

WINTER 2007 Volume 9 Number 3

Songwriters

magazine

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Rising

THEME SPIRIT

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ALEXISONFIRE

HEATING UP POST-HARDCORE

PLUS Bluebird North, Wonderful Workshops and The Fabulous Wells Brothers

Setting S.A.C. Sights on Sites, Sounds and Songposium

As fall fades into winter, I'm extremely pleased to announce that a number of different S.A.C. programs will be warming up songwriters as we head into the colder months - some familiar, some new and all of them an opportunity to encourage your creativity and sharpen your business acumen.

First, I'm very pleased to announce that Songposium 2.0 is taking place in five cities across the country, targeting the urban, country and pop music fields.

Featuring some amazing industry professionals including July Black, Steve Wilkinson, Derek Brin, John Capek and our own Haydain Neale among others, Songposium 2.0 will be visiting the Holiday Inn on King in Toronto on November 25-26; the Metropolitan Hotel in Vancouver on December 2-3; the Fairmont Palliser Hotel in Calgary January 13-14, 2007; the Holiday Inn in Guelph on January 20-21 and the Delta Barrington Hotel in Halifax on February 3-4.

Bluebird North will also be visiting five cities including Edmonton on January 19; Ottawa on January 27; Halifax on February 2; St. John's on February 9-10 and Whitehorse on February 16.

Look for announcements for these great programs on our www.songwriters.ca website and plan to attend. Better yet, bring a friend!

It's also my great pleasure to announce a brand new program called Bluebird In The Schools - an opportunity for young people to get exposed to great Canadian songwriters.

We hope that Bluebird In The Schools will offer a window into the School Alliance of Student Songwriters program that is already in many schools across the country (www.sasscanada.net).

On a personal note, I'd like to thank those of you who called to welcome me in my new post. I have spent recent months getting to know some of you either by phone or in person at events or here at our Toronto head office. I have also spent time meeting with music industry folks, getting accustomed to the lay of the land and learning more about the Songwriters Association of Canada's goals and future plans.

In early September, S.A.C. president Haydain Neale and I were in Ottawa and met with several officials from Heritage Canada, including those responsible for developing copyright policy. As you may be aware, the Federal government is in the process of reviewing copyright law and is hoping to table new legislation soon.

As a creator-driven group, our hope is to have our voice heard loud and clear in terms of speaking for songwriters on the important issues. In speaking to songwriters, the common interest is to encourage digital distribution, as it is a fantastic means of distributing music.

The caveat here is that most writers would prefer to find a way to monetize the system so that they can be compensated fairly for downloads of their music. The manner in which the world listens to music has evolved and both the industry and the legislation need to keep up with the times.

Having a strong volume of music available dig-

itally is an advantage for those who want to ensure their music is "out there" for the world to hear.

The S.A.C. was also present at a number of important conferences. The first, Copycamp, involved a three-day session in Toronto September 28-30 that exposed all types of creators to various copyright challenges and options facing the world today.

The other was the Future of Music Policy Summit, held in Montreal during the POP Montreal festival October 5-7. Both events offered excellent information on directions the music industry is taking and are events that anyone serious about their craft should try to attend. I recommend checking out websites for information on these past events (www.copycamp.ca and www.thefutureofmusic.org)

I was also fortunate to attend the Ontario Council Of Folk Festivals (OCFF) conference in Ottawa from October 12-15. The S.A.C. sponsored three events, with Blair Packham hosting a fantastic demo critique panel called "Hey Big Ears!" Blair also did a fine job of lining up the talent for the post-midnight songwriter showcase at the notorious S.A.C. Pajama Party. Thanks to those of you who came decked out in your best PJs.



PJam Session:

Executive Director Don Quarles and OCFE Songs From The Heart contest winner Ana Miura compare fashions at the S.A.C. Pajama Party.

The third event was the Estelle Klein Award interview with this year's recipient Richard Flohil, conducted by songwriter / media personality / S.A.C. Board member Christopher Ward.

On a final note, some of you have been helping to beta-test our website and we appreciate the extra effort in helping us work through the kinks. If you haven't yet done so, please visit www.songwriters.ca and have a look around!

We are working on a Members Community page called SongPage that will allow you to upload MP3 files of your songs, copies of your lyrics, and also encourage you to interact with other songwriters.

This will enable them to know about your strengths as a writer and inform them of your current successes (CD releases, song cuts, demos or events.) This promises to be a great co-writing and collaborative meeting place. We're anxiously awaiting its launch!

I look forward to seeing you at S.A.C. events this coming year and hope that you will take advantage of our member benefits! ☺

Don Quarles

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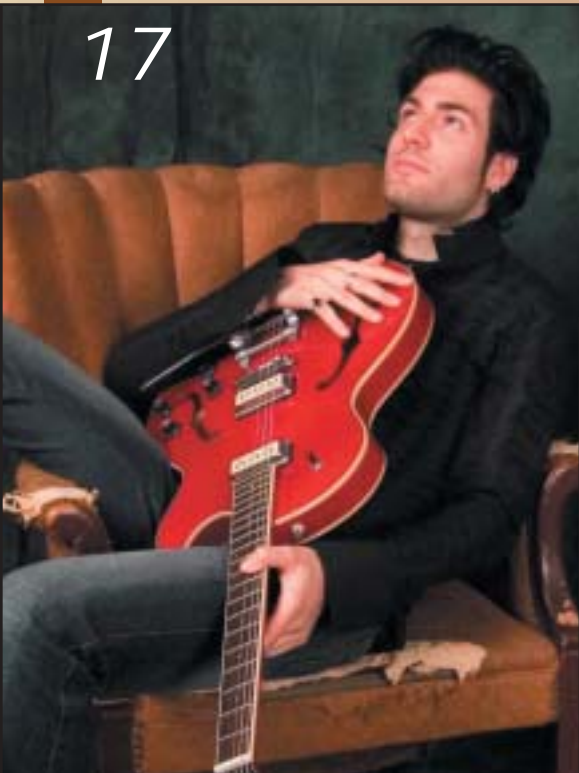
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CSHF AWARD PHOTO USED BY PERMISSION
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PHOTO: COURTESY CSHF

CSHF INDUCTS MITCHELL, FERLAND, CARTER AND "SPINNING WHEEL"

Montana Slim is! So is the most influential female singer and songwriter of the 20th and 21st centuries; a prolific French-Canadian icon and a song that's been covered by over 400 artists ranging from

Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee to NRBQ and Oscar Peterson.

Joni Mitchell, Jean-Pierre Ferland, the late Wilf "Montana Slim" Carter and the Blood, Sweat and Tears classic "Spinning Wheel" are among the 31 announced inductees to the 2007 Canadian Songwriters Hall Of Fame (CSHF) gala ceremony, co-sponsored by the Songwriters Association Of Canada and scheduled for January 28 at the Toronto Convention Centre.

The show, to be co-hosted by Andrew Young and Sophie duRocher, is an annual bilingual celebration of Canadian songs and songwriters who have had a resonating cultural impact both at home and abroad.

There's no argument regarding the resounding weight of Fort MacLeod, Alberta's Joni Mitchell on the world of popular music. As an innovative singer, poet, guitarist and painter whose phrasing, imagery and sense of arrangement is as unique as it is life-altering, it would be tough to find someone who hasn't been influenced by Mitchell, 63.

A Companion of The Order of Canada and a Rock 'N Roll Hall Of Fame member among her many accolades, Joni Mitchell will be inducted along with a handful of popular songs from her canon: "Big Yellow Taxi," "Both Sides Now," "Help Me," "Woodstock" and "You Turn Me On, I'm A Radio."

Montreal-born Jean-Pierre Ferland, 73, has had his songs covered by Ginette Reno, Céline Dion, Nathalie Simard and Claude Dubois among others, but his own hit "Je reviens chez nous" and his 1970 album *Jaune* helped change the course of the Quebec music scene.

Along with his Grand prix du festival du disque-winning "Je reviens chez nous," Ferland's "Le Petit Roi" (written with Michel Robidoux), "T'es mon amour, t'es ma maîtresse" (written with Jean-Pierre Lauzon), "Ton Visage" (written with Paul De Magerie) and "Un peu plus haut, un peu plus loin" will accompany him into the CSHF.

Along with Bob Nolan and Hank Snow, Port Hilford, Nova Scotia's Wilf Carter (1904-1996) put Canadian country music on the

map. A first-class yodeler who was introduced to Canadians through Calgary radio station CFCN in 1929, and found audiences in the U.S. -- where he was known as Montana Slim -- and Australia.

A Canadian Country Music Hall Of Famer, "The Father Of Canadian Country Music" will be inducted into the CSHF along with his songs "My Old Canadian Home," "My Swiss Moonlight Lullaby" and "There's a Love Knot in My Lariat."

