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April 2023
Vol. 5, Issue 4

MYSTIC BOWIE

Jamaican reggae performer on the power of love, music and community.

3

MELISSA FERRICK

Renown singer and songwriter talks school, the road and the destination.

22

VINNY BIRBIGLIA

Founder of legendary club J.B. Scott's talks past successes and today's barriers,

26

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Mystic Bowie

Reggae vibes, investing in community, and music on the island.

BY NIKI KAOS

Mystic Bowie. Photo provided.

Mystic Bowie and I connected and found a kindred spirit. We became fast friends while trading stories about our passion for music and community work. I also learned more about what to expect at Universal Preservation Hall in Saratoga Springs, Saturday, April 22nd.

RRX: How are you?

MB: I'm good. Who am I speaking with?

RRX: This is Niki. Just to give you a

heads up, my "reporter" name is Kaos.

MB: (laughs) I love it!

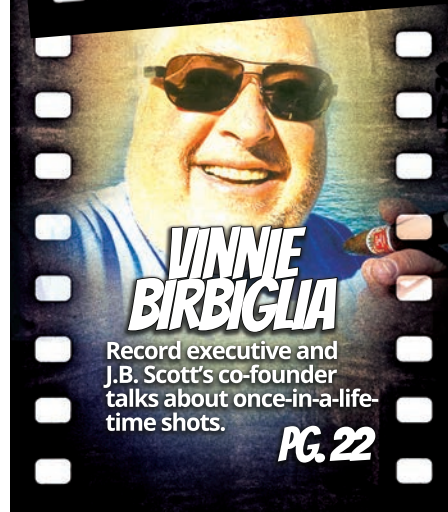
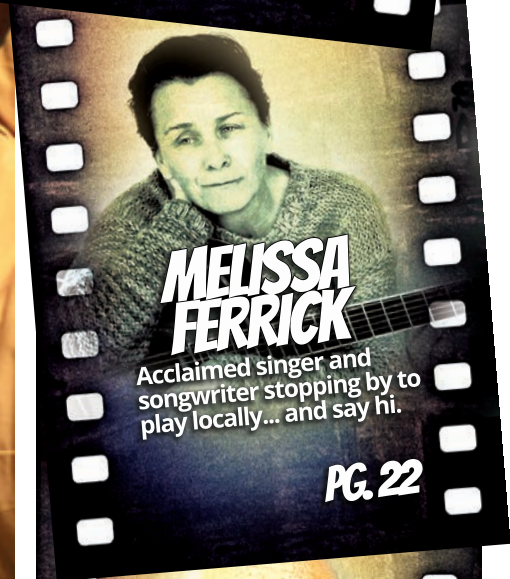
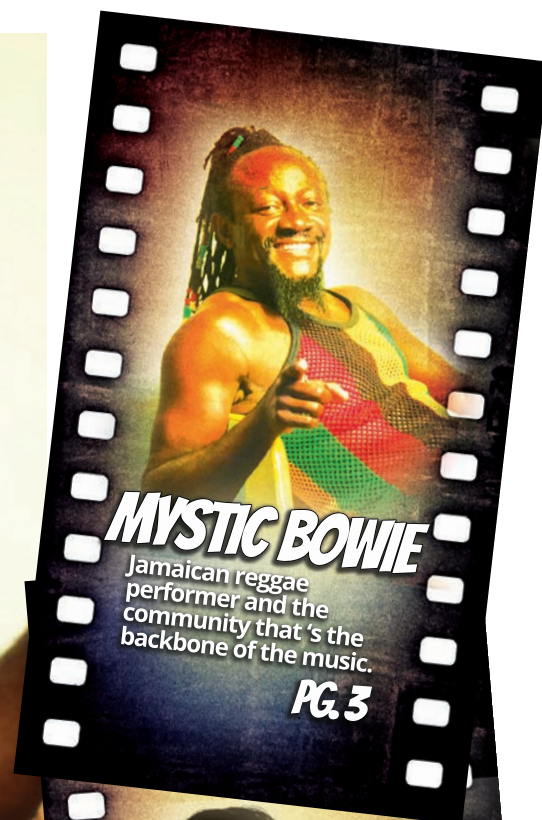
RRX: When people read it, they ask me... do you?? Do you say that "chaos"? And I say, yeah, I do. So, when you see the article don't be shocked. It's controlled Kaos.

MB: Niki Kaos. I love it.

RRX: Let's talk about your career. You worked with the Tom Tom Club. You've spent time in Jamaica recording music. Explain how you evolved with

music.

MB: I was discovered when I was nine years old because I would go to church with my grandmother, who was blind. So I would hold her hand, walk her to church, and sing in the church choir. That's where I was discovered. When I was 14 years old, they started to take me out of Jamaica to Peru, Bahamas, and places like that.



Continued on Page of 5.



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CONTENTS

3 🎧 **MYSTIC BOWIE JAMAICAN REGGAE**

10 🎧 **BRIAN MELICK ALL-AROUND DRUMMER**

16 🎧 **B. AUSTIN GLENS FALLS HIP HOP**

22 🎧 **MELISSA FERRICK NATIONAL SINGER-SONGWRITER**

26 🎧 **VINNIE BIRBIGLIA CO-OWNER OF J.B. SCOTT'S.**

32 🎧 **MARCUS MONROE STAND-UP & JUGGLER**

40 🎧 **SALIYAH ITOKA SINGER AND PERFORMER**

Continued from Page 3

I am Jamaican, but also, I was born and raised into a tribe called the Maroons. Because of growing up in the Maroon tribes as a child I was not a Reggae singer. We would do traditional music. Jamaican traditional folk music called "mento". And I would do Calypso and stuff like that. I would get jobs to leave the island and perform on other islands for festivals.

During that period, the area I was staying at was right next door to Compass Point Studios, which was owned by Chris Blackwell, the owner of Island Records. So I was staying at the Compass Point condominium complex.

That's where I met everybody! Grace Jones. Keith Emerson from Emerson, Lake and Palmer. Fred Schneider from the B-52s. Ringo Starr. Members of the Talking Heads and Tom Tom Club. It was the same period where Tom Tom Club was forming and developing off of

the Talking Heads.

RRX: And you met them at a good time. The scene was exploding.

MB: Yes. They were building an era. And here I am, a 14-year-old child who was placed in the middle of all this... controlled chaos. (laughs)

RRX: (laughs)

MB: It was amazing. I remember there was a thing that happened to me on one of those trips to Compass Point. In the studio, there is a bunch of musicians from all over the world, and they are doing stuff they don't want children to see. So when my caretaker would go to sleep, I would literally climb out the window.

I would go hang out by the studio. And some of the guys were like, you need to get back, or whatever. While others were nice to me.

RRX: You just wanted to see what they were up to?

MB: All I heard was a ton of equipment in the studio and a ton of

musicians.

RRX: And you wanted to see the music? And what they were doing to create music?

MB: Yes!

So that was the only interest that I had. But there was this one guy who brought a motorcycle from England. And had it down there, and each night he'd ride in.

The cool thing about this dude. He would always give me a ride on the back of his motorcycle. And then say, okay. Now it's time for you to go to bed. And I would go to bed. Because he gave me a ride on the back of his motorcycle. It was a huge deal for a teenager back then.

RRX: He was probably looking out for you in a way?

MB: He was. Exactly.

RRX: How did you get from Compass Point Studios to what happened next?

MB: I'm going to go from The Tom Tom Club. I met Chris and Tina from

Talking Heads, and it was the same period where the Talking Heads was having issues and they were forming the Tom Tom Club. So they were working on "Genius of Love", "Wordy Rappinghood" and all those songs, right there, at the studio at the same time.

Time went by, and in 1991 I moved up to NYC. I hated it. I hated living in the city. So, the company I worked with moved me to Western Connecticut.

A friend of my contacted me in 1992 to let me know he was doing a Mardi Gras show in NYC. He told me he would like me to be THE Reggae act on that show.

I explained to him that I just moved up to NYC, and I'm living in CT because I did not like living in the city. I explained to him that I did not have a band. He basically told me, don't worry about it, there's a house band. And the house band agrees to back me up at the show because they like my music.

Continued on Page 46..

