

# LAZIE INDIE MAGAZINE

EDITION. 52  
AUGUST 2024

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SHAUN LA BELLE  
ROHAN SOLOMON  
D CALI  
BRENDA BEST  
AARON LAZAR  
MARINA OGALLA  
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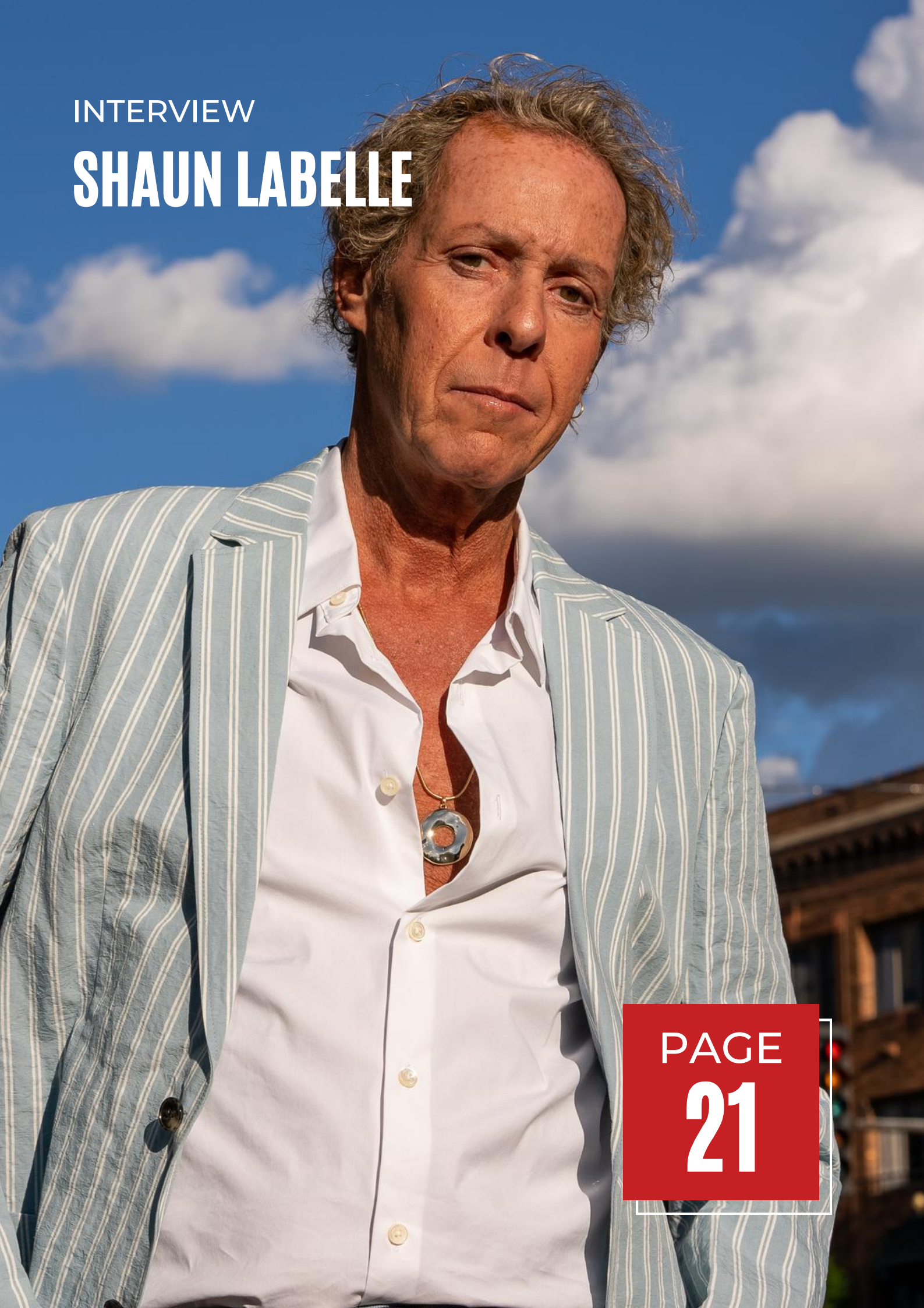
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## MAGAZINE INFORMATION

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**Mimmy & Tony Succar**

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Mimmy & Tony Succar



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D CALI

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MIMMY AND TONY SUCCAR

New approach and new template

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# *Editor's Note*



At Lazie Indie Magazine, we embrace change. We're excited to unveil our new, modern magazine layout that retains the simplicity and clarity of our previous 51 editions. We hope you'll enjoy the fresh look.

By purchasing a copy of Lazie Indie Magazine, you're helping us support indie musicians worldwide. As we enter our fifth year, your support is crucial in expanding our reach and continuing our mission.

We're also thrilled to announce the return of the John Anthony Guitar Contest, running from early September to late October. This contest highlights India's top guitar talent, offering them global exposure. Last year's winner, Sidharth Praveen, received a Fender Stratocaster, presented by Dave Evans (ex-AC/DC). With esteemed judges like Steve Lynch (ex-Autograph) and Will Johns, this year's contest promises to be even better.

This issue is vibrant and packed with interviews from Grammy winners to rising stars. We hope you love it! Supporting indie musicians is easy—just share their music and interviews. Your support means the world to them. As for this issue, it's bursting with vibrant content, featuring interviews with Grammy winners and rising stars alike. We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed creating it. Remember, supporting an independent musician doesn't take much—sharing their music and interviews can make all the difference. These artists have poured their hearts into their work, and your acknowledgment and support mean the world to them.

Pls note we are moving the IIMF Curtain Raiser to our next issue.

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**Jay Pillai**  
Editor-in-Chief

**Lazie Indie  
Magazine**



*Cover Story*

*MIMMY AND TONY SUCCAR*

# Heart and Heritage: The Musical Journey of Mimy and Tony Succar

## INTERVIEW BY LYIA META

Their smiles say it all, radiating exuberance and joy. While it may sound like a fairy tale, their story is extraordinary and inspiring—a dream worth retelling for years to come. Their debut album together showcases a unique chemistry that blends infectious beats and soulful melodies. However, as uplifting as their music is, it is the bond between the mother and son duo that dominates the narrative. Their connection, both familial and musical, shines through every note and rhythm, making their collaboration truly special. The result is music that is not only captivating but also deeply resonant, reflecting their shared journey and love for the art. Music is a profound gift, and family an incredible blessing, but to merge these two and coexist harmoniously is a rare occurrence.

The energy that emanates from Mimy Succar is riveting as she and Tony showcase during live performances. Their dynamic stage presence and infectious enthusiasm captivate audiences, leaving a lasting impression with every performance. Even more inspiring is Mimy's story—she started her music career at the age of 62. Her son, Tony, has been a driving force in this incredible journey.

Tony Succar, a two-time Latin GRAMMY winner, was first nominated for the prestigious awards in 2018 for Best Tropical Song with "Me Enamoro Mas De Ti." In 2019, he received four nominations for Album of the Year, Best Tropical Song, Best Salsa Album, and Producer of the Year for his album "Mas de Mi." He made history by winning two Latin GRAMMYs for Producer of the Year and Best Salsa Album, becoming the youngest winner in both categories. As a talented Peruvian-American musician and producer, Succar has significantly influenced the music scene with his captivating blend of Latin, Jazz and Pop Styles. His acclaimed work, "Unity: The Latin Tribute to Michael Jackson," not only showcases his musical prowess but also his passion for creating innovative arrangements that resonate with audiences worldwide.

Mimy Succar, Tony's mother, is a gifted singer-songwriter from Peru whose music deeply reflects her Latin heritage. Drawing from her roots, Mimy infuses her songs with a beautiful blend of traditional Peruvian melodies and contemporary pop sounds. Her authentic approach and emotive performances have not only earned her a dedicated following in Peru but also touched the hearts of listeners worldwide. Through her music, Mimy shares her cultural heritage and personal stories, creating a powerful connection with her audience.

Together, Tony and Mimy form a remarkable mother-son duo, creating a unique musical partnership. Their collaborative efforts blend Tony's innovative production techniques with Mimy's soulful vocals, resulting in music that is both powerful and embraced by their fans.

In a recent interview, Tony shared insights into their creative process. When asked about blending various genres like Salsa, Jazz, Pop, and Afro-Latin-inspired sounds, Tony explained, "I like to feel the music, start with the percussion, with the groove. Blending all these styles comes very naturally to me because I enjoy all these genres of music. This appreciation comes from my upbringing here in Miami, a big melting pot of music. At home, with my Peruvian parents, it was a lot of traditional Peruvian and tropical music, but with my friends, I listened to hip-hop, pop, and rock. So when creating my music, it's only natural to bring all these influences I grew up with."



**Lydia Ayo speaks To Mimmy and Tony Succar**

*Join me as I speak to this incredible mother and son duo!*

**LM: Your music blends various genres like salsa, jazz, pop, and Afro-Latin-inspired sounds. How do you approach combining these different styles to create a cohesive and unique sound?**

TS: I like to feel the music, start with the percussion, with the groove. Blending all these styles comes very naturally to me because I enjoy all these genres of music. This appreciation comes from my upbringing here in Miami. Luckily, this city is a big melting pot, so you tend to listen to many genres of music. At home, with my Peruvian parents, it was a lot of traditional Peruvian music and tropical music, but with my friends, I would listen to a lot of hip-hop, pop, and rock. So when creating my music, it's only natural to bring all these influences I grew up with.

**LM: Your album, "Mas de Mi," received critical acclaim. How do you plan to continue pushing boundaries and challenging yourself creatively in future projects?**

TS: Sometimes it's very difficult to think, "How am I going to make something better than this now?" especially after winning two Latin Grammys with a project. However, I try to emphasize just making music that I truly love and feel proud of. I always ensure it aligns with my motivation in life and my purpose, which comes from within and from God. That is what really drives me to keep creating music from the heart.

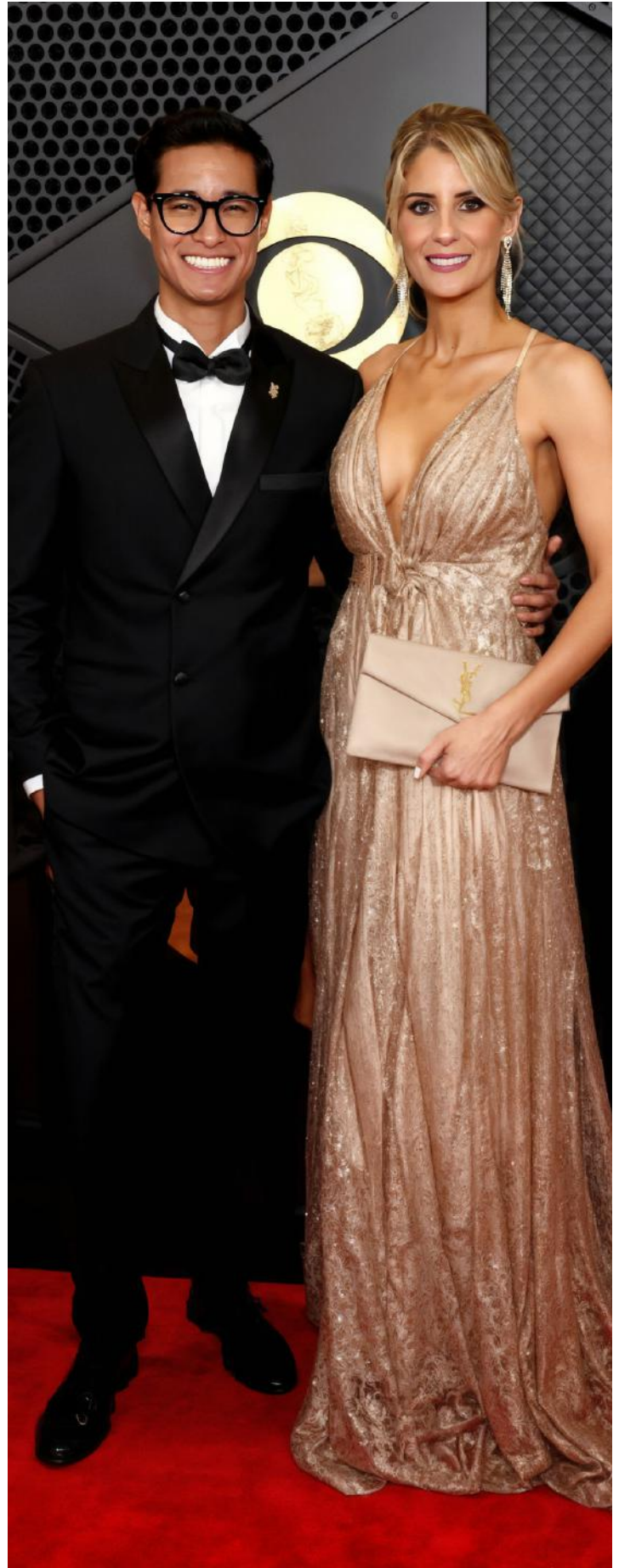
It fulfills me, whether it gets recognition or not, or whether it sells or not. I just enjoy it and try my best to get it out there using social media platforms, which is truly a big key to my success.