Born in Surrey, England and raised in Willowdale, Ontario, David Clayton-Thomas was lead singer of Blood, Sweat and Tears when he penned "Spinning Wheel," which topped the *Billboard* Adult Contemporary charts and peaked at No. 2 on the Pop charts, helping the band sell over 10 million albums of its self-titled debut worldwide and earning a Grammy Award for Best Arrangement Accompanying Vocals. Written, according to Clayton-Thomas, in 15 minutes, "Spinning Wheel" was the first self-penned hit of many for Blood, Sweat and Tears.

Other inducted pieces of Canadian gold include Sylvia Tyson's "You Were On My Mind," -- the first song she ever wrote -- "Dans nos vieilles maisons" by Muriel Millard; "How About You?" by Ralph Freed and Burton Lane; Marc Hamilton's "Comme J'ai Toujours Envie D'Aimer;" "Des croissants de soleil" by Jean Robitaille and Lee Gagnon; "Je ne suis qu'une chanson" by Diane Juster; Georges Langford's "Le Frigidaire;" and "Paquetville" by Lise Aubut and Édith Butler.

Broadway and Hollywood movie lyricist Raymond B. Egan, who co-wrote song inductees "Ain't We Got Fun?" (written with Gus Khan and Richard Whiting) and "Sleepy Time Gal" (written with Joseph R. Alden, Ange Lorenzo and Richard

Whiting) is also a Pioneer Inductee; as is the 1842 Acadian anthem "Un Canadien Errant," written by Antoine Gerin-Lajoie.

The 2007 Canadian Music Publisher Association (CMPA) Legacy Award recipient is St. Stephen, New Brunswick native Henry Burr, who recorded under a dozen pseudonyms, co-writing "Stand Up and Sing for Your Father" and "Old-time Tune." Between 1903 and 1922, Burr recorded 16 No. 1 hits including "In The Shade of The Old Apple Tree" and one of the first recordings of "When You And I Were Young, Maggie," co-written by Canadian George W. Johnson.

Meanwhile, Sam Gesser is the recipient of the Prix Du Patrimoine Frank Davies 2007. A Montreal-based folk music impresario who has produced more than 100 records by Canadian artists, Gesser, 76, a Member of the Order Of Canada and active concert promoter, is also responsible for recording thousands of singers for Allied/Folkways Records.

Though performers are still to be announced, tickets for the 4th Annual Gala at the John Basset Theatre range from \$50 to \$175 and are available through the CSHF website at www.cansong.ca.

Founded in 1998 by noted music publisher Frank Davies, the CSHF is a national, bilingual and apolitical non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Canada's rich songwriting heritage.

The CSHF held its first annual gala in 2003, and with the upcoming ceremony, will have inducted 78 songs, 22 songwriters and 10 Legacy Award recipients. ☺

PHOTO: COURTESY WARNER MUSIC CANADA



It's all about connection...

In this series of articles, we will talk to some successful Canadian songwriters who make a living at their craft, to hear their behind-the-scenes stories about how their songs first came to the attention of some big artists, as well as what they've observed about the business of songwriting. In this issue, Kerry Doole talks with Greg Wells and his brother Rob, a rare Canadian fraternal success story whose combined credits include Céline Dion, Rufus Wainwright, Nick Lachey, Backstreet Boys, Canadian Idol Melissa O'Neil, Natasha Bedingfield, Lindsay Lohan, Aerosmith and Ms. "That's Hot" herself, Paris Hilton.

Greg Wells

Born and raised in Peterborough, Ontario, the Wells brothers Greg and Rob -- sons of a United Church minister -- have followed very different paths to attain their individual achievements.

Greg, 37, left the family home at 17 to attend Toronto's Humber College to study music. He played keyboards for Kim Mitchell and secured a Canada Council grant to study with composer and arranger Clare Fischer in Los Angeles. Once in L.A., impresario Miles Copeland discovered and commissioned Greg to record his first and only album under the pseudonym Silas Loder. Copeland also invited Greg to attend his annual songwriting retreat at his 14th century castle, Chateau Marouate in southern France, where Wells teamed up with Carole King and Mark Hudson to write "The Reason," covered by Céline Dion on her album *Let's Talk About Love* and selling over 31 million copies worldwide. Another year at the same event, he met King's daughter, Louise Goffin, and the now married pair have two children together.

Initially signed to Rondor Music on the strength of an Aerosmith cover ("Fall Together" -- available on the Japanese edition of *Nine Lives*), Greg has been part of the EMI Music Publishing roster the past three years.

Rob Wells

Rob, 34, is a late bloomer on the songwriting scene. He initially learned piano through osmosis as Greg and his mother Judy were constantly tickling the ivories. Rob took a year of lessons from Mom, but learned mostly by ear, joining numerous bands and eventually enrolling in Toronto's Etobicoke School for the Arts, which exposed him to a recording studio for the first time.

Employed for three summers as a performer at Canada's Wonderland theme park, Rob got married at 21 and decided to temporarily forego music as a profession in favour of computer animation. He kept his hand at songwriting, and scored his first Canadian Top 10 hit in

2003 with "What Went On" by Vancouver's Hip Joint featuring Craig Smart. The real momentum began when Rob participated in numerous *Canadian Idol* songwriting camps, co-authoring "Alive" and "Let It Go" for Calgary's Melissa O'Neil.

In February 2005, Rob signed with Sony ATV Music Publishing Canada. Since then he's written and produced three songs on Nick Lachey's *What's Left Of Me*, including the singer's current single "I Can't Hate You Anymore," and will be contributing two songs to the next Backstreet Boys album.

"The Reason" — Céline Dion

Greg: I am forever indebted to Miles Copeland. I initially came to LA to get a record deal and a cassette tape of the

The first day on that trip I met Carole King. We were put in a room with Mark Hudson to write a song. We wrote a song called "The Reason;" Céline Dion ended up recording it. I spoke to her producer George Martin on the telephone, and all he wanted to do was thank me for helping write the song!

The truth behind that song was that both Mark and I had cuts on Aerosmith's *Nine Lives* album. Mark said they were looking for a big power ballad. After writing it, we cut the demo as if Aerosmith was rocking out. It couldn't have sounded further removed from something you'd imagine Céline would consider, or so we thought. Although Steven Tyler apparently loved it, Aerosmith passed on it. However, Céline liked the aggressive aspect of it and at the end of the demo Mark is doing these high Steven Tyler nuances that she actually does on her version. It was a Top Five single throughout Europe, though never a single in North America. It was like winning the songwriters' lottery: Hardly anyone ever sells 31 million records!

I've been to the castle seven times, and my third time back, Carole brought her daughter Louise. She's now my wife. We have two boys and Carole is my mother-in-law, so personally it has been huge.

I've learned so much from watching guys like Paul Brady, Desmond Child, Mark Hudson -- I've met Peter Murphy from Bauhaus, Belinda Carlisle, Hanson, The Buzzcocks' Pete Shelley: there is something magical about being there.

"Let It Go" — Melissa O'Neil

Rob: Our dad passed away from a serious illness in August last year, which was really heavy on our family. The two of us used to talk late at night at the hospital: we'd talk about his family and how he had a disagreement with one of his sisters where they never really came to terms. Dad got quite depressed and vowed, "I'm going to write her a letter to tell her how much I love her," but he lost the strength to do that. Soon he passed away with all



first few songs I ever wrote wound up in Miles' hands. We made the *Silas Loder* record really fast for I.R.S. Records. Miles neglected to mention that it was going bankrupt at the time, so a few thousand copies were released before EMI put a large padlock on the door. The record tanked, but Miles started inviting me to his songwriting retreat at this castle he owns in the southwest of France.

When I went for the first time, I didn't really consider myself a songwriter. I felt a bit lost there and I had to be convinced to go back the next year. That's when things really kicked in: I had a blast. I met so many kindred spirits and really felt that songwriting was what I was supposed to be doing.

of this inside him.

I wrote "Let It Go" with Rupert Gayle and Alonzo. We'd all shared similar personal experiences, and we wanted to write a song with the message, "Don't sweat the small stuff."

There are parts in the opening verse where it's like I'm talking to my dad and telling him to be positive. We also wanted to write a song that was stylistically like Foo Fighters' "Everlong" or Billy Idol's "Rebel Yell" that would help fuel that lyrical fire within us. Alonzo came in with the name of the song and it exploded from there: I don't usually write lyrics unless I have to, but on that song it came flowing from all three of us. We were all on the same page.

Initially, we wrote it with Rex Goudie in mind, but it went to Melissa.

It's always interesting to hear something that is so personal to you on the radio and sung to the masses. It's also crazy watching 1000 screaming fans singing "Let It Go" along with Melissa and knowing that it means something to every one of them.

"Confessions Of A Broken Heart (Daughter To Father)" — Lindsay Lohan

Greg: I'm proud of Lindsay Lohan's song "Confessions of a Broken Heart (Daughter to Father)" that I produced and co-wrote with Kara DioGuardi and Lindsay. I know a lot of girls resonated with the heartbreak in the lyric, and as we know, Lindsay's troubled story with her dad is all too public. Kara was executive-producing Lindsay's record and we had blocked out some time to write. Lindsay had sent her some poetry and we started going through it. There were some particularly moving lines about her father and that started us on the song. I knew we had something when I came home, played the initial demo for my wife Louise and she was

in tears by the end. I hope some parents watched that video and thought twice about acting out in front of their kids.

