



THE JAZZ MUSICIAN'S BUSINESS HANDBOOK

PART 2

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2018
JAZZ.FM91 & MUSIC ONTARIO
MUSIC BUSINESS SEMINARS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 INTRODUCTION
- 4 MIRANDA MULHOLLAND :
Digital media pros & Cons
- 5 MATT STEVENS:
Making it Work as a Musician
- 7 MOLLY JOHNSON:
The Do-It-Yourself Era
- 8 DR. JOHN CHONG:
Tuning the Body and Mind



WELCOME TO THE SECOND JAZZ.FM91 MUSIC BUSINESS HANDBOOK. For the past four years, JAZZ.FM91 has been presenting music business seminars, specially geared to workers in jazz. These events have been well attended and well received, because they fill a particular void in the realm of business education for artists; that of networking and strategizing around the precarious world of making a living in jazz music.

In February and April of 2018, JAZZ.FM91 teamed up with TD Bank Group and Music Ontario to continue this much needed seminar tradition. This document is a compendium of just some of the ideas discussed at the two events. For a deeper look into the concepts touched on below, please visit the music business seminar page on the JAZZ.FM91 website here: <http://jazz.fm/index.php/education-mainmenu-111/music-seminar>

For further information about JAZZ.FM91 in general, please go here: jazz.fm

For more about Music Ontario, go here: music-ontario.ca

For details on the many generous contributions TD Bank Group makes to Canadian music, go here: <https://www.tdmusic.com/>



MIRANDA MULHOLLAND
MUSICIAN, RECORD LABEL ENTREPRENEUR

DIGITAL MEDIA: THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE FOR MUSICIANS

“THE VALUE GAP”

- “the significant disparity between the value of creative content that is accessed and enjoyed by consumers and the revenues that are returned to the people and businesses who create it”; this means that over the last century, there have been dwindling revenue sources; more competition for fewer dollars, as well as “marketplace exhaustion - more content than ever; audiences have been expecting free music

INTERNET DEMOCRATIZATION

- The so-called “democratization” caused by the internet, which is supposed to get rid of the middleman, (i.e. record companies), has actually created more middlemen (i.e. Youtube, Instagram, Twitter, etc etc) – this leads to an overwhelming amount of office work; keeps creators from creating.

NOT A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

- Amazon currently has an unprecedented 70% profit margin.

- Business models of streaming services; Drake makes more per listen because the rates are based on market share rather than simply number of times played. Also, because of algorithms, someone like Drake will get exponentially more streams because of his market share i.e. it’s not a level playing field

HURRIED ART CULTURE

- Drafts, works in progress, sketches, the arduous process of art making over long periods is not encouraged in our current hurried art culture; governments, funders, labels etc need to be long-term thinkers; artists need time to develop, grow and hone their creations/craft. i.e. quality takes time.
- Malcolm Gladwell: “I don’t think the problem with writing right now is a failure of output, it’s a failure of quality.”- The current social climate has been moving towards a notion that “now is better.”

THE AMATEUR-IZING MOVEMENT

- the fact that anyone can record a record in

their bedroom and upload to the internet isn't necessarily good; "amateur-izing movement."

- paid arbiters of taste are being laid off and replaced by amateurs and internet algorithms.

- The Copyright Act prevents players who perform on TV/film soundtracks from being paid royalties when the shows are played internationally. The rules must be modernized!

MOVING FORWARD

- We need to ask our government to anticipate change rather than be reactive; i.e. the lag time while our govt. figures out new, effective copyright reform could be your album cycle (e.g. 2 years) or even your entire career.
- Contact/send letters to your MP regarding copyright laws around the internet.
- Safe Harbor Laws mean that Youtube is exempt from paying artists for their work. Also: The Radio Royalty Exemption, made in 1997, which was invented to protect "ma and pa" radio stations means that radio stations only have to pay \$100 of royalties on their first 1.25 million of revenue; at the time the law made sense, but right now, most stations are owned by Rogers and Bell etc. so law is no longer applicable; contact your MP!

ADVICE FOR MUSICIANS

- No one can help you until you care the most about your own career. Don't get a manager and think that you're taken care of!
- Be honest; educate audiences about "The Value Gap" and encourage fans to buy CDs from you, rather than listening to your music on Spotify.
- Tell fans to buy your new recordings on release day, which helps with algorithms and tell your fans to rate your recordings online.