**LM: Mimy & Tony" is not only a musical collaboration but also a celebration of family. How did working on this album with your mother Mimy deepen your bond and musical connection?**

TS: This is probably one of the most special projects in my entire life, and for the rest of my life. It has united my mom and me big time, but not only that, the entire family. To celebrate her success, her Grammy nomination, and her huge collaborations on her first debut album at 64 years of age is a very big thing for her and for us. She sacrificed her life, her career, to raise her three children, migrate to a new country, and start from scratch. She wasn't able to pursue her dream, so it's very special that so many years later, that dream would come to life.

**LM: Your mother, Mimy Succar, is also a musician. What was it like performing and recording with her on your album "Mimy & Tony"? How did her presence impact the creative process and the overall dynamic of the project?**

TS: My mom surprised me big time. She had never recorded in a recording studio in her life; it was her first time. In the beginning, of course, she was scared, not knowing how she would sound in the studio. But as soon as she felt comfortable, I noticed she was born for this. Although she let herself be guided by me, she definitely interpreted the music



in a way I didn't think she could. She really brought the songs we wrote to another level. She also came up with improvisations, changes of melodies, and rhythms that really spiced up the production and, more importantly, gave it her own special touch.

**LM: Collaboration seems to be a big part of your music career. How does it feel being able to work with artists like Gloria Estefan and Sheila E. who have helped shape our musical heritage?**

TS: It's pretty insane to know that my mom recorded with Gloria and Sheila. I'm still in shock that she would be given such an incredible opportunity so quickly. I must publicly thank Sheila for giving her the opportunity and for giving me the opportunity to produce that project with her. When I see my mom sing with Sheila and Gloria, it's still surreal. I feel like I'm dreaming, but what makes me most proud is that she hangs in there with them as if she has been doing this all her life. That's just God and the gift he gave her; she was born for stardom in my eyes. She has it.

**LM: What do you hope listeners take away from "Mimy & Tony," both in terms of the music itself and the story behind the album's creation?**

TS: I hope listeners enjoy the blend of cultures. I hope they really appreciate the amount of hard work and dedication, two years behind this, and the quality of musicianship. Aside from being a nice story, the album is quite fascinating. The collaborations are stunning, and it's one of my best musical works to date. As for the story, we'd like to







## Lyia Meta speaks To Mimy and Tony Succar

inspire love and family, the importance of the bond between a mother and a son, and the unity of family. We want to spread that message and inspire and motivate people to know that it's never too late to achieve their dreams.

**LM: Are there any specific tracks on "Mimy & Tony" that hold special meaning for you in terms of your collaboration with your mother? If so, can you share why those tracks are particularly significant?**

TS: Definitely. The song "Sukiyaki" is super special because it's a song my mom would sing to me when I was a kid. It's a traditional Japanese song, and I needed to include it because it's part of her culture and heritage. Another song that's super special is "Sin Fronteras" because that was a collaboration with La India from Puerto Rico and Haila from Cuba, both powerhouse female icons in salsa music. When working with my mom on that album, she was scared to collaborate with such artists because she thought her vocal would sound small compared to theirs. But she actually truly killed it, and it's right up there. That made me super proud.

**LM: Your music has a global appeal, with performances around the world. Do you have plans to further expand your international presence and connect with audiences in new regions?**

TS: Yes, for sure. There are so many new places to visit. I think this year we'll be going to the Middle East. I've always wanted to take my music to Dubai.

**LM:** In addition to your music, you've also been involved in producing and arranging. Do you see yourself taking on more diverse roles in the music industry, such as mentoring or producing for other artists?

**TS:** Yes, for sure. I'm constantly producing for other artists. I enjoy that as well. Sheila E's new album

was the most recent production I did. I also did a couple of tracks on the Orquesta de la Luz 40th anniversary album. Recently, I did something for Becky G as well, so it's something I definitely enjoy. Mentoring is also something I do. I've done masterclasses in universities like Berklee, UPC in Lima, FIU in Miami, etc.

**LM:** What would you consider to be the most important aspects of the Súcar musical heritage that you would like to see preserved and carried on by future generations?

**TS:** Family, happiness, and música con sabor! (music with flavor).

**LM:** When envisioning the future of the Succar musical legacy, how do you hope your children will contribute to its continuation and evolution?

**TS:** Yes, my daughter Emma already has her timbales, cajon, congas, ukulele, piano, and she loves to dance. She's 2 right now, so I'm starting her early!

**LM:** Finally, what can fans expect from you in the near future?

**TS:** I will be launching a new album early next year, which I'm currently working on now. But before that, I'll be launching a new documentary based on my mom's project!



**Mimy Succar:**

**LM:** Hi Mimy, thank you for being a part of this interview, could you please share with our readers, as a singer who found her shine later in life, what advice do you have for others who may be pursuing their passions and dreams at a more mature age?

**MS:** My advice is to stay motivated, no matter what, and be grateful for what you have in life. Never feel like it's too late. To be honest, I thought it was too late. However, I was content with singing at home, at family parties, and at the small gigs I would do with my family. But I always gave it my all. So when the opportunity arose, I believe it caught me prepared, and that was very important.

**LM:** "Mimy & Tony" is not only a musical collaboration but also a celebration of family. How did working on this album with your son, Tony, deepen your bond and musical connection?

**MS:** It helped us tremendously. I am of Japanese descent, and sometimes we Japanese don't really know how to express our emotions. But music is an incredible way to express. I think God sent us this opportunity to really connect and express





### **Lyia Meta speaks To Mimy and Tony Succar**

ourselves through music and unite the entire family at the same time. We were actually going through tough family times, just like all families out there, but this came just in time to make us realize the importance of being united.

**LM: Your debut album, "Mimy & Tony," represents the fusion of music from different countries and styles. Can you share more about how your background, including your Peruvian-Japanese heritage, influenced the music on this album?**

MS: Oh yes, I've sung traditional music since I was a little girl. That's actually how I started singing, period. It was because my parents loved this music, my grandparents, all of them Japanese, they really loved it as well. So when Tony said he wanted to do a Japanese song but with a Salsa twist, I was like, "OMG, this is going to be amazing." Then traveling to Japan to record the music video with Nora Suzuki was incredible! As for Peruvian music, this is also music that is in my veins. I grew up in Peru, listening to the most amazing Peruvian singers. Although I love Salsa music, Peruvian songs and genres are embedded in my soul.

**LM: "Mimy & Tony" features a blend of race, culture, and traditions from Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Japan. How important was it for you to showcase this diversity through your music, and what message do you hope it sends to your audience?**

MS: Well, spending a lot of time in Miami, I learned a lot about cultures. There are so many ethnicities here, so I learned a lot of new music. We also had a cover band, so I had to sing everything from salsa,

MIMY SUCCAR

TONY SUCCAR

# MIMY & TONY

## LA CREACIÓN DE UN SUEÑO



LA INDIA  
JOSÉ ALBERTO "EL CANARIO"  
RAFAEL "EL POLLO" BRITO  
NORA SUZUKI  
HAILA MOMPIÉ  
CALI FLOW LATINO  
MARC QUIÑONES  
KENYI SUCCAR



merengue, cumbia, Peruvian music, Rock, Disco, Swing. It was amazing to have that opportunity. So when creating this album, we wanted to include as many influences as possible and tell a story through it. However, within all these influences, there is one common denominator, which is MUSIC. Music is music, period. So that's the message we want to give: listen to the music for what it is, even if you don't understand the words. The melody, the rhythms, they speak the universal language!

**LM: Mimy, aside from your music career, what other passions or interests do you pursue in your life? How do these passions influence your music or inspire your creative process?**

MS: In reality, I really enjoy being there for my family. That's the most important thing for me. Spending time with my grandchildren and helping my children as much as I can. However, now that my singing career has taken off, I am concentrated on always doing my best, so I have an amazing vocal coach now. Aside from this, since Tony loves to do film as well, he has me doing some acting too. I never thought I could act, but he says I'm pretty good! So I guess that's a new passion I'd love to pursue now.

*Thank you so much for your time!*

When I first began this interview, Tony's social media was filled with updates about his various projects, including collaborations with Gloria Estefan and Sheila E. However, the latest addition to his impressive portfolio is a musical documentary set to premiere in theaters in Peru on September 12th. Titled "La Creación de un Sueño," this documentary follows the journey of the mother-son duo, Mimy and Tony Succar, highlighting themes of women's empowerment, cultural heritage preservation, and the legacy of traditional musical forms.

This isn't Tony's first foray into filmmaking, as his passion for storytelling has previously led him to direct compelling documentaries and live concert specials. His notable works include "Unity: The Latin Tribute to Michael Jackson," "More of Me,"



“Roots in Latin Jazz,” and The GRAMMY-nominated project “Live in Peru.” Directed by Tony Succar, “La Creación de un Sueño” is a powerful testament to dreaming big and persevering against the odds. The film highlights the strength and resilience of women, emphasizing their empowerment as a critical aspect of personal and cultural success. Mimy Succar's story is particularly inspiring, as she began her recording career at the age of 63 and achieved stardom, proving that it is never too late to pursue one's dreams. This documentary not only inspires viewers to chase their own aspirations but also serves as a beacon of hope for those who believe that age is a barrier to success. Through the lens of their unique musical collaboration, the film underscores the profound impact of cultural preservation and the enduring legacy of traditional music.

I am excited to witness the inspiring story of Mimy Succar unfold. It is heartwarming to see her son Tony by her side as she embraces her destiny. Like his remarkable mother, Tony is forging his own path, embarking on new musical ventures that highlight hard work, perseverance, commitment, talent, and the power of believing in one's dreams, all while celebrating their rich cultural influences.

## ABOUT COLUMNIST

### LYIA META



THROUGH CORRIDORS is a column by Lyia Meta “Musings, observations, music related articles and interviews from around the globe. Anything and anyone that resonates with me.” Lyia Meta is a member of The Recording Academy and a GRAMMY® voting member, An international multi award-winning singer and songwriter, producer, song stylist and an exhibited visual artist, she is a full time performer. She finds her greatest influences in rock and blues, yet she fearlessly defies genre barriers in every project she creates.”



Shaun LaBelle

# Shaun LaBelle

## Multi-platinum recording artist

### INTERVIEW BY SHERISE D' SOUZA

Multi-platinum recording artist Shaun LaBelle has been a fixture in the Pop, R&B and Jazz world for decades. His work as a songwriter, producer and studio musician for legendary artists such as Ray Charles, Ambrosia that featured David Pack, Michael McDonald and James Ingram, Shola Ama - who won a Brit award for Best Female Artist of the Year. He also helped launch Everette Harp's solo career. Many of Shaun's songs have been constantly featured in the Top 40 Jazz hits such as "It's Not Over (2011)", "I'm Back" (2013), "Wave"(2017), "Supermoon"(2020), "Feel the Breeze" featuring the legendary Patrice Rueben (2023) and now, the UK Soul #1 Chart-Topper for four consecutive weeks on the Soul R&B chart - "Your Love Kept Calling My Name"(2024) featuring Stokley, Maysa, Jeff Lorber, Patrick Lamb and Maurizio Metalli.

His breadth of work has earned him a reputation as an elite-level musician, playing bass, drums, keyboards, keyboard-bass and guitar. His resume as an ASCAP songwriter includes 10 Billboard Top10 singles. Born into a family of Twin Cities musicians, the son of Larry and Joan LaBelle was seemingly destined to make his mark as a nationally-known recording artist. Shaun's father, Larry, had parlayed his hard work, education and natural musical talent into a legendary career in the advertising industry. He began writing television commercial jingles in the 1950s, and throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s, he became one of the Twin Cities' most famous ad executives. Joan LaBelle began her own career as a jazz singer at an early age, and the couple raised three sons who all displayed musical talent. While his brothers chose careers in other arenas, Shaun followed his parents' path into the entertainment world. Beginning his professional career at the age of 9, Shaun, a self-taught drummer, found work playing in local bands. By the time he was 20, LaBelle had played in, and formed several popular Twin Cities rock, jazz and R&B groups and caught the attention of some of the top artists and producers in the country, including Minneapolis legends André Cymone, Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. This includes a remix that Shaun did for the legendary Prince, himself.

