THE-GO AMPLIFIER (MUSTANG MICRO PLUS)

Fender has released the latest version of its most versatile on-the-go mini amplifier, the Mustang Micro Plus. Building on the success of The Mustang Micro launched in 2021, this new update offers personal guitar amplification that fits in your pocket and has a wide selection of tones, amp models, and effects from popular Mustang Series amps.

The Mustang Micro Plus now has 25 guitar amplifier models and 25 effects combinations. Classic Fender tones can be quickly and easily dialed in anywhere. As the name Micro Plus implies, this device is just a bit larger than a pack of Tic Tacs. It plugs straight into your electric guitar, and musicians can effortlessly select from a variety of amp models tailored to their musical style. And as you would expect from Fender, the jack is designed to plug in easily even if your guitar has a recessed jack, like on a Telecaster.

Right out of the box, 70 different sounds are ready to go for hours of inspiration. From creamy clean swirling chorused echoes to clean jazz, '70s hard rock to '90s metal... any guitar player should be able to find some great sounds they will enjoy right away. Each preset has nine different EQ presets available. The integrated LED display is bright and clear, and the built-in tuner works well. A metronome with a Tap feature can help you find and set a tempo right away. You can use your favorite headphones wired with a mini plug or connect to ear buds via Bluetooth to enjoy the stereo sounds. If you spend a lot of time with the Micro Plus, you may do well to memorize all the buttons as you can't really see them once the unit is plugged in, but you can change them by touch.

The level of sophistication and power in this little amp is huge, but don't let that scare you. It is easy to navigate. Musicians can save and instantly recall their favorite amp and effect settings with the 100 editable presets. If you want to get deep into saving presets, programming and getting other players programs, the Micro Plus is compatible

with the Fender Tone: iOS and Android app for use with your tablet or phone. Additionally, it has Bluetooth audio streaming with audio/video sync to enable playing along in real-time with your favorite music.

The Micro Plus ships with 6 months free of Studio One+, the Digital Audio Workstation and music creation "ecosystem" partnership with PreSonus and Fender. \$129

fender.com

MICHAEL STERN, C.A.S., is a Music Engineer based in Los Angeles. He has recorded and mixed 260 film scores including *Iron Man 2*, *Sex And The City 1 and 2*, *The Notebook*, and *Borat Subsequent Moviefilm*. He has also worked with artists Strawberry Alarm Clock, Richard Marx, Kenny Loggins, Jackson Browne, Micky Dolenz, The Cowsills, Bon Jovi, Tom Jones, Chick Corea, Lisa Loeb, Rob Morrow. He can be reached at newtoys@musicconnection.com

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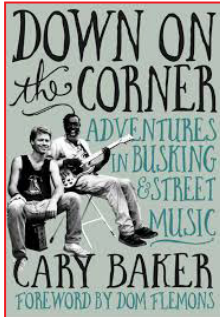


BOOK STORE

Down on the Corner

By Cary Baker
(paperback) \$24.95

Down On The Corner: Adventures In Busking & Street Music is the story of music performed on the streets, in subways, in parks, in schoolyards, and on the back of flatbed trucks, from the 1920s to the present day. Through years of interviews, Baker features performers of folk, rock'n'roll, blues, bluegrass, doo-wop, indie

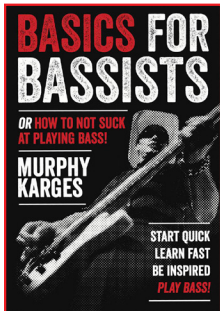


rock and more—Lucinda Williams, Billy Bragg, The Violent Femmes to name a few. Veteran journalist and music-industry publicist Cary Baker tells the complete history of these musicians and the music they play, from tin cups to QR codes and PayPal.

Basics for Bassists

By Murphy Karges
(paperback) \$19.99

Award-winning songwriter and founding bassist of Sugar Ray Murphy Karges' debut book is part musical toolbox, part rocking storybook, and part "kickass guidebook to not sucking at bass (and a little at life too)." With his guidance, you'll master essential



notes, understand the construction of modern songs, and build your confidence. Karges also emphasizes the importance of identifying key people in your life, effective communication, fearless creativity, and even offers insights into songwriting.

Stay Positive

By The Hold Steady
(hardcover) \$16.95

Stay Positive is a charming, illustrated children's book based on the beloved song of the same name by The Hold Steady and is illustrated by award-winning cartoonist and comic book author David "El Dee" Espinosa. It is a 32-page picture book for young readers, following the path of an armadillo who discovers along the way music can pull together an



unlikely cast of characters—this is a lesson in maintaining a positive attitude in uncomfortable situations, important for all ages.

Roadkill: Misadventures & Mishaps

By Kenny Nicholson
(paperback) \$19.95

"There is no glamor here." *Roadkill* shares Nicholson's first-hand journey through the highs and lows of live music production, from coffeehouses to coliseums between 1975-1995, the golden age of concert touring. Nicholson

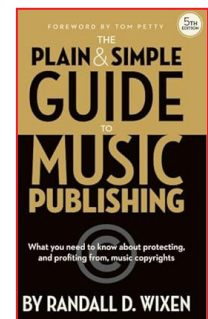


began his career as a one-guy/one-truck sound company in Sacramento, CA, spent years of low-budget regional touring, and finally made it to major-league arenas. Anyone interested in a humorous peek beyond the bright stage lights will enjoy the unique perspective of this book.

The Plain & Simple Guide to Music Publishing: 5th Edition

By Randall Wixen
(hardcover) \$29.99

Industry veteran Randall Wixen presents a clear, concise approach on how music publishing works today. It is written for the lay musician/songwriter, but contains enough substance to be worthwhile for those already holding



positions within the business. Topics covered include everything from mechanical, performing, and sync rights to sub-publishing, foreign rights, copyright basics, types of publishing deals and advice on representation. Includes a foreword (and remembrance) by Tom Petty.

Tuned In: Memoirs of a Piano Man

By Jim Wilson
(paperback) \$16.54

Jim Wilson's career(s) as a go-to piano technician and a successful recording artist has led to countless one-of-a-kind experiences with some of the world's biggest music legends: singing Beatles songs with Paul McCartney, limo



rides with Elton John, road trips with Carole King, and horseback riding with Dan Fogelberg. But beyond this telling of intimate celebrity tales, *Tuned In: Memoirs of a Piano Man* offers a message of hope to anyone pursuing a dream against the odds.

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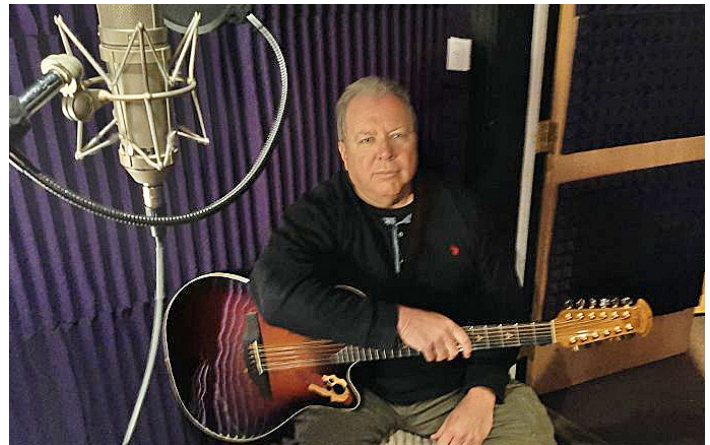
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Songwriter Greg Sinners

gssongs.com

All The Madmen at Play: Though his multi-year catalog of acoustic, rock, classical, and Celtic-influenced songs has thus far been flying under the radar from public consciousness, Delaware based multi-talented songwriter Greg Sinners is emerging from the shadows in a dramatic, socially conscious way—with “All The Madmen at Play,” a mid-tempo political commentary rock flavored song and dramatic video that incisively calls out the U.S. government for its decades-long endless war mentality and the apparent profit motives behind it. Written in the wake of the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, the song—featuring lead vocalists Robin Osik and James Fitzpatrick, with Jim Osik and drummer, Eddie Haywood—was tracked at Secret Sound Recording Studio in Baltimore and produced by Sinners with engineer John Grant. The opening lines set the tone: “All the Madmen at Play/Who will they bomb today? As we watch the puppets dance/We see who’s getting rich from war.” The chorus includes the line “Which false flag will they fly?” while the second verse includes the biting lines: “Blinded by their power/And waiting for their hour...”



Video and Inspiration: Though the song is a nonpartisan piece of frustrated criticism, the imagery that Sinners chose and his creative partner Rob O'Connor assembled, unmistakably harken back to the Bush era, contrasting images of George W. Bush, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld with photos of destruction, an aerial shot of rows of graves at a military cemetery, and a widow and her son at a father’s grave. The clip opens with a typeset quote from President Dwight D. Eisenhower as he left office in 1961: “In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.” Having not learned any lessons from the Vietnam War (once so powerfully expressed in Barry McGuire’s 1965 anti-war anthem “Eve of Destruction”), the U.S. government extended the endless war aesthetic into the 21st Century with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, with disastrous consequences. “These wars spanned the Bush, Obama, Trump and part of the Biden eras,” says Sinners. “They reflect the grip that the military-industrial-complex has on Washington.”

Sinners’s Other Material: A visit to Sinners’s website (gssongs.com) and YouTube page offers an immersion into this songwriter’s diverse talents for many different styles and themes, with an array of songs available for other artists to record and publishers to sign and license to film and TV. Sinners, plays numerous guitars on these tracks, including 6-string, 12-string, nylon string, and bass guitar. Some of the songwriter’s favorites, all brought to compelling visual life via their videos, include “Irish Rain,” a heartfelt reflection on the experiences of his maternal grandparents, who emigrated from Ireland; “Living Love Silently,” a co-write with its singer, Fran Bryant, which offers a beautiful reflection on the fragility of relationships as couples grow older; “I’d Go Back For You,” a classic styled rocker of nostalgic romantic longing; and “I Knew All Your Dreams,” a soulful tune whose video starts with a Shakespeare quote and includes the poetic refrain: “Time will wash your bones/But it will never wash your soul.”

Contact Greg Sinners: tangerinetrees@comcast.net

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▲ PLASTICSOUL LOVES COOL CAT PEDALS

Having just performed at International Pop Overthrow, Steven Wilson of L.A. pop-rockers Plasticsoul told us about his beloved Cool Cat Pedal. "Over the years I've acquired some pretty cool vintage guitars, amps, pedals, mics, etc. When I was asked to write about my favorite piece of gear, I performed a mental checklist of what I had in my arsenal, and which item I thought would be most impressive."



▲ MILES MUSIC KID RELEASES FIRST SINGLE

At just eight years old, the world's youngest music producer and music prodigy, Miles Music Kid, has released his first official single "You Can Be A Hero," from the forthcoming *Ryan's World the Movie: Titan Universe Adventure Soundtrack*. "You Can Be A Hero" was written, performed, and produced entirely by the eight-year-old Miles Bonham, who not only plays all instruments on the recording, but he also belts out his vocals with the sensibilities of a seasoned pop artist.



▲ BRYAN FERRY IS STILL A STAR

Bryan Ferry released his first original music in over a decade with "Star," a new song set to feature on the upcoming album *Retrospective: Selected Recordings 1973-2023*. The 81-track collection is a celebration of Ferry's peerless career as a solo artist, spanning a period of over 50 years of music and 16 solo albums, bringing the story right up to the present with a snapshot of his latest work.



▲ AIRSHOW MASTERING ADDS PRISM SOUND DREAM

Colorado-based Airshow Mastering has installed a Prism Sound Dream ADA-128 multichannel converter in its mastering studio where it is being used across a range of projects, including the 50th anniversary edition of the Grateful Dead's album *From The Mars Hotel*.

PRODUCER PLAYBACK

"I'm a person of vision and projection. It doesn't matter how difficult things are. You can always develop ideas and make them happen."

- RUBÉN SALAS





▲ INDIA'S NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DESIGN IS CELEBRATED

The National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad, India was founded in 1969 with support from New York composer David Tudor who personally set up its Moog synthesizer and tape machine. A recent 2x LP compilation album, *The NID Tapes*, collects some of the groundbreaking electronic music made at the studio from 1969 to 1972.



▲ CALEB ANDERSON PLAYS IN THE GARAGE

Caleb Anderson is one of the main sound engineers at the Garage in the Twin Cities, MN. "The Garage is a 350 cap room, with a large (about 50' x 25') stage and a sound system by Electro Voice. The room started life as a public works garage, and ironically the shape of the space lent itself pretty well to a music venue. The room is tuned very well, and large enough that we can mic every instrument up and have plenty of room to play with levels."



▲ JEAN-MICHEL JARRE CALLS CLOSING TIME

Jean-Michel Jarre, an iconic figure in electronic music, opened and closed the Paris 2024 Closing Ceremony in September, celebrating the legacy and modernity of the French electronic scene. In a festive and dazzling atmosphere at the Stade de France, the maestro delivered a memorable finale, before passing the baton to the top French electronic music artists and young DJs.

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Producer, engineer and music filmmaker Jesse Lauter was introduced to music by his parents. Indeed, they took him to his first Phish show when he was only eight. He's now been to 200-plus performances and often contributes DJ sets. He landed an Atlanta studio internship in his mid-teens and later earned a BFA in recorded music from NYU. One of the standout records on which he co-produced was the Low Anthem's 2008 *Oh My God, Charlie Darwin*. More recently he's directed and/or produced a number of music projects including the Tedeschi Trucks Band's concert film and documentary *Live From The Fox Oakland*, the soundtrack of which was nominated for a Grammy.

Recently he was hired as head of production and media at New York City's Dayglo Presents, which runs a number of venues including the Brooklyn Bowl chain. The gig came about through a longstanding relationship with Dayglo head and music magician Peter Shapiro. "I'd engineered at several New York venues including Union Hall," Lauter explains. "I worked at Brooklyn Bowl when it first opened and I got to know Pete. Later I was the director of production at Central Synagogue in Midtown where Pete had been a lifelong member. We became friends and he helped me make a documentary about the Tedeschi Trucks Band reunion called *Learning to Live Together: The Return of Mad Dogs & Englishmen*. When the opportunity with Dayglo came up, he asked me to join him."

Music, of course, is an art form. "If you're in tune with the greater thing and the satellites of creativity that we all have then you're in the right place," Lauter asserts. "Sometimes I'll do a project and won't get any feedback. Then 10 years later someone will tell me that they loved it. All of the stress and intensity that you put into an album or film then becomes worth it. If it had that effect on one person, it's a great feeling."

"I use a summing amp called the Rascal Audio ToneBuss," he adds as he discusses his favorite piece of gear. "It's a big part of my sound and I've been using it for more than ten years. If that disappeared, my session recall would be a mess. That's why I have two of them. They're 16 channels discrete transformers, class-A circuitry. Basically, you run the outputs from your DAW into it and you get kind of a Neve sound."

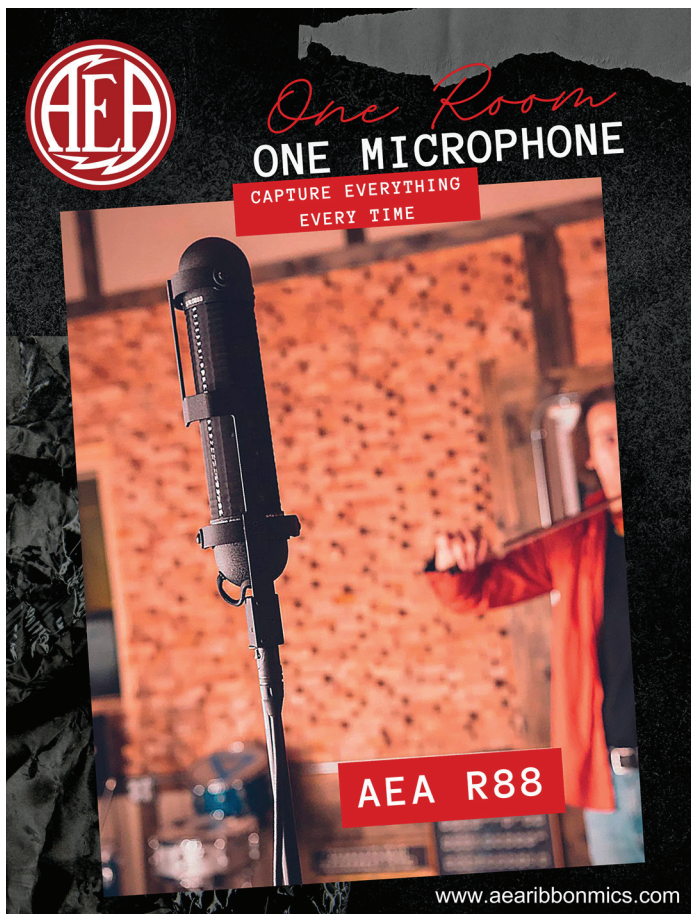
Lauter has been fortunate to work and interact with a number of artists over the span of his career. He watched Bob Dylan play basketball with his grandchildren backstage, for example. But his favorite memory is the time that he worked with the Low Anthem in 2012, opening for Bruce Springsteen at South by Southwest.

His current project is a documentary of Little Feet, which will include insights from Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, members of the Grateful Dead and Phish. It's expected to be released in the next year or two. He's the sole proprietor of his production company Good Fast Cheap Productions, and mixes and engineers largely out of his Manhattan home studio.

THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT

... lessons he's learned as an engineer and music filmmaker are:

- I get to make exceptional creative [work] consistently and that's a blessing.
- I'm fortunate to work with talented and inspiring people, from engineers to rock stars.
- I'm trying to find my place in the world and how I can be of service to others. I believe that I'm an agent of love.



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This is the current location of the Rock Star University's HOUSE OF ROCK which is arguably the finest, intimate rock venue on the entire West Coast. This facility is a fully permitted, TURN KEY, state of the art concert venue, soundstage, and production facility which features the finest in industry standard equipment, beer and wine license, plenty of parking, and can remain open until 2AM each day. HOUSE OF ROCK consists of approximately half of the buildings space. In the other unit (both separately metered) there is a very nicely finished collector car storage warehouse area with a DMV Wholesale Dealers License attached to the address. Each unit has two at grade roll up doors with easy access. Zoned IL offering many potential uses. State-of-the-art recording studio equipment, stage, lighting, venue furnishings, restaurant equipment, video and recording equipment all available separately.

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Years with Company: Eight

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Clients: Arenanet (*Guild Wars*), Toby Fox (*Undertale*)

BACKGROUND

Many fail to realize the extent to which video game fanatics crave the music accompanying their favorite digital diversions. Sebastian Wolff noticed the demand early on and has been serving gaming enthusiasts ever since.

Coming Around

The games industry is the future of music. This is something I discovered at my previous startup, Loudr, when we were doing distribution of cover song licensing. The entirety of the game industry is completely underrepresented in the music world. But discussions have started in the last couple years. The industry is waking up.

Enlightening Others

One of our first clients was Toby Fox, creator of *Undertale*. We approached him and said, "We noticed that you're not doing anything with your soundtrack. Can we help with the publishing?" He casually agreed, and he's been one of our favorite clients. His catalog does two million streams a day. When I share this with the rest of the music industry, there's this break. "Hold up. The game industry has this amount of engagement?" It's exciting to share that with the rest of the music world.

Fandom Forever

If you're playing your favorite game for hundreds, maybe even thousands of hours, that [game] is part of your identity. You might buy a physical edition or the vinyl soundtrack, have it on a loop in the background. You might listen to cover songs or, if you're a musician, play covers. Not only do those games accompany fans for a lifetime, but the melodies do as well.

Business Partners for Life

One of the most important things for us is legacy. We love working with artists and composers that understand this is more than just a one-off. Our ideal clients are the composers that finish their work, pass off the audio to the game developers, and then Materia can help on the label and music publishing side and be a partner for life. This allows us to really elevate the music. We can talk about sheet music, vinyl, derivative works, cover song licenses, all these things a composer might not be independently equipped to [handle]. That's where Materia can come in.



"Some of the most successful indie games are the ones where the composer, audio director and extended music team is part of the project from day one."

Involvement From the Jump

We love being involved with a game as early as inception. Some of the most successful indie games are the ones where the composer, audio director and extended music team is part of the project from day one. We try to be a resource during the development cycle.

Music Rights

[Music rights is] complicated. One of our big tenets is educating artists and composers, even game studios and publishers, about the nuance of games rights management. Materia is a music rights company. While we explore everything else, rights management is the core of our business. That includes everyone who might be an interested party in a song or musical recording.

Thankfully, I have a music rights background. We're comfortable having those discussions. That said, clearance can be difficult.

Sheet Music Mania

When we had the opportunity to press books, we started small. The first was called *Undertale Piano Collections*. It's beautiful arrangements by David Peacock with art by Nise. We said, "Let's do 500 books. Maybe we will sell these in a few years." Two weeks later, they were sold out. We pressed another 1,000 and another 1,000 and another 5,000. At this point, we've pressed over 50,000 books of video game arrangements for piano.

When we look at the market, there's not a lot of official sheet music from games. I gave a panel about this at a local chapter for the Music Teachers National Association. What a great way to incentivize students practicing an instrument. What if they could play a

melody from the game they're playing right now? It's surprising that many other game companies haven't really considered this opportunity.

Fan Excitement

As of two years ago, we started traveling to trade shows and conventions, not just for the educational aspects but also giving consumers the opportunity to experience the goods in person, flip through sheet music and get excited. "I remember this boss battle. I remember dying 10 times in a row."

Physical Media

A great article came out recently about the rise of video game soundtracks on vinyl. Any kind of physical media is sort of pushed back. As everything becomes subscriptions and streaming, we have this opportunity to curate. "Here's an album we think is important." Of course, the majority of our fans exist on streaming platforms.

An Unexpected Comeback

Two years ago, our head of manufacturing says to me, "We have to make cassette tapes." And I go, "Why are we making tapes?" "They're big." "Okay, make 100. If they sell out, we can make more." Now, we have a warehouse of several thousand tapes that continue to sell. We're looking at custom tape players branded for our super fans.

My dad grew up on hi-fi equipment. Around the turn of the century, he threw it all away. "Digital is the future, son." And he was correct. But here we are making cassette tapes. I love that physical media has gotten more footing, especially in fan communities that want to own their music. They want to celebrate it and listen to it on their own terms.

Multiple Labels

We started out as Materia Collective. This was our first record label. Given how much demand and interest there was, we were faced with this opportunity—how can we celebrate specific audiences? On Curaga Records, we're focusing on jazz and low-fi. With Firaga Records, it's more high energy, where we have EDM, house, and drum & bass music.