"Resolution," "I Can't Hate You Anymore," "Everywhere But Here" — Nick Lachey

Rob: Greg has been working with artists of this stature for quite a while now, but it was one of my first ventures working on a big American record. Greg sent an e-mail to Teresa LaBarbara Whites -- A&R for Jive/Zomba -- saying "Here's my brother. I'd like to introduce you." She immediately wrote me back, and we started an e-mail conversation that progressed into me actually flying down to L.A. and working with Nick Lachey. Teresa was already a huge fan of "Alive" but Greg's e-mail got the ball rolling.

I spent four days in January with Nick and two other really good writers down in L.A. that I work with all the time — Lindy Robbins and Jess Cates. We were locked up in the studio with him for four days. There was a very interesting moment when, for nearly two hours, he sat down with us and talked to us about the whole situation of his breakup with Jessica Simpson, the separation, and his relationship with the whole Simpson family, and that helped us write both "I Can't Hate You Anymore" and "Resolution." We basically went from that room right into the studio where the piano was, and just started coming up with the song. It came pretty quickly, thanks to that conversation."

Editor's note: Greg also placed a tune on *What's Left Of Me* that he produced: "Ghosts," co-written with Jamie Cullum and Kara DioGuardi.

On writing lyrics

Greg: I don't really have the gene of great lyrics. That one bypassed me. I'm definitely driving musically when I'm in a co-writing situation. However, having developed over the years a confidence about what a good or bad lyric is, I'm a good editor and I often jump in.

But that is more like producing the lyric rather than rolling my sleeves up and putting pen to paper. I'm really good at writing bad lyrics!

Rob: I'm sort of in the same boat, though there have been a couple of times where I have written a lot of the lyric if it is personal. I find that if it is really personal, it flows a lot easier. There is a song Melissa O'Neil had on the radio up here called 'Let It Go,' and

that was a real personal issue for me that I wanted to get out. That one came really easily, but I do prefer to sit back and let those who do it really well do it.

On creative brotherly love

Greg: Whenever we finish a song, we MP3 it to each other and ask for criticism, good or bad. We always reach out to see what the other thinks. There's the occasional bruised ego, but you'll know you'll get a candid answer from your own sibling. Once Greg compared one of my songs to a Dave Koz track...

Greg: No, I didn't compare -- I just joked that you wanted Dave Koz to play sax on it. I have a perverse fascination with pop culture, whereas Rob's musical taste — which has served him very well — has always been considerably more mainstream.

Rob: The very first record I bought was by Sha Na Na. For some reason I really gravitated towards '50s pop songs and classic chord structures -- and that eventually blossomed into '80s and '90s Top 40 radio.

Greg: Rob has a real innate understanding of the architecture of what makes a pop song. For me it is more of a struggle to get to that place.

Rob: The great thing about Greg is that he can go in any particular musical direction he wants because he's so well versed.

Greg: It's only in the last 18 months that I've been considered for any pop records. I was doing artier stuff like Rufus Wainwright and Otep - things I am really proud of but that didn't necessarily sell a lot of records.

About work/life balance

Greg: I used to work all the time, but becoming a Dad made me realize that although music, art and expression are amazing, life is way more amazing -- the good and the bad. As corny as this sounds, the more life you let in, the more you have to talk about and the better your music becomes.

Rob: When I was first starting out, I was grabbing at anything and everything that was coming along. With a new family of two young boys, I'm trying to maximize my time at home while trying to secure good projects that are musically satisfying. So I am being very selective. I also get a lot of inspiration being with my family and spending time with them generates tons of great ideas. Many of my life experiences tend to play a part in the songwriting process, so it's great being able to have time with my family and really enjoy what life is all about. ☺

Kerry Doole is a veteran Toronto-based freelance music writer who prefers the music of Joe Ely to the music of J-Lo.





BURT HARRIS

Copyright Advocate Succumbs to Cancer

The creative community lost a good friend on November 2 when Vancouver music and entertainment lawyer Burt Harris passed away following a long battle with cancer.

"Songwriters, musicians and recording artists all owe Burt a debt of gratitude," says Bill Henderson, songwriter, recording artist, S.A.C. director, and

founder of The Collectors, Chilliwack, UHF and the Artist Rights Coalition along with Harris and Marc LaFrance.

According to Henderson, Harris is one of the primary reasons that the Copyright Act amendments recognizing and establishing Neighbouring Rights and Private Copying actually benefit creators and artists.

"Burt and I and Marc LaFrance spent a few years trying to influence amendments to the Copyright Act that were being made in the mid-to-late '90s so that they would be supportive, in a real way, of musicians, recording artists and songwriters.

"As a result, a clause in the amended Copyright Act gave artists and songwriters an opportunity to own the new rights being granted to them - Neighbouring Rights and Private Copying being the major ones - instead of having the rights scooped up by record companies and publishers through nasty catch-all clauses that are generally found in their contracts.

"Without Burt's legal expertise, his ability to think and articulate with great precision and his incredible passion for making a fairer working environment for musicians, this would never have happened.

"That was just one of his many contributions to our culture."

Born in Drumheller, Alberta, Harris, who was 48, worked as a professional drummer for 15 years in the Western provinces before pursuing the bar and counseling artists on copyright law, artist rights and music-related contracts.

He co-authored the 1994 Report of the B.C. Advisory Committee on the Status of the Artist and prepared a 1996 position paper for the Vancouver Musicians' Association on the amendments to the Copyright Act.

Harris also contributed to the lobbying efforts of the Artists' Rights Coalition, focusing on copyright law from the performer's perspective.

A founding board member of Music BC (The Pacific Music Industry Association), Harris was with the national law firm of Heenan Blaikie from 1997-2000 before establishing his own practice in Vancouver.

An advocate for musician rights, he tirelessly promoted the artist's position in intellectual property, labour relations and occupational health and safety. Harris was recognized for his efforts in 2001 with a Volunteer Spirit West Coast Music Award.

"He was a great guy and it's very sad that he's gone at such an early age," said Bill Henderson.

"His spirit will live on in his friends, family and in the community of creative people that he so passionately and selflessly supported."

In honour of his memory, the B.C. Foundation for Music Assistance is starting up the Burt Harris Memorial Scholarship Fund. Tax-deductible donations will be gratefully accepted at:

BC Foundation for Music Assistance
501-425 Carrall St., Vancouver, BC V6B 6E3

For more information phone (604) 873-1914 or email info@musicbc.org

First Echo:

Winnipeg punk rockers Propagandhi are \$5000 richer after winning the inaugural indie-driven, SOCAN-sponsored ECHO Songwriting Prize for the song "A Speculative Fiction." Celebrating L-R are: SOCAN representative Rodney Murphy with Propagandhi members Todd Kowalski, Dave Guillas, Chris Hannah, Jordan Samolesky and SOCAN representative Dan Kershaw.



PHOTO: WARNER MUSIC CANADA



Written A Song? Want To Publish It? Here Are Some Tips.

By PAUL SANDERSON

What is a music publishing company?

Some would say music publishing is “a phone, a computer and some copyrights”. It can be more fully described as the “administration, promotion, exploitation and protection of all the musical copyrights which one owns or controls.” The performing rights (i.e., the rights to perform the work in public), which are part of musical copyrights, are a limited exception to the above definition. The performing rights society (SOCAN) obtains these rights, by an assignment agreement. See www.socan.ca for more information.

What is music publishing?

Under the Copyright Act publishing is the “issue of copies” of a work to the public. The issue of copies to the public implies tangible copies such as printed sheet music, rather than the licensing of intangible copyrights.

In practice, music publishing is the licensing and exploitation of musical copyrights, which are intangible. This could be done by the songwriter, whether or not they have formed a publishing company.

What are the functions of a music publisher?

Creative, promotional, business affairs and administration of musical copyrights.

Should a composer or songwriter have his/her own publishing company?

The answer is probably yes, the cost is nominal: See film and television rights below. If you have a catalogue of a number of musical copyrights, you might enter into a co-publishing or administration agreement and receive the benefit of advances against royalties and a music publisher's expertise.

What rights are required when using music in film and television?

- i) A synchronization licence to synchronize visual images with music. This licence is granted by a publisher, or by the CMRRA (Canadian Musical Reproduction Rights Agency), which is a non-exclusive agent for publisher members. See www.cmrra.ca for more information.
- ii) If using an original recording you need a “master use” licence. This is distinct from the synchronization and mechanical licence usually held by a record company that is required to make a contrivance (e.g. a record).
- iii) Also to be considered are AFM musicians' reuse fees, and pension and trust fund payments which are relevant to the above-noted licences, and whether the writer's moral rights are to be waived.

What royalties are payable pursuant to Songwriter / Publisher agreements?