ALCHEMY

- The magic/alchemy that we engage in as performers, creating ephemeral, one-time only experiences for audiences is invaluable. Continue on creators!



MATT STEVENS
INTERNATIONALLY SUCCESSFUL
JAZZ GUITARIST

MAKING IT WORK AS A MUSICIAN

EARLY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- After high school, applied to University of Toronto, but didn't get in. Instead, he went to Berkeley for "Guitar Week"; auditioned for Berklee full time and was accepted; finished after three years. Moved to New York with friends (Bay Ridge, Brooklyn); toured with Christian Scott.

THE NEW YORK MYSTIQUE

- It's great to be face to face with the level of playing necessary to be an international artist; the idea that you need to be "ready" to go to NYC is silly - it's a great place to learn for any musician; a major drawback is that it's possible to spend all your time just surviving (NYC is very expensive!).

TIPS FOR BEING A SUCCESSFUL SIDE-PERSON (TOURING/STUDIO MUSICIAN)

- Always be on time and prepared!
- Be someone who's easy to be around, even in tough circumstances on the road. It's vitally important to be personable, socially aware of the needs of other people.

- The first job is the hardest to get, but leads to other opportunities. There are so many musicians coming out of post-secondary jazz schools. Who will be the established person who will hire them, which will lead to more hires? There's no formula for this - it's different for everybody. Good tip: Once you establish a certain level of proficiency on your instrument, record and listen to yourself improvising and figure out what makes you unique - develop those aspects, rather than always looking to other examples. The level of musicianship in the jazz world is very high now, especially in USA. When the overall level is so high, it's not "if you can do it, but how."
- The stronger one becomes technically, the better one gets at improvising. Never stop practicing/improving.

COMMUNITY

- Groups of friends can form their own bands rather than wait to get hired. Examples: Snarky Puppy, BadBadNotGood - These groups created their own opportunities by investing in one another.

BUSINESS MODELS

- Major labels don't sign jazz players anymore: that option no longer exists. The business model has changed. Social media sometimes feels like a chore – it's a useful tool, but it's a "slippery snake": a catch-all tactic for social media doesn't work. For example, some bands without a big social media in-print do very well. You have to find a social media voice that is natural/genuine or people will sniff it out!

STAY THE COURSE

- In a musical career, things take longer than you think. It's about stamina and staying the course. Have a clear eyed view of what you're good at. School doesn't complete students, but it gives them the tools to practice. If you know how to improve on your own and can persevere, you can build a career.

DEFINING SUCCESS

- If you're in a position to keep playing/composing/creating, you're doing very well, whether it's internationally or locally.



MOLLY JOHNSON
BELOVED JAZZ SINGER,
KENSINGTON JAZZ FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

THE DO-IT-YOURSELF ERA

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR SINGERS

- Singers: definitely write your own songs/have your own things to say. If you're going to sing standards or covers, "sing them like a songwriter" not like a "singer": come at standards with gravitas, understanding of history; establish deep connections with the songs you sing.
- Learn to be like a sports coach; build a great team, so that if you walk off-stage, the show doesn't fall apart; understand the people behind the scenes (sound people etc.) understand that it takes a team to succeed.
- Only be on stage with people you like; the biz is tough and mean, so when you get on stage, be on stage with people you enjoy being with!

SONG-WRITING

- Collaborate as much as you can with other writers. Songwriting can start with discussions with other writers, but come prepared with an idea of "what you want to say" first. Also, think about who you want to talk to (who are you writing songs for?)
- Make sure when you write, that you are creating material you will want to sing/play later, over and over.
- Constantly write down ideas; keep journals.

GENERAL ADVICE

- Young players and singers should try to get as much experience as they can. Go to every open mic, every opportunity to play your own original material in public.
- Motherhood and art: postpone motherhood until you're at a certain level, or be prepared to adjust! For example, Molly sang standards more after she became a mom; She had very little energy for writing new material.
- Go out and make work for yourself. Put together combos and create gigs. E.g. use social media to draw audiences. Make deals with clubs/restaurants (even ones that don't already present music). Suggest that they get the bar sales and you get the door sales. "You've got a restaurant at the end of your street: put some music in there!"
- **NO GUEST LISTS.** Tell your family and fans that they need to support you by paying.