Collectorship

Less than half the people who buy our vinyl have a record player. So it's very much a collector-based fandom, especially for physical media. We try to make sure it honors the world of the game, the composers, and the music itself.

Seek Help

My biggest advice for composers is to delegate the business part. For composers and creators, the bulk of their time should be spent creating. Every day, I run into composers who are sort of stuck in this lane of D.I.Y.

And I love D.I.Y. I love self-actualization and doing everything yourself. But there are only so many hours in the day. If monetization is the benchmark, find a partner, label, publisher or distributor that supports you and your catalog, so you can focus on the next project.

OPPS

TikTok wants a Music Content Strategy Manager

The TikTok Music Content Investment Team is a newly formed team that focuses on partnership or acquisition opportunities in the music content space on a global level. Responsible for creating and executing strategies to drive user operations and product strategy. Work closely with global product team to plan and launch features and services that drive growth of content supply. Design SOP and data monitoring mechanism to support regional operations to improve efficiency. Responsible for conducting ad-hoc projects such as global music market research and competitor and deal analysis. Apply at LinkedIn.

Sony is looking for a Director, Finance—Ceremony of Roses

The Director, Finance role has a broad vantage point, and maintains a presence across all of Ceremony of Roses and associated JVs and acquisitions, but with a focus on performance analysis and growth areas. Working in collaboration with various departments, a successful candidate will be a strong problem solver and strategic thinker and will make a key contribution to the company's future. Manage the monthly close process, including financial commentary and analysis of performance versus plan and forecast and performing balance sheet reviews. Ensure timely submission of corporate deliverables, including monthly forecasts and annual business

plans for current ventures, new acquisitions, and business units. Apply at LinkedIn.

Amazon Music needs a Senior Product Manager

If you love building products, leading programs and working with big data to solve problems then this role is for you! They are seeking a Senior Product Manager-Technical (PM-T) to join the Data Insights Science and Optimization (DISCO) team within Amazon Music. As a Senior PM-T, you will own key data products and programs our team is building to execute their mission to enable data driven product decisions in Amazon Music. Their data products and programs range from deep learning based causal inference framework to attribution analysis and data self service platforms. In this role, you will define a multi-year strategy and roadmap for the team. No one will tell you how to do your job. You must seek out what needs done on a project and ensure it gets done. Apply at LinkedIn.

Universal Music Group needs a Coordinator, DSP Content

The DSP Content Coordinator (the "DCC") ensures that UPPM's music assets are properly formatted and loaded into various media distribution platforms for monetization on Digital Service Providers (DSPs), including, but not limited to Spotify, Apple Music, Deezer and YouTube. The DCC is responsible for ensuring that every UPPM asset is able to be monetized via any streaming platform and will be tasked



▲ OKMONIKS ENJOY AFTERPARTY FEVER

San Francisco's The Okmoniks have just announced the release of their LP *Afterparty Fever!!!!* on Slovenly Recordings, delivering a jolt of adrenaline to the music world upon its release in September. Comprising of Helene 33 on organ and vocals, Sammy on guitar, Jason on bass, and Pascual on drums, The Okmoniks blend early punk and garage rock influences into a sound that's as raw as it is infectious. For more info, contact chad@norulespr.com.

with supporting and developing initiatives aimed at growing UPPM's global presence on the DSPs. Apply at LinkedIn.

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DIY Spotlight

RAINBOW CITY PARK

DANI JUDITH fronts Northern Californian indie dream-pop outfit Rainbow City Park, having been found online by guitarist and founding member Chris O'Keefe. Judith says that she was incredibly nervous during rehearsals but it all came together.

"The music was fantastic," she says. "I could tell that they were great people, and I really wanted to stick around."

Judith has been performing since third grade, when she entered her elementary school's talent show. She wrote her first song in eighth grade, and things developed from there.

The frontwoman says that the

Rainbow City Park sound has evolved in the two and a half years since forming.

"The entire first year I spent in the group, I was not the lead singer," Judith says. "We had more of a Cranberries/hop-along sort of sound. As the band evolved and I stepped into the role as the lyrical writer and primary singer, we've begun to shape into a more Third Eye Blind-meets-Paramore type sound."

The band's latest release is the "Valentine's Day 1999" single, and all of the members are proud of it with good reason.

"It's been a part of our set for almost a year prior to the actual release, so our audience was

familiar with the tune," Judith says. "It definitely didn't come as a surprise to our listeners that "vday99" was the next tune on our rollout."

For an indie band like RCP, "DIY" is a way of life.

"DIY implies that the band is an independently ran musical group," Judith says. "We definitely aren't making our music at home in our bedrooms (for the most part), but every other process is done by the hands of the members of the band. Publishing, distribution, marketing, you name it. All of the things you'd never think from an outside perspective would be involved in keeping a band alive."



Rainbow City Park has another song dropping this year, called "Complicate This." Starting in October, they'll be touring with Bay Area band The Moondrops. Keep your eye out.

For more information, visit rainbowcitypark.com.

PROPS

MUSEXPO 2025 Gives Mark Bevan Lifetime Achievement Award

MUSEXPO, the global music industry annual conference and showcase event, often described as the “United Nations of Music,” in collaboration with the esteemed talent discovery and development firm A&R Worldwide, proudly announces Mark Bevan, Co-Founder & Co-CEO of Advanced Alternative Media (AAM), Inc., as recipient of its prestigious “Lifetime Achievement Award” at the 25th global edition of MUSEXPO. The award will be presented during a special luncheon on Monday, March 17, 2025, held at Castaway, Burbank, CA, which runs from March 16 - 19, 2025. For additional information, visit musexpo.net.

Billy Joel Honored with SoundExchange Hall of Fame Award

SoundExchange announced that Billy Joel has been honored with the SoundExchange Hall of Fame Award, recognizing his stature as one of the most streamed creators in

the organization's 20+ year history of administering digital performance royalties. “Billy Joel is an American musical icon, a performer with an unrivaled catalog of hits and beloved deep cuts. He has not only maintained, but increased his popularity over time, winning new generations of fans with his indelible songs and performances,” said Michael Huppe, President and CEO of SoundExchange. “Billy has not only been a significant presence through nearly every major shift in physical musical formats, but he is also one of the digital era's most streamed artists.” Visit soundexchange.com for more info.

BRETT CALLWOOD, MC's associate editor, has written about music for two decades, originally for Kerrang!, Classic Rock, Metal Hammer and more in the U.K. He's the author of two books, and was previously the music editor at LA Weekly and, before that, the Detroit Metro Times. A multiple award-winning writer, he's also a columnist at the Village Voice. He can be reached at bretto@musicconnection.com.



▲ TALKIE TALKIE WITH LOS BITCHOS

Los Bitchos have released their sophomore album *Talkie Talkie*, via City Slang. The band members have loads of interests and colorful backgrounds—Serra is an avid cook (hence the song titles “Naughty Little Clove” and “Let Me Cook You”), Nic has worked as a nurse for the NHS, Josefine has ridden horses competitively, and Augustina has modeled. They all came together through chance encounters in London, and a wonderful musical alchemy was born! For more info, contact catherine.herrick@promojukebox.com.

The LEGAL Beat

BY GLENN LITWAK



JOURNEY MEMBER Jonathan Cain filed a lawsuit in July of 2024 against bandmate/lead guitarist Neal Schon alleging that Schon and his wife Michaele had been misusing the band's funds.

Journey was founded in 1973 in San Francisco and is best known for its iconic anthem: “Don't Stop Believin'.” The band is currently on tour with Def Leppard, The Steve Miller Band and Cheap Trick. The legal dispute led to the cancellation of tour dates in the U.K. and Ireland.

Cain and Schon have a company that handles their

touring business and they each own 50 percent of it. Cain contends that Schon was spending up to \$10,000 a night on hotels while touring and was also using company monies for private jets.

Cain alleges that Schon's actions have led to issues with paying production employees and the crew. Cain has stated that Schon and he “fundamentally disagree” on how to run the company.

Cain also states that Schoen got the tour promoter, AEG, to give the group a 1.5 million advance for touring expenses. Cain stated that he only asked for a \$500,000 advance. Cain also mentioned that their company had an established limit of \$1,500 a night for hotel rooms and said that Schon spent up to \$10,000 a night.

Schon recently posted on social media that he would now agree to retain an independent third-party mediator since someone was needed to break tie votes between him and Cain.

Schon stated: “I am determined to take the high road and push all this aside for the moment to focus on our fans, the tour and all who give so much to make things happen. That's why I'm so glad that Jon now agrees with me that the current dynamic can't continue. And it's also why I'm pleased that we're going to bring in someone impartial to help us resolve our disputes, bring clarity to what we're doing and allow us, as a band, to get back to what we should all focus on—making music for our fans.”

On August 28, 2024 Cain stated that the court in Delaware had appointed an independent director for the company that runs Journey's business.

Cain's lawyers stated: “Mr. Schon is prohibited from unilaterally acting on behalf of the company and all future deadlock between Mr. Cain and Mr. Schon will be broken by the vote of the Custodian. Mr. Cain is elated with the outcome and looks forward to moving beyond this matter so that Journey

can continue the band's 50th Anniversary Freedom Tour.”

After Cain and Schon agreed to the independent director, Cain's attorney, Kasey H. DeSantis, stated that Schon is “now seeking to inappropriately limit the role of the custodian.”

These types of disputes are common and have led to the breakup of many groups in the past. However, with hugely successful groups like Journey, there is a financial incentive to work things out.

GLENN LITWAK is a veteran entertainment attorney based in Santa Monica, CA. He has represented platinum selling recording artists, Grammy winning music producers, hit songwriters, management and production companies, music publishers and independent record labels. Glenn is also a frequent speaker at music industry conferences around the country, such as South by Southwest and the Billboard Music in Film and TV Conference. Email Litwak at gtllaw59@gmail.com or visit glennlitwak.com.

This article is a very brief overview of the subject matter and does not constitute legal advice.



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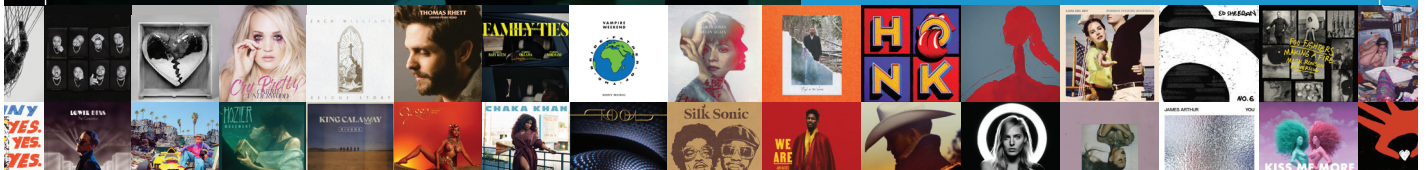
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GINNY LUKE

Date Signed: February 2024

Label: KZZ Music/Blue Élan Records

Type of Music: Rock

Management: Alexander Michaels, info@abeautifulventure.com

Legal: Maximillian Verrelli, max.verrelli@gmail.com

Publicity: Amanda Cagan-ABC Public Relations, amanda@abc-pr.com

Web: ginny-luke.com

Ginny Luke wears many hats. Her resume includes bandleader, touring performer, and teacher, among other accomplishments. What she's most famous for, though, is backing major stars as a hard-charging violinist. That role brought her to Clear Lake Recording Studios, where her playing enhanced recordings for artists on Blue Élan Records and KZZ Music, Blue Élan's spunky imprint. In due time, her studio duties expanded to arranging background vocals.

As her association with the labels progressed, she became friendly with Blue Élan's co-founder, Kirk Pasich. One day, Pasich discovered Luke's independent recordings on Spotify and brought up that she had a music video coming out, which everyone present subsequently viewed. It made a positive impression. "I got offered a sizable budget from Kirk to record three or four songs," explains Luke, whose past includes a stint in an all-girl group. It was both a gift and a test to see if they were a fit.

Meanwhile, Luke kept independently booking shows, among them an invite-only showcase. That performance enthused Pasich enough that

"You have to keep things going in alignment with your dream."

he wanted to sign her. Although the pandemic put the deal on hold, the two kept in touch. In June 2022, they made the relationship official. The agreement came with a request to record an album in six weeks. Having a collection of demos already queued up made that difficult task possible.

In 2024, Luke was informed that she was being moved to Blue Élan. In the past, Luke had been offered a deal with a Japanese label, but that fell apart after the head of A&R got fired. It's one of many experiences that grounded her in accepting this turn of events. "I've seen how the business goes and how quickly it can change," she divulges. "And if it does, you just have to keep things going in alignment with your dream."

Having been around the block also allowed Luke to turn down opportunities that were less generous or seemed suspect. She's thankful she held out for a label that feels like family. "I have a lot of respect for him," she notes regarding Pasich.

Luke's heart-stopping debut comes out November 1st. - **Andy Kaufmann**



MICHELE MORRONE

Date Signed: July 2024

Label: 477 Records

Type of Music: Pop

Management: Big Picture Media Online

Web: michele-morrone.com

A&R: Ascend Artist Representation

Model, actor and singer, Michele Morrone is on the loose and ready to pounce; pop(py) hip-hop with sensual, sultry lyrics that tempt the listener to reach inside their own chest and hand Morrone their beating heart. The music is a little dusky and a lot dark, with great sentiment, thoughtfulness and feeling going into all the lyrics. Morrone croons his way into everyone's hearts, song after song, and does it with great ease and sensitivity.

His debut album, *Dark Room*, which dropped in February 2020 and was featured on the soundtrack for Netflix's *365 Days*, is the darkest of the bunch. The compelling tune "Hard for Me" is the love story of all love stories. "Watch Me Burn," a tune about a womanizing woman who uses men for her own pleasure, twisted as they may be, summarizes the album as a whole: that love is a tough business, but it sells!

"With over 23 million followers on social media, there's no stopping this Italian tesoro."

His second album, *Double*, was released in September 2023 and leads off with "Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)." The popular tune made famous by the Eurythmics was written by Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart. Something about a man singing this song lends a different point of view and a totally different feel. This album does not have *Dark Room's* darkness, but it does possess the same lyrical quality and excellence that made *Dark Room* very popular.

Previously with Universal Group Germany, Morrone has a new record deal with the independent, New York-based label, 477 Records. Chief Executive Officer, Zach Dess, Chief Creative Officer, Geoff Hufford and Chief Operating Officer, GD Dess were thrilled when Morrone signed on. He has been so busy with projects that he hasn't had time to catch his breath. Last winter he finished up an independent film release titled *Home Sweet Home Rebirth*, based on the popular video game. He is starring alongside Anna-Marie Sieklucka in *365 Days* (and sequels), co-starring with Megan Fox in *Subservience*, and he just finished his starring role opposite Blake Lively and Anna Kendrick in Amazon Prime's *Simple Favor 2*. Whew!

With over 1.1 million monthly listeners on Spotify, and over 23 million followers on social media, there's no stopping this Italian tesoro. Listen to new single, "Leave Me (feat. Two Feet)." - **Pierce Brochetti**



EMILY FREMBGEN

Date Signed: October 2023

Label: Don Giovanni Records

Type of Music: Indie-folk

Publicity: Sarah Avrin, Charm School Media, sarah.avrin@charmschoolmedia.com

Web: emilyfrembgen.com

Country-tinged indie folk artist Emily Frembgen released the *No Hard Feelings* album and the "Drink Tonight" single in recent weeks, further cementing her working relationship with Don Giovanni Records. It's the latest chapter in what has been a fascinating journey to this point. Frembgen has been singing and making up songs for as long as she can remember.

"I got my first guitar when I was 15 or 16 and after learning three chords, I was serious," she says. "I went to a guitar lesson and the teacher told me I wasn't ready to write songs yet and I never took another lesson. I was overconfident then and sure I was bound to get discovered recording on my four-track in my bedroom. I started playing live during a stint in Denver in my early 20's and when I moved back to New York, the first of couple gigs here shook my confidence. Eventually though, I found my people and places."

The artist describes her sound as straightforward Americana,

"Eventually I found my people and places."

though there are certainly nuances. Delicate, yet strong. Honest and authentic, and always charming. It's a sound that brought her to the attention of Don Giovanni.

"It was all very serendipitous," Frembgen says. "I was booked on a show with Paisley Fields and we hit it off. I had also just finished the video for 'Fentanyl' with Kate Sweeney, who has worked a lot with Don Giovanni. She hooked me up with Mike Campbell for PR and he was like, 'oh, I'll just give Joe a call!' By that time I think so many people had put in a word for me he couldn't say no!"

No Hard Feelings was recorded with producer Hugh Pool at Excello in Greenpoint, with work starting around the spring of 2023.

"This one's really about getting to the middle of my life and really unpacking what I had been carrying around, mostly with my father," Frembgen says. "When the pandemic happened and I wasn't running around and dating crappy guys I really had to dig deeper for material and get more honest than I have been in the past."

With the album out, Frembgen is looking to play a bunch of shows around Colorado and New York, with SXSW on the horizon. Beyond that, the sky's the limit. - **Brett Callwood**



CASCADE RIOT

Date Signed: July 2024

Label: PNWK Records

Type of Music: Alt-rock, punk

Booking: sam@pnwkmusic.com

Legal: robert@pnwkmusic.com

Publicity: Mike Cubillos - Earshot Media

Web: pnwkmusic.com/cascaderiot

Detroit's Cascade Riot started playing music together as kids. Explains frontman Ryan Failla, "We're big on the chemistry that the three of us have... I don't think any one of us really have much of a desire to play with anyone else." Those kids eventually grew up, with one member taking an out-of-state job, dissolving Cascade Riot into the harsh waters known as the nine-to-five grind. Fast forward to 2022, six years later, when the departed member returned to Michigan, posing the question, "what's stopping us now?" This time, however, the group decided they needed to be all-in. "We couldn't go away for another six years and then come back and expect it to happen," laughs Failla. "So one of the things we were interested in [this time] was label support."

In attempt to take the band the next level, Cascade Riot began submitting demos. Rather than agreeing to the first pitch they heard, however, the dudes took their time. "[With the first label we met], we realized we didn't need what they're offering... They were kind of wanting to market us as just a punk band that only does this kind of sound and looks like this and acts like this." Hearing this leaves us projecting the harsh reality Cascade Riot will be disappointed seeing we pigeon-holed their genre to fit our bio box above.

"If there's something we need, we know we can go to them."

After turning down their first offer, the trio found PNWK. Failla and company were familiar with the label's track record as fellow Michigan natives, Potion Seller were already signed. "They weren't locking us into any sort of commitment," expresses Failla. Along with no long-term commitment, PNWK didn't push an agenda or narrative on the band's vision or sound, and only offered to help in spaces where Cascade Riot seemed interested. Like merch ideation and printing. "[Having the right deal], you don't feel like you're entirely on your own anymore. If there's something we need, we know we can go to them and they're probably gonna take care of it for us."

The band is now recording its PNWK debut for a release later this year. - **Andy Mesecher**



▲ **PRESCRIPTION FOR JAYA**

Prescription Songs partners with Disruptive Label Publishing, signing Nigerian artist-songwriter-producer JAYA. JAYA's Afrobeat, Amapiano, R&B, and pop style collaborations include work with Asake, RunTown, Tiwa Savage, Skiibii, Spinall, DaBaby, Oxlade, RunTown, *Lion King 2*, and others.

▶ **HARBOURVIEW BUYS FAUNTLEROY**

"Select publishing assets" of James Fauntleroy's pop, hip-hop, and R&B catalog have been sold to HarbourView Equity Partners. Fauntleroy's catalog includes Mariah Carey, SZA, work for Bruno Mars, Kelly Clarkson, Rihanna, Snoop Dogg, Cardi B, Drake, Justin Timberlake, Beyoncé, and more.



▲ **DOWNTOWN SIGNS PLUMA**

Downtown Music Publishing signs Peso Pluma's Double P Records to global publishing, covering administration and sync of its current and future releases, and administration for Pluma's own publishing interests. This includes *ÉXODO* (with the biggest Spotify debut of any Mexican artist).

BMI Congratulates Oates

Legendary musician John Oates has received the BMI's Troubadour Award, recognizing his profound impact on the musical landscape. As half of Hall & Oates, the artist's popularity continues on after five decades, through generations of listeners and multiple formats. Having released eight solo albums (including *Reunion* in May), Oates latest performances include the Newport and Philadelphia Folk Festivals, Pilgrimage Music Festival, and Americanafest.

In 2013, he joined forces with Jim James of My Morning Jacket, launching the Bonnaroo Superjam, and was also creator/executive producer for the 7908 Aspen Songwriters Festival, now a national streaming charity event (Oates Song Fest 7908).

A BMI Icon Award recipient with 10 BMI Pop Awards and 30 BMI Million-Air Awards (for "Maneater," "I Can't Go For That," "Out of Touch," "Sara Smiles," "She's Gone," and "You Make My Dreams Come True"), he has 10 No. 1 records, over 20 Top 40 hits, and has recorded 21 albums. Selling over 80 million copies, Hall & Oates are the most successful duo in rock history and are members of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

Road Rally Returns

The TAXI Road Rally returns to Los Angeles, from November 7-10. With panels, pro speakers, one-on-one

mentorship sessions, eat-and-greets, and live listening sessions, the annual conference works to help independent songwriters, artists, and composers get their music to labels, film and television supervisors, music libraries, publishers, licensing and gaming companies, and advertising agencies.

Launched in 1992, TAXI is based in Los Angeles and is committed to helping the independent artist community connect with music professionals and decision-makers to help them succeed. Get professional feedback, create a musician toolbox, and learn how to create the right kind of music for the right pitch, while gaining access to people who need what you have.

Details and register at: taxi.com

NSAI Industry Workshop

Dive deep into the music industry and songwriting methodology in Nashville in an interactive experience with respected songwriter Liz Rose, December 5-8. The National Songwriter Association International (NSAI) is now taking applications for "Inside The Industry," a four-day songwriting and music business intensive.

Details and application at: bit.ly/47c12jG

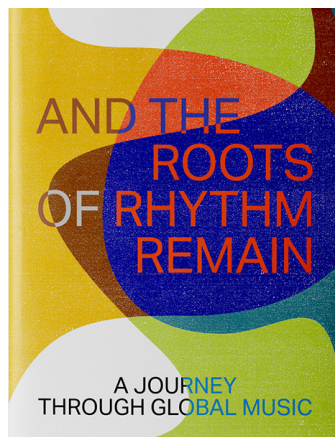
California A.I. Bill

The Senate in California has a bill—AB 2602—to protect SAG-AFTRA union actors from unauthorized A.I. replicas. As a top priority for 2024, the legislation requires explicit consent for any voice or likeness "digital replica" of a performance, in language that mirrors last year's four-month strike against film and television studios. Protections include video games, audiobooks, and commercials, and legal protection extends to include non-union work.