It depends, based on the type of agreement entered into, for example, a co-publishing, sub-publishing or administration agreement.

The songwriter's and publisher's share of net income in a



so-called “standard” songwriter's publishing agreement are as follows:

- a) 50/50 of net income from performing, synchronization and mechanical rights;
- b) 50/50 net income from unspecified uses (includes synchronization income);
- c) 10.5% to 12.5% of retail (or wholesale) for print royalties.

Note: There are many other types of publishing agreements and divisions in net income that may be applicable. One should obtain skilled business and legal advice before signing any agreement.

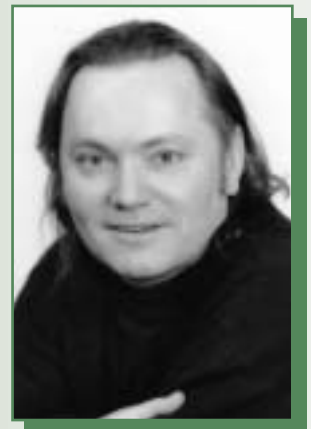
What are some of the other relevant and specific terms of music publishing agreements?

- i) Net income should be defined.
- ii) Foreign income which is subject to collection fees: e.g. 15-25% of gross income in given territory.
- iii) 'Reserve' against returns – usually to protect the record company and not really applicable in a publishing agreement unless print copies are made.
- iv) The use of songwriter's name and likeness.
- v) An accounting and audit clause.
- vi) Reversion of rights: e.g. for failure to exploit copyright or failure to account and/or allow audit.
- vii) Advances payable against royalties. For example, an advance could be based on performance obligations such as album releases and sales plateaus.

Conclusion

This is a complex legal area and songwriters should get specialized professional help. The above information is general only and in a specific situation skilled advice should be obtained.

Paul Sanderson is an entertainment lawyer who entered private practice after having spent several years as a professional musician. He has practical experience as a songwriter, guitarist, keyboard player, and is a publisher and writer member of SOCAN. He is also the author of Musicians and the Law In Canada, now in its third revised edition.



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EMI Music Publishing Powers Rossi To Rock Star Victory

By KEITH CARMAN

Lukas Rossi is a household name.

Across the country, discussions about our newest star are taking place around water coolers, in classrooms, at the local gym, and in bank line-ups. Six months ago you didn't know who he was. But after spending three nights a week with him for the entire summer, we know him, we love him and we want to see him when he hits the road for a world tour early 2007.

However, one question comes to mind: Where did Rossi come from?

Rossi is now celebrating his glorious victory, successively defeating 25,000 worldwide competitors to become winner of CBS reality TV show *Rock Star: Supernova*. Now comes the whirlwind career of writing, recording and touring the world with fellow Rock Star Supernova band mates Tommy Lee (Motley Crue), Jason Newsted (Metallica, Voivod) and Gilby Clarke (Guns 'N' Roses) with the release of their eponymous debut album -- although ex-Black Crowes bassist Johnny Colt is filling in for the shoulder-injured Newsted on the road.

Yet this is not the first time Rossi was handpicked from the throngs of universal talent. How did it come about that a virtual unknown took centre stage in the world of rock?

Thank his music publishing company. Working closely with Rossi since 2003, EMI Music Publishing Canada has diligently nurtured this grassroots talent, incorporating their own raw materials of time, funds and other professionals in order to ensure his songwriting ability and prime set of vocal chords did not go unnoticed.

Championed by EMI Music Publishing Canada president Michael McCarty and Barbara Sedun, (vice-president, Creative), Rossi seemed a perfect fit in their eyes for *Rock Star: Supernova*.

"We really felt that he was a potential superstar, and all he needed was the right vehicle to plug into," says McCarty. "This show seemed like that vehicle to us."

Yet Rossi himself didn't believe his place was on the reality TV program.

"Barb booked an audition for him in Toronto but he was very reluctant to go and missed it," notes McCarty. "Eventually we got him to agree to go to the Vancouver audition. It was a great opportunity."

"Reality-based music TV shows don't get the respect they deserve. Where else have you heard and seen on a weekly basis such smoking live rock music on primetime television?

"They are the new paradigm -- your career starts off with a giant worldwide audience, and it is up to the artist to then take advantage of that platform by making great music."

Some artists, McCarty notes, have transcended their association with *American Idol*-type reality shows.

"Kelly Clarkson has successfully made the transition from TV celebrity to credible pop music artist and there is no reason why Lukas can't do so as well. He has the serious music talent and drive, and all the other members of the band really see this as the next long-term chapter in their careers."

He just needed the exposure. Funding Rossi's travel expenses out of her own pocket on faith alone, Barb Sedun's gamble confirmed another win for EMI Music Publishing Canada's foresight concerning independent talent.

Rossi is not alone in receiving the strong hand of EMI Music Publishing Canada assistance: Sum 41, Alexisonfire, Billy Talent, Three Days Grace, Moist, Gavin Brown, Len, Matthew Good, and a long list of others who you will be surely hearing about very soon have all benefited from the company's expanded role in their careers.

With an inherent belief in their self-contained artist writers, McCarty and Sedun work behind the scenes to ensure their artists have the tools at hand to succeed at their craft, especially in an environment where record labels are investing less in gradual career development.

In fact, the realm of EMI Music Canada Publishing investment runs the gamut from constant songwriting sessions in their downtown Toronto office ("in the spirit of Motown where talent would breed talent, friendships forged and great songs written," McCarty notes) to group field trips for writers and artists -- to even financing tattoos and rehab costs, if it helps realize a career of song generation.

"We are partners in the ownership of the rights to songs, as opposed to recordings," says McCarty. "Our job is to help make things happen for the songwriters and their songs, and then we try to maximize their earning potential."

"We license intellectual property of the songs to record companies, radio, video games, movies, ringtones, online downloads -- anywhere to anybody who wants to use the songs."

The track record of EMI Music Publishing Canada-sponsored acts speaks for itself: sales of 12 million albums in the past 13 years, generating \$100 million in wholesale record label revenue.

The final word goes to Rossi himself, who co-wrote five songs on the new *Rock Star Supernova* album.

"I have a lot to thank EMI Publishing for. Before they signed me my band had broken up and I was practically homeless. Now I'm recording an album with my idols, staying at Tommy Lee's place and preparing for a world tour."

"I love these guys!" ☺



NOVA HEART: EMI's Barb Sedun and Mike McCarty sandwich TV champ Lukas Rossi

SONGPOSIUM 2.0 -- STRAIGHT TALK, NO ADDITIVES

You can always build a better mousetrap. The same rings true for the craft of songwriting, with one major difference: hopefully, you'll avoid using an excessive amount of cheese as bait.

The art of saying things a little differently was just one of the useful pieces of advice offered to aspiring tunesmiths during Songposium 2.0, held November 25-26 at Toronto's Holiday Inn.

The Toronto event presented a number of Canadian music industry experts -- Songwriters Association Of Canada president and jacksoul principal Haydain Neale; esteemed rapper and hip-hop producer Choclair; Universal Music Canada New Media marketing guru Janis Nixon and producer and engineer Byram Joseph, a.k.a., Slakah The Beatchild -- doling out valuable insight, analysis and insider experience to those interested in gaining a foothold both creatively and professionally.

But Songposium 2.0 isn't just about cramming in words to fit your melodic phrase or having your music dissected by an accomplished group of your peers: Nixon's presence allowed songwriters to discover the avenues of Internet marketing, while Slakah offered the 411 on some of the latest composition-assisting studio gear and software programs out on the street.

After all, these days it's almost as much about getting the word out as it is about creating the words, as Haydain Neale noted in

his introductory remarks.

"The important thing to me is to broaden the songwriter," said the S.A.C.'s Neale.

"We want to be teaching the up and comers how they fit in. Our job is to keep you on the path so you don't have to bang your head against the wall creatively."

Patrons who attended Songposium 2.0 got the best of both worlds. "The first day was one of public seminars; the second was spent in smaller groups with mentors -- like the phenomenal singer and songwriter Jully Black -- who provided valuable input concerning song arrangements, inspiration and answers to inquiries about music industry procedures.

"The addition of a second day to Songposium, where everyone gets to spend time in smaller groups with these mentors, has been a huge success!" notes S.A.C. executive director Don Quarles.

As Quarles observes, however, you don't have to be urban or pop to glean useful information that can be applied to your own career.

"Even though Songposium 2.0 has been focusing on genre-specific music, all participants have been benefiting from the insights of these great industry pros," he remarks.

Networking is also an invaluable aspect of Songposium 2.0: Not only do you establish connections with self-contained artists who have already navigated the obstacle course that is the music industry, but you're also meeting potential collaborators and business contacts.

"It's great," says Thane St. Andrew, a songwriter who arrived in Toronto a few years ago from Calgary and was at Toronto's Songposium 2.0.

"You can get pointers on what works and what doesn't because these people are in the industry. Your friends and family can tell you they love your songs, but it only goes so far. These people know the industry."