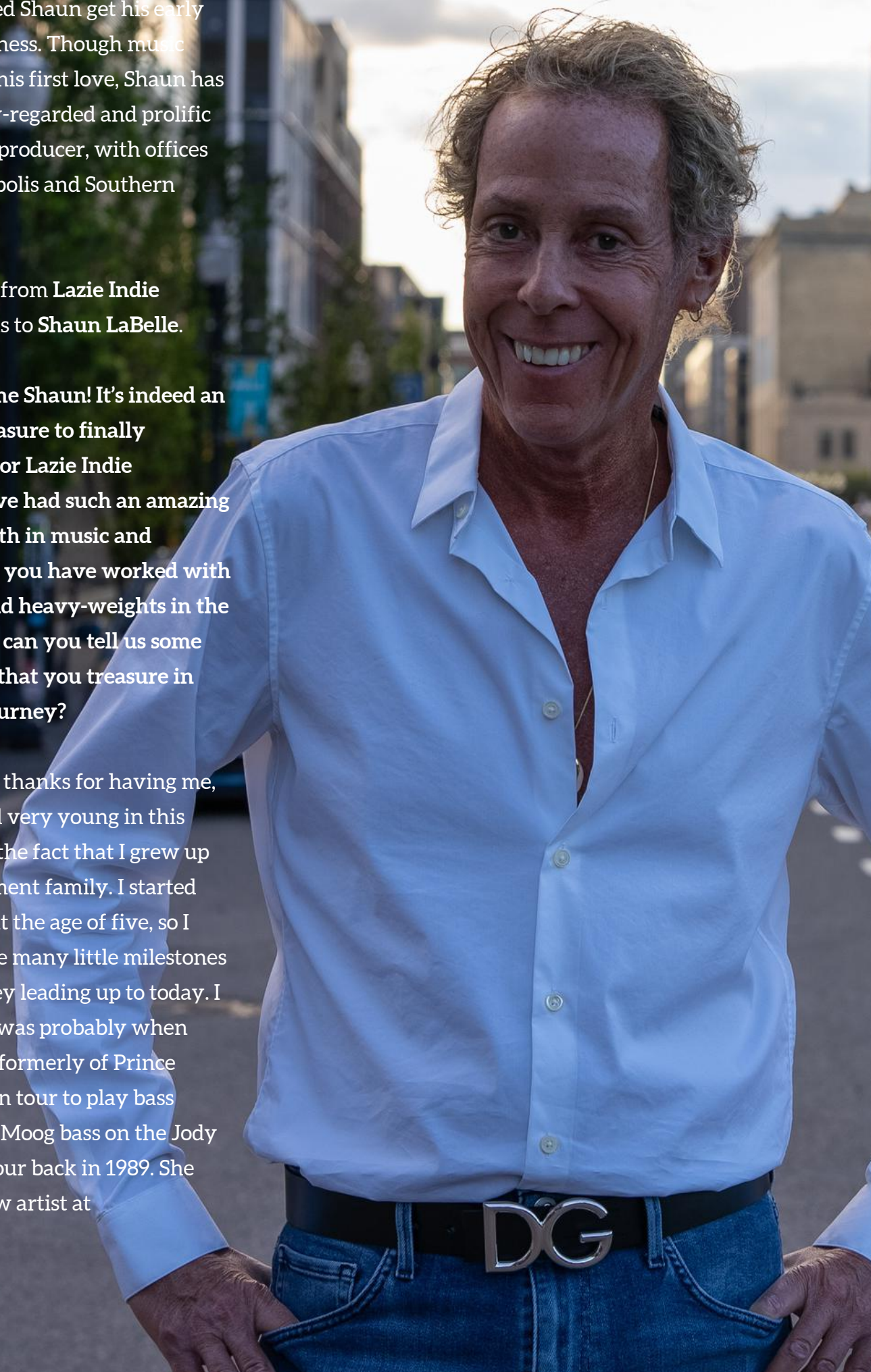
Throughout his mid-20s, Shaun worked as a star songwriter for both-Warner Bros. and EMI, and today for Sony music. He has penned dozens of hit songs during his career and collaborated with a wide assortment of gifted singers and musicians. His knack for creating hits helped launch the careers of talented performers like Nikita Germaine and Grammy Award winner Jody Watley, and his song-writing for UK sensation Shola Ama earned him a Brit Award. He has worked over the years with international stars such as Prince, Sheila E, Taylor Dayne, and the Pointer Sisters and continues to perform with industry giants Jeff Lorber, Maysa, Stokley, Maurizio Metalli, Patrice Rushen and many others. Today, Shaun balances his musical career with his other successful vocation: producing videos and television commercials. This work is a continuation of yet another

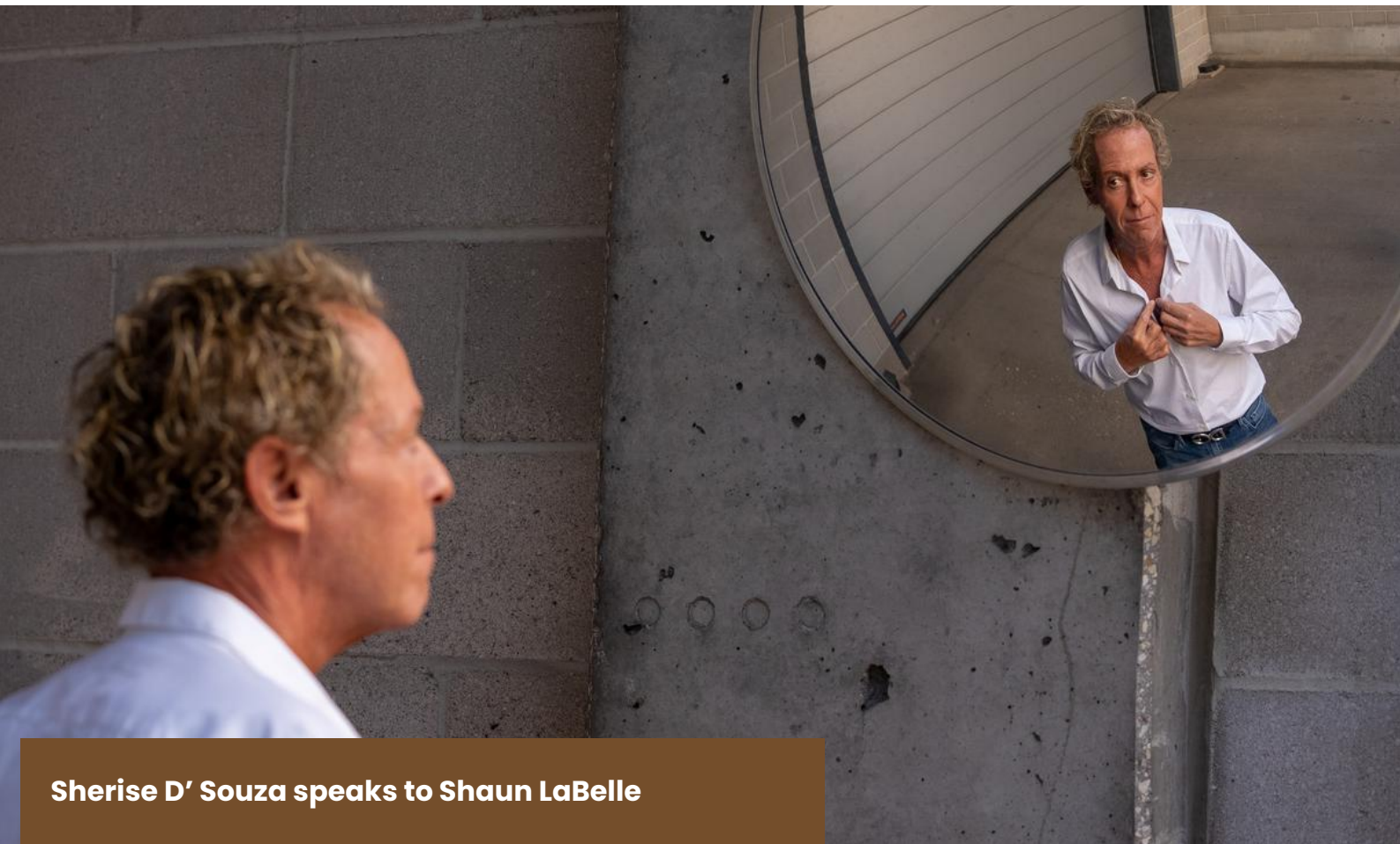
LaBelle family tradition, as his father, Larry, had helped Shaun get his early start in the business. Though music continues to be his first love, Shaun has become a highly-regarded and prolific TV commercial producer, with offices in both Minneapolis and Southern California.

**Sherise D'souza from Lazie Indie Magazine speaks to Shaun LaBelle.**

**Sherise: Welcome Shaun! It's indeed an honour and pleasure to finally interview you for Lazie Indie Magazine! You've had such an amazing career so far, both in music and advertising and you have worked with all the greats and heavy-weights in the music industry; can you tell us some key milestones that you treasure in your musical journey?**

**Shaun:** First off, thanks for having me, Sherise! I started very young in this business due to the fact that I grew up in an entertainment family. I started playing drums at the age of five, so I guess there were many little milestones along my journey leading up to today. I guess, a big one was probably when Andre Cymone formerly of Prince hired me to go on tour to play bass guitar and Mini Moog bass on the Jody Watley world tour back in 1989. She was the best new artist at





## Sherise D' Souza speaks to Shaun LaBelle

the Grammy's and her record was blowing up the Billboard chart. We were playing sold out venues and arenas, all around the world. That was an amazing experience. We even played the famous Apollo Theater. After that I got my first cut as a songwriter for the multi-platinum group - 'The Jets.' That was definitely a vehicle to get me signed to the Warner Bros music publishing company - Warner Chappell Music. I was later hired to co-produce one of the greatest artists of all time, the legendary Ray Charles. It doesn't get much bigger than that, does it?

**Sherise:** You are one of the industry legends - a multi-platinum recording artist and producer; you have had a successful musical career for many decades. What is your take on the music industry today and with the rise of streaming platforms?

**Shaun:** I remember the early days very well of when this started in 1999. I was writing with one of my close buds who sadly passed away, the late Danny Sembello who's older brother was Michael Sembello who of course wrote - 'She's a Maniac'. Danny also was amazing, writing hits for George Benson and Pebbles. I remember him pulling up 'LimeWire' - (the peer-to-peer file sharing software, which allowed sharing of music for free) and telling me we are finished. He was correct! The big budgets for me to produce records were really drying up. Downloading to this day has really destroyed our industry. On my weekly national radio show - 'The Groove' on Grand Radio, I make a point of discussing with all my guests, R&B legends from the 70's, 80's & 90's on how this must change. Songwriters and producers are not receiving their equitable share. Something has got to change! It's become rather criminal and totally corrupt!



**Sherise D' Souza speaks to Shaun LaBelle**

**Sherise: How do you go about your music creation? What is the process that you follow for your productions and releases?**

**Shaun:** It has always been about the song. I'm on my 4th major publishing deal, currently signed to Sony Music Publishing. Since 1989, I have been writing hit songs. I've amassed 10 top ten records. That comes from grinding it out on a daily basis writing sometimes 10 hours a day to write the best songs possible. For me it generally starts with a chord progression - I write on piano. I will generally start programming a drum groove on my 'Forat MPC 2000'. I love the speed to create on that machine and I swear by the feel - That and my Mini Moog are my 2 secret weapons. It's all about the bottom and the groove. As far as releases go, I'm a solo R&B and Jazz recording artist. I release about 2 singles a year. Right now, I'm currently enjoying a #1 single in the UK on the R&B Charts. The song is entitled "Your Love Kept Calling My Name". It's on my solo Shaun LaBelle project featuring Maysa from 'Incognito' and Stokley formally of 'Mint Condition'. The record was mixed by the legendary David Rideau and mastered by Steve Hall. My writing partner Steve Grissette and I wrote this song over 30 years ago with Randy Jackson of 'American Idol' fame. I decided to resurrect the song and put it out and we now have ourselves a smash hit around the world. That's obviously very satisfying for all of us. I did some rearranging with my very good friend - Italian producer, Maurizio Metalli. As far as distribution goes, I've become very conscious of trying to keep control of my work these days. The record was released through CD Baby.

**Sherise: Where can we find your music releases ? Do let our readers know which songs they should look for.**

**Shaun:** Obviously, I'm very proud of my hit records that I have on the charts right now, like I already mentioned. 'Your love kept calling my name' is obviously a very big milestone for me considering we've been number one on the UK R&B charts for over a month now. Another smash of mine, that was really about a year and a half ago was a song called feel the breeze featuring jazz legend Patrice Rushen. It was absolutely amazing to collaborate with one of the greatest piano players of all time. I was very proud that she accepted my offer to appear on the record and I've been very blessed to work with some of the greatest of all time. The list includes George, Jeff Lorber, Patrice Rushen, Ambrosia the Pointer Sisters and so many more. Now, we encourage people to visit Apple Music and download my latest hits.

**Sherise: What are some of the challenges that you faced in your musical career and how did you overcome them?**

**Shaun:** I've never looked at the music industry as facing challenges - That's just part of life. I get up every morning where I'm always determined to tackle things with everything I have and I've always had that philosophy, which I think has me successful to this day. I have never been afraid of extremely hard work. You have to be patient, you have to be determined, you have to work hard and of course at the end of the day you have to have talent. I think anything is possible if people put their mind to it. But people also have to be very realistic; this is not an easy industry to work in. You have to be very good, and it does take a little bit of luck because there is so much music out there being made today. Sadly, with the amount of music being made, I'm finding there's far more mediocrity than there used to be.

**Sherise: Which of your songs do you love to perform the most and which are the most requested by your audiences ?**

**Shaun:** I tour a great deal with Stokley, and we love performing hits off my last album and the latest singles. We also do some of Stokley's favorites from his past catalog as well. I have to say at the end of the day, I just love to play music that's got a groove and that's what makes me and my audiences the happiest!

**Sherise: What are your immediate future plans for 2024-2025? Any upcoming tour plans? Do let our readers know where they can catch you next. As a seasoned worldwide performer, which have been your favorite places to perform?**

**Shaun:** My agent is busy planning for 2024-2025 as we speak. I have plans to travel to the UK to perform as well as Paris and around the United States. I also have my own jazz series that I'm very excited to announce and there will be more information about that very shortly.