Initially opposing the bill for fear of post-production interference, the Motion Picture Association took a neutral stance after legislators changed some language to address their concerns. Approved by the State Assembly in May with a vote of 62-0, the Senate passed it with a vote of 36-1.

SAG-AFTRA will be looking at the No Fakes Act to protect anyone, whether a performer or layperson, from digital replicas created without their consent.

More at: bit.ly/3XrwRBN



▲ **BOYD'S ROOTS REMAIN**

Iconic producer Joe Boyd (R.E.M., Toots and the Maytals, Pink Floyd, etc.) releases *And The Roots of Rhythm Remain*, a music-making memoir compiled over 10 years. Travel, research, interviews, listening explore sound through global events, personalities, and politics. See: bit.ly/3TdFYUm

New Pro: All Track

The Confederation of Societies of Authors & Composers (CISAC) has approved a new performing

rights organization (PRO) to accommodate the independent music sector. All Track has been granted access to CISAC's exclusive data exchange tools, ongoing ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC as a U.S.-based PROs.

Launched in 2017 as the only full-service global PRO established to serve the independent music community, All Track was built to collect royalties on behalf of creator and publisher members through global business licenses. Members are compensated for streaming, television, cable, radio, local businesses, and live performances. Simple and affordable blanket licenses are available for businesses to obtain the permissions they require.

Founded in France as a non-governmental, non-profit organization in 1926, CISAC is comprised of over 227 member societies in over 116 countries and is dedicated to protecting creators through collective management and developing and strengthening international rights collection through international data exchange. Headquartered in Los Angeles, AllTrack also has offices in Nashville and New York.

Chuck Mangione's Wave

Composer-musician Chuck Mangione has sold publishing rights to his five decades of music—including the writer's share, artist royalties, and neighboring rights—to Primary Wave. Covering Mangione's entire catalog, the agreement grants Mangione access to new marketing, branding, digital, sync options, and film and television opportunities. Hits include "Feels So Good," "Bellavia," "Land of Make Believe," "Give It All You Got, But Slowly," "Children of Sanchez," "Once Upon A Love Time," "Chase The Clouds Away," and more. Mangione has been nominated for 14 GRAMMY awards (winning two) and has also made television appearances, including in animated form on *King of the Hill* (which included his musical score).

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genres. For further information and custom options, email reynaldomgnt@rnldo.com.

36th MusicRow Awards

As Nashville's longest-running music industry trade publication, MusicRow Magazine has revealed the annual winners list, which recognizes songwriters, producers, artists, and others, as voted on by MusicRow subscribers.

Winners were selected in the following categories: Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year (Ryan Larkins), Breakthrough Artist-Writer of the Year (Ashley Cooke), Male Songwriter of the Year (Ashley Gorley), Female Songwriter of the Year (Jessi Alexander), Song of the Year ("Dirt Cheap" by songwriter Josh Phillips), Breakthrough Artist of the Year (Shaboozey), Female Artist of the Year and Entertainer of the Year (Lainey Wilson), Male Artist of the Year (Jelly Roll), Group/Duo Artist of the Year (Old Dominion), and others.

Details and full list of winners at: bit.ly/3zeDXAd

ANDREA BEENHAM (aka Drea Jo) is a freelance writer and marketing consultant based in Southern California. The South-African born, Canadian-raised California transplant has a passion for music, people and fun. She can be reached at drea@dreajo.com



▲ HONORS FOR ELLIOTT

Honored during her hometown headline show in Hampton, VA for outstanding community support, Missy Elliott receives a Congressional Certificate of Community Service, a resolution for her first arena tour, and Mayor Donnie Tuck's Aug. 2 declaration of "Out of This World Tour Day."



▲ KOBALT FOR WOLFGANG

Best known for work with Blackpink, BTS, Ed Sheeran, Max Martin, Sia, and Laufey, songwriter-producer Max Wolfgang signs global publishing with Kobalt Music Group. His latest collaboration is "Time" with neo-soul singer Olivia Dean. Wolfgang also fronts the British alt band Wolf Gang.



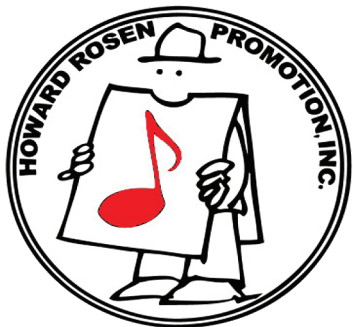
▲ WIRETAP SIGNS STORMHOUSE

L.A.-based indie label Wiretap Records signs L.A. punk band Stormhouse to their roster, with "Crashing Waves" out now, and an EP release this month. Fronted by Markei Medina, the new band line-up includes Sergio German on guitar, Adrian Vargas on bass, and Mikey Enriquez on drums.



▲ RHINO RELEASES WHITESNAKE

Rhino Records releases six-CD box set *Into The Light: The Solo Albums*. Included 1977's *Whitesnake*, 1978's *Northwinds*, and 2000's *Into The Light*, and David Coverdale's three solo albums/remixes, remastered and unreleased tracks. 60-page book of photos, liner notes, and interviews as well.

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Carla Patullo*Success From Surrender*

Breast Cancer Awareness month lends the perfect opportunity to acknowledge the triumphant journey to Carla Patullo's GRAMMY win for *So She Howls*. With over 100 TV and film placements of her writing (including *Spa Night*, *Teen Titans Go*, *The Ellen Degeneres Show*, *Skins* (U.K.), *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, *L.A. A Queer History*, etc.), the composer-artist-songwriter's Best New Age Album win came as a surprise and she says, "I still feel lucky because this is tied with my survivorship of going through breast cancer, so there's a lot of emotion there."

Drawn to music from the singing and storytelling of her Italian grandmothers, Patullo turned to writing to navigate the grief of her grandparents' passing when she was a teenager, recorded her first full-length album at 15. "I knew that I wanted to put out albums. Writing was something that I always wanted to do and felt I could really express myself doing," she reveals. While touring and releasing albums with her band White Widow, Patullo met Sandra Bernhard and invited her to a show. Liking what she was doing, Bernhard invited Patullo to tour with her. "She brought me through this world of storytelling, developing those skills and looking at it from the audience's perspective," shares Patullo. "That helped me grow as an artist, gave me more dimension, [and] led me to film scoring. Instrumentation lines became cinematic [and I wanted] to find my voice with that." Feeling fortunate for Sandra's mentorship, Patullo hopes she can do the same for others, and that more independent [and underrepresented] artists get recognition.

Her creative methodology adapts to each project and Patullo considers herself genre-fluid, adding that White Widow was a raw, brash collaboration of musicians. Her film scores differ from her personal music as they are more collaborative. "It's a very different process when I work on my own songs and experiment more—sometimes [it] just flows out." It usually starts with melody. "I learned post-cancer that if I'm feeling blocked creatively, there's something physically going on," she says. "I have to move, switch off, and keep things flowing. I write better and faster that way." She emphasizes the importance of leaving space for the listener. "One of the hardest things for me as a composer is not overwriting," she admits. "[Not] everything has to be a masterpiece. Putting that pressure on yourself is taking you in the wrong direction. Focus on what you need to say or feel, ask yourself what the piece is about—it should be a straightforward answer."

The magic of *So She Howls* stems from its universality. "I was sharing my story but, in some form or another, [something] we all go through. Everything fell into place. It felt natural. I didn't have to push." The record connects us all with a universal healing conversation that people often don't like to have: words unsaid and moments taken for granted that suddenly become a core memory. "Cancer made me say, 'Hey, this is it. This is life. Live it now,'" says Patullo. "I was really tired while recording, but kept a lot of the vocals. Old Carla would've edited all that, but I kept [the] raw tracks."

The process reminded her of her grandmothers' recordings. "You're capturing this moment. Nowadays we have so many tools and we've gone crazy perfecting everything. It's taking away the moment. Embrace the flaws." Upcoming projects include a studio album for the musical *Hurricane* in collaboration with librettist Cory Hinkle, a solo electro-acoustic album that could include some teenage recordings (with the release of the first single next month), and a collaboration on an animated documentary about 1920's pioneering European film director Lotte Reiniger.

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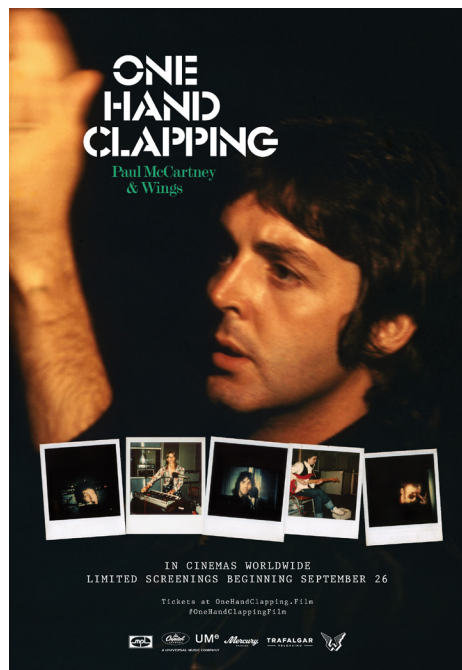
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DROPS

Trafalgar Releasing and Mercury Studios announced a fall cinematic showing of *Paul McCartney and Wings—One Hand Clapping*, a documentary filmed on video tape that takes viewers back to 1974 for a behind-the-scenes look at the group's historic session at Abbey Road Studios as they recorded *One Hand Clapping*. That was released in June 2024, 50 years after its original recording. **David Litchfield** directed the film, which features rare footage, interviews with the band and creative team, performances and more. The theatrical event also features the previously unreleased *Backyard Sessions*, showcasing



Paul McCartney on acoustic guitar performing songs from his catalog, and an exclusive filmed introduction by McCartney himself. Learn more at onehandclipping.film, or contact Steve Martin at steve@nastylittleman.com.

Hollywood Records has released *The Supremes at Earl's All-You-Can-Eat (Original Soundtrack)* by composer **Kathryn Bostic**. The album is available now on digital platforms, coinciding with the film's Hulu release. Hollywood Records also released an episode of their music docuseries, *The Big Score*, in which Bostic works on the score for the film, drawing on her jazz and classical background. The film, directed by **Tiny Mabry** and based on the 2013 best-selling novel by **Edward Kelsey Moore**, follows the three best friends known as The Supremes through life's ups and downs. For more information, contact Sam DeFrank at samd@costacomm.com.

Filmmaker **Tanner Poppitt** has released a short film documenting Southern California rehearsal facility **Cideshow Studios**, highlighting the changes in the musical landscape and stressing the importance for a band to have a central place to go to establish their sound. Cideshow Studio was the brainchild of



Sherman Jones and his partner at that time, **Brian "Gimmi" Smith**. In 2003, they moved into an abandoned medical building in Gardena, CA, and converted the space into a series of rehearsal studios. With a 20-year history, Cideshow Studios now has an all-access in-house venue known as Backstage Live, and its legacy has touched local artists, including **Recoil, DTM (aka Black Chappel), and Rome Apart**. Visit cideshowstudios.com.

Released in theaters nationwide on Oct. 9 (**John Lennon's** birthday), new documentary *Daytime Revolution* offers a behind-the-scenes look at the 1972 week when Lennon and **Yoko Ono** took over the *Mike Douglas Talk Show* on CBS. Directed by **Erik Nelson**, the film features archival footage of the musical couple as well as **Chuck Berry, Bobby Seale, George Carlin and Jerry Rubin**, plus new interviews with original guests including **Ralph Nader**. It premiered at the Hamptons International Film Festival. At the time Lennon and Ono helmed the show for five days, the

Mike Douglas Talk Show was the most popular show on daytime television with 40 million weekly viewers. Lennon and Ono's take on it featured candid interviews with handpicked and sometimes controversial guests, covering topics including political violence, women's liberation, music and art. Contact **Betsy Rudnick-Fernand** for more information at betsyrudnickpr@gmail.com.

Lakeshore Records has released the *Terminator Zero—Original Series Soundtrack*,



which features music by composer duo **Michelle Birsky and Kevin Henthorn**. The Netflix original anime series brings the *Terminator* franchise to a new generation while embracing what's beloved about the original films. The composers said they used electronic instrumentation combined with human voice and electronically-altered instruments to capture the complexity of being human in a digital age as this series follows a soldier sent back in time to change humanity. For further details, contact **Christian Endicio** at christian@whitebearpr.com.

OPPS

Nov. 16 is the final deadline for the **Hollywood ShortsFest**, which is slated for Jan. 22-26, 2025 to promote the work of up-and-coming filmmakers with cash prizes for winners and networking opportunities. Categories include Best Music Video. Learn more at filmfreeway.com/hollywoodshortsfest.

The **Berlin Music Video Awards**, slated for June 2025, is now accepting video submissions for consideration. Unknown filmmakers and

Clarke (Guns N' Roses) and more. Learn more at diocancerfund.org.

Artists are poised to benefit from A.I. in a new way through a recently announced partnership between **Musical A.I.**, the music rights management platform for A.I., and **Symphonic Distribution**, the fastest growing U.S.-based independent digital music services company. This new partnership will allow generative A.I. models to be trained on Symphonic's broad catalog of commercial releases when artists and labels have opted into the program.

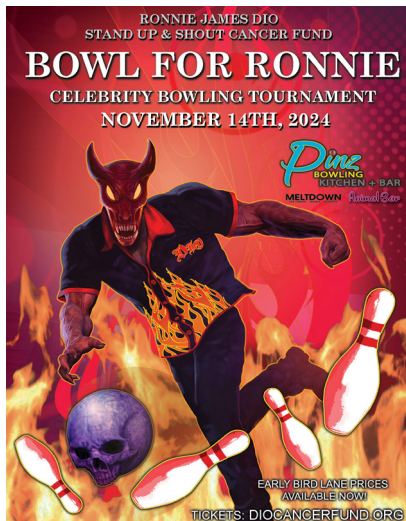


creators are welcome to apply, and the early bird deadline is Nov. 15. The event features live performances, filmmaking workshops, networking events and more. For more information, visit berlinmva.com.

During the **Guild of Music Supervisors 10th Annual State of Music in Media Conference** in August, the 15th Annual Guild of Music Supervisors Awards date was announced as Feb. 23, 2025. It will take place at The Wiltern Theatre in Los Angeles, and tickets will go on sale toward the year's end. Learn more about award submissions at guildofmusicsupervisors.com.

PROPS

The annual **Bowl for Ronnie Celebrity Bowling Party**, benefiting the **Ronnie James Dio Stand Up and Shout Cancer Fund**, is set for Nov. 14 this year and will be held at the PINZ Bowling Center in Studio City, CA. The event, now in its 15th year, will once again be hosted by television and radio personality **Eddie Trunk**, who is heard on SiriusXM's 103 Faction Talk channel. Bowl for Ronnie features a celebrity bowling tournament and a raffle drawing for prizes and memorabilia. Last year's event raised more than \$80,000 for cancer research. Past featured entertainers and artists have included **Jack Black** and **Kyle Gass (Tenacious D)**, **Phil Buckman** and **Brett Scallions of Fuel**, **John Bush (Armored Saint)**, **Geezer Butler (Black Sabbath)**, **Gilby**



Through its advanced technology, Musical A.I.—the only company offering music and audio attribution for A.I. training—will help Symphonic artists earn more revenue from their existing music. By opting into the program, Symphonic artists will be able to reap the benefits of A.I.

and a new revenue stream while protecting their work. Learn more at wearemusical.ai.

The **Hollywood Music in Media Awards** will take place this year at The Avalon in Los Angeles with the main event on Nov. 20, honoring original music in all visual media from around the globe including film, TV, video games, trailers, commercial advertisements, documentaries and special programs. HMMA features live music performances, celebrity presenters, tributes to music

industry icons, and awards for composers, songwriters and artists. The HMMA also celebrates emerging, independent artists and music influencers across the world for creative and innovative contributions. For a list of past winners and nominees, membership information, and details on how to attend, visit hmmawards.com.

JESSICA PACE is a music journalist-turned-news-reporter based in Durango, CO. She is from Nashville, where she started a writing career by freelancing for publications including *American Songwriter* and *Music Connection*. Contact her at j.marie.pace@gmail.com.

OUT TAKE



John Kinsner

CEO of Black Ink Presents

Website: blackinkpresents.com

Most recent: *Labyrinth: In Concert*

JOHN KINSNER first started working in concert production as a teenager in Colorado Springs. His mom, who worked at the city's Broadmoor World Arena, got him gigs as a runner or assistant. "She knew I was obsessed with music and WWE wrestling and all these events, and since I wasn't the greatest student, she said I'd have to be a great worker," he said. More than 20 years later, Kinsner has worked with Disney Concerts, Paramount, Danny Elfman, Elton John, and worked on, produced and developed tours for Live Nation, AEG, William Morris Endeavor, CAA and more.

He's now CEO of Black Ink Presents, a film-to-orchestra service that has transformed iconic films like *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *La La Land* and *Batman* into live concert experiences. Of founding Black Ink Presents, Kinsner says, "I realized this medium at the intersection of film, concert and media wasn't going anywhere, and that I should start a business focused on helping film and video game makers leverage and launch their product into the live spectrum."

Most recently, Black Ink Presents brought Jim Henson's '80s cult classic *Labyrinth* to life this fall. "I grew up loving and watching this movie on VHS, and *Labyrinth* was my introduction to David Bowie. The Henson and Bowie estates were very enthusiastic," Kinsner says.

With technology constantly evolving, Kinsner sees the film concert experience evolving with it to create even more immersive experiences in the future. "If we can transport you inside of a story or inside a world, that's the goal. If we can suspend your disbelief through the experience, then we've done our job. We'll continue to incorporate new technology to make that happen," he says. "One of my mentors said follow your passion, and the rest will fall in place."

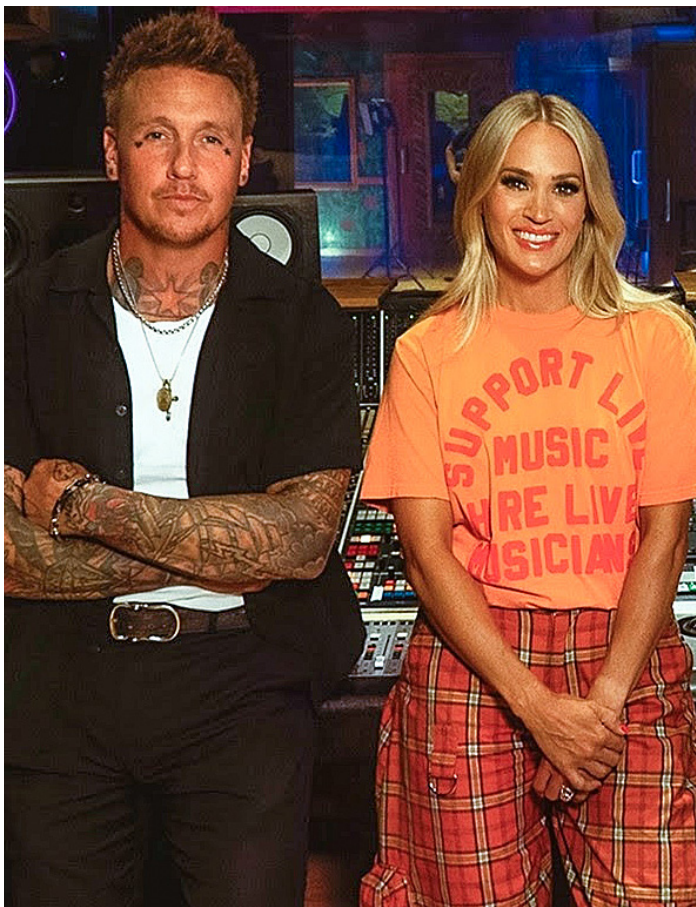
▶ **MEGAN MORONEY TAKES GOLD AND PLATINUM**

Sony Music Nashville and Columbia Records presented Megan Moroney with two plaques celebrating the RIAA Platinum certification for her hit single "I'm Not Pretty" from her newly RIAA certified Gold debut album *Lucky*. The plaques were presented at her Nissan Stadium, Nashville show in August.



▲ **DILJIT DOSANJH TEAMS UP WITH NLE CHOPPA**

Combining Diljit's iconic Punjabi flair with multi-platinum artist NLE Choppa's electrifying verses, "Muhammad Ali" emerges as an urban pop anthem that's both invigorating and motivational, encouraging listeners to dance, dream, and defy the odds. The track debuts alongside an official music video that seamlessly merges cultures with an infectious rhythm.



◀ **CARRIE UNDERWOOD UNITES WITH PAPA ROACH**

Eight-time Grammy Award winner Carrie Underwood unites with rock icons Papa Roach on a new recording of their multi-format hit single "Leave A Light On (Talk Away The Dark)," out now. The dynamic duet was recorded in Nashville, TN, and continues the mission of the California band to raise awareness for suicide prevention and mental health awareness, alongside partner organization(s) the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), who will receive royalties generated from both artists from the song, in perpetuity.



▲ **ENGINEERS WELCOME NEW NAMM PRESIDENT**

At a recent weekly Pro Audio Lunch Bunch in Burbank, CA, over 70 engineers, musicians and industry pros welcomed guest of honor John Mlynczak, who took over as President/CEO of NAMM in 2023. Pictured (l-r): *Music Connection's* Joseph Maltese, Robin Rose, NAMM's John Mlynczak, *MC Publisher* Eric Bettelli, Mastering Engineer Peter Doell

Tidbits From Our Tattered Past



1996 - Fiona Apple - #21

On the cover of our October '96 issue, songstress Fiona Apple told us that, "People see me and they want to put glitter all over me, and have me wear really, really stylish clothing. And I'm like, 'No, no, no, that's not me.'" Our featured songwriter in that issue was Sam Phillips, who said: "I think the creative process is always happening in every writer. Your downtime is as important as the time you spend actually writing. As a performer, you spend a lot of time sitting around, whether it's waiting to get on a plane or waiting around for soundcheck. And all that time waiting around opens up a lot of room to muse and think."



2020 - Trippie Redd - #2

At the start of the new decade, cover star and emo-rapper Trippie Redd told us that, "I don't know anything, I just do it. It just comes from my head, it's like a gift. A lot of people don't do that, a lot of people write. I really look up to Lil Wayne, and he's always just said what was on his mind at the moment." In our feature story about tribute bands, Michael Twombly of The Cured said that, "If you can take the audience back to a time and place—it all depends what tribute it is. If it's an act that you can no longer see, that's a whole different thing than the guy doing Bruno Mars tributes."