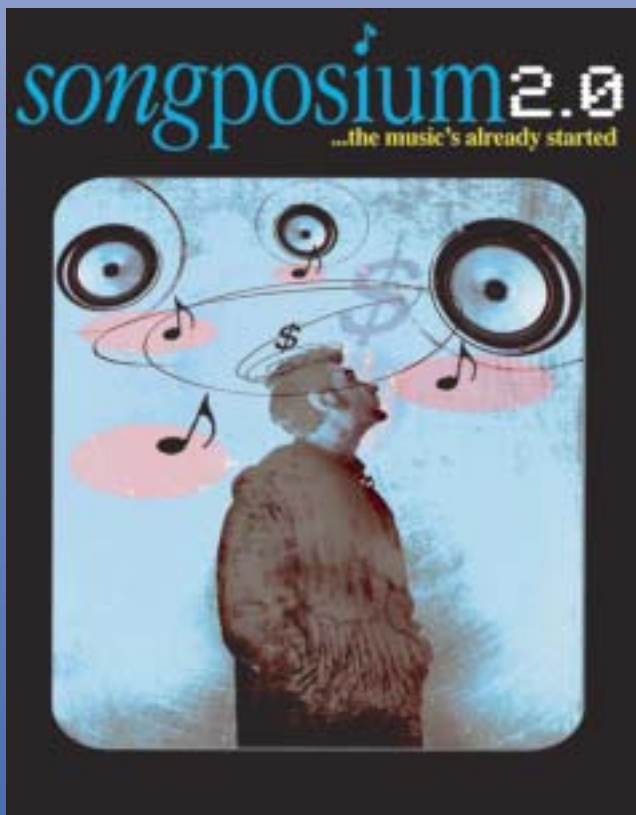
One of the emphasized components of Songposium 2.0 is the Internet, an ever-increasing presence in our lives and an exciting frontier and to market your music.

In her informative and entertaining presentation, Universal Music Canada's Janis Nixon identified digital and mobile platforms as being chief areas of growth beside the Web, outlining relatively inexpensive ways of branding yourself and building your community through websites, cell phones and services like Puretracks.

Songposium 2.0 participants, also include Derek Brin, Metty The Dirt Merchant, Kyprios, Vince Degiorgio, John Capek, Lennie Gallant, Steve Wilkinson and Chad Mitchell, and many of them will make repeat appearances through the remaining dates (Calgary, Jan. 13-14; Guelph, Jan. 20-21 and Halifax, Feb. 03-04.)

Whether it's a demo evaluation or providing guidance, Songposium 2.0 panels are at your disposal to share their wealth of knowledge.

In other words, they are there for you. **S**



DISTINGUISHED PANEL: At Songposium 2.0, Haydain Neale, Janis Nixon, Choclair and Byram Joseph field demo evaluations.

Check for January and February Songposium 2.0 dates, details and locations at www.songwriters.ca

FLAME AND FORTUNE: ALEXISONFIRE'S LATEST CRISIS

By KAREN BLISS

PHOTO: MATT BARNES

"It's a five-person process."

Dallas Green, singer/guitarist of St. Catharines post-hard-core band Alexisonfire approaches his songwriting meticulously, but says democracy rules when it comes to final approval.

"The songs go through the wringer before they come out. We play them and play them and play them until everyone is satisfied with what they're doing."

Green is rarely satisfied with what he does. For a guy whose solo side project City And Colour has gone gold with its first full-length, *Sometimes*, it is surprising but true.

"I struggle with writing a song in general because I don't have a lot of faith in myself," Green admits. "I always think what I'm doing sucks."

It doesn't make a difference that all three Alexisonfire albums have done well.

The band — known for its dual singing-screaming vocals — went gold with barely any radio play at all for its 2002 self-titled full-length album. The 2004 follow-up *Watch Out!* scanned 75,000 units according to Nielsen Soundscan Canada, and the brand new *Crisis* was certified gold in a matter of weeks. That should be validation enough.

"It's just my personal opinion on everything that I write," says Green, who says he has "millions" of half-finished songs and would keep working on them all if he could.

"A lot of it has to do with me listening to lots of music and thinking that everything is better than mine. Why should I even bother when this guy's saying exactly what I want to say?"

Luckily for Green, he has four bandmates to go to for feedback and approval — co-vocalist George Pettit, guitarist/vocalist Wade MacNeil, bassist Chris Steele and drummer Jordan "Ratbeard" Hastings.

"It usually goes through a huge process for me to even get to that point. Once I decide what I'm going to sing and I show the guys, I have usually come to terms that it's okay," Green says.

"Once you start believing that you're awesome or that you're the shit, your music will probably start to *sound* like shit."

Pettit is neither self-deprecating nor cocky when it comes to talking about Alexisonfire's songs. Even with rock radio

finally on board for *Crisis*, he hasn't heard any negative feedback from long-time fans that have followed the band since its inception in 2001.

"I think in a lot of ways this album is maybe less palatable and a lot heavier than *Watch Out!*" says Pettit. "It's definitely gotten very hooky. I think we've gotten better at writing songs, but at the same time, I'm doing a lot more singing on this record."

Pettit is the rip-your-throat-out screamer in the group usually heard in the more "chaotic" parts and Green is the melodic singer who usually handles the choruses and "prettier" parts; MacNeil has a rougher singing voice and can be heard on a few songs.

When a vocalist writes lyrics, usually he or she has the melody and hook in mind, so how does a screamer approach songwriting?

"I just know when I write lyrics that I'm going to have to yell 'em," says Pettit.

"Sometimes when I write lyrics, if I'm writing a pattern, I'll put on a song that has the pattern. For instance, the 'Charlie Sheen vs. Henry Rollins' song (on *The Switcheroo Series: Alexisonfire Vs. Moneen* EP), those lyrics for the chorus that I wrote, they fit with a song called 'State Trooper' by Bruce Springsteen.

"You can read the lyrics to that song the same way he sings them. It's like borrowing a rhythm from another really great writer, and then changing the lyrics obviously. But sometimes that helps me get a basic tempo for the song."

Pettit writes pages worth of lyrics and will change them several times, before Green and MacNeil make their own contributions.

"Most of the time we'll pick a topic. I'll be like, 'Yo, Dallas, I'm writing a song about burning mailboxes,' or he'll be like, 'Yo, I've got this song that's kind of about St. Catharines, about how downtown is going down,'" Pettit says, referring to the *Crisis* songs "Mailbox Arson" and "This Could Be Anywhere In The World."

"Then we'll write our own bits and then when we come together as songwriters, we'll change it again to make it fit. Most of the time we sing our own parts, but a lot of times we'll collaborate on things or someone will make a good suggestion and we'll change stuff from start to finish."

MacNeil — who contributes vocals and lyrics to "Drunks, Lovers, Sinners And Saints," "Keep It On Wax" and "Boiled Frogs" on *Crisis* — says their sound has definitely developed



L-R Jordan, George, Chris, Wade. Seated: Dallas

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MacNeil — who contributes vocals and lyrics to "Drunks, Lovers, Sinners And Saints," "Keep It On Wax" and "Boiled Frogs" on *Crisis* — says their sound has definitely developed



over the past four years.

"Our first album has a lot of all-over-the-place vocals, but there's a lot more all-over-the-place ideas in the songs. There's not cohesive singing, which we tried to do a lot more on the last album and definitely a lot with this.

"The three of us would sit down and talk through the lyrics and figure out what we wanted to say and work all three voices into it, or just work it out lyrically so it's telling one story, as opposed to two songs going on at the same time."

The fierce rhythm section is particularly important in Alexisonfire. In fact, bassist Steele came up with the initial idea for the single, "This Could Be Anywhere In The World."

"I think that's very important, every-

one putting their own stamp on it," says MacNeil. "Steele's not happy with things that are really simplistic, so he's always forcing us to look at parts. Even if it's subtle, like we're changing up the timing for one part or lengthening certain parts or shortening them, he's not interested in having things having things be all fours."

Hastings, who joined Alexis last summer, wasn't on *Watch Out!* but made his mark on *Crisis*.

"With our last drummer, we'd be like, 'Do you want to try this on the drums? Do this for this part,'" says MacNeil. "Whereas with Jordan we would make suggestions and he would do something completely different that would blow us away. He's not a show-off kind of drummer but he has a



lot of style and it really comes out on the new CD.

"'Rough Hands,' the last song, the drumming is relatively simplistic, but it's just brilliant the way it's done and 'Mailbox Arson,' the opening fill definitely gives people an idea of how powerful the drummer is."

Adds Green: "Jordan really helped make our songs more song-oriented, as opposed to just parts. He came from a band (Jersey) and background with choruses. He would be like, 'We need to do a chorus here,' or 'We need to put a bridge here to go into the best chorus.' I think the power and solidity that he brings to the sound really helped with the songwriting.

"It feels like we have a backbone now." ☺

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DISCOVERING ATLANTIS

K-OS EXPLORES HIS OPTIONS

By NICK KREWEN

Fact or fiction: The existence of the lost continent of Atlantis has been debated since the days of Plato.