**Sherise: Who are your inspirations and what was the best advice given to you in your musical career? What advice would you give to upcoming musicians inspired by you?**

**Shaun:** I would have to say my biggest cheerleaders were probably my mom and dad and my two brothers growing up. Without them, I wouldn't be where I am today, and I would have to say they have been my biggest inspiration. As I already mentioned, my mom and dad and my older brother Lance were musicians. It definitely helped nurture me and develop me in a house that was so very musical. Because of the difficulty of our industry today, I would highly recommend young up-and-

coming to by all means learn how to play an instrument, but make sure you have something to fall back on to do for a living. The music industry is just not what it used to be, and it takes money to survive. I think it is important to have something that will bring you the right income. There's no guarantee in the music industry.

**Sherise: What else would you like to tell our readers; Any concluding message?**

Shaun: In closing, I really hope governments around the world step up and protect artists because right now there are certain companies that are defrauding us out of what we have coming. This is something that has to be stopped. Otherwise, the yard will also stop and there will be no more music. Thanks for having me. I really enjoyed being part of your article. God bless!

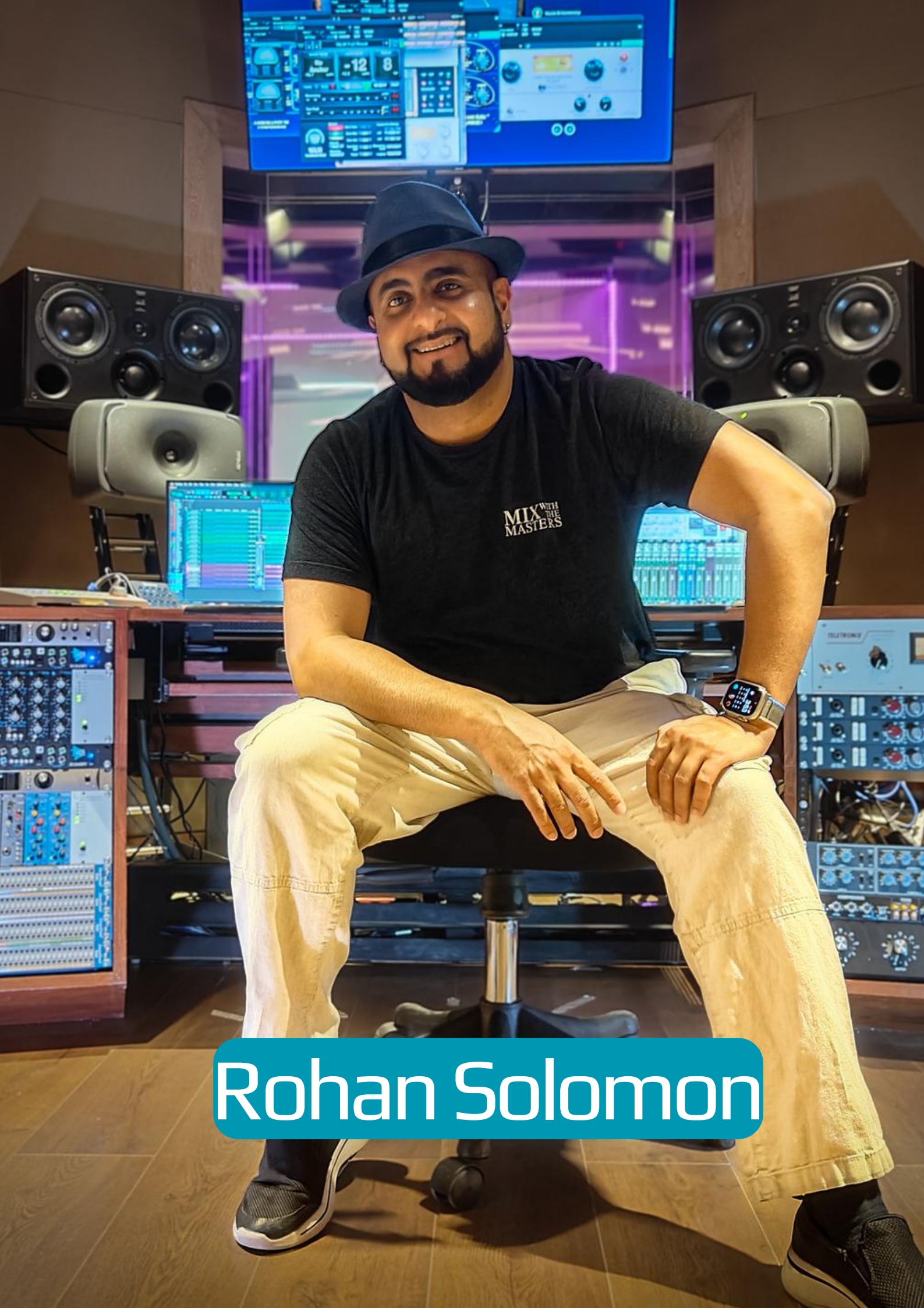


## **ABOUT COLUMNIST**

### **SHERISE D SOUZA**



Sherise D'souza - an internationally acclaimed vocalist, songwriter, and a super-charged live performer, a Recording Academy Voting Member and Country Music Association (CMA) Industry member as well as an accredited vocal coach/trainer.



Rohan Solomon

# Rohan Solomon

## speaks about his of state-of-the-art Pro-Music trio

Rohan Solomon is a Singer-Songwriter, Composer, Vocal Coach and Audio Engineer, all rolled into one. Well-known in the Indian Indie Circles as the former frontman of the erstwhile New Delhi-based Alt-Rock out-fit Cyanide, Rohan started exhibiting his musical abilities at a rather early age. In the era of Channel V Launchpad and the Great Indian Rock Concerts, Cyanide was successful in making its presence felt in significant Indie Rock events of the country, in a short span of time. Rohan moved to New York a few years ago where he packed in some new skills as an Audio Engineer and was a part of a trio called By Chance. During his time in New York Rohan also was a part of a Grammy Award winning track called Bubblin by Anderson Paak, in the capacity of an assistant engineer. Post the string of well-appreciated singles that chronicled different shades of the pandemic life in 2020, The New Delhi/New York-based artist had released a compelling new single titled We Demand Change, in June 2021. The track that made it to the top 5 spot on Euro Indie Music Charts and the top 20 of World Indie Music Charts. The powerful track gained significant praise from the media and audiences as 'a fierce poignant anthem' and 'pean of hope'. We Demand Change was 'Submitted for Consideration for a Grammy' under the 'Best Rock Performance' category.

A celebrated artist and Producer, Solomon completed 20s years in the industry in 2023 and dropped a full-length orchestral-pop album titled 'Strung Out To Dry' in October this year, which showcased his growth both as a singer-songwriter and a producer. This exceptional release is not merely an album; it could be called a conceptual and orchestral masterpiece. In NYC, he worked and recorded with notable artists such as John Legend and Anderson Paak, among others, as an audio engineer.

Rohan Solomon has now trained his focus on the other aspects of music making. Beyond crafting melodies, the accomplished artist and audio engineer, now also serves as the Founder and CEO of The Synergy Group, encompassing the crown jewel - Synergy Audio Productions along with Synergy Institute of Music, and Synergy Audio Institute. This trio aligns with his vision to elevate music production and education standards.

Synergy Studio emerges as a production space curated by a musician for musicians among others. Drawing on his vast experience, including tutelage under the legendary Michael Brauer and tenure at New York's Engine Room Audio, Solomon has cultivated a sanctuary for sound that marries the precision of modern technology with the soul of traditional craftsmanship. Lazie Indie Magazine speaks to Rohan Solomon...

Jay from Lazie Indie Magazine speaks to Rohan Solomon...

**Jay: How have your roots in audio studios and your stints at big-name studios shaped your unique approach to music production?**

RS: It has certainly shown me the industry standard of doing things. The work ethic involved in working on projects at that level is amazing. I have tried to adopt the best of both worlds (top-level and indie) and develop my own way of doing things.

**Jay: In a world where Dolby Atmos and spatial audio are all the rage, how do you blend these cutting-edge tech advancements with classic production techniques?**

RS: Music is still mainly produced in stereo and once we have a stereo mix, we spread those stems to Atmos and Spatial Audio. This is because music as of now is still consumed in stereo broadly. Once that consumption majorly shifts to Atmos, perhaps then music would start to be produced in Atmos.

**Jay: What's the story behind adding a pool table and a gaming room to your studio? How does this vibe boost creativity and keep the sessions fresh?**

RS: A pool table just keeps things fun. It's a nice way to let out some steam, relax,





## Jay Pillai speaks to Rohan Solomon

and take a break from the tiresome process of making music. When you're in the room for so many hours working on a song, you really need a break after a while, and playing pool or PlayStation is a great way of doing so.

**Jay: You've worked with some big names in NYC. Got any standout moments or projects that totally blew your mind?**

RS: Oh, yes! It was definitely a great learning experience. The thing that I learned the most is that artists at that level are so well prepared. Artists like Immortal Technique and Anderson Paak are so talented and their style of working is so unique. They know their songs so well that each take seems almost the same as the last one. So incredibly consistent.

**Jay: Mixing and mastering in Dolby Atmos is a whole different ball game. What's your take on the new challenges and perks that come with it compared to other formats?**

RS: It's a process of getting the listener immersed in the music. It makes the listeners feel like they are right in the middle and the musicians are playing all around them. That would be a perk. But there are challenges as well. The biggest one would be the actual consumption of this format. It is still pretty limited. Plus, you need to have the infrastructure of a Dolby Atmos studio to be able to mix in this format. This is expensive and not easily available. Luckily, we at Synergy offer this as a service as we have the infrastructure for it.



**Jay:** From your work across India, what are the biggest shifts you've seen in the music scene? How's the industry evolving and what's next?

**RS:** The industry is ever-evolving. The main thing that is constantly changing is the genres that are considered "popular". Also, now it's fairly easy to make a song in your home with a very basic studio setup, so many artists are making music themselves and putting their ideas down on audio. They can go to a proper studio with a proper demo which is very helpful to the producer. The next step that I can see is the use of AI in producing music.

**Jay:** How do you make sure artists and their teams feel right at home in your studio? Any cool stories about how this approach made a recording session unforgettable?

**RS:** I think that just depends on the people that are running the studio. We at Synergy are just warm and friendly people, so that vibe is felt by the artists as well. We also take the artist's privacy very seriously and want them to feel safe. Without going into too many details, I'd say some of the most fun sessions have been with artists like Ashish Zachariah, Abhijit Soof, Prabh Deep & Raghav Meattle.

**Jay:** Your studio is a mix of high-tech gear and old-school craftsmanship. How do you strike the perfect balance to enhance sound quality and artistic vision?

**RS:** I love to say that we use "Science" and Equipment to achieve the "Artistic Vision" of the artists.

**Jay:** What upcoming trends in music production and audio tech are you most excited about? How are you planning to ride the wave of these innovations?

**RS:** I'm not sure if there are any such trends. We just treat each session as its own and do whatever we need to to get the desired sound and achieve the artist's vision. Whether we achieve this by old-school techniques and using analog gear or using new techniques using digital plugins is merely semantics.





**Jay: What do you think makes a recording studio stand out as a “one-of-a-kind destination”? How do you bring that special touch to your own space?**

RS: It’s definitely the overall experience. Of course, having great equipment helps with making the sound more open and professional, but at the end of the day what matters most is the experience that the artist has while they are recording/mixing/mastering at the studio. We at Synergy offer that with our love for brewing coffee and playing pool. :)

  
  
**SYNERGY**  
AUDIO PRODUCTIONS



Jay Pillai is the founding editor of Lazie Indie Magazine. A musician for 30+ years, with his bands Lazie J, Lazie Bison and the Autumnleaf, Jay has been on the forefront promoting indie music in India and now worldwide. The brain behind the award winning TV show Autumnleaf The Big Stage, And the International Indie Music Festival in Kerala, India which has already showcased top Bands from more than 15 countries within 2 years . He also founded the John Anthony Guitar Contest to promote young guitar talent in India and bring them to the notice of legends on International Rock music.



**DCALI**

# D Cali

## Takes Off With 'Personal Jet' from his upcoming album

D Cali, the rising star of urban Punjabi music, fuses his Indian heritage with the beats of Urban Hip-Hop to create a sound uniquely his own.

His recently released single, 'Personal Jet', is setting the stage for his highly anticipated album 'Urban Domination'.

'Personal Jet' embodies D Cali's journey as an artist, his aspirations, showcasing a splendid 'jet-setting' lifestyle through its captivating music video shot in Los Angeles. The video features a private jet and a luxurious beach bungalow, while the track's Urban Hip-Hop and reggae style deliver a smooth, rhythmic flow that reflects the artist.

Reflecting on his bi-cultural upbringing being born in India and raised in California, D Cali says, *"Growing up in California, I found a bridge to my Indian heritage through Hindi and Punjabi music. My journey across two cities inspired me to embrace both cultures, which is reflected in my artist name"*.

This blending of worlds is not just a narrative but also a strategy that has led to significant collaborations. He says, *"After years of practice and learning, I've finally found my unique sound. Collaborating with artists like Ikka, Fateh, Pardhan, and featuring actress Sunny Leone in my video 'Barbie Doll' have been the highlights of my career so far."*

D Cali's discography includes a string of hits such as 'Desifornia,' 'What To Do,' 'Radio Girl,' 'Chorni,' and the recent romantic freestyle 'Teriyan Gallan'. These tracks have garnered millions of views on YouTube and have solidified his reputation as a new hitmaker on the block on the urban Punjabi music scene. D Cali's vision, however, goes beyond music and entertainment. Determined to influence the younger generation positively, he aims to steer clear of promoting negative themes that are often associated with the genre and quite prevalent in the music scene. With a background in Recording Arts, his diverse influences range from Jazzy B and Bohemia to Dr. Dre and Eminem, allowing him to create music that transcends cultural boundaries.