Limited backissues available to order at musicconnection.com



▲ RIOT GAMES PARTNERS WITH VIRGIN MUSIC GROUP

Virgin Music Group has announced that it will release the next soundtrack album for season two of the highly anticipated Riot Games series *Arcane* on Netflix. Virgin Music Group, the world's leading partner to independent artists, labels and entrepreneurs, announced today that it will release the next soundtrack album for season two of the highly anticipated Riot Games series *Arcane* on Netflix. Pictured here are representatives from Virgin Music Group and Riot Games.



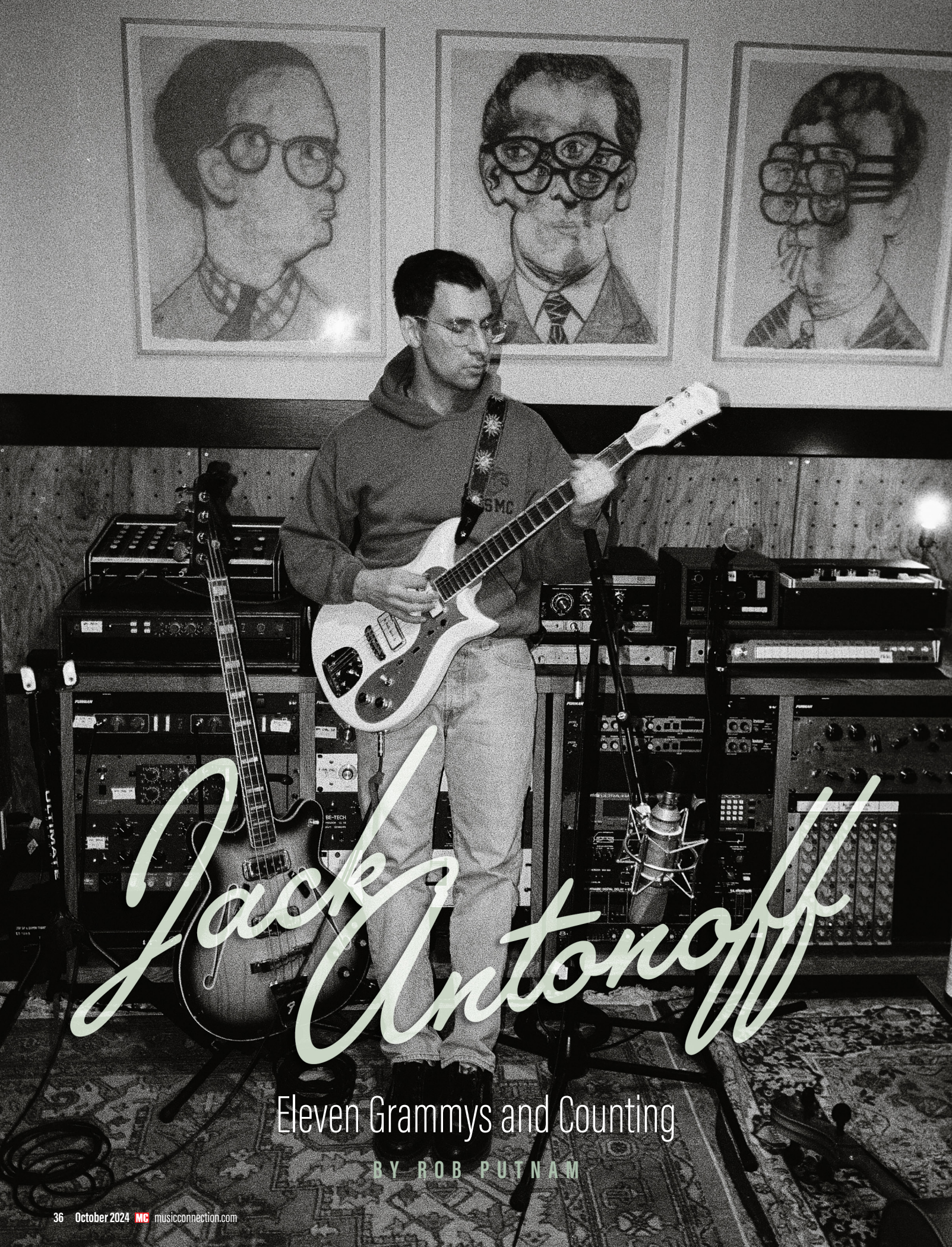
◀ MISSY ELLIOTT RECOGNIZED WITH CONGRESSIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL HONORS

Missy Elliott continues to skyrocket with first-ever recognitions during her history-making debut headline tour, *OUT OF THIS WORLD*—The Missy Elliott Experience. The Portsmouth, VA, native was honored once again as a hometown hero during her stop at Hampton Coliseum in Hampton, VA in August.

▶ HARMAN PRO SPONSORS AFM & SAG-AFTRA FUND WITH AKG HEADPHONES

Harman Professional donated two cases of AKG K-92 headphones to the music researchers at the AFM & SAG-AFTRA Fund. The Fund has paid out royalties to the tune of over \$700 million to date. Pictured (l-r) at the Harman Experience Center: Fund Researchers Jonathan Schwarz, Marie Matson, Christopher James, Harman Professional Global Manager, Product Relationships Becki Barabas, Fund Manager, Repertoire Debbie Sanov, Fund Researcher Chris Lawrence, SRD Fund Supervisor Lavonne Murlowski





Jack Antonoff

Eleven Grammys and Counting

BY ROB PUTNAM

Musician, producer and eminent East-Coaster Jack Antonoff has had a relationship with music since he was old enough to know what it was. Like many successful artists, he began to play in bands as a teenager and was always comfortable taking the helm to guide and shape projects. That penchant for production has served him well and he's played musical midwife to a swathe of artists that includes Taylor Swift, Lana Del Rey and Sabrina Carpenter, to name-drop a few. His efforts have earned him a staggering, Quincy Jones-level 11 Grammys, three of which were for Producer of the Year for the past three years running. Accordingly, he's a member of an exclusive club, the members of which could fit around a single, self-luminous table.

The morning *Music Connection* spoke with him, he'd just been invited to join Swift on stage at London's Wembley Stadium. There he helped mete out melodies to the intimate crowd of nearly 100,000. He happened to be in town for the kickoff of the European leg of his band Bleachers' tour later the same week. Rarely idle, he also logged some production time at Sleeper Sounds while in the cockney capital.

BEGINNINGS

"Production was always something I did," Antonoff recalls of how he waded into the trade. "[But] I didn't know it was producing. I always thought 'I'm a songwriter, an artist and I make albums.' Probably because so much of the folklore I'd heard about music came from the '60s and '70s. You hear all of these stories of David Crosby going to somebody's house, Jackson Browne and Joni Mitchell are there and they write these songs. The combination of all that mythology and then growing up in the New Jersey scene, it was always a part of me that everyone helps with each other's music. It wasn't until I got a little older that I realized that I was producing music. Someone would play me a song and I'd think 'There's gotta be strings here. It's too fast. We've gotta be sure we record it this way.' Life is so unsure, but the one area where I have complete confidence is when I hear things, how I feel about them and what I think should happen. So I always did this. And as I kept touring and making records, I began to see that I was producing them too.

"It's been made clear to me what an anomaly I am to some people," he continues. "I understand that these are all separate things. Some people love producing, some love writing or being on the road. But this spectrum has always been what I've done. I've never seen it as separate pieces. Through all of this, there was no time when it wasn't just music. I heard music all day and I wrote it in my head. I didn't know I was writing or producing. The world told me that later."

CREATING TO CONNECT

To Antonoff, the appeal of production and of making music in general lies, to a great extent, in deepening his connection with his listeners and nurturing his own emotional well-being. There's also the aspect of becoming so engrossed in what he's doing that he's

nearly unaware of anything else, not unlike a meditation, a mental state that psychologists often refer to as "flow" and what most everyone else simply calls "being in the zone." As he explains it, "It's something that comes naturally to me. It's like a language; like a way of communicating. If you can find things where you feel peace, comfort, excitement, you feel alive within them. It's never crossed my mind that I wanted to be anywhere else. I've never had a moment in the studio or on stage when I've thought 'This kind of sucks' or had a thought outside of what I was doing. In every other aspect of my life I can be anxious, exhausted, nervous or unsure. So if you're lucky enough to find a space where all of the poison of being alive doesn't exist, then that's where you're meant to be. I feel far away from the darkness. Then when I leave, the darkness is pretty close. It's not a bad thing; I'm not terribly depressive. Life is challenging and stressful. You have to work so hard and put all of yourself on the line constantly to even get through it or to exist. That's everyone's experience and if someone tells you it isn't, they're either lying to you or to themselves. So we look for these moments of purpose or relief—suspension of all of the intensity it is to exist—then you've crested to another plane. To me, that's the point of life. I have no complicated relationship with the heart and soul of this work. I'm constantly excited by it, mystified and drawn back to it."

FINDING A SAFE SPACE

Any artist is fortunate if they have a physical place of peace where they feel supported and safe to create. Antonoff finds this vibe in all of the four main studios at which he works, the most notable being New York City's Electric Lady. "That's home," he asserts. "Everything kind of goes through there. At this point in my life, it would be borderline impossible to not have something at least pass through there if not [be] made there completely. Emotions and sonics fill spaces and then you start to understand them. I know that room. It's kind of the attic where Jimi [Hendrix] lived. I also know my room at home and in L.A. It's like the same way that I know my wired iPod headphones. I check my mixes on them and can understand quickly what I need to do."

Essentially, Antonoff's four main work spaces are Electric Lady, his Brooklyn home studio Rough Customer, a more rudimentary one at his permanent home in New Jersey and then one built recently in Los Angeles. John Storyk is a renowned studio architect whose first design was, in fact, Electric Lady. He's since planned thousands of others, notably for Alicia Keys, Jay-Z and Green Day, among others. It was Antonoff's love of Electric Lady that prompted him to enlist Storyk's help with both Rough Customer and additionally with his longtime engineer Laura Sisk on his L.A. setup. "I was really nervous when we built my L.A. space," he recalls. "There's an element to a great studio that you can't really put your finger on. It's not about how perfect the soundproofing is, it's not about the gear. Some rooms have that magic.

"I did everything the way I saw it in my head," he adds. "The studio is one of the most comfortable spaces in the world for me. But I was nervous when I first walked into my L.A. place because I worried that it might not be a good vibe. I started recording and that week I'd

written and recorded some Bleachers things that I loved. Lana came in and we did some of my favorite things I'd ever done and Taylor and I finished 'Fortnight' there. After all of that, I realized that the place had magic. Anyone who's ever built a studio knows that if you build a place outside of your home studio, it creates anxiety about its functionality and magic."

In addition to these sonic spaces, Antonoff often makes regular visits to Conway Recording Studios in the heart of Hollywood and Henson Recording Studios a short stroll away... if anyone were to ever actually walk in Los Angeles. But he's most comfortable on home turf back on the East Coast. "I go straight to how I feel when the plane lands at JFK or Newark," he notes. "My shoulders drop and I'm home. Anywhere else I sort of tense up and get ready for battle."

CHALLENGES AND PEAK MOMENTS

Bleachers released its fourth record—the self-titled *Bleachers*—earlier this year. Antonoff finds that the song that was most challenging (or of which he's most proud) changes over time. "But in this moment it's 'Modern Girl,' which is the first song that came out and is like the theme song for the band," he says. "It wasn't terribly challenging, but I'm most proud of it because it should have been. I have one of those bands where we just do what we do live and it's like a train on fire. That's how I've always been; it's like the last night on Earth. I'm always up against how to capture that in the studio and so often it's not the answer I think it is. I'll say 'Let's just play it live.' But the sonic field is what it is and so putting a bunch of people in the studio can feel really cool and exciting, but it's not going to capture the feeling of [playing] live. If anything, it can sound oddly smaller because you have so many instruments going on. The more you record, the less space you have. Also, it's not live. We're in a studio and we know we're being recorded. So I went on this long journey and what I ended up with was 'Modern Girl' and a lot of the album. The key was to have the band play its ass off and then grab the moments. For example, the horns on 'Modern Girl' are later in the recording. But when I heard them, I said 'Right there. That feels like the electricity of live [playing.]" I don't care about anything else. I hear that one thing that gives me that tingle, that frenetic energy of [being] on stage, grab it, start the song with that and almost sample my band. I'm so proud of that one because it cracked the code of how to capture the feeling of my band live."

LABELS: INDIES VERSUS MAJORS

Bleachers' first three records were issued by RCA. However, *Bleachers* was released by indie outfit Dirty Hit. What led to the choice to go indie rather than the well-worn and entrenched major label path? "I spent a little too much time massaging other people's egos," he recalls. "It never changed my work, but it was a bit exhausting. I realized that the music business is a funny place, but it's like any business. You have the great people, if you're lucky [enough] to find them. Now I'm surrounded by a group that gets me, gets what I do and we're running towards it together."

"I could write novels on the number of experiences I've had with a gatekeeper that in some way I had to satisfy," he continues. "I was never going to change that feeling. The way I'd appease those people was to make them think [my idea] was theirs too. It's exhausting. It's different for everyone, but in my experience, I need a small team that's ready to go to the moon with me; people that are on my level. Most of the records I make [now] are either me, my band or me and another artist. Record-making is one of the most delicate things in the world: songwriting, recording, mixing—all of it. You're building a house of cards that draws upon the deepest emotions, fears and life stories of the people making it. You can be the biggest star in the world, but if someone walks in off of the street and says 'Wow, that hi-hat sounds like shit,' everyone in the room is going to crumble. It's so vulnerable and delicate so it's easy to dismantle. The process needs to be kept insular and safe where this group of people are just yes-anding each other to the moon to get where you're going. I've seen and had it done to me where some people have this kind of tough love idea like 'Oh, that sucks.' It can be a bit of a male thing, I've noticed, to come in like a bull in a chinashop; to lay down the law as to why one thing works and another doesn't. That's not how great records are made and it's how artists get confused. This isn't to say that that happens more at major or indie labels, but in my experience, any way that you can break your world down to preserve that vision, put the blinders on and do what you're going to do is a win. For Bleachers, that was a thousand percent an indie label."

INFLUENCES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF HOPE

Virtually every artist is influenced by other creatives, in small ways or large. The work of '80s film writer and director John Hughes—who gave us *The Breakfast Club*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* and *Weird Science*, among others—is what's resonated in particular with Antonoff. "I don't know what it is about his films, but they speak to me on every level," the producer observes. "He never forgot the hope. The thing I get from Hughes is why I always go back to Springsteen and in a different way to Joni [Mitchell] or OutKast. These artists never give up on that hope. It comes from a core belief that you can't make art cynically. You can use it as a tool and as a path. But making a record is such a hopeful act that anytime cynicism is introduced, it automatically feels like a tool to get to the hope. My favorite stuff is when artists like John Hughes put that right on display."

BROADWAY AND APPLE TV+

Antonoff wrote the original music for a new version of *Romeo and Juliet* that will debut on Broadway this fall and produced the soundtrack for the Apple TV+ series *The New Look*. The show includes covers of World-War-II-era songs from Florence & the Machine, Lana Del Rey and Nick Cave, among others. "One thing that's nice about having different projects going is that I work on them when they call [to] me," he explains. "With *The New Look*, I made that over the course of about a year. It felt like this inspired island I'd go to. I was working on *Bleachers* at that time as well as both Taylor and Lana's

records. I'd take two days and orchestrate a song around Nick Cave's vocal, which was a totally different and beautiful experience. I've noticed that's a way to keep myself sharp: to have widely different things happening. It was the same with *Romeo and Juliet*. That sounds like nothing else I'm doing and it's a different experience where the music was front and center. It invigorates me and I love to push myself in different directions because new parts of me open up. I think people imagine my life to be more scheduled than it is. Usually I create a lot of space for myself to go in different directions, depending on how I feel."

CREATING DESPITE FATIGUE

Much of Bleachers' first record, 2014's *Strange Desire*, was written by Antonoff while he was on tour with his previous band Fun. "Being on the road is funny because it's stimulating and you're filled with so many ideas," he notes. "But you're also tired so I always have this emotional wrestling match with myself. I'm exhausted and I want to relax, but I'm also drawn to create. I get so much done on tour from a conceptual level. I ended up writing a lot of lyrics or having multiple ideas of what I want things to be. But then I'll just sketch them out in a hotel room and then get really excited to go into a studio and figure out what I'm doing."

SADNESS, LOSS AND EXPRESSING INDIVIDUALITY

Songs such as "I Wanna Get Better," "Everybody Lost Somebody" and perhaps even the entire record *Take the Sadness Out of Saturday Night* (or, arguably, at least the title) draw from sadness, loss and other such cover-charges that life exacts. "It's something I think about often because it's weird," the producer says. "Writing songs is a lot like being at a dinner table and telling everyone some deep truth about yourself. And if you're there with 10 people, maybe eight are like, 'What?' And then two people are like, 'Yes, yes! Me too! I also can't sleep unless I imagine myself naked on a cloud' or whatever it is. So you just write what you write the same way you think what you think. Then you put it out into the world and that's when you realize a lot about yourself. For example, I remember when *Strange Desire* was released, hearing it through other people's ears and realizing, 'Oh, wow. Some of these songs are really sad.' My life is just my life, so within the context of my sadness, there's a lot of joy and there's everything else. And then just like that dinner table, you find the people who get you and that's your audience. But they tell you a lot about yourself. It's not horribly different than the experience of therapy: you are what you are and you think what you think. When you start saying it out loud, it hits differently and you realize what it means. In many ways, that's the core of what a relationship with an audience is. It's a conversation. Hopefully, the artist is doing that for them. But damn, I'm definitely getting that from them.

"It's the same way that people can tell when a person is being honest," he goes on to say. "Dishonesty or pandering just doesn't work and not even in a way where people are conscious of it; not in a way where they're saying, 'I don't like that, it doesn't feel honest.' When something's honest, it can be about anything. It draws people in. It's why I'm remarkably

unthreatened by the A.I. conversation. I'm deeply threatened from a cultural point of view about what could happen, but when it comes to the conversation about writing music and faking things like that, I believe in this sixth sense in people where they feel something and they feel the communication from the artist. No matter how it's dressed up, those are all just ways to get to this place. It's not like five percent of that's good, 80 percent is good. It's a hundred percent or nothing; it's real or it isn't. That's how I feel and I haven't been proven wrong yet."

THE INTROVERTED PERFORMER

Rising comedian Tamale Sepp once said "Don't presume that just because someone's a performer that they're also an extrovert." Antonoff is a self-described introvert, but, perhaps paradoxically, the stage is where he feels most comfortable and at home. "It's always been a place where I've been able to completely cut loose and be absolutely transparent in my emotions or where I am with my life," he observes. "Sometimes I feel it's easier to speak to a crowd than to one person. I feel a release. I think that's a trait that a lot of songwriters and performers have. But I'm really introverted in public. I don't mind playing a song with Taylor at Wembley. I'm eager to do it. [But] if I was at a birthday party and someone said 'Jack, go play a song,' I think there's a chance I would explode. Quite literally, that's my worst nightmare and I can't explain why I feel that way. I think it's because it's in my soul to connect with people in this big, broad way, which I've become good at, but also may have stunted the part of me that would connect with someone in a very simple way."

A TROVE OF GRAMMYS

When it comes to his staggering 11-Grammy audio ascendancy, the artist and producer can scarcely grasp the feat himself. "Imagine me being like nine or 10 years old in New Jersey playing guitar and wanting to have a life in music," he muses. "Then jump-cutting to an interview where someone says that I've won 11 Grammys. I'm a kid producing records for my friends and it cuts to that moment in the interview. That's a crazy statement."

HEADING FOR HOME

Bleachers will wind up its 2024 tour with a hometown show at N.Y.C.'s fabled Madison Square Garden, less than two miles from the comfort of Electric Lady. Indeed, it'll be the band's first time to take the stage at the venerable venue. Once the tour is wrapped, the in-demand producer will then dive deep back into the studio... presumably after a good night's sleep at home. "I don't think when I have these big things coming up," Antonoff admits. "I just kind of stay in my zone. I'm working on some music right now, but I won't say what it is. It might sound funny coming from me, but I keep my head down and keep doing what I do."

With the devotion to his craft, the ever-widening scope of his work and his nearly uncanny ability to create sonic soul-stirrers, it seems inevitable that Antonoff will soon need to add another tier to his Grammy shelf.



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STARCK®

Video Game Composers Discussion 2024

BY ANDY KAUFMANN

CREATING MUSIC FOR VIDEO GAMES is becoming more and more popular. It's no wonder, as interactive entertainment continues to evolve in unique and wondrous ways. *MC* chatted with five leading figures in this cutting-edge space. Their insights shed invaluable light onto one of the most exciting disciplines in the industry.

Inon Zur

Web: inonzur.com

Recent Works: *Fallout*, *Starfield*, *PUBG*, *Fantasia: Music Evolved*

What makes composing for video games a satisfying career path?

The most substantial one is the creative process. Unlike composing for film or TV, there is freedom in composing music for



games, since you don't need to be locked to any picture. That allows you to create a more traditional composition with a proper introduction and thematic material. The second thing is the fans are music enthusiasts. They are really vocal when it comes to the music. It matters for them. And to get a response from so many is satisfying.

Do you have advice for people trying to break into video game composition?

It starts from mainly two components. The first and most important is hard work. You need to bring yourself to a level that you can deliver. Train by listening, writing, and talking to people. The second thing is even more important: who you know. It all starts from somebody that trusts you. Don't send demos to tons of people. That's not going to get you anywhere. Find one person that you can do the job with. Almost all the people I know, including myself, started by somebody vouching for them. When you're looking for a contractor, plumber or electrician, are you going to go to the Yellow Pages? Or are you going to ask your neighbor, "Do you know somebody?"

How do composers train their brains to create music for interactive content?

It starts from knowing music in-depth. Then, it is about the narrative. It's about the story and message you want to tell. This is something you want to discuss with the game's creator. How can you find something that will be the signature, the thing that everybody will tell you, "This is *Starfield*," or "This is *Fallout*," from the second they hear it?

What are your thoughts on the current state of the game industry? How is video game composition going to change?

Today, the biggest composers are writing music for games. Now, where it's going, it's all about the culture. Music is always answering the call of the people, but also sometimes seeing the future. The artistic part is going to develop by demand. Meaning, the tastes of people are changing. And if the people like [a certain] direction, then it will gravitate to this field.