The quandary, of course, is whether the island, reportedly located somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean and first mentioned by the prominent Greek philosopher during his lifetime circa 400 B.C., did indeed sink during a volcanic catastrophe with its advanced civilization some 9000 years before he lived, or whether it was a figment of Plato's vivid imagination.

Attempts to turn up evidence of its whereabouts have been fruitless, with theories concerning its sunken ruins ranging everywhere from China's Southern Seas to the Caribbean.

Even if it exists, it may never be found, but the symbolism and hope of what it represents -- the potential of possibility -- weighs heavily within the framework of *Atlantis: Hymns For Disco*, the third innovative album from hip-hop visionary Kheaven Brereton, a.k.a. k-os.

"I've always loved mythology," notes Brereton, hunched over a table at a Toronto cafe one late afternoon, dreads hanging over his brow, between sips of his caffeine-free beverage.

"I think it was my escapism as a kid: African mythology, Egyptian mythology, religions, why things happen; things to explain why things happen -- and I loved this whole idea that Atlantis was a city that sank, but it's somewhere there still.

"And then a friend of mine, Saul Williams, who is a great poet and songwriter, was telling me that he had a movie script where a city suddenly springs up one day, and the album's kind of based on that story.

"Imagine that one day on the coast

of Nova Scotia you see a city rise. What would the people be like? What would be their culture? What if their culture was so different that it made everything that you perceived about those people different?

"And that's what *Atlantis* is about. It's not about a city sinking. It's about a city rising."

As listeners of his two previous albums, 2000's *Exit* and 2004's *Joyful Rebellion*, will attest, the Whitby, Ontario-born Brereton has stretched the idiom of hip-hop so far beyond its parameters that some have questioned his credentials.

Written and recorded in Toronto, Vancouver and Halifax, *Atlantis: Hymns For Disco*, is comparable to his other efforts in its abundance of flavours. The straightforward lexicon of "ELEctrik HeaT - the seekwiLL" is immediately contradicted by the orchestrated piano balladry of "The Rain," arguably k-os' tribute to James Brown's "It's A Man's Man's Man's World."

"FlyPaper" segues from comedy to rock 'n roll anthem; "mirror in the Sky" anchors itself on a reggae rhythm and accelerates to a Russ Klyne ska guitar line for "born to Run."

"Valhalla," which features a guest cameo by Sam Roberts, finds k-os spewing Dylanspeak phrasing and imagery, while "highway 7" keeps it bare and minimal, a strummed guitar at its epicenter.

Brereton both sings and raps -- again, attributes he displayed both during *Exit* and *Joyful Rebellion* -- so to portray the Canadian of

PHOTO: JUSTIN RABIN



Trinidadian descent as some sort of urban scapegoat untrue to his muse seems unmerited.

In response to his critics, Brereton champions the philosophy of influential New York MC Kris Parker, a.k.a. KRS-One, and says he's simply expressing his culture.

"KRS-One used to talk about something called 'edutainment,' where you could entertain people and educate them at the same time," k-os explains.

"Not educate them with your jargon, but your experience.

"That was also a common theme in hip-hop at the time: How do you make these really fun songs but not make them about partying all the time?

"So he was the first guy from the streets who had this idea of making hip-hop that kids could listen to, but would still have a boombastic beat and maybe a rebellious attitude towards saying something.

"He also kept saying, 'Hip-hop is an attitude. Rap is something you do.'"

For k-os, *Atlantis: Hymns For Disco* is a personal platform to forward that assertion.

"I think this record, more than anything, gives me a great plateau to say that," confirms Brereton, who recorded over 30 songs for the project before settling on the 14 that made the cut.

"Hip-hop is an attitude -- like punk rock, or Andy Warhol, or anybody with an attitude who expresses it through their art.

"My attitude will always be hip-hop because it was the music that schooled me. You see elements of graffiti in here and I boom back to all the beats, even if it's a rock beat -- it's kind of got these kicks and snares and is sort of heavy.

"So those are the sensibilities of hip-hop, but it's not rap. I'm not rapping that much on the record. Maybe I'm living in a dream world, but I hope that people see that you can take that attitude and do anything."

In fact, you won't find anyone practicing this principle more overtly than Brereton himself. The sophistication of material delivered on *Exit, Joyful Rebellion* and now *Atlantis: Hymns For Disco*, is all the more impressive considering k-os, signed to Universal Music Publishing Canada, has no formal training and can't read a note of music.

So when it comes time to create, k-os takes his cues by listening to others.

"First thing I do is I start getting my ass kicked by listening to the greatest songs," says Brereton, who, as demonstrated by such hits as "Crabucket," "Crucial" and "Dirty Water," has a refined ear for melodic hooks.

"Burt Bacharach - boom, you get slain! McCartney-Lennon, you get slain! Stevie Wonder, you get killed! Then I hear more current stuff like The Police, some of the Joe Strummer/The Clash stuff, really classic songs."

Then he plugs into his four-track recorder.

"The first thing that comes out of me, I record," he states. "Whether it's a piano lick, a guitar lick, a lyric or -- (Paul) McCartney had this thing where he wrote down titles before he even had songs, and 'Valhalla' was a song title before I even knew what it was going to become because it means 'Viking heaven' and I liked the word -- I've tried all those types of things.

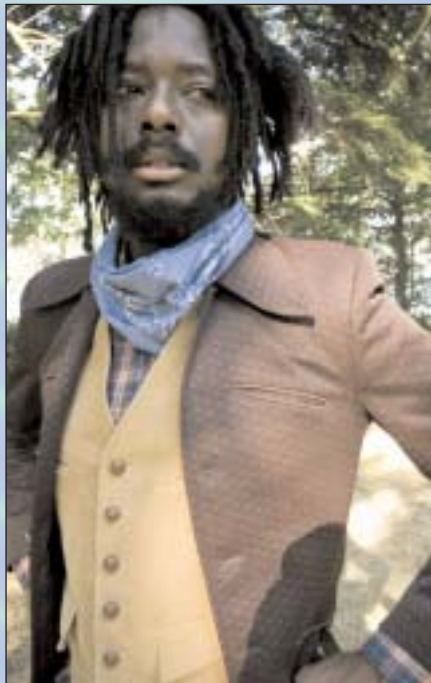


PHOTO: JEREMY R. JANSEN

"Anyway, recording is the first thing I do."

A favourite instrumental tool of Brereton's is the Ensoniq ASR-10 sampling keyboard.

"That, the guitar, a microphone and a four-track, that's what I brought on my last tour. That's where I wrote 'Valhalla,' 'black ice' and 'FlyPaper.'

"I like to sample things, play guitar over it and also use my four-track to put down the scat ideas."

The "scat ideas" k-os employs -- a method of wordless singing most often employed by jazz singers -- allows him to get a general lyrical feel for his songs.

"The song is kind of built on a scat," k-os explains. "I write songs with scat words, and then write lyrics to the onomatopoeia -- the rhythm of it. You get the rhythm that sounds best over the song and then you write lyrics to that rhythm."

Co-producer Greg O'Shea also helps him fill in the sonic blanks.

"Greg can get any sound," Brereton asserts. "So I play him something, he gets the sound and then we start building. Once I've got a drum sound going -- again from the hip-hop mentality, the drum is the soil -- and I think, 'Okay, now you've got to make big trees. Now you've got to make cumulus clouds. Now you've got to make flowers.'

"Then I start to pick the other sounds -- I haven't really heard a harmonica with this type of hip-hop beat -- and then you can start messing with things because you're approaching it from the ground up."

Brereton admits that he has no qualms about calling in the cavalry whenever he requires.

"I know some people just write songs on guitar, but me, I don't have those skills," he reveals. "I can give you a couple chords, but then I'll get another guitar player to come in and do it better than me or we'll play it together. But for me, it all starts with some kind of layered reality, just letting the thing build.

"Sometimes, I'll just start hearing things in my head and take it from there."

Brereton says his arrangements are tantamount to solving puzzles.

"In something like 'Sunday Morning,' the whole song is really based on the acoustic breakdown in the song.

"But what I find starting happening to me -- and I'm putting this out there for other non-trained musicians who will do it by ear -- things just start fitting together," he explains.

"You play this guitar motif and then you start playing these chords on keyboards on top of it. I don't know what key it's in, but maybe that's the key that I play in all the time. Then I start singing and it's my register.

"I think subconsciously, you just start figuring out what your voice sounds best with and your hands just naturally go to these places. It's a really weird thing, because a guitar player will ask me, 'Oh, what chord are you playing there? A B-minor? And then you went to that?' And I'm like, 'I don't know *what* I did. I just did it.'

"I think the untrained ear and eye in art don't stop to go, 'Is this going to fit?' 'Is this harmonically correct?'"

"You just try it until you find something that fits."

Brereton says he heeds the words of late jazz pioneer Miles Davis to reassure his artistry.

"The greatest thing that any musician ever said that I've read was Miles Davis, who said he learned everything to forget it.