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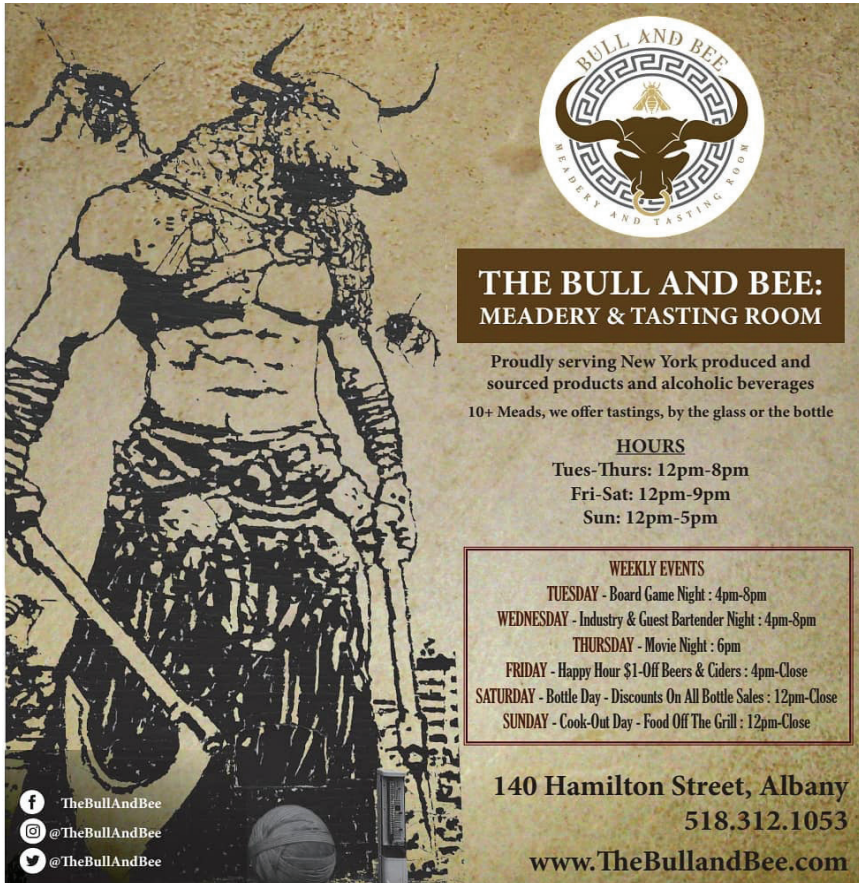
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Brian Melick

Anything can be a drum if you're brave enough.



OP CALLAGHAN

Brian Melick. Photo provided.

Most drummers will say that they got their start, hitting pots and pans in the kitchen. After showing interest, we quickly move on to real drums, and traditional percussion instruments. But Brian Melick is not most drummers. In his nearly 60 years of playing, Brian is still hitting everything from drums, to found objects and even Legos. He is an educator, percussionist, innovator, designer, and performer. He also happens to be one of the nicest, most down-to-earth people that I have had the fortune of knowing. I first met him in the early 2000's, when we were on the same recording session, and Brian; or "Udu Boy" brought in his infamous Udu drum to play. His knowledge and

love of the instrument is palpable, and inspiring. Brian's passion for all things percussive is infectious, as is the smile that he wears when playing. His story is fascinating, and his optimism and love of hitting things is infectious. So please welcome, Mr. Brian Melick!

RRX: How did you get your start with drums?

BM: My journey really started quite organically. I truly remember like it was yesterday, I was 4 years old and really found myself completely lost and feeling compelled to explore the different sounds and textures of different objects by either striking, scraping, or rubbing them. My favorites were Oatmeal containers, Coffee cans, Roller Skate Cases, Spice Containers, Piles

of change, anything around the house. I was blessed with two remarkable parents and an amazing sister who both consistently throughout my life have encouraged and fueled my fire by not only allowing my passion but also by offering me items to explore and create with. Had no idea that all of these items in my formidable years would continue to be the basis of my musical voice to this day. Early on my dad built me a simple wooden miniature pallet thing that gave me multiple surfaces to explore all at once, finding different pitches as well as textures. I was able to create my grooves with it, but also created my melodies. Funny - Dad also gave me two metal rods to use as sticks.

I remember them feeling quite heavy but quickly felt pretty agile with them. My sister was the one who purchased my first real drum for me - which I have to this day. With her allowance money, she visited a next-door neighbors garage sale and bought me a cardboard snare drum wrapped in a light blue metallic foil like paper with plastic hardware, but the drum was tunable and the snare throw worked beautifully. Man - I played that drum all day long, every available minute. I fondly remember standing outside my front door on our concrete stoop and playing every conceivable march-like rhythm that I remember hearing during parades in our community and the little kids would gather and march

around the neighboring houses and streets. Some would find a little flag or even make them out of paper.

RRX: Who were some of your first influences?

BM: Wow - that's a loaded question. Every drummer on television or on the radio!!! Seriously - Gene Krupa. As a kid what I remember about him more than anything - his Smile. Every time I saw him on television he simply was radiant. The absolute joy of being in the musical creative moment with those around him. The music just poured out of him in such an effortless way and he always allowed you in. I was riveted and absolutely inspired. He was the first for me that equally used his drums as well as his cymbals to create his melody inside of his rhythm. I absolutely love that, and it is what draws me in when I listen to other drummers. Not every drummer is moved in that way. Some are just not melodic players. To me it is always about the melody, or I should say counter melody that we can create inside the main melody of the song we are playing. As I grew up and to this day, I adore John Bonham. Started listening to Led Zeppelin very early in life and am still captivated by his work. Nothing wasted - every note means something. You just feel it. The same absolutely is true about my biggest influence which is Steve Gadd. All about the feel and the groove. That man says more with one note, on one sound than most of us will ever say, period. As I became inspired to explore hand percussion at the age of 17 - Babatunde Olatunji was huge in my life. My parents bought me for 50 cents at a garage sale, a record that was a life changing experience and major turning point in my life and still to this day deeply moves me. It is Baba's "Drums of Passion". When I heard his voice and his drum for the first time, the hair on the back of my neck stood up. For me there is nothing like the sound of skin on

skin. I can't explain it. Simply incredible

RRX: Tell me about some current projects?

BM: Music:
-Upcoming Performances with: The McKrells; Americana Roots / Celtic, Maria Zemantauski: Flamenco, Heard; NEW World Jazz, GeoBEAT; World Beat, Maswick & Brown; Adult Contemporary Singer / Songwriters, Warden and Company; Acoustic Rock, Studio Stu; Improvisational, Gus Mancini and Sonic Soul; Improvisation, Sonny & Perley; Brazilian Mix, Franklin Miccare; Classic Adult Contemporary, Joy Adler and the Souls of Evolution;

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- Upcoming Recordings: Matt Smith; Blues / Rock, Rena' Graf;

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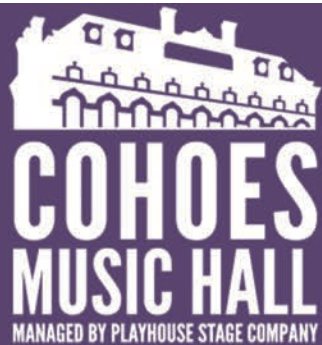
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B. Austin

Making a home for Hip-Hop in Glens Falls



BY JAMES MULLEN

B. Austin. Photo provided.

When people think about the music that's come from the Glens Falls region of the 518 music scene, they most likely think of rock bands like Wild Adriatic and Capital Zen. However, there is one person who has been making massive progress toward changing that perception to include Rap and Hip Hop, and that's the man behind Family Thing Records: B. Austin.

With several releases already in 2023 including the "New Goats EP" in January and singles "Beast Mode" and "Get on My Level" in February and March, Austin has made racking up

streams and digital reach look easy. What's perhaps most impressive is that he's doing it all while also hosting Hip Hop events at multiple venues and consistently helping to shine a light on a part of our music scene that certainly does not get nearly enough attention. I caught up with B. Austin as he prepared to host his seventh consecutive monthly Hip Hop Night at 42 Degrees Tavern in Downtown Glens Falls on March 16th, with the eighth already scheduled for Thursday, April 20th.