However, there's another component: A.I. For certain types of content, computers are able to do a great job. It reminds me of 25 years ago, when people asked, "Are samplers going to replace live instruments?" Samplers and electronic music definitely replaced some, but it did not replace a lot of this industry. The same thing is for A.I. Yes, it will create a new component. Will it replace the live composer? I don't think so.

Is there anything else you want our readers to know?

I've been working on *Starfield* from 2016, so I've been working on that score for seven years. That shows you the amount of planning, thought, energy, and creativity being injected in one score. We take what we do seriously. It's not about, "Here's a picture. Let's give it some musical framing." It's about telling the story on an emotional level. It's helping elevate what gamers are experiencing.

Tom Salta

Web: tomsalta.com

Recent Works: *Deathloop*, *Wolfenstein*, *The Outlast Trials*, *Halo*

What makes composing for video games a satisfying career path?

For me, it comes from an authentic love of video games. A lot of people love film or other things. I'm a big gamer. So to spend my days [being] part of the creative process, it brings out my talents, skills, and child-like passions.

Where did your gaming life begin?

My first console was the Atari 2600 in 1981, but I was gaming before that existed. I was gaming on the Apple IIe. I remember the stand-up games in the '70s. If I walked into a hotel or restaurant and they had *Asteroids* or *Space Invaders*, I was in heaven.

Do you have advice for people trying to break into video game composition?

It's about making relationships and connections. There's something special about the video game industry. There's a kind of camaraderie, even amongst competitors.

First of all, ask yourself why. Make sure it's an authentic desire, as opposed to falling in love with the romanticized idea of fortune and glory, which is not what it's about. Then, surround yourself with people who are doing it. Attend conferences like GameSoundCon and Game Developers Conference [GDC]. I hope to launch one in Puerto Rico. Meet everybody, and become part of this growing industry.

How do composers train their brains to create music for interactive content?

The thing about creating music for games is it's a balance between the analytical side and the creative side, I'd argue much more than other mediums. You have to create great music. At the same time, you have to think about the strategy. How is it going to connect to other pieces? Is it going to be a multi-layered piece? Is it going to loop? You have to consider the implementation, as opposed to linear media.

What are your thoughts on the current state of the game industry? How is video game composition going to change?

There is more and more focus on the music itself, rather than the technical limitations. I marvel at the early days. On the Nintendo 64, it's remarkable how they were able to get it to sound so incredible with so little. There



were no recordings in those games. They were all triggered MIDIs of the synth sounds or sample blocks in the cartridges. I dealt with some things like that early in my game career, but now I never have to. It's going to free composers and audio directors to fully realize their dreams.

In a way, it's too much choice. Developers had to create something that worked and

that's all they could focus on. Now, there's the temptation to go down alleyways that can be dead ends.

That's a good point. Creativity comes through limitations and setting boundaries. Think of how creative the guy who created *Pac-Man* was. Where do you come up with that? That said, I don't have to compress things to the point where it harms the quality. I remember my Amiga 500. I loved the music in *Shadow of the Beast*, but you'd hear the dithered sound of the low sample rate. Yet having limitless possibilities is often not a good thing. Any creator should learn how to set boundaries.

Is there anything else you want to throw out there?

Another thing that attracts me to games is the pure variety. I'm working on [the DLC for] *The Outlast Trials*, which is an intensely scary horror game. And the last major score before that was *Deathloop*, which is a kind of jazzy, unique sound. I'd never done anything like that before. That's one of the things I love the most and why I transitioned out of purely focusing on records. Video game music is so liberating. I'm doing fully finished songs for games like *Just Dance*. I still work in records. I still do trailers. I'm putting a stage show together right now. I do all kinds of things. It keeps the creative gears oiled.

Wilbert Roget II

Web: rogetmusic.com

Recent Works: *Helldivers 2*, *Call of Duty: WWII*, *Star Wars: Outlaws*, *Mortal Kombat*

What makes composing for video games a satisfying career path?

There's so much diversity. Pretty much any kind of composer, regardless of genre, can find a place in game scoring. I've worked with musicians around the world, many of



them playing the traditional instruments of Greece and the Middle East, Northern Europe, Scandinavia, Brazil... Eastern Asia, especially. It's been great to collaborate with different musicians and solve different problems than you would on a film score.

Do you have advice for people trying to break into video game composition?

There are a lot of different avenues. The most important thing is to accumulate a friend group of people that you jive with. They're motivated and talented. And they're also in the industry or trying to get into the industry, from different backgrounds and disciplines but especially fellow musicians and audio professionals.

As time goes on, everyone's career rises. It's like a rising tide. One person's career rising could mean your career rising. Maybe they'll help you get your first gig. I'm friends with a sound designer. We worked together on an indie project, and eventually he was hired at LucasArts. They were looking for a music editor and he recommended me. That kind of started the AAA blockbuster side of my career. I wouldn't have had that opportunity otherwise. The important part is that I was a real friend with him. It was a real connection, rather than just, "Here's my business card." It's those connections that keep you in the minds of people in a position to hire.

How do composers train their brains to create music for interactive content?

Find a piece of music in a style you want to learn and transcribe it by ear. That trains you in not only what the composer did but also why they did it that way. This has been a style of teaching music for centuries. It's hard at first, but you'll get better as time goes on. The benefits will be astronomical.

Writing linear music is arithmetic. Writing for games is like algebra, sometimes calculus. There are these variables you have to take into account. The trick is to be so fluent with your style that you can at any point say, "In this section, I have to be able to extract it. Maybe I could loop it or substitute one instrument for another or abstract it into different layers." If the player is in a certain type of low intensity, it can still work as a piece of music with only this layer. But if the intensity increases, we add more layers. Or different pieces of music altogether, but they have a similar timing and harmonic rhythm. It comes with practice, but it's just that style of conceptualizing music in the abstract, rather than only thinking about getting from point A to point B.

Is there any difference in composing for VR as opposed to flat games?

It depends on the project. There are some projects where the developer says, "We want to make sure everything is localized and 3D." So the music would have to come from a radio or something that exists in world. There are some projects where they want the music to be not necessarily spacial but multi-channel, so you would have to mix it in 5.1 or whatever. Even in [Dolby] Atmos.

In *Star Wars: Vader Immortal's* case, I wrote in stereo and then we up-mixed it to quad. It wasn't a linear score, because you obviously had interactivity. But it was very scripted and

not an adaptive score. At any point where the player would have some interactive bit, I would say, "This section has to be loopable." And then it would transition into the next section and the next. I somewhat linearly scored my way through the whole game with different chunks being either a loop or a section.

What are your thoughts on the current state of the game industry? How is video game composition going to change?

We started off with the chip era and then samples came in. They were heavily compressed and that led to one kind of sound. But then on PlayStation 1, we had Red Book audio and you could have live bands, even



live orchestras. From then on, the floodgates were open. You could put anything into a game. It became a matter of what kind of vibe developers were trying to bring.

And there are trends. When we went from PS2 to PS3, we started to get a lot of film composers interested in scoring for games. As a result, it became a lot about authenticity and fidelity. As we went through PS4, it was more about, "How do we get a new genre? How do we blend styles?" *Death Stranding* was one of my favorites on PS4. On that title, they were trying to invent a new sound. Small orchestras and string quartets became quite popular around then.

With the PS5 era, the orchestra is kind of coming back, which surprises me. I was shocked by how well-received the *Helldivers 2* score was. I thought, "I love writing orchestral music. There might not be a place for it anymore, but let's give it the old college try." Lo and behold, it became probably the most popular thing I've written. We haven't quite had a specific identity for what PlayStation 5 era music is, because everything is now acceptable.

I think the floodgates are opening even further. I hope we start embracing more diversity. I'm a

huge fan of Jongnic Bontemps's score to *Redfall*, because he combined traditional orchestra with hip-hop. That was brilliant.

Mikolai Stroinski

Web: mikolaistroinski.com

Recent Works: *The Witcher, League of Legends, Age of Empires 4, Diablo Immortal*

What makes composing for video games a satisfying career path?

From a personal view, my passion is music. I love composing and producing music. Video games, more than movies and television, gives me an opportunity to create interesting music. I've composed for games like *The Witcher 3*, *Metamorphosis* and recently *Nobody Wants to Die*. Those projects gave me this possibility of composing music I find interesting.

From a broader point of view, it's the sense of contributing to people's joy of playing the game, of immersing them into the world. Music makes it so much more magical. It's that feeling that the experience of playing the game will be that much [more pleasurable] if my music works. That gives me wings to continue.

Do you have advice for people trying to break into video game composition?

My breakthrough year was 2012, and *The Witcher* happened 2015 or 2016. You have to agree, 2024 is way different than those days. On one hand, technology makes it easier to produce something worthy. But because of that, everybody wants to do it. Therefore, the competition is fierce.

However, there's a place for quality content. There are a lot of people trying to cut through, but not many doing something unique, something outstanding. Now more than ever, there's a need for that. People are hungry for something special. Detach yourself from social media, cell phones, all that noise, and continue on the art of music. Find a way of telling a story or making the experience of playing the game that much more special.

What I love about this work is it forces you to work on yourself as a human being. To climb the ladder, you have to present yourself as a worthy human being. You have to work on your people skills, character, content within yourself, what you express as a human being, not necessarily an artist. Listen to John Williams. His music is outstanding.

How do composers train their brains to create music for interactive content?

It's about feeling the game. As a composer, you have to develop your relationship with the game and let it speak with your music. I compare it to going on a date. I guess there is a method of preparing 20 questions you're going to ask, but the better method is to subconsciously feel the person, what her or his needs are and where you can help. You've got to work on feeling, in a way. And then there's understanding how middleware works, programs like Wwise or FMOD.

What are your thoughts on the current state of the game industry? How is video game composition going to change?

Part of the problem is oversaturation of safe choices, of certain series repeating themselves. And the safe route might turn out to be not so safe, because there's too much of the same thing. The problem is also in getting the money to produce games. Money has become more expensive to borrow.

It's scary how many games are being thrown on the table every single day. How do you [distinguish] yourself? Being original and doing something that resonates.

Something that has and will be going on is building more interactive scores. That's where a lot of focus is. The problem with building a more interactive score is you have to compose in a more modular way. You have to compose from those moving cells. At any given time, when the game asks the middleware to change the music, it has to change, if not instantly then almost instantly. So composers have to create modular music, but that can create something that is disjointed. It's a challenge to compose something artistically viable in parts.

Luci Holland

Web: luciholland.com

Recent Works: *Sleep Thorn, Venture's Gauntlet VR, Fluyo*

What makes composing for video games a satisfying career path?

I have always been inspired by the potential for a player to impact a game and have a different experience from somebody else. For me, that's where music can really shine. It can really enhance the whole experience.

Are you Scottish?

Yes, I'm based in Edinburgh.

Scotland is at the forefront of technology merging with creativity.

Certainly. It's got a vast and creative community working not just in game environments but also lots of fringe, experimental pockets. It's really varied.

Do you have advice for people trying to break into video game composition?

A few things are key. Playing games is number one. Get to know your medium and the variety of that world. Meet people. Look for events and groups in your area, as well as online communities. Free jobs are a great way to put your craft into practice. That's one of the things I was doing 10 years ago. It's a great way to get to know practitioners in other fields that make games, like programmers, developers and artists. And it's a good way to learn the terminology, techniques and processes that people use.

Also, network with relationships in mind, rather than work or career. Make friends and take a real interest in what others are making. Not only does that fulfill you creatively, but you might find some new friendships and that could lead to something in the future.

How do composers train their brains to create music for interactive content?

Stay creatively curious and up-to-date. I play

lots of games and pay attention to the music, how it's integrated into the game. I listen for techniques that surprise and interest me. I want to figure out how they've done that. It's like breaking something apart and then putting it back together again.

Follow composers online and engage with what they have to say. It's also important to flex your compositional muscles. I listen to a vast array of musical styles, find what excites me creatively, and use those as inspirations in my own music.

I'm constantly trying new things, both in and outside games music. For example, I dabble in interactive audio-visual installations. I might use creative technology like microcontrollers and sensors to invite people into interesting sonic experiences.

What are your thoughts on the current state of the game industry? How is video game composition going to change?

Music is becoming more and more integral to games. What tends to be a barrier are the studio's restrictions—how much time, budget or space they have.

I've worked in the indie space more than anything. More and more, I'm being brought on early in the process. Developers are going to their potential funders or publishers and saying, "Not only do we have this working demo with concept art and narrative journey, but we also have these key musical moments." So they can translate the atmosphere more easily.



Recently, I heard some amazing talks, including one by Jakob Schmid. He worked on *Cocoon* and did an in-depth analysis of the real-time synthesis that he used to generate most of the music.

Contact Greg O'Connor-Read
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Arturia KeyLab mk3

Arturia's KeyLab mk3 is a professional, human-centered performance keyboard that has all the benefits of a fully featured MIDI controller. The KeyLab mk3 is class-compliant and capable of harnessing the power of practically any software instrument or DAW including Arturia's Analog Lab Pro and V Collection software plugins. Arturia's KeyLab mk3 has been designed to have full integration with Ableton Live, Bitwig Studio, Cubase, FL Studio, and Logic Pro as well as has basic volume, panning and transport control functionality for many other popular DAWs.

Arturia's KeyLab mk3 has been designed to enhance your workflow so you can spend less time using computer peripherals and focus on creating music. The KeyLab mk3 integrates seamlessly with Arturia's Analog Lab software, placing over 2,000 presets from a large number of instruments at your fingertips. Fast sorting of Analog Lab presets is available to help you find the sound you are looking for quickly.

The KeyLab mk3 has MIDI-assignable encoders, nine faders, (all customizable) which are pre-configured to work with Analog Lab software instruments are touch-sensitive and also 'pre-configured' for DAWs. The 12 backlit RGB Pads are velocity and pressure sensitive.

The Arturia KeyLab mk3 is currently available in 49 or 61 semi-weighted keys with velocity- and pressure-sensitivity (polyphonic aftertouch). An 88 version of the KeyLab mk3 is currently under development. The Arturia KeyLab mk3 features a new high-quality synth-action feel Keybed that is perfect for piano and hybrid synth playing and is among the best Keybeds I have ever played on a MIDI keyboard controller.

The KeyLab mk3 features professional grade build quality, including upgraded beechwood side panels and a brand new full-color screen. The KeyLab mk3 features extensive on board controls and has three primary modes of operation DAW, Arturia and User. The DAW mode lets you control your Digital Audio Workstation directly from KeyLab mk3. The KeyLab mk3's Arturia mode where you can control plugins such as Arturia's V Collection instruments. The User mode lets you customize your KeyLab mk3 to control virtually any MIDI parameter or control change.

The KeyLab mk3 will adapt its behavior to streamline your workflow depending on

whether you want to control your DAW or Arturia plugins. Thanks to the KeyLab mk3's new color screen, you can browse through Analog Pro presets and filter by type, instruments, or genre. You can also control, browse, and arm your Arturia V collections plugins as well as launch clips and scenes, navigate the timeline, and control external devices within all DAW's. Full transport functionality for supported DAW's includes Play, Record, Stop, Save Quantize, Undo, Redo as well as forward, backward, metronome, and Tap tempo functions.

Other notable features on the KeyLab mk3 include a cumulative chords function, a new scale mode that is accessible using only one finger, as well as the ability to play chords that

the KeyLab mk3 is powered by an optional power supply. The MIDI In connection port can receive MIDI data from external devices, and also serves as a MIDI/USB converter for your DAW if that is how you plan to connect to your computer.

On the KeyLab mk3, Arturia removed the silkscreen labels found on the KeyLab mk2. Arturia compensated for the fact by adding haptic enabled dynamic pop-ups that will show you what you are controlling i.e., when you move the faders, turn the rotary encoders.

Arturia's KeyLab mk3 comes with a generous selection of added value software including a full license to Arturia's flagship Analog Lab Pro software instrument and a variety of composition and performance oriented Arturia plug

ins and software instruments. You also get a selection of partner licenses (Ableton Live Lite, Native Instruments The Gentleman, Melodics and Loopcloud).

One thing I do need to point out: I'm a Pro Tools user and yes, while on the KeyLab mk3 Arturia has followed the HUI MCU protocol and included basic transport controls and standard volume, panning and fader capability, a lot of functionality including mute, solo, the ability to switch between Mix and Edit screens on the fly has not been carried over from the KeyLab mk2 to the KeyLab

mk3. Yes, I think a lot of people are going to be sold on the upgraded Keybed and the KeyLab mk3's extensive feature set, but a percentage of Pro Tools users are going to have a moment of pause when they see what the overall trade-offs are relative to the currently marketed Arturia KeyLab mk2.

So, is upgrading from the Arturia's KeyLab mk2 to the KeyLab mk3 worth it? If you are currently the owner of an Arturia KeyLab mk2, the single biggest reason to upgrade I can see is the newly redesigned Keybed, which is, as far as my experience anyway, truly best in class. More to the point, if you have the experience and knowledge to program your own MIDI parameters and control changes, the Arturia KeyLab mk3 User mode offers all the sophistication, flexibility, and creative controls most users could wish for and could be just what you're looking for in a professional grade MIDI Keyboard controller that's as much at home on stage as it is in the studio.

Arturia's KeyLab mk3 is available now. Find out more at arturia.com.



can be held and quantized to a user defined scale. The KeyLab mk3 features a new Arpeggiator which includes random mode and chord mode with preset and user chords plus strumming DAWs. The 12 Performance Pads on the KeyLab mk3 can be used to trigger samples within your DAW, play chords on software/hardware instruments, and/or send all sorts of MIDI data including aftertouch (the pads are pressure-sensitive). Each pad can have a different setting within each mode.

The back of the KeyLab mk3 has Aux, Expression and Sustain Pedal inputs ports. Any pedal can be assigned to any MIDI CC number or tasks like Program Change, note commands, and other static or switched controls. The KeyLab mk3's Expression port is primarily for use with a continuously variable pedal and sustain primarily for triggering MIDI on/off changes. The KeyLab MK III can be powered solely via USB, or you can use an optional power supply.

The KeyLab mk3's MIDI Out port will send USB/MIDI data to external devices, and it can also do so without a computer when

IK Multimedia iLoud Precision 6 Reference Monitors

IK Multimedia's iLoud Precision 6 are professional grade two way reference monitors designed to compete with speakers costing twice the price, if not more. The iLoud Precision series reference monitors are available in Five inch, Six inch and MTM configurations. All of the monitors in the iLoud Precision series are hand crafted in Italy and are individually calibrated within 0.5 dB tolerance before they leave the factory. The speakers are sold individually so you can equip a home project studio, all the up to larger immersive audio installations. The iLoud Precision 6 reference monitors, as tested here, are in the middle of the range and are made of a solid composite material. High attention to detail and quality construction is immediately evident as soon as you take them out of the box.

The iLoud Precision 6 features an advanced 96K internal DSP system, digital crossover, and has custom designed audiophile amplifiers to deliver a true linear phase response. This allows the speakers to have precise stereo imaging, sharp transients, solid bass, and exceptional clarity and detail across their entire frequency range. Overall, in my opinion the IK Multimedia Precision 6 sound reference monitors sound a lot bigger than they physically are.

The iLoud Precision 6 features a 1.5-inch tweeter and is powered by a 150-watt class D amplifier, whereas the larger MTMs are rated at 175 watts. The Precision 6 monitors feature an ultra-light coated paper 6.5 inch low distortion woofer, and a 1.5-inch high output low distortion chambered textile dome tweeter. The iLoud Precision 6 monitors are bass ported. Both the Precision 6 and MTM speakers have a frequency response from thirty-six hertz all the way up to 30K, meaning for most styles of music you won't need a subwoofer. The main input on the back of the speaker is an XLR combo jack which accepts balanced quarter-inch or XLR inputs. Internal operating sample rate is 96K at 24 bits.

The back of each speaker has a Level control and preset buttons for changing the high and low frequency response of the speaker. There's also a calibration button, which when pressed, starts the ARC calibration (acoustic room calibration) process running

through a series of test calibration tones. There is an input for the ARC test calibration microphone (each speaker in the iLoud range include an ARC test microphone in the box) and a USB input for connecting to free with registration X-Monitor desktop virtual monitoring software. Each speaker comes with a set of acoustic decoupling pads to decouple them from your desktop or monitor stands. An optional four button remote control can be plugged into the back of the speaker.

among four main voices precision, comfort, high frequency presence and wide dispersion. Precision is the most neutral, transparent, and precise one comfort, which is a curve that is great for long sessions because it has a less fatiguing character to it, while still being extremely focused and very precise high frequency presence Wide dispersion is a specific voice that increases the vertical dispersion of the monitors by approximately 20 degrees vertically and makes the monitors slightly less flat and precise, but with a lot wider dispersion.

In addition to the main four voices, the X-Monitor software gives you the option to select from three groups of additional voices. The first group of voices is called studio monitors, which includes 20+ iconic studio monitors profiles. This is a great tool for getting different perspectives on the sound, exactly as if you were using more than one pair of speakers at a time on your console. In addition to studio monitors, you also get a selection of hi-fi speakers. These are less neutral than studio monitors and provide the typical experience of a high quality home system, plus you also get a few entries in the multimedia section that include a standard TV, Bluetooth speakers and a smartphone.



Like all of the Precision studio monitor range, the Precision 6 reference monitors have IK Multimedia's ARC Advanced Room Correction software system built in. Once connected to your computer, the free downloadable X-Monitor software facilitates the ARC calibration process with step-by-step instructions and provides visual feedback as you go through the calibration process. The ARC system allows you to precisely calibrate each speaker's settings to your specific listening space whether that is a bedroom or a professionally treated control room, the calibration curves of which are then stored to each speaker be recalled or bypassed.

Once the calibration process is completed, the X-Monitor software displays your speaker's frequency response curve pre and post calibration, green showing the frequency response that the monitor had in your room before the correction, orange displays the frequency response after the correction.

The X-Monitor software lets you choose from

Each of the speaker simulations takes into account frequency and phase response, making this an especially useful tool for A-B comparisons and for having different perspectives on your mixes. The X-Monitor software also has a contour section that extends the sonic contour capabilities and fine tune the voices to your particular room.

With the iLoud Precision 6 monitors, IK Multimedia has designed a true reference-grade nearfield reference monitor at a realistic price point. For what they cost, it's unlikely you will find a currently available reference monitor that's likely to make such a positive difference in your daily mixes and overall critical listening experience, and the free X-Monitor software exponentially expands the iLoud Precision 6 monitors capabilities.

Well worth checking out and a solid bargain for what you're getting.

IK Multimedia Precision 6 reference monitors are available now for \$699 each.

Find out more at ikmultimedia.com.