'Personal Jet' is a statement of the singer's ambition and achievement. As D Cali puts the finishing touches on his album 'Urban Domination,' he promises his fans an immersive experience into his world of urban Punjabi music. Lazie Indie Magazine caught up with this upcoming superstar in music to know more about his plans and his tour to India in the next couple of months ... Lets check out

**Jay from Lazie Indie Magazine speaks to D Cali..**

**Jay: Can you share with us the story of how you first got into music and what inspired you to pursue a career as D Cali?**

DC: The very first time I got interested in music was when I was in school. I always had a curiosity about how to make songs, and since then I started writing lyrics. When I finally got into college I decided to pursue my musical career as D Cali. In D Cali, D stands for Delhi, and 'Cali' is for California where I grew up.

**Jay: Who are some of the artists or genres that have significantly influenced your sound and style?**

DC: I was inspired by Hip-Hop music in the USA and also Punjabi Hip-Hop artists like Jazzy B, Jay Sean, Richie Rich, and Sukshinder Shinda during their peak times.

**Jay: What does your typical songwriting process look like? Do you start with lyrics and melodies, or do you let the music guide the theme?**

DC: It just depends on the vibe. Sometimes I write my lyrics first and then come up with the music or sometimes if I like the beat then I try to write lyrics that blend with the beat.





**Jay Pillai speaks to Rohan Solomon**

**Jay:** Could you tell us about your most recent single ‘Personal Jet’? What was the inspiration behind it, and how do you feel it reflects your growth as an artist?

**DC:** We just wanted to make a fun song to display our future goals, aspirations and dreams. You can say that we manifested our dreams and goals in the song.

**Jay:** You've worked with various artists and producers. How do collaborations influence your music, and what do you look for in a potential collaborator?

**DC:** It's always fun to collaborate with different artists, by doing such you get to see how the other artist brings his own style or vibe to the song. I always try to stay real and I try not to change my style but still make a song where we both as artists create something unique.

**Jay:** What are some of the biggest challenges you've faced in the music industry, and how have you overcome them?

**DC:** The biggest challenge in the industry I face is to stay consistent and this year I am trying my best to overcome... and release as much music as I can with good quality music production. I try to write lyrics on a regular basis and listen to different music to get inspiration for potential ideas.

**Jay:** How do you stay connected with your fans, and what role do they play in shaping your music?

**DC:** I try to stay connected with my fans through social media, I do try my best to reply to them as well. My fans are the reason I am working hard and making more and more music. My fans' messages and comments are like reviews for me which gives me an idea of what type of music they like or not.

**Jay:** You have your upcoming tour to India, what do you expect to deliver to the audiences and what do you expect to gain from them as a musician? Have you traveled to India as a musician before?

**DC:** Yes, I have travelled to India as a musician before to record and make songs but this year we are doing another tour to promote our upcoming album.

**Jay:** What advice would you give to young, aspiring musicians who are looking to make a name for themselves in the industry?

**DC:** I would say, try to be consistent and make music that you like, not what other people would like you to do.



Jay Pillai is the founding editor of Lazie Indie Magazine. A musician for 30+ years, with his bands Lazie J, Lazie Bison and the Autumnleaf, Jay has been on the forefront promoting indie music in India and now worldwide. The brain behind the award winning TV show Autumnleaf The Big Stage, And the International Indie Music Festival in Kerala, India which has already showcased top Bands from more than 15 countries within 2 years . He also founded the John Anthony Guitar Contest to promote young guitar talent in India and bring them to the notice of legends on International Rock music.



LORRAINE JUNO

# Lorraine Juno

## *The universe of a Singer Songwriter*

Between sunny pop and sensual soul

Adopted by the pink city, Laurine Juno plays with a palette of musical influences, ranging from the warm notes of Janet Jackson to the emotional nuances of Corneille, from the electric pulsations of Moby to the tender chords of Dua Lipa and Emily King.

A singer-songwriter, she revealed her talent with the singles "Feel The Floor" and "Balloon" in 2021, and offers a mix of Pop, Soul and electronic, all in English.

His first EP, "Bliss" (immense happiness in French), scheduled for 2024, depicts an initiatory journey.

Like a living musical tableau, the rhythmic songs evoke vibrant hues, while the atmospheric ballads bathe in softer nuances.

Whether you speak English or not, everyone is invited to let themselves be carried away by its emotions and captivating sounds.

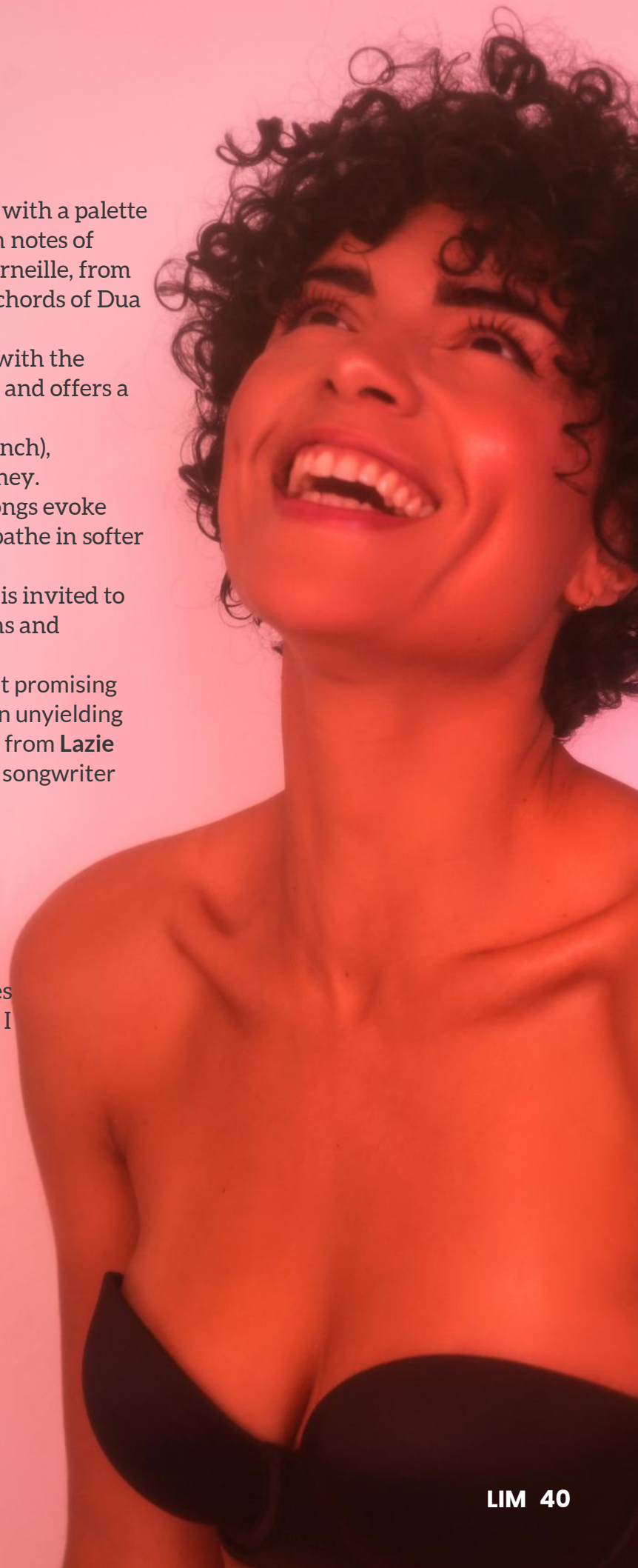
Laurine Juno thus stands out as one of the most promising artists on the contemporary scene, driven by an unyielding passion for sharing her music. **Emma Goldberg** from **Lazie Indie Magazine** spoke to this beautiful singer-songwriter from France.

**Emma: You have had a long and exciting career in music so far, how do you see it yourself?**

LJ: My career in music has been and continues to be full of challenges and great experiences. I learn so much every day about my audiences on stage, and particularly about myself.

**Emma: Who is/are your musical influences? How did you pick up music as a career option?**

LJ: My musical influences are varied: Pop music with Michael Jackson, R&B with Janet Jackson, Hip Hop with Lauryn Hill, Electro with Moby, Caribbean Music, Neo-soul, Folk. There was always music at home.





My parents listened to a lot of music. My music is a mix of all those references. From a young age, I knew that I wanted to create my own music and perform on stage.

**Emma: How do you go about your music creation? How are the songs written and produced?**

LJ: My music creation process usually starts with a melody or a lyrical idea. I then build on that foundation, often using the piano or guitar. Once I have a rough structure, I refine the lyrics and arrangement. In the studio, I collaborate with producers to bring the song to life, experimenting with different sounds and techniques until it feels right.

**Emma: Where can we see your music releases over the internet? Tell us about your latest or upcoming release.**

LJ: You can find my music on platforms like Spotify, Apple Music, Deezer and YouTube. My latest release, Bliss, is a project I'm very proud of. This song came to life during the 2020 lockdown and speaks about the inner strength that resides in each of us even when life's reality is difficult. A music video was made by a Toulouse-based collective called "La House of Amor."

**Emma: You have worked with a number of greats, who are musicians whom you loved to work the most with and why?**

LJ: I am lucky to work with great musicians. Their creativity is incredibly inspiring, and I couldn't choose whom I prefer to work with because each one, in their individuality, brings something precious to my songs.

**Emma: What do you like to do the most in music: writing, producing, or performing live?**

LJ: Each aspect has its own quality. Writing allows me to express my thoughts and feelings, producing lets me play with sounds and textures, and performing allows me to connect with my audience and my musicians. Maybe performing gives the best thrills.

**Emma: What are your immediate future plans for 2024?**



LJ: In June, I will release a new single titled "Time is Running Out." Then, on July 13th, I will be the opening act for the British-American singer Mika at a festival in Rodez (France): F'Estivada! I'm excited to perform in front of almost 10,000 people. In October, my first EP should be released on all streaming platforms. And I hope to add many more concert dates to my calendar.

**Emma: Among all your collaborations, which one is the dearest to you, and why?**

LJ: The collaboration that is dearest to me is the one with Brolence. He is a young French DJ with whom I collaborated on the track "Sunflower." This Electro Chill project was a first for me, and I love the result of our work.

**Emma: What was the best advice given to you and what would you give as a piece of advice to fellow musicians?**

LJ: The best advice I received was to stay authentic to myself and my artistic vision. Some people advised me to sing in French or to make more popular music, but I preferred to continue making the music I love. The advice I would give to other artists is to remember that the project should bring joy most of the time. It's important to persevere but also to feel comfortable and true to oneself.

## **ABOUT COLUMNIST EMMA GOLDBERG**



Emma Goldberg is French Pop Singer, Composer, Video Producer, Author writing in Italian, Spanish, English, French. She also is a radio host in Radio 242 UK introducing independent musicians to audiences across UK, France and the nearby countries. Emma has her own radio show called Just like Emma which is maintained here for the column she contributes to Lazie Indie Magazine.



**MARINA OGALLA**

# Marina Ogalla

Lazie Indie Magazine catches up with the upcoming singer songwriter Marina Ogalla who is based in New York but originally from Spain. Let us know more about this upcoming artist... Here is how the interview went .

**LIM: Can you share your journey into music? What inspired you to become an independent artist?**

Marina Ogalla ( MO): I have always been in music in a sense. Ever since I can remember I sang, I begged my parents to put on the radio and learned all the songs from their CD collection. Then, as I grew I was cast in an important musical from my hometown, UAP, in which I played Malala, the main character for UAP16, and was a soloist for the other years. With this, I realized I wanted to be in musicals, that I wanted to sing for a living. Then, the pandemic hit, and suddenly I had more time than I had ever had with nothing to do. I started writing. Becoming an independent artist felt like the natural next step, and an EP later. Here I am!

**LIM: How would you describe your musical style, and what influences have shaped it over the years?**

MO: I define my style as indie Pop Rock, Lyrical. I give a lot of importance to the words, the poetry in the music, I feel like that comes from my love for Taylor Swift, and growing up listening to her music. Apart from that, the music takes a lot from the early 2000's Pop Punk scene like Paramore, or Avril Lavigne. I am a very big fan of both of them. I also love what artists like Olivia Rodrigo or Chapell Roan are doing right now, even if it's quite different from my own style. It is something I'd like to consider for the future. I'm always open to new music and new influences, that's the fun of making music.

**LIM: What challenges have you faced as an independent musician, and how have you overcome them?**

MO: Most of the challenges of an independent musician come from the lack of a team surrounding you. I have a producer, but apart from that, everything else comes from me. From writing the music and lyrics to taking care of the publishing, the marketing, the music videos, everything. I even take my own pictures for the album and single covers! Eventually, I have learned to organize and do things myself, but I know I could go much faster if I had some help. Another challenge has been the lack of money, all of these projects are investments, big ones, and until it pays off, it's all coming from your pocket but it's all a matter of working hard, and things eventually work out.