RRX: You've been red hot in 2023 with a handful of releases gaining lots of streams, but you've got releases on

Spotify going all the way back to 2014. What has your journey as an artist been like?

BA: It has had its ups and downs just like sales. In 2014 I started producing for myself and I faced a lot of criticism tapping into a whole different world when it comes to production. I never let it affect me or my process. The most important thing out of anything during my journey is being consistent.

I had projects drop in 2014, 2015, singles in 2017, Gotta get it in 2020 and so far this year, I have released over 10 songs in just 4 months. Being

consistent is the most important thing even if you don't think the music is where you want it to truly be at. You just have to keep reminding people who you are, what you can do and also don't be afraid to show your accomplishments.

RRX: Rap and Hip Hop are severely under-represented in the Glens Falls area; how has it felt to be able to start changing that?

BA: I really took the big first step of being vulnerable just seeing what I can accomplish by doing the unthinkable. I just know that what I have done will really open up the eyes of those

who are younger to let them know “hey, I know you got dreams too, you can’t be afraid of what people say. You just have to send it; go out there, do your thing and everything else will work out in the end.” My dad always used to tell me “Bry, you just have to show up”, I really took that with a grain of salt. It’s one thing to take advice but it’s definitely a whole different perspective to take action towards something you truly love. I’ve been thinking about making music for nearly my whole life.

RRX: I first became aware of you as a rising Glens Falls artist after learning about your Hip Hop Nights at 42 Degrees Tavern, how did that partnership come together and what has it been like to watch it grow?

BA: Everyone at 42 Degrees really welcomed me with open arms. It’s been almost a full year since I did my first open mic there. I actually just decided to go there one Friday night for an open mic. My neighbor Lily

recorded a video of me and the next day I posted it online, and it got so much love and insane crazy reactions from everyone, even on Instagram, Twitter, etc.. So I just kept going back to 42 Degrees. After about 4 months, eventually Robin asked me to host Hip Hop Night in September 2022 and I instantly said yes. The biggest thing for me was that I told him that I wanted to “do it right” and I feel like I have done that for the most part. We had the seventh Hip Hop Night in a row on Thursday March 16th! We have them once a month but everyone thinks we do it every week haha! Back to the “being consistent” thing. Life can change as long as you keep pushing!

RRX: You’ve worked with Pauly’s Hotel in Albany as well as 42 Degrees; do you have a wish list of venues in the 518 you’d like to expand to?

BA: I’ll perform anywhere to be honest! But I would really love to do a show at Desperate Annie’s and Putnam

Place in Saratoga Springs. I’ve been to so many shows at Desperate Annie’s that it’s only a matter of time getting booked there. As for Putnam Place I’ve done numerous open mic nights there too even if I’m just performing for Gary and the bartender. I remember the first time I walked in there and no one was even in there. I still told Gary. “Man, this is just something I gotta do” can’t be afraid to perform for just the bartender and the sound guy. One day 3 people will turn into 3,000 people!

I really wanna get into some of these 518 festivals also. I have helped make Hip Hop recognized now and you can’t deny our skills or talents anymore. I wanna do a show at MVP, Empire Live & SPAC! You can’t ever, ever dream too big!

RRX: What other 518 area artists are you a fan of? Are there any you’d most like to collaborate with?

BA: One person that I’ve always wanted to collaborate with is Margo

Macero. Many people don’t know this, but we actually grew up together. We went to middle school and high school together. Even back in middle school I knew she was always gonna be something special. Lately how she’s been touring nonstop all around the 518, I’m super proud of her. I always thought more globally from day one since music is a universal language but what she has done so far is truly amazing and inspiring, I need to make her some beats haha.

As for bands and rappers there’s too many to name. Most if not all of the great acts in this area I would consider my friends now or even business partners. I have a lot of respect for Seize Atlantis, Under the Den, Aila, Mundy, The Messenger, LuBuoy, Blister Boo, Trey Magic, Untouched, Death Cult Pharmaceutical, Capital City Crooks, Bonus, 50 Racks, Queen Midas, and many, many more. I’ll collaborate with everyone as long as the timing is there.



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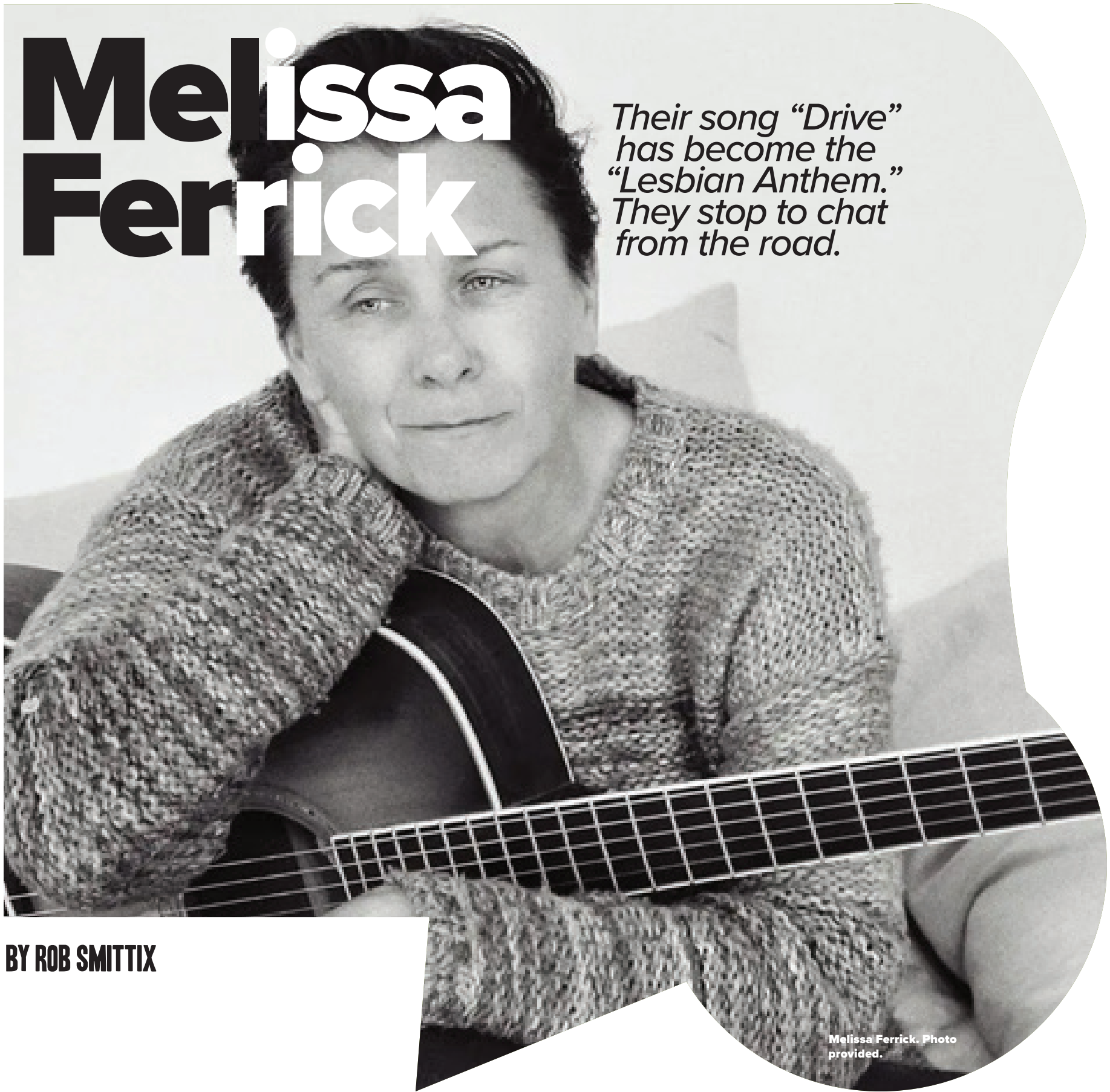
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Melissa Ferrick

Their song "Drive" has become the "Lesbian Anthem." They stop to chat from the road.



BY ROB SMITTIX

Melissa Ferrick. Photo provided.

RRX: Hello. How has your morning been?

MF: So far so good.