Rodger Cloud, Cloud Microphones

Rodger Cloud became passionate about ribbon microphones in his youth. That love eventually blossomed into manufacturing and selling his versions of these classic mics. Cloud Microphones also offers Cloudfilters, standalone Mic Activators that add gain and sensitivity to virtually any recording setup. To this day, the founder and CEO performs and records with his band, CloudPainter.

How does being a musician impact your ability to run Cloud Microphones?

It helps me relate to our customers. I think about those days when I was trying to accomplish something with equipment that was inexpensive. And when I discovered ribbon microphones, I thought, "This is what I've been looking for."

I was working with Stephen Sank, who has a restoration business. What I came up with was—why don't I buy some broken ribbon microphones, fix some, sell some, and keep some? We had a pretty good eBay business going. That allowed me to outfit my studio with great microphones.

The first time I heard a ribbon microphone, there was a sea of hiss. We started modifying preamps so the first gain stages were really nice. You got a good, clean sound right off the front. We ended up modifying the board I was using and getting even more gain. That led to the Cloudfilter. It was just a circuit we wanted to put inside our microphones. We put it in a box to test it and went, "Wow, this is cool."

Can you put in layman's terms how the Cloudfilter works?

The Cloudfilter is a way to modify your preamp to give an initial gain stage without going through components that might degrade the sound. The way we configure them phases out a lot of noise that might creep in. You end up with more of the microphone's natural character and less of the alterations that occur as you reach the upper gain range of your preamp.

You offer a number of different Cloudfilters. How do people decide which is right for them?

It depends what you're looking for. All Cloudfilters give you more of the microphone and a more stunning signal. Some models offer multi-channels. The CL-X is our newest. It incorporates an input transformer that we've custom designed with CineMag. I love it, because it sounds modern. It has some character but without coloring [the sound.] I make a distinction between character and

colorization, because colorization could mean changing the frequency response. But character is about texture, how the signal sits and the roundness of it. This transformer doesn't change your frequency response in the way a "colorful" circuit might, but it gives you that robust sound.

Talk about the Cloudfilter Z.

The CL-Z gives the ability to change the impedance load of the input of the microphone. A lot of people are intimidated by impedance. It's a tricky thing to get your head around. But the Z is made to be intuitive. Just

magnetic structure has to be tight. With modern magnetics, you're able to get more wiggle room. This allows more space for the ribbon to move without the danger of it becoming damaged.

We have a local radio station, KXCI in Tucson. They use a Cloud Ribbon microphone in their studio for capturing performers. At some point, their microphone fell, and they wanted us to check it out. We opened it up, and it was fine, even though it had fallen about eight feet. They're a lot more robust than people imagine.

There are other myths around what you can record with them. I use them a lot on drum overheads and as drum room mics. Occasionally, I'll have them outside the kick. It's about placement and using the off-axis response. If you've got a heavy pressure sound wave, you don't want that pressure wave to go through the middle of the ribbon. If you put it off axis a bit, it allows the pressure to go by the ribbon.

They also have a reputation of being dark-sounding. The early RCA microphones weren't particularly dark. If you listen to the recordings of the 1940s and '50s, there's a lot of clarity. If you take that technology into the modern era, you get a unique sound that stands out because it

has more detail in the mid-range and realism with the way it sits in the speakers.

What problems are new Cloud mics trying to address?

One of the things we're continuing to do is make microphones that are good for vocalists. We design our microphones to be incredibly open. We've limited the reflections inside in such a way it gives you more of the natural sound.

And with our Cloud 44-A, we've incorporated a voice switch. When you go into voice mode, it instantly tames the low frequency that can get in the way when you're too close. It opens up the microphone so it can be used for singers, even hip-hop and rap. We've had a lot of success with modern artists using Cloud Ribbon microphones.

For an overly sibilant voice, this is a great alternative. It always sits in the mix exactly like you want. A condenser microphone can be so in-your-face. The wrong voice on that microphone accentuates things you might not want. And then you're there with plug-ins, trying to run it through tube compressors or whatever to tame that. But the Cloud 44 can capture all that perfectly so you need very little in post.

cloudmicrophones.com



turn the knob until you like the sound. The Z interface allows you to get more of a mid-range sound by going to low impedance, or a fuller, more aggressive sound by going higher. We also have the CL-Zi, which allows you to use an instrument and take advantage of the tonal shape and capabilities of the Z interface.

What efforts do you make to be environmentally friendly?

Our circuit boards are all made on the Navajo reservation in northern Arizona. We try to keep everything in the United States. That allows us to visit our suppliers if there are issues. It also helps the community and keeps the revenue we generate primarily in the United States. And we do smaller things, like using compostable peanuts in our shipping.

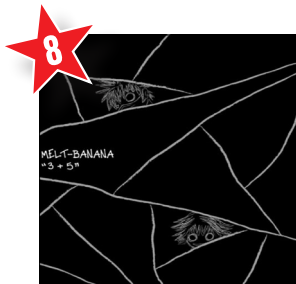
What are some of the myths and misconceptions about ribbon mics?

There are a lot of fears around damaging a ribbon microphone. Certainly, older ribbon microphones are more susceptible. Cloud Ribbon microphones are more robust. Even though the ribbon itself is unchanged, everything around it has been modernized. With older ribbon microphones, the distance between the edge of the ribbon and the

Melt Banana

3+5
Label: A-Zap
Producers: Melt Banana

Tokyo-based project Melt Banana have long had a gift for disguising the most intensely sweet melodies under the gnarliest of noises. It makes for multifaceted listening experience, and even gives you whiplash, but ultimately it's incredibly rewarding. 3+5 is their ninth studio album, and it continues the trend for high-pitched vocals and noise-rock. They've opened for Napalm Death and the Melvins, which hints at their ferocity. But make no mistake—tunes like "Code" and "Puzzle" are undeniable. **- Brett Callwood**



Steve Hunter

The Deacon Speaks
Deacon Records
Producer: Steve Hunter

Alice Cooper, Lou Reed and Mitch Ryder are just a few of the musical luminaries that have relied on his guitar prowess. Hunter's been one of the hired guns that has provided the secret sauce for their star maker machinery. Now he's front and center, serving up, not only soul-stirring axe work, but scintillating and resonant vocals as well. His takes on traditional tunes like "Back Door Man" and his own "Tiresome Blues" are spot on. And Reed's "Sweet Jane" gets a fresh and revelatory arrangement. **- Eric Harabadian**



MC5

Heavy Lifting
earMUSIC
Producer: Bob Ezrin

It's 53 years since proto-punkers MC5 released anything. Now, on the eve of their induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, they're back with one final provocation. Tracks like "The Edge Of The Switchblade," and "Boys Who Play With Matches" are as polemical and explosive as ever. Founding member Wayne Kramer didn't survive to see the project through, so it's fitting that players who credit them as an influence, including Slash, Vernon Reid, and Tom Morello, helped finish the album. **- Andy Kaufmann**



Tzuyu

aboutTZY
JYP Entertainment/Republic Records/IMPERIAL
Producers: Various

Tzuyu makes an impressive debut with her first mini-album *aboutTZY*. As the youngest member of the K-pop supergroup TWICE, Tzuyu's has a lot riding on this album and she does not disappoint. The six-track album showcases Tzuyu's sweet melodic vocals and ambitious versatility. Standout tracks include the fast-paced and fun personality-filled track "Lazy Baby (Feat. pH-1)" and the whispery inspirational ballad "Fly." The album features strong pop hooks that get stuck in your head. **- Jacqueline Naranjo**



Benjamin Croft

We Are Here to Help
Galactic Receiver Music
Producer: Benjamin Croft

A British keyboardist/composer/producer, Croft has gathered some of the finest contemporary jazz, rock and fusion players for a sort of old school prog rock extravaganza. If you're a fan of Dream Theater, David Sancious, Spocks Beard and the like this needs to be on your radar. Leaning on the rock side, "The Age of Magrathea" and the title track hit you with a no holds barred assault. Jazzers like "You Made Me Miss," with guest guitarist Mike Stern, are beautifully constructed and tastefully sublime. **- Eric Harabadian**



Fontaines D.C.

Romance
Wild XL Recordings
Producer: James Ford

If the infectious lead single "Starburster" from Dublin-born, London-based alt-rockers Fontaines D.C. hasn't already been stuck in your heads, wait until the full-length. The album does fall prey to not living up to the sum of all its parts, and includes a few too many mildly monotonous lo-fi acoustic ballads. Blur, Arctic Monkeys (tourmates) and even The Cure are influences, though we'd love to hear the group lean more into the '90s-Euro-Trip-Hop sound (White Town, The Prodigy). **- Joseph Maltese**



Skilla Baby

The Coldest
Geffen
Producers: Various

Pulsating, yet egotistical, *The Coldest* is "freezing." Rising Detroit rapper, Skilla Baby expands his breakout mixtape with a deluxe edition. Amid four new tracks added to *The Coldest*, this project contains ominous piano loops to glitchy bounces with a trap-ish vibe. Speaking of relevancy, Skilla is also part of the XXL's coveted 2024 Freshman Class as this year's "People's Champ"—voted by the fans. With over 400 million streams to his name, Skilla Baby, may indeed in the near future, be a household name. **- Adam Seyum**



The The

Ensoulement
Cinéola/earMUSIC
Producers: Matt Johnson and Warne Livesey

When the world feels as fractured and toxic as it does at present, The The's Matt Johnson is precisely the person we need to rebalance our collective chi. The man is a lyrical wizard and a musical soothsayer, capable of diving headfirst into our fears and anxieties and clicking us back into place like some sort of psychic chiropractor. From the haunting tones of "Cognitive Dissident," he had us hooked. Johnson's vocals, ably complemented by famed backing singers, feel personal in a manner reminiscent of Leonard Cohen or perhaps Tom Waits. **- Brett Callwood**





Brooklyn Belton

Contact: brooklynbelton04@gmail.com
Web: Spotify
Seeking: Label
Style: Pop

Dayton, OH alt-pop singer, songwriter and performer Brooklyn Belton is an interesting one. She's been described as pop-punk in the past, and that might be stretching the use of the word "punk" even by today's standards. That said, she's blessed with bags of energy and no small amount of snotty attitude. That's been highlighted by "Our Life," which builds and then bursts into life a la PVRIS or CHVRCHES. One of those upper case "V" bands. "All I Wanted" weighs heavier towards the pop end of the spectrum. None of the genre stuff matters anyway—Belton knows how to pen a tune that sticks with you for a good while.

- Production 8
- Lyrics 7
- Music 7
- Vocals 8
- Musicianship 7

SCORE: 7.4



Sophia Blue

Contact: sophia.lauricella@gmail.com
Web: Spotify
Seeking: Booking, Management
Style: Blues Rock

Whether it's true or not, it very much feels like Sophia Blue has been worshipping at the altar of Eric Clapton, and other blues rockers with similar vibes. That's great; Blue can clearly play and she's thrown her all into polished tunes such as "Hard Way" and "Mind Your Business." If anything, it all starts to feel a little bit *too* polished. A little bit more Robert Johnson wouldn't go amiss; some soul-shaking, devil-may-care blues gumption. Even as it is though, Blue proves herself to be remarkably adept at this sort of thing. She'd be welcome at Clapton's Crossroads Fest, which is no bad thing

- Production 8
- Lyrics 7
- Music 7
- Vocals 7
- Musicianship 8

SCORE: 7.4



Lucie Tiger

Contact: production@lucietigermusic.com
Web: Spotify
Seeking: Film/TV, Booking
Style: Southern Rock, Country

The opening moments of "Everybody Knows Your Name" are a glorious surprise. There are bluegrass flourishes to this southern/country rock that takes it up another level entirely. The song is executed immaculately and, arguably more importantly, the attitude is dripping off of Tiger's tongue with a startling level of authenticity and honesty. She means this shit, man! "Hummingbird" is a little more chill, but she's still in it to win it. "Got the stereo turned up all the way, gotta let him know I'm coming 'round today," she sings. Oh, he'll know! There's simply no ignoring Tiger, as she roars through these tunes.

- Production 8
- Lyrics 8
- Music 8
- Vocals 8
- Musicianship 8

SCORE: 8.0



Paris Paloma

Contact: creynolds@netwerk.com
Web: parispaloma.co.uk
Seeking: Review
Style: Folk-Pop

The first name that screams out when listening to British songbird Paris Paloma is Florence & the Machine. One imagines that she might be sick of hearing that comparison, but it's genuinely a huge compliment. It's not that she's a Florence sound-alike or anything like that—Paloma is clearly her own artist with things to say. But her epic waves carry the listener away so completely, in seas of total joy or overwhelming devastation, that it just feels very Florence-esque. Paloma's voice is haunting, delicate and frankly beautiful. But it's the construction of these songs that showcases what a special artist she is.

- Production 9
- Lyrics 8
- Music 9
- Vocals 8
- Musicianship 8

SCORE: 8.4



Fuzz Huzzi

Contact: allenrcamp@gmail.com
Web: fuzzhuzzi.bandcamp.com
Seeking: Booking, Film/TV
Style: Rock

According to their Bandcamp page, "Allen Camp, the lead singer of Fuzz Huzzi, is something of a local legend in Imperial Beach, CA. His band has been rocking out for over 17 years, and their music has left an indelible mark on the community." One must assume, therefore, that Imperial Beach is now full of riotous headbangers, impervious to modern trends and intent on raging into the early hours. Frankly, the noise that these garage-metallers make is a joy. With the spirits of AC/DC and Motorhead looking on, there's a bluesy, boozy vibe that is infectious. Camp's snarling vocals are the icing on a cake decorated with cigarette butts.

- Production 7
- Lyrics 7
- Music 8
- Vocals 7
- Musicianship 8

SCORE: 7.4



Bridgette Starr

Contact: bridgettstarrmusic@icloud.com
Web: bridgettstarr.com
Seeking: Label, Management, Booking, Collaborations
Style: Alternative

From the opening notes of "He Fixed Me," Bridgette Starr hits you right in the feels. As she recounts memories of a toxic parental relationship, and then moving forwards to a much healthier life with her significant other, it would be hard to imagine that Starr hasn't actually lived through this. "You use thank-you as a contract, you use gifts so you can take them back," she sings, before coming back with, "He gives freely, no strings attached." Oof! "The video begins with an injurious relationship between father and daughter," she says on her website. "Then HE came—her significant other, who loved her lavishly. One man broke her. But another man fixed her." Starr is very, very real.

- Production 7
- Lyrics 9
- Music 8
- Vocals 8
- Musicianship 7

SCORE: 7.8

Music Connection's executive committee rates recorded music on a scale of 1 to 10. Number 1 represents the lowest possible score, 10 represents the highest possible score. A final score of 7 denotes a solid, competent artist. For more information, see Submission Guidelines on the next page.



Poeina

Contact: poeinas@poeina.com

Web: poeina.com

Seeking: Booking, TV/Film

Style: Singer-Songwriter, Indie-Pop

The earthy, bluesy, jazzy tones of Poeina are the artist's greatest weapon. Her voice is so lush and warm that her stories become fables. You find yourself hooked, listening with intent, as she lays layered lyrics onto the parts of our consciousness and subconsciousness that need them the most. It would be a source of constant delight, if not for the fact that some of those lyrical lessons are simultaneously hard to hear. "12 million people every year are victims of domestic abuse," we're told at the start of the video for "Villain." "I was one of them and I was fortunate to have survived. Don't be a villain." Powerful.

Production	7
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	8
Musicianship	7

SCORE: 7.6



Libby Tisler

Contact: campbell@milestonepublicity.com

Web: Soundcloud

Seeking: Booking, Label

Style: Indie-Pop

Libby Tisler's sound is one that is very much of the "now." One would imagine that she's an admirer of the songwriting of Taylor Swift, perhaps Lorde and Billie Eilish. Not that she sounds like any one of them, but the influence of those artists can be heard on her sweet, pained heartfelt indie-pop. Songs like "The Artist" and "End of an Era" come across like journal entries set to music, but they're not at all hokey. Moreover, the songs are expertly constructed and beautifully produced. "End of an Era" builds with an admirable restraint, reminiscent of Swift's "All Too Well." One senses it's going to be wonderful watching Tisler's star rise.

Production	8
Lyrics	8
Music	7
Vocals	8
Musicianship	7

SCORE: 7.6



Sieski

Contact: worldpeachrecords@gmail.com

Web: sieski.com

Seeking: Review, Feature

Style: Pop

Sieski's electro-pop/synth-pop vibe is instantly attractive, from the moment we hear the pulsing beat and insistent melody on "Gumdrops." Think classic female-fronted acts such as Goldfrapp, but also more contemporary projects like Magdalena Bay and Sofi Tukker. "Lady Deity" is better still—a sultry, brooding statement of intent. This strong woman knows what she wants and what she likes. Her voice is evocative and emotional, while maintaining a level of chill like a modern Beth Orton or Beth Gibbons. All the while, the electronic backdrop is exemplary. Never intrusive, the music frames the vocals. "Happy to be Here" is perhaps the most expansive song of the three—a hypnotic journey. But there's much to admire here.

Production	9
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.2



Caitlin Mahoney

Contact: teamcaitlinmahoneymusic@gmail.com

Web: caitlinmahoney.com

Seeking: Review, Feature

Style: Indie Pop

It's great when feelings of nostalgia and discovering something fresh can sit comfortably side by side. Such is the case with Caitlin Mahoney, whose "Feelin' Free" recalls late '80s to mid '90s electro-pop, while not sounding the slightest bit stale. That's a fine balance, but the fact that the song is so memorable and the delivery is so joyous means that the tune is undeniable. "Subway Cars," on the other hand, sounds very now. It's the sort of sweet, authentic indie pop that fans of Lana Del Rey and even Billie Eilish would dig. Mahoney's voice is gorgeous and comforting, and she clearly knows how to construct a song.

Production	8
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.0



Eternal Worlds

Contact: joseflores073@gmail.com

Web: Spotify

Seeking: Film/TV, Label

Style: Alternative Rap

Jose Flores records as Eternal Worlds, carving out a unique space in the underground hip-hop scene, with his distinctive style that spans emotional vulnerability and raw intensity. His music often explores themes of inner turmoil, mental health and madness, offering listeners a powerful journey through both haunting soundscapes. With full-length *Bone Palace Ballet* and recent EP *Dissolve*, Eternal Worlds pushes boundaries sonically and energetically. While the lyrics could be stronger, Flores is a confident and competent emcee. The subversive nature of the tracks and infectious sub-synth-led instrumentals do the heavy lifting, following the path Tyler, The Creator and Travis Scott have paved.

Production	9
Lyrics	7
Music	8
Vocals	7
Musicianship	7

SCORE: 7.6



Katelyn Tarver

Contact: skayden@netwerk.com

Web: katelyntarver.com

Seeking: Review

Style: Pop/Singer-Songwriter

Katelyn Tarver's latest release, *Quitter*, delves into themes of self-discovery, vulnerability, and the challenges of adulthood. Title track, "Quitter," sets the tone for the album, and, along with "What Makes a Life Good?" and "Starting To Scare Me," Tarver addresses existential questions about happiness, fulfillment, imposter syndrome, self-worth and self-doubt. Tarver admits, "I don't think I have all the answers yet, but I do feel like I've peeled back some of the layers and gotten closer to understanding who I am and why I do what I do." *Quitter* is excellently produced acoustic indie pop with Tarver's emotive vocals bringing these big themes to song.

Production	8
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.0

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: There is absolutely no charge for a New Music Critique. We critique recordings that have yet to connect with a label or distributor.

To be considered please go to musicconnection.com/get-reviewed. All submissions are randomly selected and reviewed by committee.

The Sun Rose West Hollywood, CA

Contact: ashley@ashleywhitepr.com

Web: ladyblackbird.com

Players: Lady Blackbird, vocals; Chris Seefried, guitar, backing vocals; Jon Flaughner, bass; Kenneth Crouch, piano; Jimmy Paxon, drums

Material: Celebrating the launch of her latest album, *Slang Spirituals*, Lady Blackbird played a fabulous almost 90-minute set at West Hollywood's Sun Rose. With a vibey tense instrumental intro announcing her arrival, Blackbird covered hit songs from 2022's *Black Acid Soul*, Moby collaboration "Dark Days," Gladys Knight and Roberta Flack/Donny Hathaway covers, and selections from the new album. Enigmatic and soulful, Blackbird offers a captivating showcase of music for music's sake, and she holds the audience spellbound.

Musicianship: With support from some of the best musicians around today, Blackbird (alongside producer/Musical Director/guitarist, Chris Seefried) delivered a tight, honest, fresh sound that paid homage to traditional soul, rhythm & blues, jazz, with the occasional ethereal electronic element. Jimmy Paxon brought phenomenal drumming with frequent restraint, adding just the right amount of drive and energy, while Seefried's guitar licks sang alongside Blackbird beautifully (along with his intermittent backing vocals).



LADY BLACKBIRD

Performance: "If I Told You" brought swampy blues sound and delicious bass licks from John Flaughner, with his fat walking bass lines continuing on groovy track "Woman" alongside beautiful piano playing from Kenneth Crouch. The suspenseful, reflective sound of "Let Not (Your Heart Be Troubled)" belongs in a Bond movie and the evening's stirring stripped-back version engaged the crowd, happily snapping and singing along. Following a syrupy cover of Gladys Knight's "Neither One of Us," the Lady was joined by vocalist Ty Taylor (of Vintage Trouble). Their perfect blend—and Taylor's stellar falsetto—made for a magical cover of Flack/Hathaway's "The Closer I Get To You." Blackbird's

talent is met only by her humble appreciative energy. Her unbelievable chops and engaging bubbly personality make for pure entertainment.

Summary: Closing with "It'll Never Happen Again," Blackbird's emotive storytelling remained on full display. From the taffy-pulling lyrics of "Five Feet Tall" to the bluesy sounds of "No One Can Love Me (Like You Do)," and the upbeat anthemic "Reborn," Blackbird and the band draw your ear and spirit like your palate to a delicious dessert you can't get enough of: just the right amount of sweet and salty—heartbreak and inspiration—to keep you wanting more. — **Andrea Beenham**



SURFBORT

The Belasco Los Angeles, CA

Contact: therealsurfbort@gmail.com

Web: surfbort.bandcamp.com

Players: Dani Miller, vocals; Sean Powell, drums; Bee Wright, guitar; Adam Laidlaw, guitar

Material: Brooklyn punks Surfbort recently opened for Keith Morris's OFF!, the erstwhile Circle Jerk and former Black Flag man putting another of his bands on a well-earned hiatus. It could have been overwhelming, but Surfbort approached the gig with a level of side-eyed contempt and 'tude-riddled fury rarely seen in a support. Dani Miller formed the band

and named it after a line in a Beyoncé song, they've worked on a Gucci campaign, and they've written with Linda Perry. That's a lot of check marks in their favor already. And boy, did they impress with a punk set just brimming with aggressively uncompromising, angry and really very fun tunes.