"So that gives a guy like me hope," he laughs. "Because I don't know anything. So maybe I'm starting where he ended."

Brereton recalls that his musical onset happened innocently enough. The first instrument that intrigued him to the point of action belonged to his grandmother.

"It was a Yamaha Melodica that you blow through to play," he remembers. "I thought it was mystical. I'd wait until she was gone and then I'd open it. I must have been 10 or 11; one day she was standing at the door listening and she said, 'Yeah, boy! Play it! Play!'"

Brereton experimented and admits his first songs did little more than amuse his family.

"That's when I decided I really wanted to write songs, although instruments were things that I didn't want to learn about from a book," he recalls. "I just wanted to beat on them and play on them. I still think I do the same thing today."

Calling himself "a pretty insecure, weird species of a hip-hop guy," Brereton's influences came from all over the musical map: Siouxsie And The Banshees, Kid Creole And The Coconuts, Grandmaster Flash, KRS-One, punk, new wave, jazz -- and his father's albums.

"Linda Ronstadt right up to ABBA, right down to Deep Purple and

Moe Koffman," k-os recalls. "I'd find these Jose Feliciano records, all these people from every culture. I think that's why I can never judge music, because my Dad's record collection was like the United Nations."

After a lifetime of singing, Brereton, 34, says he fell into rap at the age of 18 when the bland R&B scene at the time disenchanting him.

"I basically switched my vocal instrument to rap and then singing played the background. I think it's funny, because the success of that character of k-os has happened because he's singing on his chorus and hooks.

"People in the hip-hop world says, 'He's not a real rapper because he sings.' I don't mind that, because I know I started singing first. I'm okay with letting people hear that vulnerability in me."

Of course, of paramount importance to hip-hop is the lyrical content -- and k-os says *Atlantis: Hymns For Disco* picks up where *Joyful Rebellion* leaves off, displaying a more personal side.

"I knew that with all the songs on this record, I could no longer talk about the state of hip-hop or whatever everyone else is doing," Brereton explains.

"'Crabucket' is about the crabs in the bucket, you know? The songs that spoke to me most about my own experience were 'The Man I Used To Be' and 'Crucial.'

"Those two songs were really a man talking about his own experience. All the other songs were really about what the world is at or what the world is doing to me, with kind of a victim mentality.

"So with *Atlantis*, it was about whatever's really pissing me off or really making me so happy. Like the song 'CatDiesel,' where I just met this girl and I was so happy because a couple of girls before her weren't paying me any attention.

"What's pissing me off? My first girlfriend that broke my heart -- I want to write about that, still, even

though when I tell everyone I'm over it, I'm not.

"Or the fact that everyone's talking about ghetto this and ghetto that, or rich this and rich that. You know what? The world is a ghetto. And that's how 'Valhalla' came to me."

Brereton also possesses another compositional ace up his sleeve: that eight-bar shift known as the bridge, or "middle eight."

"Music is all about the change, all about the middle eight," he explains. "Nobody's really doing this anymore -- it's kind of a lost art.

"If you know where it's going to change and go back into the song -- it doesn't have to be chordal, it could just be a breakdown, or as in 'Crabucket' and 'Crucial,' it could be a little section -- then the chorus can be informed by that."

It's a method that has worked wonders for Brereton's career, with *Joyful Rebellion* scoring a double-platinum record in Canada, seeing him headline summer amphitheatre con-



PHOTO: DUSTIN RABIN

certs and international releases in the U.K. and the U.S.

Now with *Atlantis: Hymns For Disco* poised to continue the momentum of k-os rising, Brereton is only looking in one direction: forward.

"I'm going to keep it going, love life and trying to get better at this craft of songwriting," he vows. "Because it *is* a craft -- that's for sure." **S**

Welcome New Members!

The S.A.C. welcomes the following new members who have joined since August 11, 2006

AB Rhonda Berger	NB Brad White	ON Sarah Herburger	ON Steven Rane
AB Ronnie Gaffar	NF Christina Clouter	ON Andrea Higgins	ON Joseph Ress
AB Jean Greer McCarthy	NL Larry Brenton	ON Ron Hobman	ON John Riopelle
AB Ross Harper	NS Garth Bennett	ON Keith Holding	ON Santino Rotiroti
AB Murray Hayward	NS Reeves Matheson	ON David Houghton	ON Mike Rouleau
AB Randy Howell	ON Choclair	ON Rhowan James	ON Duane Rutter
AB Ron McNeill	ON Frank Anderson	ON Cheryl James	ON Grainne Ryan
AB Angela Nurse	ON Sue Battle	ON Veronica Johnny	ON Wendy Samulski
AB Michael Pittonet	ON Ty Baynton	ON Wayne Johnson	ON Judy Seabrook
AB Patricia Poriz	ON Michael Bebis	ON Aurora Jon	ON Helen Shannon
AB Charlie Scott	ON Jason Blackwood	ON Levon Kalalian	ON Eejune Sim
BC Loyd Bishop	ON Vicky Bolduc	ON Courtney King	ON Rayna Slobodian
BC Dane DeViller	ON Kimberly Boyce	ON Max Layton	ON Philip Sohan
BC Kevin Gardner	ON Shae Calhoun	ON Mile Lazarevski	ON Chris Staig
BC Ginette Genereux	ON Kira Callahan	ON Bob Livingston	ON Dani Strong
BC Renee Geronimo	ON Jason Chapman	ON Dave MacLean	ON Chris Tait
BC Carol Gurr	ON Stephen Cogan	ON Kimberley MacLean	ON Sarah-Jean Villa
BC Bonar Harris	ON John Collins	ON Bernie Maisonneuve	ON Joanne Wasylshen
BC Ray Lasell	ON Karen Cooper	ON Justin Manuel	ON Ashley Weinhandl
BC Joe Mock	ON Aduron De Ronov	ON Michael Maracewicz	ON Wendy Wile
BC Stan Morris	ON James Delaney	ON Salvatore Marcello	ON Kimberley Williams
BC Gail Noonan	ON Cristian Di Rocco	ON Donna Matthieu	ON Alton Willis
BC Mark Plimley	ON Dian Doyle	ON Francis McCain	ON Tom Savage
BC Lester Quitzau	ON Emmanuel Erskine	ON Antonio Moniz	QC Martha Cortez
BC Ronald Rau	ON John Farragher	ON Alden Anthony Morgan	QC Paul David
BC Pernel Reichert	ON James Fernandes	ON Joshua Morin	QC Alasdair Gillis
BC Bernadette Saquibal	ON David Folkerth	ON Sue Nguyen	QC Reagan Hicock
BC Mike Twining	ON Stephen Ford	ON Hedda Nicol	QC Rachelle Mantha
BC Andrew Warren	ON James Gadon	ON Katie O'Halloran	QC Mark Sheppard
BC Murray Wilde	ON Madeline Gauthier	ON Arlene Payne	QC Lori Singer
BC Marie Willson	ON Godfrey George	ON Pablo Petrucci	QC Trever Trudeau
BC Jimmy Zee	ON Michael Gibbons	ON Lorenzo Policelli	SK Kimberly Hall
NB Rick MacIntyre	ON Sarah Gropp	ON Vojin Radenovic	SK Ovide Pilon
NB Jordan McElhinney	ON Stanley Hammond	ON Kavitha Ramachandran	

SHARING IDEAS: THE WORKSHOP COMMUNITY

By L.C. DI MARCO

Warmth. Fireplace. Hot water. Jalapeno pepper. Fire.

I can feel the warmth of your skin as I lie next to you by the fireplace.

I said the wrong thing and now I'm in hot water.

My tongue is on fire but the jalapeno peppers are worth the painful quench.

I feel the warmth of the sunrays on my skin as I remember your sweet kiss.

I remember your sweet kiss as I bathe in the warmth of the sunrays.

Writing a song is like poetry in motion. It's more than lyrics and music: We all have something to say, but we're not always able to express ourselves to others.

Many great writers use fictional characters to convey their thoughts. Visual artists awaken emotions with specific colours and brush strokes. Poets choose verse styles. Songwriters choose eclectic lingo.

The eclecticism of style and presentation of a song depends on the purpose of writing it in the first place.

It's not about money: It's about connection.

It comes down to community. If the purpose of writing is to communicate, then our material needs to be universal, which, of course, is often the challenge. At this point, sharing our music with others may help the creative process. What better way to know if our song is reaching others than by actually performing it for an audience?

Performing for an audience can be intimidating for folks who are exclusively songwriters.

This is where the workshop format becomes useful. It is in a group of peers that we can obtain honest feedback and advice. If the purpose of writing a particular song is to 'build trust,' then how do we proceed? Most importantly, has our choice of words conveyed its point?

Quite often, without even recognizing it, there is a song lingering in our minds. Our thoughts, feelings, experiences, all follow us in our musings.