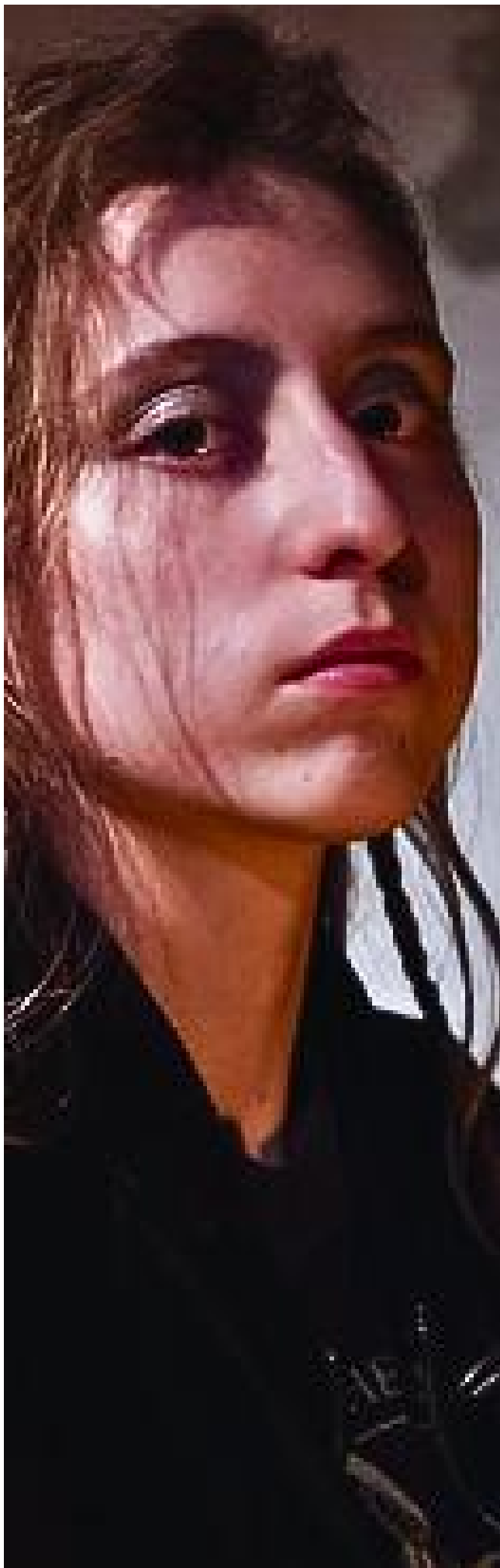
**LIM: Can you walk us through your creative process? How do you approach songwriting and production?**

MO: My creative process consists on silence. I normally sit in my room alone and think. Paper in hand, or phone in hand mostly, I just sit and think about something that has happened, an experience, a moment that stayed with me. Eventually a sentence will come to me, followed by a melody and once this inspiration has arrived, I stick to it until the main structure of the song is done. Then, it's all about finishing it, changing the lyrics and music until it sounds how I like it. Once it is fully finished I send it to my producer with a couple of reference songs, to show him how I imagine it. We go back and forth for a while until the music is ready and I go in to record the lyrics. Luckily, I have been working with the same producer for a while, and by now we understand each other well so we work fast.

**LIM: Which of your songs holds the most personal significance, and what's the story behind it?**

MO: I think the most important song to me would be Fine, as it was the first song I wrote for the EP, before I even knew I wanted to make an EP. I had just gone through a big break up and my feelings were very raw. I had also just moved to the New York City by myself and I was feeling alone, sad and angry. Out of all





my vacation. I want to keep my authenticity. I believe that is what keeps my audience engaged, that I'm not selling anything I'm only me.

**LIM: Who are some artists you admire or collaborate with, and how have they influenced your work?**

MO: I mostly collaborate with my producer, Joey Auch. Being honest, I don't know how to finish and produce a song without him. He has taught me a lot about the industry itself as he has more experience, and has influenced my way of writing. He has also opened my eyes to different genres and to be open to how my music could sound. That is why *Lost in Translation* sounds more Pop while *Alone* is more of a Rock ballad. I like how it came out, different songs, different feelings, different productions but the same soul. Another artist I have written with is Tyler Okun, also from New York City. None of our work together is out soon but we hope to put something out for the public soon enough. That is all I can say for now.

**LIM: What advice would you give to aspiring independent musicians looking to carve out their own path in the industry?**

MO: I would tell them to just go for it. Don't wait to have money to do things, or for things to be perfect. It is better to just film and drop the video, even if it wasn't exactly what you wanted. Making art is better than not, so leave perfectionism behind and focus on what you can do today with what you have. Everything will come in it's due time.

**LIM: What's next for you? Can you share any upcoming projects or goals that you're excited about?**

MO: I am currently working on my first complete album, which is called "Shades of Wrong", the goal is to put it out in 2025. As I am also an actress, I have a series of short stories based on New York City that I have written and will star in. I'm currently on the lookout for collaborators on this project. I'm also sure that more new things will come, I'm flexible enough that if an amazing opportunity comes my way. I won't say no to that.



**BRENDA BEST**

# Brenda Best

## The “BEST” is yet to come

Real Talk with KShip

When I first heard about this Nashville based singer/songwriter, a few years ago, I jokingly said with a last name like that I know her music is good. Little did I know this artist was “next level” and then some! Brenda Best recently dropped a new single called “The Bitter End”, which explores Love and Loss. “The Bitter End”, is a reflective breakup song about love, lies and broken dreams that came out on July 19th. Drawing inspiration from observations and personal experiences, Brenda promises this track will resonate with fans of heartfelt indie music.

Brenda who is an indie multi awards winner, has been placing heartfelt music into the universe for many years. Hailing from Campbellton, New Brunswick she is listed in Wikipedia as an award-winning singer/songwriter inducted into the NBCMHF New Brunswick Country Hall of Fame.

Campbellton, is a city in New Brunswick, Canada. After seeing the many beautiful photos of where Brenda grew up, I was not surprised that Forestry and Tourism are major industries in their economy. They also have a thriving pulp mill in the community which is the largest employer in the area. And since I love Atlantic Salmon and apparently it is a known fact that during the summer months avid fisherman flock to the area to drop their nets to make the next big catch. And in the winter months it boasts Alpine and Nordic ski facilities at Sugarloaf Provincial Park, for visitors and the locals. I need a second home there!

I saw a photo recently posted on her social media page, and I knew this must be an “Oh Canada” thing. It was a food spread that consisted of deviled ham with mustard on bread, plus a cup of Red Rose tea. As she put it, “This type of food hits the spot and takes me back to my childhood home in Campbellton”.

Brenda always makes it known that her musical background, hails from her mother’s side of the family. They were all musicians, and her grandfather apparently was a trailblazer of a fiddle player from Caraquet. Brenda is excited for the 67th annual Grammy Awards in February and plans to be in attendance with her husband Rayzor. (Brenda is also a Recording Academy Member and Voting Member). Brenda has been Blessed to have received many other prestigious awards over the years. She also has also had some acting roles/appearances under her belt. But sometimes with joys in this business comes heartache. She fell into some unsettling times, where she questioned if she wanted to continue her passion. She felt wronged from a well-known music competition and her fate was up to 2 judges that didn’t see eye to eye with the others on



the panel. She went on to explain, that her age became a factor, and her emotions after this, placed her in a very raw but eye-opening situation. But she decided to take the high road, and never try to “entertain” those types of competitions again. And as she put it “Those contests, don’t justify your talent”.

Another unsettling time came from a serious health scare back in 1984. She was diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis. For 10 years constant battles of abdominal pain and lots of pills, moved into 1994-1995 which consisted of hospitalization, at The University of Virginia Medical Center where she was hooked up to machines for intravenous treatment to give her bowels a chance to heal and rest. Then five days after being admitted, her large intestine perforated and luckily, she was already in the hospital where she was transported very quickly to the O.R. The surgeons opened her abdomen, and saw a very sick and inflamed colon, so they made the decision to remove the entire thing. In recovery, after an 8-hour surgery, an intern was making his rounds late that night checking in on patients and she happened to “code” while he was in the room. Brenda was having a heart attack, and she remembers a team of medical staff talking loudly and panicking over her, and she explained her eyes were in darkness as though she was fighting to breathe. Another surgery and this time, hooked up to a heart monitor and a breathing machine. She told me, by the Grace of God, she is here to talk about this! It was 8 months later, and it all worked out. She mentioned that these days, she looks back at that, and realized the reason to sing God’s praise. Brenda was in alignment and had Grace/Mercy on her side.



So, I gave you a nice spoonful to kick this off, so now buckle up and be ready to read this eye-opening, fun filled and very informative interview, for Lazie Indie Music Magazine and my column, Real Talk With KShip... Brenda Best - The "Best" Is Yet To Come -

**KSHIP - Brenda thank you so much for taking time to connect with me today. Truly excited to get this interview going and just also catch up and see what you currently are working on.**

Brenda Best - I am the one to thank you for this interview, Kathryn.

**KSHIP- I had told one of our friends we have in common singer/songwriter Lee Newton that I only learned maybe late last year you are from Canada? I think I may have had a lay over there many years ago. such a beautiful country. I did my research and what a beautiful place you are from, the picturesque, Campbellton, New Brunswick area! What adventures you must've had growing up there!**

Brenda Best - Awww girl, I love Lee! That woman has a heart of gold, such a beautiful genuine soul. Yes, I am from New Brunswick Canada. I was born and raised there, schooled in two languages (French and English). In 2003, I wrote a song about the old, shingled house that we lived in. We moved out of there when I was 11 after my father died. It's the kind of house that was heated by a wood-burning stove during those cold Canadian winters. We didn't have bathroom plumbing and we had an outhouse. My family saw some hard times. The enjoyment I got from learning to play a guitar and singing along with stuff I heard on the radio took me to a different location in my mind. It was total happiness! When I heard bands like CCR or Alice Cooper's School's Out album, then I would study the Album covers artwork keeping me so occupied and my imagination went somewhere else. It's hard to explain the joy I got from music. Apart from Radio and LPs, I liked hearing my older sisters sing together, how they harmonized together. I wanted to learn how to do that! So, they taught me and so did Mom who had an ear for music like no other. She would correct me if I went off key. I loved those days because they were guiding me in the right direction without knowing how valuable these lessons would become decades later.



**KSHIP:** Back in 2004, you were in the Top - 33 for a show that was like American Idol called “Nashville Talent Search” that was viewed on USA Network. I am sure that you have some bragging rights to say you were on a show that jump started the careers of a few notables, Buddy Jewel, Miranda Lambert, Chris Young, and Kacey Musgraves to name a few. But there was a twist to it all, can you explain what happened?

**Brenda Best:** Yes, I was one of the last 33 finalists, but unfortunately, the panel of 4 judges had mixed feelings on whether I was going to move forward. The two who felt I had potential were Tracy Gershon and Robert Oermann. The other two had my future’s fate was in their damn hands. Geez... They pretty much insulted me at The Wildhorse Saloon in front of 2,000 people telling me I was TOO OLD!!! What? After that, I beat myself up over it and I felt like quitting. But I didn’t. I just never entered those types of competitions ever again because I feel those contests don’t justify your talent.

**KSHIP:** You have a very modest number of honors/awards since you became an artist, I know one big accolade for you was in 2015, being Inducted in Canada, to the New Brunswick Country Hall of Fame! Did you even fathom that when you started in 1999, that something as prestigious as this would surface for you? I also learned many tickets were sold at the gala, that were fans of yours, wanting to celebrate this with you. I can only imagine the emotions from every layer of this.

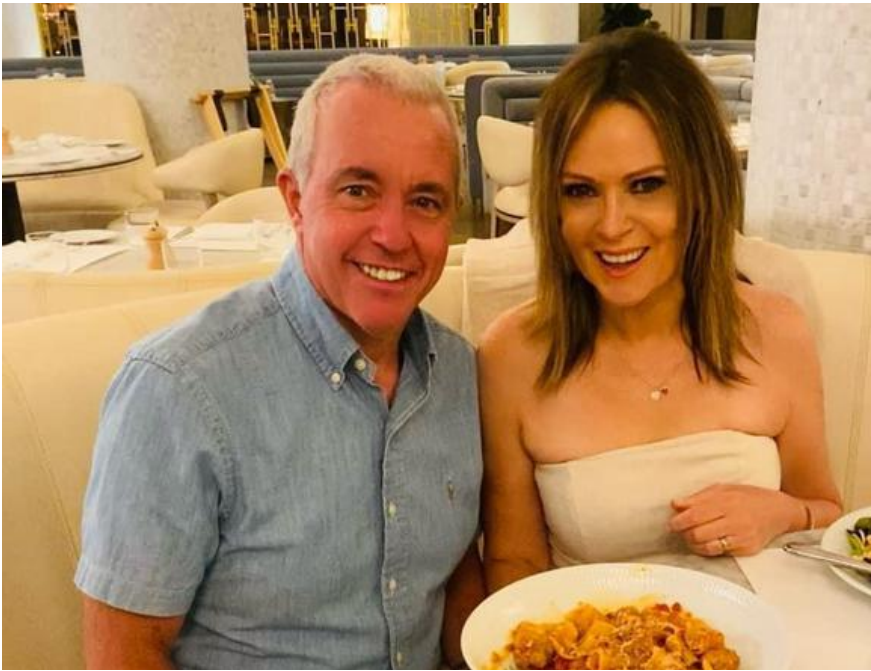
Brenda Best: (laugh with disbelief).. No, I sure didn't. Words cannot describe how honored I feel to be amongst the greatest musicians and singers of New Brunswick Canada. Being inducted to The Hall of Fame shows how much an artists' contribution to the music industry has made an impact with all the years they dedicated and devoted themselves to their craft. The event itself was a celebration I will never forget. I was surrounded by Hall of Famers and friends & family members and my amazing husband of now 27 years. He is my rock. It also makes me proud to share this Induction with my siblings and my mother, the matriarch of the family who created the environment and exposed her kids at an early age to good music. She was a musician herself, and she played a lot of LPs and 45s in every genre. It went from Johnny Rivers to The Mills Brothers to Ann Murray to The Beatles and Patsy Cline.