RRX: I'm excited just to talk with you. I don't really like to do "interviews," I think they're boring so my style is just to chat. Everybody else does that, they just plug away all of the questions and I'm just like, what did you have for breakfast? Are you a breakfast person?

MF: Yeah I'm working on my second cup of coffee right now, I had a little bit of granola and yogurt this morning. Lining up my day, so yeah it's going to be a good day, I look forward to it.

RRX: Me too but I'm on the first cup of coffee. The coffee cup I grabbed from the cabinet I've never seen before, I don't know where it came from but it says "you're awesome, keep that sh*t up!" So I'm going to roll with it.

MF: Good, good, excellent!

RRX: So April 28th, we've got you at Caffe Lena. That's exciting. I've never seen you live before.

MF: Oh wow, okay great, are you coming?

RRX: Oh, heck yeah!

MF: Great, I'm looking forward to coming back there, I like it there.

RRX: I guess I'm late to the game but at least I'm going to be at the game now. Now I see you're a music professor as well?

MF: Yeah I teach at Northeastern University now, I was at Berklee College of Music, I went to school there for a little while. I started teaching about a decade ago, well I started in 2010 but I didn't really get a permanent job at Berklee until 2013. So I started there and then I moved over to Northeastern in 2019. It's really cool, I like it a lot, I get to teach some classes on creative practice, which is really cool. It's not as myopic as just songwriting, it's really about how a person approaches work creatively. Where they get their ideas, how they think about where their ideas

come from and how they express them. I teach an intro to music business course and I teach a course on music entrepreneurship, which is really fun and has a lot to do with my history. It really taps into what I have done in my career. It's really nice, it's not just song-writing, which is what I was teaching at Berklee. I'm really happy with my position now, it's increased my commitment to learning and that's something that really didn't get ignited until I went back to school in 2017. I've just been kind of killing it in that area.

RRX: So what else have you been up to?

MF: I've been doing a bunch of co-writing now and I've just started managing a couple of artists, so I'm moving into the behind the scenes world, which is really lovely for me. I'm still playing shows and I'll be putting music out throughout the year. More singles here and there just like how everybody else is doing things these days, then I'll be compiling it together and putting out a full piece of work on vinyl, for the hardcore fans. It feels very relaxed unlike in the 90's and 2000's. My first record came out in 1993 and the last record I put out in 2015, which still feels like 5 years ago because of Covid.

RRX: Sure.

MF: This feels nice, it feels way more relaxed.

RRX: You do what you love though and that's really a blessing, I do what I love but I know the majority of people kind of just do what they have to do. Your dream has probably come true, you probably still have other dreams.

MF: Yeah but it's still a struggle. There are plenty of days that I don't want to go to work. Even as a performer it just depends. Like when we were talking earlier about how's today going? I'm having a great day. It's a day at a time. The older I get the more I understand that I'm so fortunate to have this teaching job. A lot of my friends who are DIY, indie musicians,

especially when Covid hit, were incredibly financially devastated. The entire live industry shut down. For me because of the job I have I kept getting a check. Just as importantly for me is having structure in my life. It really serves my personality really well. When Covid hit, I had to get up and I talked on ZOOM. It gave my brain other things to think about rather than if the air that I breathe was going to kill me. You know?

RRX: I can totally relate to that. It hurt the soul not being able to play live.

MF: It's highly possible it could happen again, it's just the way things roll. I can only speak for myself but I got through it and there's a light at the other side. Getting through Covid really was a practice of getting right down to living in the present. For me it really was. I didn't write through Covid, I wasn't one of these musicians that surged on songs. I have a friend Dave Herlihy that I teach with, he was in a band called O Positive back in the day and he wrote like 30 songs. I was like dude, how did you? But that's how he dealt, you know?

RRX: Right.

MF: Some people really flourished creatively and others really hit a wall.

RRX: Totally, and if you're writing what you were going through, it's therapeutic but nobody wanted to hear a Covid song. We wanted to escape it as much as possible.

(Both Laugh)

RRX: So I'm excited to see you live, what are we to expect from the show, anything different? Any certain strategy you are going to take with it?

MF: That's a good question. I haven't really thought about it yet. It's still a little ways away. Caffe Lena is really the first show beginning my summer touring. As a teacher, school gets out on the 19th of April, so right after that I kick in to playing shows. Which I wasn't able to do last year or the year before that so it's really going to be the first full summer of me touring. I haven't been down to Nashville in a long time, I haven't been out to Chicago in a long time. I'm excited. The run-up to getting back out on the road, with Caffe Lena being the first show of this run, is giving me the opportunity to try out some new things and revive old songs. This year 2023, is a big marker for me because my first record came out in 1993. In August it will be the 30th Anniversary of my first record. I am doing work this year to pay homage to that. Not really a big push or anything like that but just for my fans and for me to just kind of look back.

RRX: It's definitely a milestone and I can't believe 1993 was 30 years ago.

MF: (Laughs) I know!

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Vinnie Birbiglia

Owner and driving force behind legendary local club J.B. Scott's shares the secret recipe for success.



Vinny Birbiglia.
Photo provided.

BY LIAM SWEENY

If you were alive and around in the Albany environs in the turn of the eighties, you might have gone to a sonic bunker of a place called J.B. Scott's. Owned by Douglas Jacobs and Vinnie Birbiglia, this nightclub had a list of bands go through that would, at the same time be chewing through the Billboard Top 40.

I reached out to owner Vinnie Birbiglia, and I learned quite a bit.

RRX: J.B. Scott's, 'J' and 'B' are yours and Douglas Jacobs's last names. So you two started this in 1979. I've been around a ton of scenes, seen them start and fade away. What was it like in the weeks before you opened? Was it just to make a couple of bucks, or was it something more?

VB: I was working at the time at Record Town. I was the general manager for Upstate Music. We had the store on New Karner Road and Albany Street, I believe. And Doug came in one time, and we were talking, and we hit it off. We then started doing shows at the Madison Theater. And that's how we started J.B. Scott's.

RRX: Madison Theater is doing some pretty cool stuff now.

VB: It was a great theater as far as acoustics went. And the only problem that the place had was parking, because it's a residential area.

RRX: The only experience I had with J.B.'s was J. B.'s Theater, which was across from Westgate Plaza. I've never been to J.B. Scott's, the original place. What was the space like; what was the venue like when you first went in it?

VB: It was a rectangular building that - we put the stage on the opposite wall to the bar. Therefore, everybody was right on top of the stage, which, when the bands came in, they loved it.

RRX: That's cool, because the way a lot of clubs are set up, if you're in the back, you're in the nosebleeds.

VB: Yeah, exactly.

RRX: What was the place before you guys had it?

VB: It was the S&H Green Stamp building. When you went shopping, they would give you little stamps that you put into a book, and then you use the book to buy stuff. It was a very plain building. It was a concrete floor, cinderblock walls and a wood roof.

RRX: How long did it take you to build it up into the club itself?

VB: Honestly, I don't remember. It wasn't that long. The only thing we had to do was build the bar and build the stage.

RRX: One thing everybody remembers about J.B. Scott's is that you had everyone there. U2, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Pat Benatar, Rick Derringer, Buddy Rich to name a few. In fact, Al Quaglieri, in the Facebook group, Albany: The Way it Was, compiled a list that looked to be two feet long. How did you get those people to show up?

VB: I was pretty well-known in the music industry. So I had lots of contacts at the labels. Since we had starting doing shows at the Madison Theater and at the Palace Theater, we did a show or two at Proctor's Theater, the agents saw that we knew what we were doing. We got along with the bands, and like I said, I had my contacts at the labels, with the promotion departments at the record companies. That helped us decide who we were going to book, and that also showed the industry, again, that we knew

"Had it not been for the fire, it'd be very interesting to see where we would've been today"

Vinnie Birbiglia

what we were doing. That's how we basically started, and word got out and bands wanted to play for us.

RRX: When you were doing a different national act every day practically, what were some of the challenges you faced? Were there any challenges that weren't just the basic challenges of running a club?

VB: Back then, at that timeframe, it was getting the customers to come in. For every band that we did, it was one winner, three losers, financially. And then, because of politics, we were getting screwed by the agencies, even though the name of the game was 'you book the band the first time they come to an area, that band is your band going forward.' Yet when we had acts that we broke in the Albany market, some agencies would give the band to a different promoter when they were big enough to play the Palace Theater.