DIVERSIFY

- In order to make a living as a musician, you have to work very hard and diversify. Working hard includes being a good person first and foremost – learn to cultivate and nurture relationships. Teach, write. Use all your skill sets.



DR. JOHN CHONG
PIANIST AND DIRECTOR,
MUSICIANS' CLINICS OF CANADA

TUNING THE BODY AND MIND FOR MUSICIANS

THE ARTIST'S LIFE

- Great musicians need to spend 10,000 or more hours in the rehearsal studio refining their craft. They don't do it for the money! The average annual musician income is approximately \$16,000/year (2011, National Household Survey, Canada).

HEALTH RISKS FOR ARTISTS (M.A.D.N.E.S.S.)

- “Muscle Fatigue Anxiety Depression Nerve Entrapment Stress Syndrome”
- According to a 2012 Australian study of orchestral musicians, there is an 84% lifetime prevalence of injury and a 50/50 chance of playing while injured.
 - Musicians may be up to 3 times more likely to be prone to depression than the wider public (British study) Reasons for this statistic include:
 - Poor working conditions (difficulty sustaining a living, anti-social working hours, exhaustion, inability to plan time, lack of recognition for one's work, welding of music and identity into one's idea of self hood;
 - Physical aspects of career (e.g. musculoskeletal

risks while playing);

- Issues related to being a woman in the industry: sexism, balancing work and family commitments, sexist attitudes/harassment.
- Ergonomics: e.g. clarinet players are prone to right thumb troubles/bassoon players have left thumb troubles. Important concept: “where things get squished”; improper posture and muscle tension lead to blood-flow problems and chronic injuries.
- Cancer/throat nodules can develop with singers because of bad lifestyle/exposure to toxins
- Hearing loss: Make sure to wear earplugs, even when going to concerts: cells in ear don't grow back!

THE MECHANICS OF STRESS

- When the body experiences stress, the hormone cortisol is produced, causing the body to respond with a defense reaction. When the stressful situation goes away, the body returns to normal. BUT
- If the stress system gets stuck on, (this is often the case with musicians with on-going financial

issues etc.), the stress response is very hard on the body: 1 year of chronic stress can create 6 years of biological aging. This is one of the main reasons there's so much illness + injury among stressed out musicians.

MINIMIZING STRESS

- Fight or flight responses are prolonged/made permanent in musician's lives by "stories going on in the background", i.e. distracting, negative narratives in musicians' heads.
- "Targeted Humiliating Criticism" lights up parts of the brain in scientific studies; psychological mistreatment is actually as harmful as physical assault. Spurning, terrorizing, isolating, exploiting/corrupting, denying emotional responsiveness, mental health/educational neglect are all major risks to health, resulting in negative bodily symptoms comparable to those caused by tobacco and asbestos (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012).
- The four elements that come out of chronic stress narratives are: Seeing red ("freaking out"); Ruminating ("going over and over with self critique); Threat to Ego; Negative Mind Wandering
- Create boundaries! Fight against stress-creating narratives.
- Prevent overuse injuries: Have rest breaks during practice; stretch; exercise; use ergonomics; don't "play through the pain".

- More methods of stress prevention:
 - **Proper alignment** (posture);
 - **Breathing** (alleviates stress!);
 - **Coordination** (learn to practice while decreasing stress so it doesn't get wired into playing);
 - **Diet**;
 - **Focus** (stay focused on art, don't start thinking about what others think etc);
 - **Goals** (make sure you're making art for the right reasons; not to be competitive etc.).

RE-WRITE THE NARRATIVE

- We have the power as individuals and collectively to decrease stress and injury rates among musicians.
- Add meditation/yoga/breathing techniques or other methods of decreasing stress (bringing muscle/brain activity to minimum) to your rehearsal routine every day.
- don't listen to "Monkey Mind" stressful narratives.
- Resources:
 - Book: "Effortless Mastery" by Kenny Werner
 - Website: "Bulletproof Musician": <https://bulletproofmusician.com>