**KSHIP: I think many people like me had you only penned for doing country, but my goodness you are all up in the Gospel genre of things. Did you always go between both genres, that's kind of what I have done throughout my career, I personally think it's a refreshing balance amongst the two.**

Brenda Best: Yes Kathryn, you and I share a lot of similarities in our genres. I know we are so versatile writing and singing Country and Gospel music. In fact, we met for the first time at The Josie Awards 2023, and both being nominated in the Gospel Music Category. By the way, congratulations on your win! As for me, singing Gospel music is new and I credit Jesus Christ for guiding me there. I recorded only a half a dozen Christian songs so far, and one of them won a Holiday Music and Film Award in 2023. It's a song called "Checking Up on Your Behavior" that was inspired by a young guy with Autism, a true story of my encounter with him while shopping for Christmas gifts at the town square in Murfreesboro Tennessee. He approached me in a crowd of people with an important message asking me if I knew Jesus. Then he asked for just one minute of my time. At first, I was hesitant, but I felt it was the right thing to do in giving him my focus. I'm glad I did because everything he asked me is now written in the song. Last year, another one of my Gospel songs was nominated for several awards. It's called "Speak Your Name", a personal favorite of mine because it is a prayer song, one that anybody can sing along and feel connected to The Lord.

**KSHIP: You've done the work, the bar scene with live music, concert venues, and you are still trailblazing it. We all know as artists/musicians (which you knock out of the park on guitar as well) sometimes performing can take its toll where you need to kind of pump the brakes. As you have navigated this throughout the years, where do you find your peace within all of this to keep going? How many shows do you currently do a year?**

Brenda Best: Thanks for acknowledging my musicianship. I did put in a lot of hours playing guitar in bars. Even before moving to Nashville, I played college pubs and coffee houses in Charlottesville Virginia where I lived for 5 years, then in 1999 I moved to Nashville playing the honky tonk circuit on Broadway for about 4 years straight. Those gigs really wore me out because they are four hours long, and I played a lot of solo gigs for tips. It wore out my voice, so I eventually moved on from that whole circus and I put on the brakes. Though, the experience I got from that is not lost nor regretted in any way because it taught me to be an "entertainer" rather than just a singer. Knowing how to entertain on a stage comes in handy if you want to



please your crowd, and pleasing the crowd is important if you wanna earn some really good tips in the jar, [laughing]. Plus, you get to meet nice people from all walks of life in a touristy city like Nashville. They come here to have a good time on their vacation, so it's good to offer familiar songs and friendly hospitality.

**KSHIP: I read somewhere that on your mother's side of the family they were all musicians, and your grandfather played a mean fiddle? I guess you can say the genes have been well received...? Then you know, you've been out in Television land, being an actress and all, which was your favorite role/part that you got to do?**

Brenda Best : Over the years, I've auditioned for so many movies and TV commercials with a lot of rejections. The kind of day where you feel like a failure... BUT one of the strangest things that happened to me in 2023, I was on the set of a Paramount + movie titled "A Nashville Country Christmas" when the director just shouted out "Do we have a real musician here that we could use for a scene"....and since it was filmed outdoors after dark, it was hard for them to see that I had my arm & hand held up high with anticipation they would choose me "pick me pick me" among a few others who wanted to be chosen. The director came over asking if I can really play a guitar. I said "YES, I play very well". So, it was decided they would give me a prime location this movie playing guitar and standing next to Tanya Tucker and Keith Carradine in the final scene of "A Nashville Country Christmas". Other movies I've been part of were "Country Strong" and a faith-based movie "The Second Chance", and like many Nashvillians there were many opportunities to be part of TV drama series "Nashville". I also had a couple of voice over jobs as a French speaking narrator for travel documentaries. I'm fluent in French.

**KSHIP: What are you currently working? And any early plans for 2025 looking ahead?**

Brenda Best: I'm so glad you asked! I've got a couple of singles in the works, one of them is a Christian Rock song coming out in September that I cowrote with Grammy Nominated songwriter Thornton Douglas Cline. Also, I'm excited to say that I just released a new single "The Bitter End" and right now I'm promoting it to the world. I've been getting a lot of positive feedback from fans and friends and I'm hoping for that same reaction from The Recording Academy, because the song is entered for a GRAMMY. We also shot a music video for this song, directed by Tracy & Marco Argiro and shot on location at Mirror Mirror Network in Nashville in the Liberate Lounge, which is a unique place with such a cool vibe. People can watch the video on YouTube <https://youtu.be/dHNtD8P9MSw?si=mRfivNN1QCccoTdn>

**Final Thoughts – a short note from Brenda’s husband Ray, who many know him as Rayzor. –**

Kathryn,

*First let me say that unfortunately Brenda’s mother passed away in 2015, but I know she would be so proud of what Brenda has been able to achieve in music.*

*What I love about Brenda is that happiness and love revolve around her all the time. Her amazing strength and fortitude is an inspiration to myself and to others.*

*On her career- I am so proud of her. She had a vision for where she wanted to go in music and has worked hard and continues to work hard to achieve that success. I remember long ago when I first saw her sing on stage...I saw her then, as I see her now, a beautiful, intelligent shining STAR!!!! -Rayzor*

Want to learn more about Brenda Best and her achievements? Socials? Here you go!

Website: [www.brendabest.net](http://www.brendabest.net)

Instagram: @brendabestnashville

You Tube Channel: [Lazie](#)

Twitter: (X) - @brendabest

Facebook: @brendabestnashville

**\*\*Photography Credits\*\* -**

Peter Pose, Marco Argiro, Tracy Argiro, Wallace Best, Maekayla Miller, Robbi Meade, Nick Swift.

## **ABOUT COLUMNIST KATHRYN SHIPLEY**



About the Columnist

'Real talk with KShip' is a column presented by Kathryn Washington Shipley who is an Award-Winning Modern Country/Christian Singer-Songwriter who is recognized as One of the fastest-growing Indie Artists over the last few years. She interviews top Indie artists and present them to Lazie Indie Readers through this column.



CLAVER MENEZES

# Claver Menezes

*Comes out with his new project “Divide”*

Claver Menezes started off with his rock band 'Rust Angels' in 1991 practicing and playing cover versions of Iron Maiden, Scorpions, Metallica, Megadeth, Wasp, Anthrax and many more. The band performed at rock shows across colleges and also entered the finals of Live Wire (IIT, Mood Indigo) the next year. Claver's distinct style of guitar playing with fantastic speed on the fretboard was noticed and applauded, soon to be recognized as one of the best guitarists in Mumbai. Joe Satriani's style of music has been the most significant influence in his playing. He started a recording label called Hangar Records, and brought together the top guitarists of the country in 2001 for an instrumental album, 'The Unborn Recital (FOK II)' and a video featuring all the guitarists were also produced and released. The participating guitarists in the album were the best in India. The same year The Hangar Records recorded and released another album, a non-instrumental this time, called 'Screwed' which other than his own band Rust Angels featured other rock bands Zero, Sceptre,

A Brief Biography - 1986 - Picks up the guitar at age 12 1990 - Steps onto the stage for the first time playing popular music 1991 - Forms his own rock band Rust Angels 1992 - Performs with Rust Angels at Live Wire (IIT, Mood Indigo) and enters the finals 1993-96 - Rust Angels attains popularity across Mumbai and neighbouring cities 1997 - Claver gains recognition in the league of the best guitarists in Mumbai 1998 - Performs a tribute to his idol Joe Satriani with an electrifying performance featuring the best Satriani solos at Razzberry Rhinoceros, Mumbai 2000 - Forms Hangar Records to support rock music and musicians 2001 - Hangar Records releases the guitar instrumental album The Unborn Recital (FOK II) by getting together the top guitarists from the country 2002 - Hangar Records releases a non-instrumental rock album featuring the top rock bands of the country 2004 - Disbands Rust Angels to concentrate on Guitar solo instrumentals 2004 - Sets up his own studio to compose music full time for himself and the fraternity 2005 - Scores music for the movie 'Sacred Evil' produced by Percept Picture Company 2008 - Formed Zedde, played various shows 2018 - Released his solo album Crooked Ways I & II instrumental albums (bootleg) 2019 - Released 'Diverse Delusions' it is the 1st Indian rock album with 19 songs featuring various singers from all over the country. In 2023 he headlined the IIMF-2 as the main guitarist for EX- AC/DC frontman Dave Evans.

His latest album **Divide** is in the stores ... Lets speak to Claver Menezes to know more about his latest release...



**Jay: Claver, congratulations on your new rock album 'DIVIDE' What inspired you to embark on this project, and how does this album differ from your previous work?**

Claver: Thank you! This album has been a long time in the making. The inspiration came from a deep desire to explore the raw and unfiltered emotions that rock music is known for. I've always been fascinated by the power of a single riff or chord to convey complex feelings, and I wanted to create an album that captures that intensity. Compared to my previous work, this album is more personal and in many ways more daring. I pushed myself to experiment with new sounds and to be more vulnerable in my songwriting.

**Jay: You've been known both as a guitarist and a producer in the music industry. How did you balance these roles while creating this album? Did you approach any aspect of the album differently because of your dual roles?**

Claver: Balancing the roles of guitarist and producer was definitely a challenge but also incredibly rewarding and in India we don't have the comfort of being just anyone of them. The liberty to have complete creative control, which meant I could shape the sound exactly the way I envisioned it. As a guitarist, I focused on capturing the energy and emotion in every take. As a producer, I made sure that those moments were enhanced rather than lost in the mix. I approached the production with the mindset of a guitarist, always thinking about how each element would interact with the riffs and solos.

**Jay: As someone who's handled a lot of the production work on this album, what challenges did you face? Were there any particular moments where your experience as a producer really made a difference?**

Claver: One of the biggest challenges was staying objective. When you're so close to the material, it's easy to get lost in the details. There were times when I had to step back and listen with fresh ears to make sure the mix was doing justice to the performances. I used to even bounce it out to Micu the guitar player in the the F band, he is a big daddy in the ad world and is brilliant in music soundscaping.



**Jay:** The guitar work on this album is phenomenal. Can you tell us about the techniques or gear you used to achieve the specific sounds and tones that stand out in the tracks?

**Claver:** Thank you! I spent a lot of time experimenting with different guitar pedals and processors. I used the NUX mg30 for 'DIVIDE' explored the amplifiers in it—classic tube amps for that warm, organic sound, combined with Dmarzio DP220 D activator bridge hum bucker for texture and depth. I also played around with different techniques to bring a unique feel to certain songs like the kill switch. And I have played the piano in the title song 'DIVIDE' pretty thrilled about that. A lot of stuff came from just letting the gear speak for itself and capturing those happy accidents that happen when you're not overthinking things.

**Jay:** Was there a particular track on the album that was more challenging to produce or play? If so, what made it stand out, and how did you overcome those challenges?

**Claver:** Rocket, Moonstruck, Divide & Man as You..ahhhh I can keep naming all the songs in the album coz they all are high-energy songs with a lot of intricate guitar work and it was tough to get the right balance between technical precision and raw emotion. The challenge was making sure it didn't sound too polished.

**Jay:** Collaboration is key in music. Did you work with any other artists or musicians on this album? How did their input shape the final sound?

**Claver:** While I handled a lot of the production and instrumentation myself, I did collaborate with a few close friends who are incredible musicians. Yousuf Tareen, Hebzy Williams, Upasana Chhetri, Manas Jha, Jaishankar, Darren Das, Maahir Siddique & KC Loy. Their input was invaluable. They brought fresh perspectives and ideas to my songs.

**Jay:** Rock music often carries strong emotional and thematic elements. What are the central themes or messages you're trying to convey through this album?

**Claver:** The central theme of this album is resilience. It's about pushing through adversity and finding strength in the struggle. Each song touches on different aspects of that journey—whether it's confronting personal demons, fighting for what you believe in, or just surviving the chaos of life.



I wanted the music to reflect both the highs and lows of that experience, capturing the intensity of those emotions in a way that resonates with listeners.

**Jay: Looking back on the entire journey of creating this album, what are you most proud of? Is there a particular moment or achievement that stands out to you?**

Claver: I'm most proud of the fact that I stayed true to my vision throughout the entire process. There were times when it would have been easier to compromise or take shortcuts, but I resisted that temptation. One moment that stands out is when I finally heard the mastered version of the album in its entirety. That was the moment I knew all the hard work had paid off. Hearing it all come together exactly as I imagined was incredibly satisfying.