Musicianship: Opening with a manic "Hot Chix," the band swiftly moves into "Pretty Little Fucker." A cover of the Hollywood Squares' "Hillside Strangler" is a nice touch in L.A., though their own "Lot Lizard 93" is better. Miller's voice is perfect for this sort of stuff. She simultaneously looks like she wants to

tear everyone's faces off, and like she couldn't give a fuck about anyone. That appropriate punk attitude carries into the music, with Miller conveying every nuance of wit, cynicism and nihilism with unrestrained joy and no small amount of fury. The rest of the band are equally adept of doing exact what is required of them to make these songs soar, despite the fact that they were missing their bass player for this show. It's punk—there's no need for proggy flourishes. But these guys are no slouches either and they, as much as the vocalists, make these songs sing.

Performance: This is where they excel. Miller is the consummate punk rock frontwoman; a glorious blend of Wendy O'Williams, Dinah Sander and Siouxsie. There's the slightest hint of contempt in her smile, in all of the right ways. Like, "Screw all of this." But then she also appears to be having a blast, as do her bandmates. It's the sort of artistic schizophrenia that breeds great art.

Summary: New punk bands spring up all the time; enthusiastic and hungry musicians who have learned just enough about their instruments to pen a decent, attention-grabbing song. The key is to have a little bit extra. In the case of Surfbort, the Ingredient X isn't only Miller's astute delivery and performance, but also the fact that her band can stir a pot and turn the contents into something surprising. There's so much to love here, and one senses that they're only just getting started. Ones to watch for sure. — **Brett Callwood**



Blues, Brews & BBQ Festival
Westland, MI

Contact: info@e-hrecords.com

Web: elizaneals.com

Players: Eliza Neals, vocals, piano; Joe Stanley, guitar, backup vocals; Tye Mayhem, bass guitar; Mark LoDuca Sr., organ; Eugene McBride, drums, backup vocals

Material: Contemporary blues, with a heavy slab of rock and soul is on the menu at this cookout. The strikingly blonde-coiffed Neals leads a crack veteran ensemble through a litany of classics and Sirius XM "Bluesville"

channel—crafted original hits like her "Living With Your Mama" and "Candystore." Her latest single, the groove-alicious "Something is Better Than Nothing," a collaboration with the late legendary Barrett Strong, is especially indicative of her deep Motown roots.

Musicianship: The cream of Detroit's blues and session players show up and show out in a star set that's flawless in every way. Stanley leads the pack on gritty string bending solos and slide work. Mayhem locks in seamlessly with McBride for a sound that cradles the backdrop in a full and warmly rich fashion. LoDuca Sr. plays a modified organ which

dovetails nicely with Neals' steady piano accompaniment. Collectively, the band shares camaraderie in support of Neals' powerhouse four octave range and dynamic stage persona.

Performance: The sky was clear and the air was slightly humid and filled with the ambience of fresh barbecue and summer fun. The audience was primed for Neals' hometown return, of sorts, and the band delivered on all fronts. The "Detroit Diva" is a great communicator and bandleader. She knows how to keep the party going with the crowd while visually and vocally relaying solo cues and breaks with the band. Stellar moments included Neals' spot on rendition of Etta James' "I'd Rather Go Blind" and the heartfelt socially relevant title track of her latest album *Colorcrimes*. Granted, Neals' name was on the festival marquee, but she was more than gracious in spreading the love and featuring each member of the band in an extended solo spot.

Summary: Musical luminaries as prominent as Buddy Guy and Mick Jagger have been quoted as singing the praises of singer-songwriter Neals. And it's easy to see why. She knows how to amp up the crowd and engender group participation. And she has a track record of successful festival dates across the country to prove it. Eliza Neals is one of an exciting breed of contemporary artists that is redefining rock, blues and soul for a modern generation. — **Eric Harabadian**

The Grape Ventura, CA

Contact: Nina Gordon @ Nina Gordon PR/
ngpr1231@gmail.com

Web: michaelwolff.com

Players: Michael Wolff, piano; Ray Obiedo, guitar, Edwin Livingston, bass; Mike Barsimanto, drums

Material: Sharing music from *Memoir*, his first release in four years following his Cancer battle, pianist-composer-bandleader Michael Wolff wowed with his phenomenal band for over two hours. Displaying fabulous brushwork and rimshots, funky upright bass sound, beautiful piano runs and a perfect bass/drum taffy pull on the beat ("Left Out"), Ray Obiedo's badassery solo nod to George Benson, and an edgy percussive Latin drive ("Zawinul"), the group was spellbinding. Written for Cannonball Adderley, "Leland" added melancholy chords, and stunning piano and bass unison. Gentler blues elements appeared, with bass/rhythm guitar stank notes and singing guitar, before moving to a moody piano bridge.

Musicianship: With expert musicality and sublime use of dynamics, the musical experience and natural connectivity of the group left no room for ego—and plenty of space for the magic to unfold. In a perfect blend of tension, dynamics, and instrumental communication, there was incredible anticipation between the players (Wolff and Obiedo have been collaborating since high school). Tasty walking bass lines, tight band shots, and shifts in and



out of juxtaposing styles and time signatures came through flawlessly with musical patience, respect, and BIG ears, creating a delicious marinade of sound.

Performance: "Jamaican Turnaround" opened with one note on the piano, adding a bass line, shaker, and rimshots, continuing with an intriguing blend of melody and syncopation, and a piano solo that sounded like running water. With a comfortable, focused crowd, the show felt intimate and relaxed, helped by musicians having played together for years and Wolff's naturally subtle leadership, which allowed for all on stage to shine. Wolff's unassuming charm and easy energy made

his performance a pleasure to behold. Trading solos throughout the night, Wolff and Obiedo had a friendly interplay, each challenging and enhancing the other's improvised runs.

Summary: The experience and talent on stage were undeniable, wrapped in an easy presence and clear enjoyment by all involved. From traditional sound and Latin vibes, to blues and smooth jazz, the evening was a tremendous unfolding for the soul. Grounded in appreciation to be back at the piano, Wolff's performance—along with the incredible musicians joining him—shone through as an authentically present offering of sound expression. — **Andrea Beenham**

Santa Barbara Bowl Santa Barbara, CA

Contact: taylor.vaughn@fullcov.com

Web: kingsofleon.com

Players: Caleb Followill, vocals, rhythm guitar; Matthew Followill, lead guitar, keys, backing vocals; Jared Followill, bass, keys, backing vocals; Nathan Followill, drums, percussion; Liam O'Neill, keys, percussion, backing vocals; Timothy Deaux, rhythm guitar, keys, percussion, backing vocals

Material: Four-time GRAMMY winners Kings of Leon lit up the bowl in Santa Barbara as part of their tour celebrating their ninth studio album, *Can We Please Have Fun* (released earlier this year). With trademark rhythm and bass lines and tight drumming, the band delivered high energy and fantastic solid sound throughout the evening.

Playing selections from all but two of their albums, the group performed for a packed happy crowd, with great visuals behind the group all evening, Caleb Followill's clean lead vocals shone through for almost two hours and there was plenty of crowd involvement, with singalong moments on fan favorites "On Call," "Sex On Fire" (which had an especially clean live sound), "Pyro," "Closer," "Knocked Up," and "Use Somebody" (from hit records *Because of the Times*, *Only By The Night*, *Come Around Sundown*).

Musicianship: While the visuals and overall presentation were stunning and added to the



ambiance and feel of the show, the focus was most definitely sound-first, and the band had it in spades. Tight, clean instrumentals, powerful vocals, and solid harmonies—along with the great pace of the setlist and interspersed crowd interaction—made for a memorable, non-stop experience.

From tender vocal moments ("Beautiful War") and group 'ooohs' ("Revelry") and howling ("My Party") with the crowd, to retro video game graphics on screens around and behind the stage ("Nowhere To Run"), '70s style filters ("Split Screen"), and syncopated driving sound, the group presented a captivating show.

Performance: Adding a debut live performance of "Fairytale" (from 2021's *When You See Yourself*) for their "song for the city" segment of the evening, Caleb delivered more soaring vocals. "Back Down South" brought a guttural kickdrum sound, and "The Bandit" got everyone fully rocking out.

Summary: The 5,000-seat outdoor space felt somehow like family and the show felt like a warm homecoming. Kings of Leon is a unifying rock force with major chops that put on an incredible show and are worth taking in as a live experience. - **Andrea Beenham**



Sawtelle Studios Los Angeles, CA

Contact: harrietschock@gmail.com

Web: harrietschock.com

Players: Harriet Schock, vocals, digital piano; Andrea Ross-Greene, background harmony vocals

Material: Harriet's one-hour-plus-standing-ovation-encore-set featured a good mix of past

favorites and new material off her latest offering from 2023 entitled *Paintings*. Highlighting a standout tune "Brick and Mortar," she performed it live to much audience laughter with honest lyrical sentiment. "Cause I'm your brick and mortar and I'm barely hanging on, with the sleazy competition of that cheap slut Amazon. She may lure you with a drone or a smiling big blue truck, it's true she might come faster with your sauce for Peking Duck."

Musicianship: The main focus at this intimate house concert was the lyrics and storytelling mastery that earned Harriet her stripes. Still listening to her solo rendition of her tune "Mama," (recorded by Helen Reddy), with its seventh chord blues riffs, reminds one of Elton John's ivory tinkering and talent. In addition, call-and-response and harmony vocals by Andrea Ross-Greene add more emotion and angelic nuance without one realizing the techniques necessary to make that happen.

Performance: Stories told by Harriet before several tunes keep the audience engaged and connected. Harriet and Andrea have a radiance that just brings the audience closer to them naturally. By the time her epic tune, "Ain't No Way To Treat A Lady" is performed, the audience isn't just in her hand, most likely they want to be in her suitcase as well.

Summary: From TV music like "The New Adventures Of Pippi Longstocking," to collaborations with Arthur Hamilton, Harriet has a 50-plus yearcareer as a master songwriter and lyric coach. Her songwriting classes continue to keep her schedule busy to this day. Perhaps a most poignant idea illustrated to this reviewer was after the show when a young buff gentleman was expressing his astonishment with the music and lyrics, and started to break down. I told him, "I know how you feel. Harriet's songs do that to me as well." - **Rich Marchetta**



Silvana New York, NY

Contact: bencybersound@yahoo.com

Web: facebook.com

Players: Ben McMurtrie, guitar, vocals; Brian Hess, bass; Mike Rodbard, drums

Material: This power rock and blues trio was back at one of Harlem's popular music spots delivering their brand of well-known and

obscure covers along with originals. Of the more recognizable were "Handle With Care," by The Traveling Wilburys, The Who's "Substitute," "Wham," by Lonny Mack, and for those that graced the planet when this song came out, "Secret Agent Man," a fun bit of nostalgia. On the original front, they performed "Times," a ska-inspired song reminiscent of Elvis Costello and XTC. For all the Todd Rundgren fans, they ended the show with "Couldn't I Just Tell You."

Musicianship: Secure and proficient when it comes to their respective instruments they also come together as a tight unit. Their high energy, enthusiasm, and love of this music is evident. McMurtrie delivers some tasty guitar licks while Hess on bass provides a strong foundation moving each song forward. Rodbard on drums keeps the tempo and mood squarely where it belongs. Though the instruments support the vocals more than the other way around, polishing them will be a plus.

Performance: To quote McMurtrie, "We are still a work in progress," which suggests that the band is still carving out their goals and where they see themselves as they continue to develop more of their original catalogue and/or pursue future venues. As band members, individually, they have racked up credits with other prominent bands but as a relatively new outfit they need to further define how they want to market themselves as they continue their musical journey. At this juncture, in their favor, the material they currently perform keeps an audience engaged, notably with those who may be unfamiliar with them or some of their more obscure material.

Summary: Satellite Reptiles, a spirited group, know how to keep the evening going. Honing in on the next steps will go a long way towards claiming their place in the everchanging fabric of the music industry. The band plans to do some recording soon. - **Ellen Woloshin**

Autry Museum of the American West

Los Angeles, CA

Contact: info@brotherswan.com

Web: brotherswan.com

Players: Chris Matthews, vocals, guitar; Ian Stahl, vocals, bass; Morganfield Riley, guitar; Chris Weisson, drums

Material: Brother Swan took the stage at the Autry Museum as part of Street Food Cinema's special pairing with Quentin Tarantino's cult classic, *Pulp Fiction*. This outdoor event, combining live music, local food trucks galore and an iconic film, set the perfect scene for a band with classic rock influences and college rock sensibilities.

Musicianship: With a soft-spoken, but charming "We're gonna have some fun," the band gently eased into their set with an Americana-inspired single "Horses." Their frontman Chris Matthews may be mild-mannered, but the material stands on its own. The second song shifted gears, erupting into a rip-roaring guitar solo that brought an intensity to the performance, with bassist Ian Stahl doing heavy lifting on lead vocals.

The crowd particularly responded to "When's the Last Time," where the deep and high harmonies added depth to an already engaging performance. The band seamlessly combined their '70s and '80s rock influences with a hint of blues and a lot of fuzz, particularly evident on tracks like this one.



Performance: One memorable moment was when the band took a brief pause to ask the audience how they were sounding, followed by a sincere shoutout to their sound team. It was a thoughtful gesture, though somewhat drowned out by the swirling guitars and evening atmosphere. That fuzzed-up sound, present in several tracks, was warmly welcomed by the audience, further amplifying the nostalgic classic rock vibe.

"In the Morning" was a standout track, giving the band room to expand into a five-minute jam session, showcasing their musical versatility. The final song "America"

delivered a fitting and unmistakable *Pulp Fiction* vibe. With a secret agent feel reminiscent of "Misirlou," the band channeled their inner Tarantino, ending the night on a high note.

Summary: Though their gratitude may have been hard to hear over the guitars and rowdy crowd-chatter, Brother Swan's performance and thoughtful stage moments at the Autry brought energy and left a lasting impression, ushering in concert/moviegoing guests under the stars.

- **Joseph Maltese**

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All data has been updated with approved info supplied by the listees.

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Web: batesbrothersrecording.com
Contact: Eric Bates
Basic Rate: please see web for info

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Birmingham, AL 35222
205-595-8497
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Contact: Col. Darryl Harrelson
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THE SALT MINE STUDIO OASIS
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Mesa, AZ 85210
480-220-4007
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Web: thesaltmine.com, arizonamastering.com
Contact: Don Salter
Basic Rate: call for a custom quote.
Gear: BetterMaker Mastering Compressor, Manley Massive Passive EQ, Weiss DS1 Compressor Limiter, Manley Backbone Console, Dangerous ST Monitor, Mytek AD/DAC, Millenaea NSEQ-2 Tube EQ, GML 8200 Equalizer, Lydkraft Tube Tech Mastering multi-band limiter, Neve Portico II Master Buss compressor, Prism, Waves L2, ATR 1-inch Master Recorder etc.
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jon@raneyrecordingstudio.com
Web: raneyrecordingstudio.com
Contact: Jon Raney
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Web: 21stcenturyaudio.com
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626-303-4114
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Web: audiovista.com
Contact: Jim LaForest

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Culver City, CA 90232
310-736-6661
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Web: thebakeryla

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Web: benbernsteinmusic.com
Contact: Ben Bernstein
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Email: hello@beckermastering.com
Web: beckermastering.com
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Basic Rate: please call for info

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Web: facebook.com/grillocarmen
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Web: coastmastering.com
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Web: denoise.com
Contact: Albert Benichou
Basic Rate: please call for info

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Contact: Raphael De Giorgio
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Basic Rate: please see web or call

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Basic Rate: please call for info

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Web: mastergroovestudios.com, facebook.com/

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Contact: Dave Morse
Basic Rate: please call for info, reasonable rates.

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323-662-3642 Studio
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Contact: studio manager
Basic Rate: please call for info

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Web: rockzion.com/productionco.html

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SILENT ZOO STUDIOS

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Web: silentzoo studios.com
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SONIC LODGE STUDIOS

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(Mixer / Engineer / Producer / Educator / Author)
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Los Angeles, CA 90068
Email: mixkenji@gmail.com
Notable Projects: Tom Petty, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Scorpions, Celine Dion, Boz Scaggs, Bill Champlin, Final Fantasy IX, Mario Kart 8

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Format: mixing, mastering & production

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714-540-0063
Email: ron@soundaffairtld.com
Web: soundaffairmastering.com
Contact: Ron or Andree
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Basic Rate: please call for info

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Web: thelakestudios.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

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818-848-3393
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Contact: Michael Woodrum
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Colorado Springs, CO 80905
419-704-8253
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303-247-9035
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UPCOMING STUDIO, INC.
 601 W. Oakland Park Blvd., Ste. 13
 Wilton Manors, FL. 33311-0913
 954-530-4710
Email: studioinfo@upcomingstudio.com
Web: upcomingstudio.com

GEORGIA

B CHILL MUSIC
 4002 Hwy 78 Ste 530. #167
 Snellville, GA
 678-660-8744
Email: bchillmusic@gmail.com
Web: bchillmusic.com

COS MASTERING
 800 E. Ave., NE
 Atlanta, GA 30312
 404-524-7757
Contact: Larry Antony
Email: larry@cosmastering.com
Web: cosmastering.com

SING MASTERING
 781 Wheeler St. N.W.
 Studio 8
 Atlanta, GA 30318
 404-827-8503
Email: info@singmastering.com
Web: singmastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

HAWAII

ISLAND SOUND STUDIOS
 377 Keahole St.,
 Ste. D-03
 Honolulu, HI 96825

888-458-2312
Email: aloha@islandsoundstudios.com
Contact: Kyle Spicer
Web: islandsoundstudios.com
Format: 2 SSL9000J, Digital/Analog

LAVA TRACKS RECORDING
 P.O. Box 6564
 Kamuela, Big Island, HI 96743
 808-885-6558
Email: cb@lavatracks.com
Web: lavatracks.com, facebook.com/lavatracks
Contact: Charles Michael Brotman, Grammy Award winner
Basic Rate: call or check our website for contact info.

SEASIDE RECORDING
 1320 W. Hiahia Pl.,
 Wailuku, Maui, HI
 808-280-0722
Email: joel@joelkatzmaui.com
Web: seasiderecording.com,
 joelkatzmaui.com
Contact: Joel Katz
Basic Rate: reasonable rates by hour/week/job

IDAHO

COTTONWOOD STUDIOS
 4436 E. 49th S
 Ammon, ID 83406
 208-757-7328
Email: dudleys100@gmail.com
Web: cottonwoodstudios.net

DASH MASTERING STUDIO
 Boise, ID
 208-639-1282
Email: dashmastering@gmail.com
Web: dashmastering.com

TONIC ROOM, THE
 1509 S. Robert St., Ste. 103
 Boise, ID 83705
 208-338-8433
Email: info@tonicroomstudios.com,
 mastering@tonicroomstudios.com
Web: tonicroomstudios.com
Basic Rate: see web for info

ILLINOIS

BOILER ROOM, THE
 1440 N. Western Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60622
 773-525-8551
Email: collin@brmastering.com
Web: brmastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

CHICAGO MASTERING SERVICE
 3052 W Carroll Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60612
 773-265-1733
Email: info@chicagomasteringservice.com
Web: chicagomasteringservice.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

DON GRIFFIN MASTERING AND MIXING
 5818 S. Archer Road
 Summit, IL. 60501
 708-267-2198, 312-286-5018
Email: don@studiovmr.com
Web: studiovmr.com

GRAVITY STUDIOS
 2250 W. North Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60647
 773-862-1880
Email: info@gravitystudios.com
Web: gravitystudios.com
Basic Rate: Call for more info

MASSIVE MASTERING
 P.O. Box 68143
 Schaumburg, IL 60168
 630-237-4393
Email: master@massivemastering.com
Web: massivemastering.com
Contact: John Scrip
Basic Rate: hourly/project rates on web

INDIANA

AZMYTH RECORDING
 5130 Brouse Ave.
 Indianapolis, IN. 46205
 317-281-3670
Email: info@azmythrecording.com
Web: azmythrecording.com

MAHERN AUDIO
 2051 W Vernal Pike
 Bloomington, IN. 47404
 812-320-2437
Email: info@mahernaudio.com
Web: mahernaudio.com

THE ROUND TABLE
 6345 Carrollton Ave
 Indianapolis, IN 46220
 317-981-5351
Email: booking@thertrc.com
Web: thertrc.com

IOWA

CATAMOUNT RECORDING, INC.
 5737 Westminster Dr.
 Cedar Falls, IA 50613
 319-268-1011
Email: catamount@cfu.net
Web: catamountrecording.com
Contact: Kitty Tatman
Basic Rate: please see web for info

MAINE

BELLWETHER MASTERING
 45 Casco Street Ste. 200
 Portland, ME 04101
 619-228-6941
Email: joe@bellwethermastering.com
Web: bellwethermastering.com
Contact: Joe Goodwin
Basic Rate: varies, see website

PATRICK KEANE AUDIO MASTERING
 103 Hanover St.
 Portland, ME
 207-807-5379
Web: patkeanemastering.com

MARYLAND

ABOVE GROUND STUDIOS
 3200 Annetta Ave.
 Baltimore, MD 21213
 443-255-5016
Email: abovegroundstudios@gmail.com
Web: abovegroundstudios.com
Basic Rate: please call/email for info
Credits: Tate Kobang, Lil Mo, The Beatnuts, DITC, Moneybagg Yo
Specialization: iTunes, vinyl, radio mastering

BLUE ROOM PRODUCTIONS
 7718 Bradley Blvd.
 Bethesda, MD 20817
 240-505-5544
Email: info@blueroommusicstudio.com
Web: blueroommusicstudio.com

HIT AND RUN RECORDING
 18704 Muncaster Rd.
 Rockville, MD 20855
 301-948-6715
Email: info@hitandruncording.com
Web: hitandruncording.com
Contact: Steve Carr
Basic Rate: please call for info

LION AND FOX RECORDING STUDIOS
 9517 Baltimore Ave.
 College Park, MD 20740
 301-982-4431
Email: mail@lionfox.com
Web: lionfox.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

OMEGA RECORDING STUDIOS
 12712 Rock Creek Mill Rd., Ste. 14A
 Rockville, MD 20852
 301-230-9100
Email: admissions@omegastudios.com
Web: omegastudios.com
Basic Rate: 125/hr. (tax/materials separate)