RRX: Yeah, that sucks.

VB: Tell me about it.

RRX: The J.B. Scott's was, aside from the mechanical aspects, thinking the whole scene: do you think it could be done today, with the way the industry is?

VB: I don't think so. I think that the cost factor is too prohibitive. If we were to think of opening up a club in this environment, it would be a very expen-

sive proposition.

RRX: I had a practice space in J.B.'s Theater, when New Music was in there, and a friend told me I was playing where Stevie Ray Vaughan once drank a fifth of Crown Royal. I doubt that's true, but it actually references one of the saddest moment for the area music scene; the fire that closed J.B. Scott's. What can you tell me about that?

VB: Some kids tried to rob us, and they set a fire, and they got caught a year later. Actually, we made the front page of the Times Union for the fire, and made the back page of the first section when the kids got caught because when they got caught, it was the same day as Erastus Corning, the Albany mayor, died.

And the place didn't actually burn down. Like I said, it was concrete floor, concrete walls. The only real damage was the roof. The worst part about it was the fact that the fire voided our lease. While we had insurance and paid the bills that we had outstanding, the landlord still voided the lease that we had. So that's what became the end of J.B. Scott's.

RRX: Okay, so J.B.'s Theater, as I brought up before. How much time between J.B. Scott's and J.B.'s Theater?

VB: Over a year. And it lasted about a year or so. It was too big for the area. Also, the drinking age went to twenty-one, so that became a problem. And we were the first place in the state, I believe, that had underage patrons in a place that had a bar. We actually closed off the bar and used the roller skating section for where we built the stage and did a majority of shows.

RRX: So we cover a lot of smaller venues, and there are a lot of interesting local scenes. What advice would you give to the owner of a smaller venue to get near to where J.B. Scott's was in its time?

VB: I don't think anybody can. We had the balls, so-to-speak, to do all different types of genres in the music industry. Now, unless you have a big bankroll, you're really locked in to doing local bands. The cost factor is just too prohibitive.

RRX: This is where you answer the question I didn't ask.

VB: Had it not been for the fire, it'd be very interesting to see where we would've been today. We had some competition, but the competition we had tried to only stick with certain types of artists coming in. We tried to broaden the horizon.

The Heights

BY JOE BARNA



Welcome to The Heights. A new monthly forum that attempts to demystify the culture, history and characteristics existing within the American art form known as jazz. I will be presenting interviews, topics pertaining to the music, and introducing those who may be unfamiliar with the idiom to the beautiful qualities inherent within jazz and the artists who bring the music to life.

In this first installment I'd like to highlight a new live recording I'll be producing with saxophonist Stacy Dillard, pianist Davis Whitfield and world renown bassist Tarik Shah. But first I'd like to lend my perspective to the question that has been looming in the ether for what seems like an eternity...

"What Is Jazz?"

In my opinion there isn't a

definitive, or rather singular, answer to the question. Whether musician or non-musician we each come to view artforms through our own unique lens. There are no right or wrong ways to consume or digest art. The way an individual interprets a painting, a song or a sculpture is up to them and the moment. What I'd like to do is share my thoughts on how I view jazz as music and a way of life. Please come along and let me entertain your mind.

Having been involved with jazz for nearly 35 years, from high school till present day, my perspective has grown with each experience and relationship. The way I see and feel jazz is much different today than in my infancy or even last week. However, some feelings never change. How I'm moved by the shifting tones, the harmonic richness and

that timeless swing feel, if executed right, still resonates with me today the way it always has. Let me offer a more colorful landscape on how I see things today.

Jazz, through my lens, is a nonverbal form of communication shared with the listener from the hands, feet, mind, and body of those creating soundscapes in the moment. It attempts, if not triumphs, in fusing multiple styles into one voice that leads its audience on a sonic journey through music history and into the future. It takes the best of the blues, Latin, funk, country, pop, classical and beyond, melting musical Picassos into a singular art that is both inclusive and captivating. It defies restraint and unchains the artist from the shackles that attempt to bind the soul, imagination, and potential waiting up ahead. This is not to say that jazz is an elite form of music. It is not. Simply put, jazz is just another way of expressing oneself utilizing melody, harmony and rhythm.

We are fortunate living in upstate New York, in that we have access to some of the greatest musical minds currently performing in the world today. Both in our own community and the surrounding areas. With NYC, Boston, Syracuse, Portsmouth, Rochester, and many other strong arts scenes 3 hours or less from the Capital Region, it's a blessing to be afforded such a luxury. One of the greatest luxuries right here in the heart of Troy, NY is a brand-new performance space called Alias Coffee Roasters. Owned and operated by master roaster/barista, Hernan Lopez, this intimate space is turning heads and raising the bar for what the potential can be in our com-

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Onto the show...

Coming on Tuesday, April 11th and Wednesday, April 12th will be an exciting live recording experience with Sketches Of Influence. I will be leading my quartet featuring Stacy Dillard, Davis Whitfield and Tarik Shah. This will be the 3rd and final installment in a series of 3 live albums. The Grind (2021) The Purpose (2022) and now The Heights (2023). This will conclude the trilogy and highlight some compositions written in tribute to my daughter Savina Jewel and partner Deana Clapp. Other compositions included will capture the image of my time spent while residing in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan.

We invite you to take a musical journey with us. Come as we explore sonic possibilities and share our stories with you at upstate New York's newest home for live performances, Alias Coffee Roasters, 219 4th street, Troy, NY.

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 Joe



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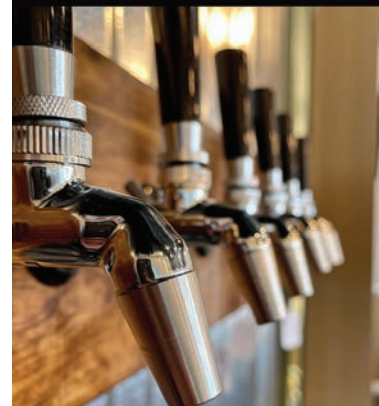
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Marcus Monroe

Stand-Up is just the beginning...



BY ROB SMITTIX

Marcus Monroe (center). Photo provided.

RRX: How are you?

MM: I'm doing well man. I just had a late night last night at The Comedy Cellar. So I'm just kind of starting my day at noon, which is kind of normal for me.

RRX: Well I've spent some time watching your videos online and I love your sense of humor.

MM: I love posting my jokes as soon as I write them because I get so excited about it, and I want to share it with everybody. I'm building a fanbase and it's been such a blessing to have that. I forget that fifteen years ago you had to rely on Conan, Leno or Letterman for a late-night spot. Now viral video is just as good if not better, it's crazy.

RRX: Everything has switched upside down.

MM: Everything's backwards. Some people are having a really tough time adjusting to that because some are like: no man I'm saving my act for the stage but otherwise people aren't going to know who you

are. People aren't going to buy a ticket to see you, if they don't know what you're going to do when you get up on stage. If all they see you do is crowd-work in your videos... I post a fair amount of crowd-work but I also post material because I want people to know that I can write a joke and I can be weird in front of people.

RRX: And you're a juggler!

MM: True, yeah, yeah. I started juggling when I was nine. I don't know if it was before the pandemic or during it, but my manager was like, "why don't we move forward without you juggling?" I'm like "woah, what?" He's like "yeah man, just do comedy." I said, "juggling is all I know, it's my bread and butter." He said, "I think you've got this. You're funny without the juggling." It took about two or three years before I was comfortable on stage without a trunk of props. There has been an adjustment, but it's been very fun to do that. I think it's every juggler's dream to go on

stage without a bunch of props and just do comedy. At least for most comedy jugglers, that's what the goal is. Even if they don't say it out loud but most people never do. A lot of people come to my shows now with juggling props, with the hopes that I juggle.

RRX: Understandably.

MM: I did this show in Chicago and this kid brought six juggling clubs in hopes that we would juggle together. I mentioned on stage I used to juggle, and this guy was like, "let's juggle together!" I was like alright, so I brought this guy up on stage, a stranger I did not know, and we juggled together. It was so much fun and everyone loved it. So I was thinking maybe I should juggle at the end of my shows. There's a small chance that I might, I don't know yet. It's a possibility.