We could be sitting on the bus and daydream a memory as we look out the window. A woman could cross our paths, her perfume reminding us of our grandmother. A stranger's cologne could serve as a memory of a bygone Christmas.

cont'd on page 18

THEMATIC ALBUMS: WHAT A CONCEPT

By Shallima Maharaj and Nick Krewen

Some have argued it was Frank Sinatra; others say it was The Pretty Things.

Whichever act truly pioneered the concept project -- where the song cycle comprising an album is thematic, with each composition staying true to its chosen subject matter -- has certainly been responsible for some of the most beloved, enduring and commercially successful albums in contemporary times: *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, *Tommy*, *Quadrophenia*, *The Wall*, *2112*, *The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway*, *Operation: Mindcrime*...and the list keeps growing.

Canadian artists have also taken topical music to heart: in this past year alone, Neverending White Lights and Meligrove Band are a few whose albums sport running themes.

Where to begin?

As concept specialist Alan Parsons, whom the Songwriters Association Of Canada presented earlier this year at Canadian Music Week in Toronto, points out, having a premise in mind can instill a project with purpose.

"If you know what to write songs about, it makes it easier to pluck ideas out of the air that much more easily than with a completely blank sheet of paper and not really knowing what kind of song you're looking to write," explains Parsons, who teamed up with session keyboardist and songwriter Eric Woolfson to launch his studio-bound Alan Parsons Project with 1975's *The Tales Of Mystery And Imagination Of Edgar Allan Poe*.

Motivated by his own engineering contributions to Pink Floyd's *Atom Heart Mother* -- and in particular, the phenomenal *Dark Side Of The Moon*, still going strong with an estimated 40 million copies sold, 1535 weeks on the *Billboard Pop Catalog* charts and counting -- Parsons partnered with Woolfson to set American writer Poe's works to music.

"It seemed that Edgar Allan Poe was a good plan," allows Parsons. "His work had been always successful in cinema. It seemed like a perfect vehicle for what we had in mind - a progressive rock concept album.

"It was certainly designed to be my *Dark Side Of The Moon*."

In adapting the material to music, both Parsons and Woolfson delved into the Poe library and tried to adapt source material both familiar and obscure.

"We both re-read a large slice of the body of Poe's work and we made discoveries during the actual album recording," Parsons recalls. "We discovered 'To One In Paradise' and 'A Dream Within A Dream,' so we just didn't go with the Poe "hits" as it were, like 'The Telltale Heart' and 'The Cask Of Amontillado.'"

"To re-read works it was like, 'Oh, that will work really well as an ending song' or 'that would work really well as a poem.'"

For the Neverending White Lights opus *Act 1: Goodbye Friends of Heavenly Bodies*, sole static member Daniel Victor relied on his University of Windsor minor studies in World Views to inspire the ethereal, synth-infused soundscape that thematically revolves around mortality and rebirth.

"I found myself already graduated and still seeking out information in books about world views and religion and spirituality," Victor recalls.

"It was more about the interest of something that no one knows anything about, but that humanity created these sorts of religions and rules along the way based on past teachings and ideals and we follow them, but they're still limited to the human mistake."

In the case of Meligrove Band's epic *Planets Conspire*, songs like "Isle Of Yew" and "Our Love Will Make The World Go Round," suggest tunesmith Jason Nunes' romantic obsession was the fodder of this seemingly thematic Valentine.

But the singer/songwriter, who originally intended *Planets Conspire* to be a shorter EP called *Headphones For Hard Times*, says instead that it stems from artistic restlessness: a career crossroads that found him contemplating whether he should continue creating with Meligrove drummer Darcy Rego, bassist Michael and multi-instrumentalist Andrew Scott.

"I had all these heavy, heavy ideas at the time and I kind of thought I was wasting a lot of my time just being in a band," explains Nunes, whose *Planets Conspire* is Meligrove Band's third album.

"I really thought I had to work on myself and my home and my family and a whole bunch of things that were a lot more heavy than playing songs that were on *Let It Grow* and *Stars and Guitars* that really had no substance.

"So I just told Darcy and Mike, 'You know guys, I can't really do this right now. I've got to do other things.'"

"It was weird because right when I was saying that, I was still writing and what I was writing, Mike and Darcy heard and they were really into it.

"It just made sense to keep going."

The 10-track introspective, full of pop rock splendour, engaging harmonies, booming classical instrumentation and a heart-on-sleeve account of life from the dismal lows to the victorious highs, served as sonic therapy to Nunes, harnessing his curiosities, fears and experience.

In order to reach from within, Nunes had to step outside his musical composition comfort zone and trade his usual guitar for his parents' piano.

"I think the guitar became so familiar to me that I became

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L-R Jay, Darcy, Mike, Andrew

PHOTO: DAVID NEMEROFF

too conscious of what I was doing," reasons Nunes. "When I sat at the piano, I could be hitting the same notes and I wouldn't even know it. And I was inventing all these new chords for myself and I ended up teaching myself how to replay the guitar through the piano.

"You have to kind of step out of everything otherwise you're too critical and too self-conscious."

Rather than deliver their music in Nunes' manner with a single voice, both Alan Parsons and Neverending White Lights' Daniel Victor opted for multiple musical guests.

"It was a variety angle," says Parsons concerning the turnstile approach that employed singers ranging from The Hollies' Terry Sylvester, Arthur Brown (remember the 1968 hit "Fire?") and John Miles to Colin Blunstone, Chris Rainbow, Lenny Zakatek and co-creator Woolfson.

"I think a lot of people stumble because they essentially have the same sound from the beginning of an album to the end of an album. We managed to hold the

PHOTO: GREG PLANTE



interest by always having different singers on each song."

Victor, whose 16-song self-written, produced and engineered *Act 1: Goodbye Friends of Heavenly Bodies* includes appearances by Our Lady Peace's Raine Maida, 311's Nick Hexum, Finger Eleven's Scott Anderson, Creeper Lagoon's Sharky Laguna -- and, on the hit single "The Grace," Dallas Green, both of Alexisonfire and City And Colour -- settled for a more organic method.

"It was half me going through my entire record collection and essentially making a wish list of who I would like to see step out of their band and do something interesting," Victor reveals. "The other half of it was a vocalist that came to mind as I was writing a song."

The album unfolds in novel-like fashion with its own chapter divisions, broken into three sections.

"To me, 79 minutes of music is a lot for somebody to take in," he explains. "The songs are very long, you have different vocalists coming in and out, you have a lot of different instrumentation and it just seemed like a lot to interpret."

Commercially, the multi-singer approach has served Alan Parsons well, enabling him to score hit songs like "Games People Play," "Time" and "Eye In The Sky," and sell more than 45 million combined copies of such popular titles as *Tales Of*

Mystery And Imagination Of Edgar Allan Poe, *I Robot*, *The Turn Of A Friendly Card* and *Eye In The Sky* before he and Eric Woolfson split in the early '90s.

But when it comes to creating concept projects, Parsons says only one thing really matters: your audience.

"Choosing concepts wasn't the challenge so much as coming up with good material and structuring them in a way that we felt was going to please the listener." ☺

SHARING IDEAS... cont'd from page 16

How do we express such pleasantries and/or even sadness in a song?

There are various exercises to help the process. It involves more than the movement of our pens. It involves us actually getting up and leaving the comfort of our homes.

Working through exercises such as starting with words that convey particular emotion and build free thoughts is something that can be focused on in a workshop. By setting up a motivational atmosphere, our musings are more likely to exfoliate.

The individual singer-songwriter generally writes alone, but collaboration is a growing trend. But how do you meet like-minded others?

The Songwriters Association of Canada has run workshops, demo evaluation nights, seminars and other songwriting business-related events over the years. Of particular value are the Regional Writers' Groups.

As the co-ordinator of the Weston/Etobicoke Writers Group, I've seen and felt the firsthand benefits of working with other peers. Amateur songwriters profit from those who are published and more experienced in the industry.

There are other reasons why creators value the workshop environment.

Paul Travydas finds that the "deadlines imposed by the

workshop have helped me to become more prolific with my writing."

Popcycle, a Mississauga-based duo consisting of Fabiola Vettese and David Franco, say their combined interest in S.A.C. workshops "is to fine-tune our lyrical and general songwriting and performance technique."

Randle Timmins from Williams Lake, British Columbia, appreciates the networking opportunities.

Some come for the camaraderie and others come ready with a newly completed song or one in progress. All of us come to share our stories, practice some writing exercises and discuss business challenges.

Over the next few months, S.A.C. will be working hard to improve the formats of these workshops. The Regional Writers Group Workshops are free to S.A.C. members. The Weston/Etobicoke chapter meets the first Saturday of every month.

Check out www.songwriters.ca for details.

If you are interested in becoming a Regional Writers' Group coordinator, please contact Executive Director, Don Quarles at 1-866-456-SONG. ☺

L.C. Di Marco is LiANA, a Toronto-based singer-songwriter with three independent CDs to her credit. Check out her latest effort *I See No Rain* at www.liana.biz and www.indie-music-toronto.ca.

blue bird north

SPOTLIGHT

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