TONAL PARK
 7014-C Westmoreland Ave.
 Takoma Park, MD. 20912
 301-891-9035
Email: contact@tonalpark.com
Web: tonalpark.com
Basic Rate: see web for info

MASSACHUSETTS

M WORKS MASTERING
 1 Fitchburg St.
 Somerville, MA 02143
 617-577-0089
Email: studio@m-works.com
Web: facebook.com/mworksmastering
Basic Rate: reasonable rates

PEERLESS MASTERING
 Physical Address:
 161 N. St.
 Newtonville, MA 02460
 Mail Address:
 1089 Commonwealth Avenue #322
 Boston, MA 02215
 617-527-2200
Email: info@peerlessmastering.com
Web: peerlessmastering.com
Contact: Jeff
Basic Rate: please call for info

PILOT RECORDING STUDIOS
 1073 Main St.
 Housatonic, MA 01236
 413-274-1073
Email: info@pilotrecording.com
Web: pilotrecording.com
Contact: Will Schillinger
Basic Rate: please email for info

SOUNDMIRROR, INC.
 76 Green St.
 Boston, MA 02130-2271
 617-522-1412
Email: info@soundmirror.com
Web: soundmirror.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MICHIGAN

BROADSIDE PRODUCTIONS
 901 S. Westnedge
 Kalamazoo, MI 49008
 269-720-2068
Web: broadsideproductions.com
Contact: Mike Roche
Basic Rate: by appointment only. Call for rates

STUDIO A RECORDING
 313-561-7489
Email: eric@studioarecording.com
Web: studioarecording.com
Contact: Eric Morgeson
****No degree, Avid Pro Tools certificate**

THIRD MAN MASTERING
 441 W. Canfield
 Detroit, MI 48201
 313-209-5212
Contact: Bill Skibbe, Warren Defever
Email: mastering@thirdmanrecords.com
Web: thirdmanmastering.com

MINNESOTA

FLOWERS STUDIO
 Mailing Address (Not Physical):
 2751 Hennepin Ave. #161
 Minneapolis, MN 55408
 612-567-1219, 612-327-8544
Email: info@flowersstudio.com, kjaudio75@gmail.com
Web: flowersstudio.com

RARE FORM MASTERING
 712 Ontario Ave. W. #200
 Minneapolis, MN 55403
 612-327-8750
Email: info@rareformmastering.com
Web: rareformmastering.com
Contact: Greg Reiersen
Basic Rate: please contact for info

SKYLAND STUDIOS
 7452 236th St. E
 Lakeville, MN 55044
Email: skyland@me.com
Web: skylandstudio.com

MISSISSIPPI

MALACO MUSIC GROUP
 3023 W. Northside Dr.
 Jackson, MS 39213
 P.O. Box 9287
 Jackson, MS 39286 - 9287
 601-982-4522, 800-272-7936
Email: malaco@malaco.com
Web: malaco.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

TAPROOT AUDIO DESIGN
 108 Co Rd 411
 Oxford, MS 38655
 662-801-3273
Email: info@taprootaudiodesign.com
Web: taprootaudiodesign.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MISSOURI

ENDEAVOR STUDIO

211 South College St
Arcadia, MO.
573-944-4449
Email: greggill45@gmail.com
Web: endeavorav.com

GFM RECORDING STUDIOS

1118 W Main St.
Blue Springs, MO. 64015
816-598-8810
Email: gfmmodernrecording@gmail.com
Web: gfmmodernrecording.com

STUDIO 2100

2100 N. National Ave
Springfield, MO 65803
417-894-0692
Email: jeff@studio2100.com
Web: studio2100.com
Contact: Jeff Smith
Basic Rate: please call for info

NEBRASKA

FOCUS MASTERING

6866 Willow St.
Omaha, NE. 68152
402-915-0557
Email: doug@focusmastering.com
Web: focusmastering.com

STUDIO 24

8601 N. 30th St.
Omaha, NE 68112
402-342-9090
Email: chuckbeckler@studio24omaha.com
Web: studio24omaha.com
Contact: Chuck Beckler
Basic Rate: please call for info

NEVADA

THE HIDEOUT RECORDING STUDIO

14 Sunset Way
Henderson, NV 89014
702-445-7705
Web: hideouttv.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

HIT TRACK RECORDING STUDIOS

Las Vegas, NV
702-481-1663
Email: tomparham@mac.com
Web: hittrackstudios.com

NEW HAMPSHIRE

CARDINAL MASTERING

71 Lafayette Rd #2b
Hampton Falls, NH 03844
603-944-6710
Email: contact@cardinalmastering.com
Web: cardinalmastering.com

CEDAR HOUSE SOUND & MASTERING

P.O. Box 333
North Sutton, NH 03260
603-927-6363
Email: cedarhousesound@gmail.com
Web: cedarhousesound.com

JACOB'S WELL MASTERING, LLC

79 East Wilder Rd.
West Lebanon, NH 03784
619-754-5050
Email: contact@jacobswellmastering.com
Web: jacobswellmastering.com

NEW JERSEY

ED LITTMAN MASTERING

35 Harring Ct.
North Haledon, NJ 07508
201-824-7860
Email: littmuze@edlittmanmastering.com
Web: edlittmanmastering.com
Contact: Ed Littman
Basic Rate: available on website

HERB POWERS, JR.

PM Mastering, Inc.
Email: pmmastering@mac.com
Web: pmmastering.com
Contact: Angie Powers
Masterclass: redbullmusicacademy.com/
lectures/herb-powers

KNACK MASTERING

Ringwood, NJ
973-556-5749
Email: kimrosen@knackmastering.com

Web: knackmastering.com

Contact: Kim Rosen

Services: specializes in analog audio mastering for digital & vinyl formats, audio restoration and vinyl and tape transfers

STERLING SOUND

33 Hilliard Avenue
Edgewater, NJ 07020
212-604-9433
Email: markglaser@sterling-sound.com
Web: sterling-sound.com
Basic Rate: please see web

Additional location:

805 Meridian Street
Nashville, TN. 37207

STORY BOOK SOUND

Maplewood, NJ
Email: info@storybooksound.com
Web: storybooksound.com
Contact: Scott Anthony, Rebecca Turner

NEW MEXICO

HIGH FIDELITY MASTERING

8100 Wyoming Blvd. N.E., Ste. 315
Albuquerque, NM 87113
505-459-6242
Email: andy@highfidelitymastering.com
Web: highfidelitymastering.com
Contact: Andy Rogulich
Basic Rate: please call for info

NEW YORK

BANG ZOOM MASTERING

P.O. Box 145
Orangeburg, NY 10962
845-445-4460
Email: bangzoomprod@gmail.com
Web: masteringzone.com
Contact: Steve Vavagiakis
Services: Analog and Digital Audio Mastering

BATTERY STUDIOS

(Sony Music Entertainment)
321 W 44th St., Suite 1001
New York, NY 10036
212 833-7373
Email: donna.kloepfer@batterystudios.com,
vanessa.gonzalez@batterystudios.com
Web: batterystudios.com

ELECTRIC KINGDOM STUDIOS

Hartsdale, NY 10530
800-933-1305
Email: info@electrickingdom.com
Web: electrickingdom.com

ENGINE ROOM AUDIO

42 Broadway, 22nd Fl.
New York, NY 10004
212-625-3467
Email: info@engineroomaudio.com
Web: engineroomaudio.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

JOE LAMBERT MASTERING

3 Marsala Ct
Cortland Manor, NY. 10567
914-737-2795
Email: joelambert@jmsound.com
Web: joelambertmastering.com

KEVORKIAN MASTERING

441 W 53rd St.
New York, NY 10019
917-406-9147
Email: flfk@aol.com
Web: kevorkianmastering.com
Contact: Fred Kevorkian, flfk@aol.com; Larry Lachmann, larry@kevorkianmastering.com

LODGE, THE

740 Broadway, Ste. 605
New York, NY 10003
212-353-3895
Email: info@thelodge.com
Web: thelodge.com, facebook.com/
lodgegmastering
Basic Rate: please call for info

MASTERDISK STUDIOS

8 John Walsh Blvd., Ste 411
Peekskill, NY 10566
212-541-5022
Email: scott@masterdisk.com
Web: masterdisk.com
Contact: Scott Hull
Basic Rate: premium services, Indie mastering

Services: Mastering for All formats (Vinyl, CD, Streaming, iTunes, Video, Surround, HD), Vinyl Disk Cutting Form HD Digital, Vinyl Disk Cutting from Analog Tape, Direct to Disk Recording, Restoration and archival of historic formats. (Disk, Tape & Digital), Recording, Mixing and Mastering, Mix evaluation and consulting

THE MASTERING PALACE

307 W. 121st St.
New York, NY 10027
212-665-2200
Email: mleedy@themasteringpalace.com
Web: themasteringpalace.com
Contact: Michael Leedy

SKYELAB MUSIC PRODUCTIONS

37 W 37th St., 12th Floor
New York, NY 10018
212-789-8942
Email: info@skylab.com
Web: skylabmusic.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

THRESHOLD RECORDING STUDIOS NYC

517 W. 45th St.
New York, NY 10036
212-244-1871
Email: thresholdstudiosnyc@gmail.com
Web: thresholdstudios.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

TIMELESS MASTERING

361 Stagg St., Suite 401
Brooklyn, NY 11206
Email: info@timelessmastering.com
Web: timelessmastering.com

TRUTONE MASTERING LABS INC.

228 E. Route 59, #306
Nanuet, NY 10954
845-680-6490
Email: sales@trutonemastering.com
Web: trutonemastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

XTREAM AUDIO

East Amherst, NY
888-878-3292
Email: anthony@xtreamaudio.com, info@
xtreamaudio.com, audio@xtreamaudio.com,
Web: xtreamaudio.com
Contact: Anthony Casuccio
Basic Rate: call for customized quote

NORTH CAROLINA

BLUEFIELD MASTERING

1408 Fairway Ridge Dr.
Raleigh, NC 27606
919-859-0102
Email: info@bluefieldmastering.com
Web: bluefieldmastering.com
Contact: Jeff Carroll
Basic Rate: please call or Email

CATALYST RECORDING

Contact: Rob Tavaglione
Charlotte, NC
(704) 526-8400
Web: catalystrecording.com
Email: rob@catalystrecording.com
Text: 704-526-8400 — during business hours
only 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Basic Rate: please call or email

KITCHEN MASTERING

109 Brewer Ln., Ste. A
Carrboro, NC 27510
919-929-4494
Email: info@kitchenmastering.com
Web: kitchenmastering.com
Contact: Brent
Basic Rate: hourly and track rates available

STUDIO B MASTERING

821 Louise Ave.
Charlotte, NC 28204
704-372-9661
Email: dave@studiobmastering.com, joey@
studiobmastering.com
Web: studiobmastering.com
Contact: Dave Harris
Basic Rate: please call for info

OHIO

ACOUSTIK MUSIC, LTD.

511 W. College St.
Oberlin, OH 44074-1446

440-775-3681

Email: acoustikmusik@gmail.com
Web: acoustikmusik.com
Contact: Tom Bethel
Basic Rate: please call for info

CAULIFLOWER AUDIO

1305 W 80th St., Suite 104B
Cleveland, OH. 44102
440-539-5457
Email: info@caulifloweraudio.com
Web: caulifloweraudio.com

THE DREAMCATCHERS RECORDING STUDIO

7384 E Main St. Suite B
Reynoldsburg, OH
614-434-6012
Email: info@thedreamcatchers.studio
Web: thedreamcatchers.studio

STARSOUND STUDIOS

10200 Royalton Rd. Ste 3
North Royalton, OH. 44133
216-374-8458
Email: starsoundstudioscleveland@gmail.com
Web: starsoundstudios.com

OKLAHOMA

KL MASTERING

25 S. Oklahoma Ave
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
405-410-2706
Email: kevinlivelymastering@gmail.com
Web: kevinlivelymastering.com

VEUX STUDIOS

6729 Well Oak Cir
Oklahoma City, OK 73127
323-486-3193
Email: booking@veuxstudios.com
Web: veuxstudios.com
Contact: James Conner

OREGON

CRAZY DAISY PRODUCTIONS

Beaverton, OR 97008
541-517-1458
Email: info@crazymastering.com
Web: crazymastering.com

FOSTER MASTERING

4711 S.E. 26th Ave.
Portland, OR 97202
503-222-9444
Email: ryan@fostermastering.com
Web: fostermastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

FUTURE DISC LLC

15851 N.W. Willis Rd.
McMinnville, OR 97128
213-361-0603
Email: steve@futurediscsystems.com
Web: futurediscsystems.com
Contact: Steve Hall
Basic Rate: please call for rates or more info

LIQUID MASTERING

1393 W 40th Ave,
Eugene, OR 97405
541-286-5434
Email: liquid@liquidmastering.com
Web: liquidmastering.com
Contact: Thaddeus Moore
Basic Rate: \$10/min of processed audio, Stem
Mastering, and Mixing available. Contact
for budget details. Any Style or Genre, Film
Audio, Podcasts, Forensic Recovery. 24 years
experience in audio.

SPECIALIZED MASTERING

15438 S.W. 81st. Ave.
Portland, OR 97224
503-866-8383
Email: dana@specializedmastering.com
Web: specializedmastering.com
Contact: Dana White
Basic Rate: please call for info

PENNSYLVANIA

IMMERSIVE MUSIC MEDIA GROUP, LLC

1630 Manheim Pike, Suite 3A
Lancaster, PA 17601
717-621-2441
Email: info@immgstudios.com
Web: immgstudios.com
Format: Digital, Dolby Atmos
Basic Rate: please call for info

MASTERING HOUSE INC., THE
Trythall Rd
Elverson, PA 19520
484-802-2624
Email: info@masteringhouse.com
Basic Rate: please call for info
Web: masteringhouse.com

SI STUDIOS
945 S. Main St.
Old Forge, PA 18518
570-457-0147
Email: tom@studios.com
Web: sistudios.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

TREELADY STUDIOS
1256 Franklin Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15221
412-816-0300
Email: info@treelady.com
Web: treelady.com
Basic Rate: please see web

RHODE ISLAND

STATIC PRODUCTIONS
46 Glenwood Dr.
North Kingstown, RI 02852
401-267-8236
Email: record@staticproductions.com
Web: staticproductions.com
Basic Rate: please call or see web

SOUTH CAROLINA

SIT N SPIN STUDIOS
10 Michael Dr.
Greenville, SC 29611
864-586-0557, 864-414-4855
Email: sitnspinstudios@gmail.com
Web: sitnspinstudios.com
Contact: Matt Morgan

STRAWBERRY SKYS RECORDING STUDIOS
1706 Platt Springs Rd.
West Columbia, SC 29169
803-794-9300
Email: info@strawberryskys.com
Web: strawberryskys.com
Basic Rate: call for rates

VLADO MELLER MASTERING
c/o Truphonic Studios
816B Saint Andrews Blvd.
Charleston, SC 29407
843-540-6953
Email: emma@vladomastering.com,
vlado@vladomastering.com,
paulwest@vladomastering.com
Web: vladomastering.com
Contact: Emma Stewart, Vlado Meller

TENNESSEE

BLACK MATTER MASTERING
601 Lemont Dr.
Nashville, TN 37216
615-424-6509
Email: dan@blackmattermastering.com
Web: blackmattermastering.com
Services: Mastering, lacquers, vinyl etching
Contact: Dan Emery
Basic Rates: Check Website for Rates

DAVE TOUGH PRODUCTIONS
Nashville, TN
615-554-6693
Email: dave@davetough.com, trehouston.info@gmail.com
Web: davetough.com
Contact: Dave
Basic Rate: \$75/hr - specializing in internet mastering

DIAMONDSC AUDIO
8161 Highway 100, Suite 262
Nashville, TN 37221
615-662-6870 (voice only), 615-212-8410 (text only)
Email: info@diamondscaudio.com
Web: diamondscaudio.com
Contact: Doug Diamond
Basic Rate: Mastering Package 'D' - \$30/song

EUPHONIC MASTERS
Arlington, TN
901-266-6075
Email: info@euphonicmasters.com
Web: euphonicmasters.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

FOXWOOD MASTERING
108 Foxwood Ln.
Franklin, TN 37069
615-297-3929
Email: info@foxwoodmastering.com
Web: foxwoodmastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

GEORGETOWN MASTERS AUDIO, LLC
33 Music Sq. W., Ste. 108b
Nashville, TN 37203 USA
615-254-3233 Fax 615-254-3237
Email: info@georgetownmasters.com
Web: georgetownmasters.com
Basic Rate: please call or see web

INDEPENDENT MASTERING
1312 16th Ave. S.
Nashville, TN 37212
615-425-0739
Email: eric@independentmastering.com
Web: independentmastering.com

MASTERFONICS
28 Music Sq. E.
Nashville, TN 37203
615-720-2761, 615-585-7197
Email: tommy@masterfonics.com
jr@masterfonics.com
Web: masterfonics.com
Contact: Tommy Dorsey, Jonathan Russell
Basic Rate: please call for info

MAYFIELD MASTERING
2825 Erica Pl.
Nashville, TN 37204
615-383-3708
Web: mayfieldmastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

STERLING SOUND
805 Meridian Street
Nashville, TN 37207
212-604-9433
Email: mark.glaser@sterling-sound.com
Web: sterling-sound.com
Basic Rate: please see web

TRUE EAST MASTERING
Nashville, TN
(615) 785-1749
Web: trueeastmastering.com
Email: alex@trueeastmastering.com

WOLF MASTERING
1024 16th Ave. S.
Nashville, TN 37212
615-351-1688
Email: wolfmastering@gmail.com
Contact: Erik Wolf
Basic Rate: \$85/hr. plus masters

TEXAS

AMBIENT DIGITAL
Houston, TX
888-808-DISC (3472)
Email: bob@ambientdigital.com
Web: ambientdigital.com
Contact: Bob Boyd
Basic Rate: please call for an estimate

DES MASTERING
1409 S. Lamar St., Ste. 100
Dallas, TX 75215
214-428-8777
Email: george@desmastering.com
Web: desmastering.com
Basic Rate: see website

FORT WORTH SOUND
306 S. Main St.
Ft. Worth, TX 76104
817-922-5444
Web: fortworthsound.com
Contact: Bart Rose
Basic Rate: please call for info

JO MUSIK
Sunnyvale, TX 75182
972-226-1265
Email: info@jomusik.com, joe@joemilton.com
Web: jomusik.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MASTERPIECE MASTERING
P.O. Box 2909
South Padre Island, TX 78597-2909
956-233-5326, (Austin) 512-289-3428

Email: info@legendaryaudio.com, billy@legendaryaudio.com
Web: legendaryaudio.com
Contact: Billy Stull
Basic Rate: call for rates

NEXUS RECORDING STUDIOS
8535 Fairhaven St.
San Antonio, TX
210-639-5266
Email: jason@nexusrecordingstudios.com
Web: nexusrecordingstudios.com
Contact: Jason Hatch
Basic Rate: please call for info

OTR MASTERING
Grapevine, TX
650-595-8475
Email: info@otrstudios.com
patrick@otrstudios.com
Web: otrstudios.com/mastering
Basic Rate: Please call for info

SONAR HOUSE STUDIOS
Austin, TX
512-270-8208
Web: sonarhousestudios.com

TERRA NOVA DIGITAL AUDIO, INC.
9600 Escarpment Blvd. #745-234
Austin, TX 78749
512-891-8010
Email: terranova.mastering@gmail.com
info@terranovamastering.com
Web: terranovamastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

VAULT RECORDING STUDIOS, THE
9135 Katy Fwy., Ste. 1
Houston, TX 77024
713-851-0265
Email: info@vaultrecording.com
Web: vaultrecording.com
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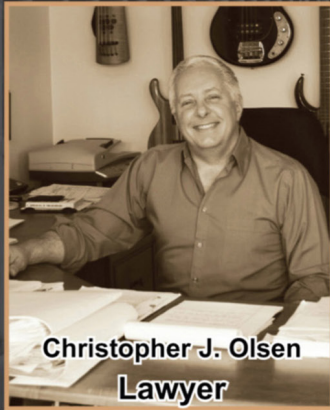
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Becoming an Entertainer

Moving Beyond Solely Singing

I wasn't quite out of my teens when I withdrew from college and entered into the world of touring, rolling from city to city in a school bus painted silver with 'London Fog' in big black letters on the side. Hotels and night clubs were our venues, playing Top 40 songs six nights a week, a four-piece band behind me, the singer. Singing itself was never an issue for me. The trouble was the time between songs. Our drummer would take over the job of talking to the audience while I would blush and clam up, unsure of what to say, and nervous to begin the next song. When the drummer got called for a gig with a major rock band, the responsibility of speaking to the crowd now lay solely with me. I knew then that my ability would need to grow beyond simply singing, I needed to become an entertainer, and one with poise.

You may ask, how does one do that?

1. Be prepared! Know your song well before you start singing.

2. Write song introductions, band introductions, and between song banter, and rehearse it. You are performing the whole time you are onstage. It's not limited to the time the songs are being sung.

3. Prepare yourself for your performance. Wear clothing you are comfortable in, pray or meditate beforehand, and make sure you are well nourished—if you are concerned with anything other than your performance, your audience will be too. Experiment with your preparation and find a routine that works for you.

4. Find your fans in the audience. Give to those who are giving to you.

5. Be authentic! Your audience will see through your veneer if you try to be someone you're not.

Today, I love being on stage, talking to my audience and connecting with them. I enjoy large venues but also intimate settings with a small audience that is more conducive to connection.

I think authenticity and honesty with the crowd makes the artist more approachable, and opens the door for personal interactions that make the night so special. Comments such as: "I love your stage presence, you're so real and down to earth," "I've been having such a difficult time. Your voice helped me so much, thank you," or "I enjoy your angelic voice, it brings me peace and joy," are the words that confirm my convictions that I am on the right path.

A Few Thoughts

Stay focused on what it is that you want in the business, then surround yourself with like-minded people. Bring that knowledge and passion onto the stage.

Never compare yourself to others. Look at people who are successful doing what you want to do and learn from them. Be happy for them.

You are unique. Rejection is a big part of this business. Keep optimism and persistence, though. The answer is "NO" if you don't ask.



Niagara Falls-native, National recording artist **DeeAnn DiMeo** has her roots anchored in gospel, blues/jazz, and soul. In 2019, she was inducted into the Niagara Falls Music Hall of Fame and has won multiple Buffalo Music awards for Best Female Vocalist. She has fronted several bands as the lead singer and primary songwriter, receiving airplay across the country in college and jazz stations with previous projects and currently with her new album *It's My Time* with Neal Sapper. deeanmusic.com

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