RRX: I mean I'm rooting for it.

MM: Oh okay. Maybe I'll do it then. I have a

pretty funny knife juggling routine that I did when I won the Andy Kaufman Award. That could be fun to do because it's also very heavily comedy based. Which is obviously super important at a comedy club. You don't want to see someone juggling to music, I mean how boring?

RRX: I mean from what I saw you're fantastic at it. I can juggle three balls, which most people can't do.

MM: That's true most people can't do it. That's so funny you say that because last night at The Comedy Cellar I mentioned that I used juggle and some guy was like, "oh, yeah three or four? Can you juggle three or four balls?" I said "I can juggle seven!" Weird options. My options were three or four, I'm like "C'mon I've been juggling for almost 30 years. I better be able to juggle three or four."

RRX: You would think. I was watching a video of you juggling and I couldn't even count how many balls there were.

MM: The thing about social media is I found out about all of these other jugglers that I have never heard of. They're insane, they're just so good. There's this one guy named Spencer (Androli) and he's a beast, probably the best in the world right now. Part

of me is happy because I've stopped training because there's no way I could catch up with these guys. It's much more rewarding for me to write a joke and for that joke to get a laugh than for me to practice a juggling trick and people are like, "oh, okay." Reactions are so much better to comedy than they are to juggling tricks. If that makes sense.

RRX: I'm a performer, a vocalist in a band and I've thought about doing comedy but I'm not very good at punchline jokes. I also thought about this. Being in a band, if we hit a sour note or I get a lyric wrong, the audience will still applaud at the end, but I feel like in comedy if you start off and the audience just isn't feeling it, I kind of blame the audience a little bit because it's more of a give and take sort of thing.

MM: Right. One-Hundred percent. Part of it is... is the comic going on stage and just doing the act? Or is the comic going on stage, taking it in and having a conversation? To me that's way more interesting. You can have a conversation with the audience and still do your material. People don't want to be talked at. You've got to respect the audience enough to have a dialogue with them while still doing your jokes. I'm not saying to have a back-and-forth conversation but

make it seem at least that there's a reason behind what you are saying. Not that you're saying it just because it's in the act. You want people to really feel your perspective and your experiences through your words.

RRX: That makes sense.

MM: I think that's important to keep in mind. If a show is not going well, sometimes I wonder, did I connect to anyone in the audience before I started or did I just get up on stage and like: here's what's weird about hats? I see people sometimes on stage at open mics or comedy clubs and they just do their act the way that they would practice it in their Livingroom. But you've got to breathe it in. If you hear a loud click or bang during your set, you want to acknowledge that. If you keep moving forward people will wonder, is this guy here? Is he alive with us or is this a recording? Because something crazy just happened and this guy didn't even mention it.

RRX: I can see that, you make a good point. I respect that, maybe I'll give an open mic a try sometime. But... you my friend are hilarious.

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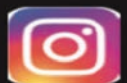
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The Crawl

BY JORDAN LANEGAN

For most music fanatics of this paper, the world of rave and electronic dance is likely a little lost on them and their era. With its emergence comes a whole range of new and younger fanbases. Even with me being a part of that generation and realm, hearing of DJ Dr. Fresch was a first for me.

Based out of Los Angeles, Fresch pulls inspiration from early 90s and 2000s metal and West Coast hip-hop influences, evolving into more bass-forward electronic styles and imprinting on a sub-genre known as G-house, or “gangster house” – fusing elements of house, trap and rap – the flavor profile where he reigns and dominates his craft now. In 2019, Fresch and Insomniac Music Group launched his latest label, The Prescription, which he believes is an all-embracing representation of who he has most proudly become as an artist and DJ and where collectively they introduce and gather producers who share a similar vision and sound.

Dr. Fresch is dark, groovy and snyth-y, dabbling in samples, percussive nods, ominous vocals and heavy build-ups followed by huge drops that amplify the beats and get the crowd hyped to new levels. The venue that we saw him at in Philadelphia this past weekend, The Ave, is a dark, intimate and sexy club

atmosphere where we somehow managed to work our way into the VIP section which gave us a phenomenal bird-eye vantage of the main stage and chaos that ensued below us.

As a part of the audience, one of the most magical additions to an electronic show is the implementation of lasers that seamlessly synchronize with the music and enhance visuals. The production that goes into a laser show is gnarly in its own regard, as technicians mix BPM with color, intensity, movement patterns and laser sequences, all which elevate emotional waves and total sensory control of the viewer.

For those who have perhaps never experienced a live set like this, let me paint a pretty picture. Pre-game as usual. Stand in line and make friends with those around you. “Have you seen *said artist* before?!” asks someone. The answer “no” from a stranger launches an excited conversation of what is about to proceed when gates open. The closer you get to security and entrance, the more the inside beats permeate and tingle throughout you. The energy increases. The darkness of the outside evening lends no comparison to the darkness inside of the club. An array of fragrances begins to overwhelm you – perfume, sweat, cologne, weed, booze – and something else you can’t quite

put your finger on (and probably don’t want to). Spilled drinks and bumped shoulders are almost welcomed in this particular environment. You glance at the people surrounding you. The outfits. The hair. The faces. The most very telling of pupils and eyes. We are all the same, yet all on different and strange levels.

Slowly, the crowd cusps their beverages, plants their feet semi-sturdily and simmers down as they realize the main event is about to begin. The vibe is hush-hush and elbow nudging to friends to shut the f* up and cast their eyes on the DJ booth in front of them, dim lit and foggy as it may be as Dr. Fresch strolls forward and announces his presence.

Trance like tones begin but quickly fade. Base emits. Over and over and over again with green, purple and red lasers spitting out in front of you. The frequency of the beats with the lasers combined make you feel like you’re on drugs even if everyone else is, but you are not. People are attempting to scale poles to get a better view, and those who can’t quite get the finger-grasp they thought they could, fall into random hands who settle them gently down into the floor that nobody wants to see with sober eyes.

There is a period when the fist bumping and ‘goddamn this is nasty’

faces subside to jointly wait for the beat to drop (a holy shit moment in and of itself with so many sardines crammed in there), but when it does drop, and everyone looks at one another with a 1...2...3... mentality – pure, respective, animalistic chaos derives in all its gloriousness. And just when you think it might be too much bass, just when you might think it may be a touch too much repetitiveness -- a sweet, easy melody drapes over and brings you down to simultaneously match the visuals on the screen behind Fresch -- lyrics to a song you know, but you can’t remember why, deepening into a layer of nothing you’ve ever seen or vibrated to before.

This might seem extreme. And I get that. But to be frank, that is the only way to describe it. EDM is extreme to many people, which is fair, and this level of G-house is nothing short of pretty hardcore -- I wasn’t even sure if I’d like it. But here I am to say, that WOW, did I love it, and would go to another show by him, or anyone else in the genre, again and again and again. Word to the wise, ending on a cliché, per use: broaden your horizons. Just a smidge. Because you might just really goddamn dig it.

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Saliyah Itoka

Singer and model notes the beauty of self-expression.



BY LIAM SWEENEY

Saliyah Itoka. Photography by Zine Massey.

One of the best things about my gig here is that, by default, I have to expose myself to every type of music. I have to challenge myself, because it's easy to ask a rocker what kinds of strings they use if you're into electric guitars. But it's a challenge to run across a singer/songwriter that's out of your depth.

Saliyah Itoka is a singer and a songwriter and a model, and if you watch her perform, you'll realize she does have a plan to kill everyone in the room.

I connect with Saliyah and we discuss our best cocktail mixes.

RRX: I'm listening to What You Doing, the video on Youtube. I love your style, it's great. A sense I get from you by your lyrics is that you're a strong, confident woman and you are in absolute command of what's around you and what's in your world. How much of what we see of you as a performer and how much is actually you?

SI: What my audience sees from me as a performer is actually all me. I'm still learning to be comfortable as a

performer and that comes from the type of shows I do. And it comes from reading the room and being confident that I can command the room. But everytime you see me hit the stage; I'm aiming to be the best.

RRX: I'm learning about you from listening to your videos. You're a singer/songwriter, and I've heard plenty of them, but I've not heard anyone bringing what you're bringing. I fully admit this is me; I'm a rock guy. So let me ask simpler questions due to my own personal lack of depth. When and how did

you get started singing and writing songs?

SI: I started singing when I was 3 years old, and I started writing songs at 11 years old. I've always loved to write and I've always been fascinated with how my favorite artists wrote their songs. I used to open the cd and read the paper insert and see how the lyrics were formatted and I would write them out myself. I studied artists like Mariah Carey, Stevie Wonder, and Sade in regards to their writing and composition. As far as singers, I

listened to a variety of artists growing up but I've always gravitated towards R&B and the artists that I idolized for singing were Toni Braxton, Aaliyah, Mariah Carey, Mary J. Blige, and Tamia.

RRX: Some people have an aim, or an inner vision with what they want to create or produce and they're never there yet, stuck in a home studio with every instrument on earth. Then there are people who just pick and grin and smile and will pick and grin forever. Do you have a vision for what you write now and what you want to write?

SI: It depends on a few factors. Sometimes, I'll get a random line or melody that pops into my head and I'll write it down quickly so I can build on it later. Other times, it depends on the track that I'm given or the vibe I get from the track. And there are instances where the vision of what I want to write about will just appear and I just follow its course until its completion.

RRX: Music transcends our differences and puts our hearts in the hearts of others, and that is an amazing property. But music doesn't exist in a vacuum. None of our lived experiences are the same. As a black woman in America, you have to share your experience to audiences that won't get it. How do you try to reach them? Do you try?

SI: I believe that being and staying authentic to your true self is how you reach greater audiences. And I also believe that being open to having those conversations and asking the questions is how we reach understanding. As a black woman in America, I want to be able to express my experience in the way that I have lived in and hope for it to be a roadmap or even a glimpse into understanding who I am as an artist as well as a human being.

RRX: You were nominated for the 2022 Listen Up awards. As I write this, the 2023 awards are coming. By the time you get this, you might be twice-nominated, or you might be a

winner. This is a fan awards thing; we don't vote for anything. Do you have something to say to the fans? Do you want to nominate anybody?

SI: To my fans, I just want to say thank you for all of the support. It's heartwarming to be a consideration for a nomination. I appreciate everyone who has taken the time out to listen to my music and have followed my journey and I can't wait for you all to see what I have in store. As far as me nominating anybody, there are so many people that I can see being nominated. There are a lot of artists who are really stepping out of their comfort zone and really showing their talents from the 518.

RRX: You are also a model on top of being a singer/songwriter. I love it when people have some other cool thing on top of being a musician. I figure you have more to pull from. We are getting out of an age where modeling was abusive on women in the sense of body image. How do we reform the modeling industry? Any ways that aren't easily seen?

SI: I think we should understand that everyone is beautiful in their own way and that there is a market for everyone. I think that the flaws that each of us have make us unique and that not everyone is going to fit into the same category. With that said, there is a market out there for everyone and I believe that every single one should be showcased. It doesn't matter what size or fit or shape you are, you are beautifully made. I feel that the stigma that a model should only look like this versus a model that looks like that puts unneeded pressure and unneeded expectations on the mind. We are all beautiful and we need to keep an open mind in the discussions of what beauty is because the definition is different for everyone.



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In the Heart of Texas

BY JOHNNY MYSTERY

Is it the heat? Is something in the water? It should be no surprise that some of our greatest rock artists have come out of the lone star state. Texas is also rich in Country and Blues. In fact, Alan Lomax spent a good amount of time, particularly in Dallas, putting together the Great American Blues Catalog. We all know Alan Freed coined the term Rock N Roll in Cleveland, but that town has got nothing on Texas.

Buddy Holly, strapped on his Stratocaster in his hometown of Lubbock back in the early 50's and pretty much set the template for the rock n roll band as we know it. In his brief time on Earth, Buddy along with his band The Crickets recorded: "That'll Be The Day," "Peggy Sue," "Maybe Baby," "Think It Over," "Rave On," and dozens of other tunes. They have inspired everybody in the business, and you can still hear their influence. Buddy is one of the great "what ifs" of rock and roll and his roots are firmly planted in Texas, along with a lot more artists.

From El Paso came "The Bobby Fuller Four" who formed in 1961 and recorded their first single "You're in Love" in Bobby's parents living room. That's home recording before they had a name for it. Of course, they eventually set sail for L.A. and recorded a great string of records, including: "I Fought the Law", "Let Her Dance", Another Sad And Lonely Night" and "Love's Made A Fool Of You" as well as many others. Unfortunately, Bobby Fuller met an early demise just like Buddy Holly. On July 18, 1966, Bobby was found dead in his car outside his home under mysterious circumstances. It's safe to say, I'll be going into more



detail on this in a future article because his death has still not been explained to anyone's satisfaction.

You want to trace the beginnings of Psychedelic Rock? You can follow it back to Austin. That's where "The 13th Floor Elevators" are from. In fact, they named their first album "Psychedelic Sounds." They were the first, but definitely not the last band to refer to themselves with "The Psych" word. The song they are remembered for after all these years is "You're Gonna Miss Me."

Sung by one of the greatest acid casualties of all time, Roky Ericson. His soulful voice influenced fellow Texan, Janis Joplin. Patti Smith, who once claimed to put on 13th Floor records every night before she went to bed was/is a big fan. You know, there's a lot of peyote out in the

desert and I'm pretty sure The 13th Floor Elevators found it all!!!

Another artist who was influenced by Roky was Billy Gibbons from Houston, who formed "The Moving Sidewalks" and recorded a fuzz heavy tune called "The 99th Floor." After doing several opening shows with Jimi Hendrix, Jimi himself claimed that Billy was one of his favorite players. That's a good endorsement for future reference eh... Billy Gibbons continues to wow us all in ZZ Top.

From Corpus Christi, Texas comes Zackery Thacks who were an incredible tight outfit who paid a lot of attention to British Invasion with heavy influence from The Yardbirds. The closest they ever came to a national hit was their first single, "Bad Girl" which was picked up by Mercury Records but

failed to chart. They made a few more 45s before the draft broke them up. Considered to this day, to be one of the great lost bands of the 60's.

From San Antonio came "The Sir Douglas Quintet" and they had a Tex Mex Garage sound. They enjoyed a couple of chart hits. "She's About A Mover" and "Mendiceno" both hit the top 40. I would venture to say from their sound they were a great party band and probably played a few frat houses in their day.

From Bridgeport, Texas comes "The Green Fuz" and their one record. "The Green Fuz" is one of the crudest singles ever made. I had the chance to speak with their lead guitarist and co-writer, Les Dale on several occasions and the way he puts it "We didn't record it in a studio. We had a reel-to-reel tape deck and did a session in a closed diner one night. It was in the middle of the winter and pretty cold. The electronics were not working right." "Green Fuz" has been covered by the likes of "The Cramps" and "The Lemonheads."

Also noteworthy are "The Gentlemen" from Dallas who recorded "It's A Cryin' Shame" and "Kenny and The Casuals", also from Dallas and their record "Journey Into Tyme." Both of these records are considered to be among the greatest rare garage tunes of all time. In fact, there are so many more cool records from Texas, I can't rule out a part 2.

Stay tuned kids and go hit your local record shop!

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Olivia Rodrigo Sour

BY FRANCESCA MORINA

Olivia Rodrigo kick-started her career on Disney Channel's *Bizaardvark* and then went on to the Disney+ show, *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series*, where she first showed off her songwriting skills with "All I Want". The song conveyed a teenage girl's struggle between two guys and her obstacles with dating. The song hit 119 on the Billboard Global 200 in 2019 and hit the top charts around the world. In January 2021, Rodrigo released "Driver's License," and then that same May, released her first album *Sour*, which made her the three-time Grammy award winner she is today.

The album delivers ballads and punk to show heartbreak and the struggles of being a teenager. She takes inspiration from pop heroes like Taylor Swift and Hayley Williams from Paramore to create an early-2000s-like punk-rock tone.

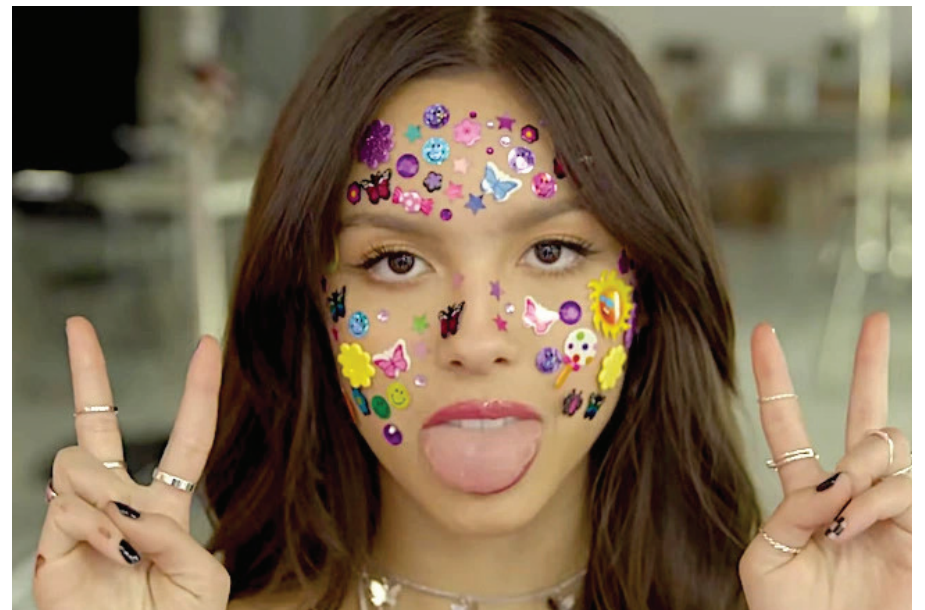
Of course, we cannot forget the song that went viral in the first place. On January 7, 2021, Rodrigo released her first single, "Driver's License," a song about her remembering the good times with her ex after, you guessed it, getting her driver's license. The song immediately blew up and was on #1 on the Billboard charts for weeks during the year topping "Blinding Lights" by The Weeknd and many more well known and beloved artists. This power ballad is more piano driven, heartbreaking to hear, Rodrigo also delivers a bridge like no one has heard before. The bridge layers her voice to create a more distorted, majestic sound to explain her heartbreak while referencing her driving like, "I still see your face in the white cars."

The internet dissected the song to see if it was about her former co-star from *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series*, but neither stars confirmed or denied who the song, and the album in general, was really about.

Heartbreak is the central idea of *Sour*: explaining the struggles she went through in her past relationship or relationships through ballads and strings. From "Traitor" to "Favorite Crime" where Rodrigo explains the toxicity of her past relationships ("Well I hope I was your favorite crime"), both songs start with a softer tone, using more piano in "traitor" and just a guitar in "Favorite Crime," then going into powerful belts with even some harmonies to emphasize her dread. She even explains her jealousy of him being happy with another girl in "Happier" where she says, "I hope you're happy but don't be happier." She uses more piano in this one, and her favorite, layered harmonies to create this beautiful song.

All but one song was written with her producer Dan Nigro. That one song was "Enough for You," that Rodrigo wrote on her own. With just her and her guitar, she goes into the lengths she went to please him and how "All I ever wanted was to be enough for you." Although not the fan favorite, it was still perfect to include it in this album.

Olivia Rodrigo also alludes to her heroes with this album. If you're a fan, you have probably seen the many covers that she creates with Taylor Swift songs and old photos of her with a sign that says "#1 Taylor Swift Fan" on her Instagram. She also shows her love by using many inspirations from



her songs including ("Deja Vu" which was inspired by the bridge from "Cruel Summer" and even sampling Swift's song, "New Year's Day" to write "1 step forward, 3 steps back." She also alludes to Hayley Williams, who was most famous in the early-2000s, for her pop-punk songs with her band, Paramore. She took direct inspiration from Paramore's 2007 single "Misery Business" to write "Good 4 U," which actually went through a legal battle recently to give Williams a credit in the song. All of these songs on Rodrigo's album are about the frustration of heartbreak and the struggles in her past relationship.

Though most of her songs are about heartbreak, Rodrigo also sings about the romanticizing of being young and a teenager throughout the album. With "Brutal," she explains in distorted sounds and low register, the expectations of being a teenager and questioning when she was going to get

her Hollywood, young life "Where's my fucking teenage dream?". In "Jealousy, Jealousy," she goes on to tell her struggles with the internet and comparing herself to other girls ("Co-Comparison is killing me slowly"). Using more of the bass than any other song in the album, this one is more of a jazz tone than the others.

Her last song on the album is not like the others. If it couldn't get more heartbreaking, "Hope Ur Ok" gives Rodrigo the chance to shout out old friends who had a tough childhood ("His parents cared more about the Bible than being good to their own child"). She delivers a comforting song to not just them, but maybe others too, listening while she shows perspective on her own life and how she has grown and matured. As Olivia Rodrigo has shown, some good things may come out of the craziness of life itself.

Mystic Bowie (Cntd.)

He gave me the phone number. Turns out they were living in Fairfield, which was literally 10 minutes from me.

RRX: That's funny.

MB: And they gave me the address, and I'm like, you know, I'm only 10 minutes away in Westin. And they're like, oh my God! That's really cool! Come on over.

When I walked into the house, it was Chris Frantz and Tina Weymouth!

RRX: No kidding!

MB: Yes! It was the Tom Tom Club.

RRX: They didn't like living in the city either, apparently. Where are you living now?

MB: I live both in CT and Jamaica.

RRX: So, it depends on where you're working?

MB: Exactly! In Jamaica I founded the Mystic Bowie Cultural Center not for profit. I founded a summer camp, which

I fund every single year in the mountains where my tribal kids attend camp for free. They could never afford to go to camp if they had to pay.

I also work with the school. I built a library in my community, and no child is allowed to pay for anything. 100% free.

As a tribal community there was a generation gap where the elders were carrying on the drum making, the drumming and the dancing. But there was a gap where they weren't teaching the young people.

So I went back to Jamaica and started a culture based summer camp. I hired the elders to teach at the summer camp. Teach the kids how to make their own drums. So, now, in the past 15 years, every single child in that community is a drummer and a dancer. 100%.

RRX: It sounds like you are a busy

guy!

MB: I am very busy. This morning I have a bunch of photos from that same school, Accompong Primary School. The pictures were sent to me from the principal. Yesterday, they had the national drum talent festival for the entire island of Jamaica, and my students brought home the gold medal!

But you know what's even better? This is the third year that we got the gold medal. So they are making me proud.

RRX: That's amazing! Congratulations!

Looking forward to your April show in Saratoga, what are we going to see at UPH?

MB: Basically, if you like Reggae music... which I'm sorry, something is wrong with you if you don't like Reggae.

RRX: So do you think people need to

find a way to get out of their heads or need to relax a little bit? Because, personally, I love Reggae.

MB: Reggae music is supposed to take you down from that speed that you live in. That high horse you live on. Reggae music is supposed to take you down. Let you kick your shoes off and dance. Enjoy the moment to the fullest. That's what I do with my Reggae music. At the same time, if you love Reggae music and you love Talking Heads music, what's a better combination? If you're ready to dance, have fun and let your hair down, you don't want to miss this show.

RRX: I couldn't agree more! People can visit the Universal Preservation Hall website to purchase tickets for the show! We can't wait to welcome you to the Capital District.

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- 04/07** HEX Goth Industrial Night and C.O.L. Dark and Kinky Munch -8:30pm \$10
- 04/08** Throwback Night to the 80s/90s! with DJ Queen Beatz -9pm \$10
- 04/14** GoGo Gone Dark Burlesque -8pm \$10
- 04/16** Xperience Fuzebox with Sonic Sacrifice, Zeffler and Southbound Renegade -2pm \$10
C.O.L. EDU Consent and Negotiations Discussion Style Class -5:30pm \$10
- 04/21** Resist The Club/Untz Goth Industrial Dance Night -9pm \$10
- 04/22** OUTTA My Head LP Release Show with Breach The Asylum, Flat Wounds
and Hostile Engagement -6:30pm \$15
- 04/23** Have Fun/Grandstand Jockeys/The Snorts/Shortwave Radioband -6:30pm \$10
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