**Jay: The album cover is striking and carries a lot of emotional weight. Can you tell us about the creative process behind it and how it connects with the themes of the album?**

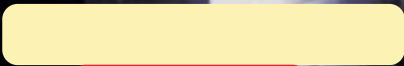
Claver: This piece of art is created by my friend Mandy Kulkarni I would let him answer this one.  
Mandy: Claver made me listen to his album tracks. Freaking killer like always. And then he flaunted the album cover design to me and seemed proud he had designed it himself. Was shit served on a fresh new plate hahahaha! But on a serious note, I felt the track Divide had so much of aura to be the title of the album. While I listened to it in a loop, lyrics to music, I did feel the pain of today's world, divided and broken while an innocent paid the price. In my vision, kept seeing a survivor girl child in a tattered jacket with her only buddy, a teddy bear, and she was



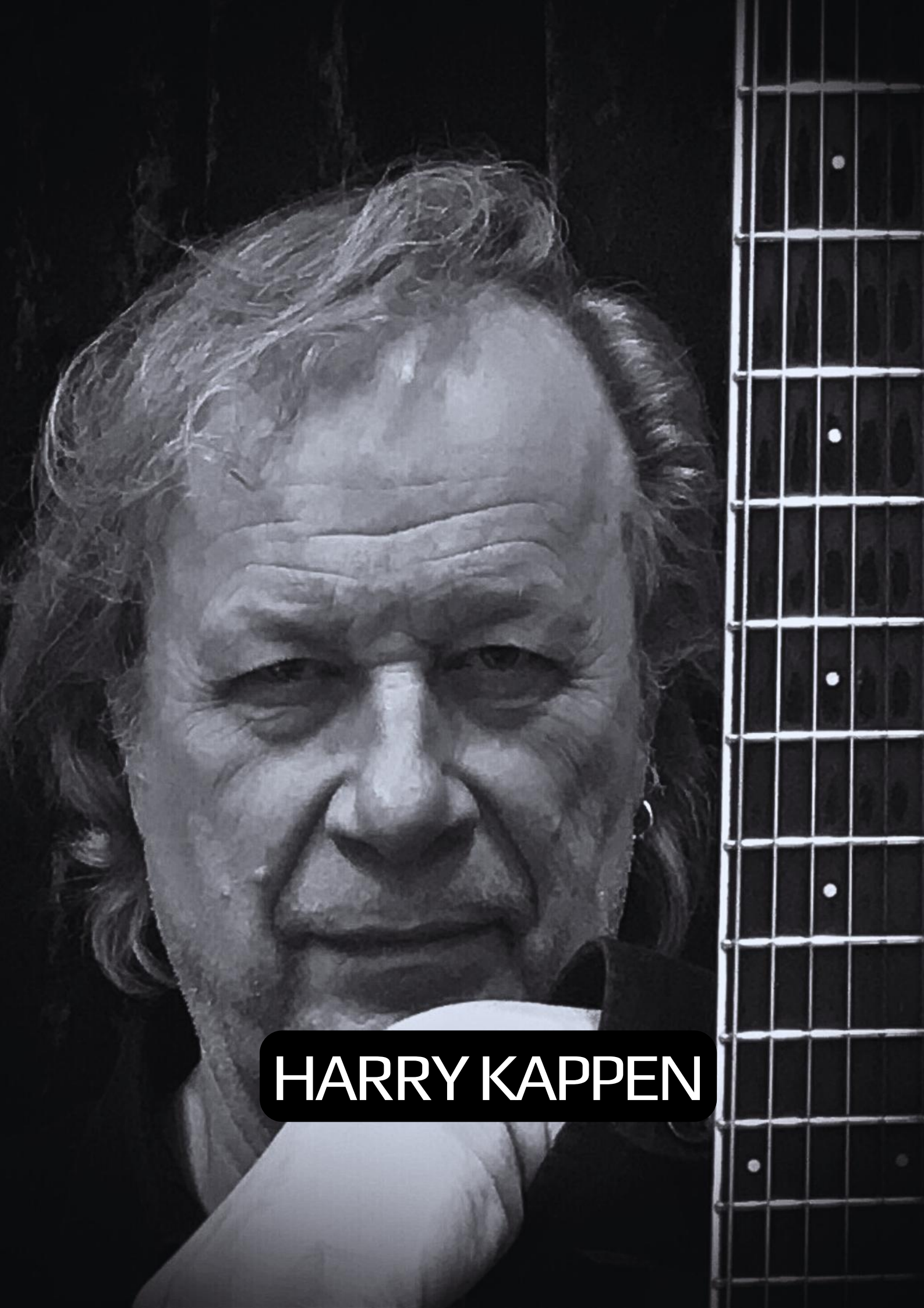
emotionally numb, looking at a massive divide between a land that she once knew as home, which had now turned into a wasteland after a post-apocalyptic aftermath.

**Jay:** Finally, what do you hope listeners take away from this album? Is there a specific feeling or message you want to resonate with them after they've heard it?

Claver: I hope listeners come away from this album feeling energized and inspired. If there's one message I want to convey, Music has the power to lift us up and give us strength and if this album can do that for even one person, then I've accomplished what I set out to do. So download the 'Divide' album from all the music streaming platforms. Support GOOD Indi artists ONLY ;).



Jay Pillai is the founding editor of Lazie Indie Magazine. A musician for 30+ years, with his bands Lazie J, Lazie Bison and the Autumnleaf, Jay has been on the forefront promoting indie music in India and now worldwide. The brain behind the award winning TV show Autumnleaf The Big Stage, And the International Indie Music Festival in Kerala, India which has already showcased top Bands from more than 15 countries within 2 years . He also founded the John Anthony Guitar Contest to promote young guitar talent in India and bring them to the notice of legends on International Rock music.



**HARRY KAPPEN**

# Harry Kappen

## *Whats new from our featured artist*

**Jay: Harry, Welcome back to Lazie Indie Magazine, Great to speak to you...**

**It's been over a year since we last spoke. How has your musical journey evolved during this time?**

HK: A lot has happened last year. I have released 3 singles and a two months ago my album "Time will tell" was released, containing 12 songs that I am very proud of. Of course you can listen to it on all streaming services such as Spotify, Deezer, Apple Music etc etc and on my website [www.harrykappen.com](http://www.harrykappen.com).

I have also been nominated 5 times for the ISSA Awards and Josie Awards for this year! So, only exciting and fun events. I feel very honored by those nominations.

**Jay: Can you tell us about your latest release or any other music you published since our last conversation? How do they differ from your earlier work?**

HK: "Time Will Tell" the entire album and the final single that accompanies it "Cool Down" were released at the same time. There are again many guitars to be heard and a balanced mix between analogue and digital instruments. I paid a lot of attention to the vocal parts. The final versions of the lyrics for most songs were written within two weeks, which makes the album feel even more unified than the previous album 'Escape'.

**Jay: In what ways do you feel your songwriting or sound has progressed over the past year?**

HK: Because so much more attention has been paid to my music by others in the last 2 years, I have perhaps become a little more alert to the production process and perhaps even more accurate in my lyrics, but fortunately without losing my spontaneity. On the other hand, I have of course been making and producing music all my life, I have now developed my own style. So not much has changed.

**Jay: Have you discovered any new influences or genres that have impacted your music recently?**

HK: No, not really. I'm quite stubborn in that respect and I do things the way I want to do them. I'm of course curious about how others do it, but I don't feel the need to let that influence me much at the moment. I admire Billie Eilish's productions, especially the way of recording and I admire Knower's new album 'Knower forever'. Good musicians with their own recognizable style. Hopefully later people will also say about me that I had a specific sound of my own. And perhaps they will say that I was appropriately influenced, but that happened unconsciously.



**Jay: How has your experience with live performances over the past year? Any memorable shows or tours you'd like to share?**

HK: Until now, I was mainly working on studio projects. I compose, play and produce everything myself. But I must admit that the thought of playing live is becoming increasingly attractive to me. I think the songs from the last 2 albums are very suitable for playing live with a band. So who knows, there may be musicians who love my music; they are free to contact me. Let's see what happens. But in addition to being a musician, I also continue to work in my job as a music therapist and as a teacher at a master's program in music therapy in Rotterdam. So I don't have much time for performances at the moment. Hopefully next year!

**Jay: Have you collaborated with any new artists or producers since we last spoke? How did they shape your music?**

HK: No, not with other musicians. I am in contact with a new group of dancers from New York, who have now danced a number of clips for me. That works very well; thanks to them, among other things, I have gained many new fans through TikTok. I like young enthusiastic creative people; these dancers are a good example of that (Amelia Dance Crew).

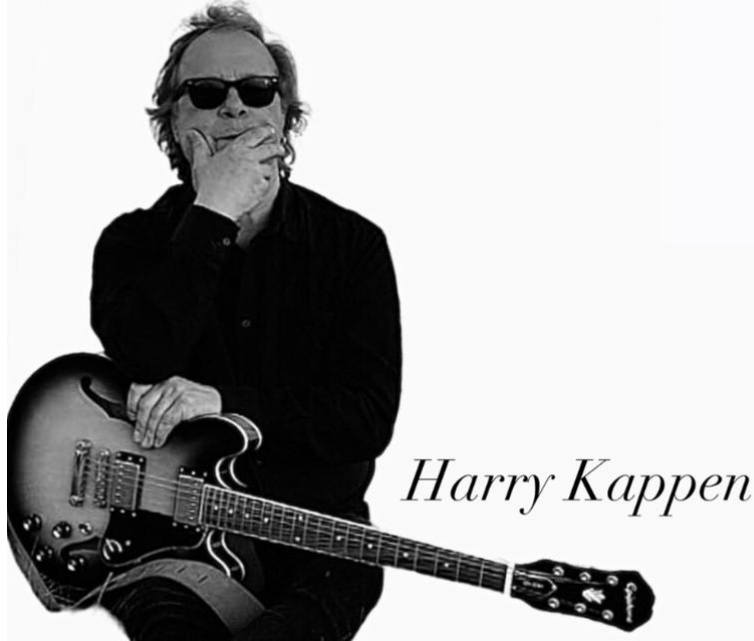
**Jay: Any new challenges you faced in the indie music scene recently and how have you overcome them?**

HK: I like challenges. I mainly see opportunities in challenges. Over the years I have gained enough experience and confidence to take on those challenges. As long as I take it step by step and take my time. Everything in time and working through it, that's how I overcome every challenge.

**Jay: How has your relationship with your fans evolved? Have you noticed any changes in the way your music is received?**

HK: Like I said; a new group of fans has emerged via TikTok. Furthermore, I try to approach everyone as openly as possible. That works well for me. It is true that I have to keep working on it every day. Society is structured in such a way that if you don't say each

# *Time will tell*



element would interact with the riffs and solos.

**Jay: What can we expect from you in the coming months? Any exciting projects or releases on the horizon?**

HK: Yes of course, there are still many songs in the pipeline that need to receive the necessary attention from me. I have now started collecting and charting the next album. So I will start the new recordings soon. You will hear about it through my own channels or through my management MTS management group.

**Jay: Reflecting on your journey so far, what advice would you give to your past self, and what are your aspirations for the future?**

HK: I wouldn't do much differently than what I did. Music is my life and my second nature. I am always busy with music; with recording, composing and producing. Music is my passion, so the only advice I would have given to my younger self or someone else is to never give up on your passion. Continuing to do where your heart lies is important, this also applies to my love for music therapy, cooking and teaching. Creating, making beautiful things, realizing your personal ideas, but also teaching and encouraging others to love music makes my life meaningful; in the past, the present and the future.

**Jay: Thank you, it was great speaking to you again and I wish you all the very best !!!**

Additional info if needed:

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email: [kappenhe@hotmail.com](mailto:kappenhe@hotmail.com)

All songs available via: Additional info if needed:

website: [www.harrykappen.com](http://www.harrykappen.com)

email: [kappenhe@hotmail.com](mailto:kappenhe@hotmail.com)

All songs available via:

YouTube: [https://youtube.com/channel/UCCsUD\\_vqC\\_gmEON8G1WXV8w?si=wSo4TnNB7mMyn3gc](https://youtube.com/channel/UCCsUD_vqC_gmEON8G1WXV8w?si=wSo4TnNB7mMyn3gc)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HarryKappen>

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TikTok: <https://tiktok.com/@harrykappen>

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/kappenhe>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556986805074>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/album/1VJJ30RqhSo9MpG4PgjvTY?si=ip1Jdx3CRrqqo0T8tqoZAg>





**FIRDAUS**

# Firdaus

*There's nothing like music from the mountains*

FIRDAUS Music, a band hailing from the serene village of Kasol in the Parvati Valley of Himachal Pradesh, India. The band's name is courtesy of Urdu language which means 'Heaven'. The 4 members of the band are Pawan Chauhan from Uttarakhand, India who is the vocalist of the band, Shubham Dhiman from Chandigarh, India who does the Rap Vocals and Lead Guitars for the band, Deepak Kumar the Drummer from Punjab, India and Manish from Himachal Pradesh, India who is the Bassist and Flautist of the band. Lazie Indie is excited to speak to the band as the music from the hills always carries the mystique with it. Let us know more about Firdaus and its music .....

## **Lazie Indie Magazine speaks to Firdaus**

**LIM: How did the band come together, and what inspired you to start making music as a group?**

Firdaus: FIRDAUS is active since 2018 and needed a new drummer and bassist in 2023, that same year the then members of the band saw the other two playing live at the New Year gigs in Kasol valley. 2 hours of partying and talking music was all it took us to know that we want the same things from music as the opposites. Meanwhile the initial members, Pawan and Shubham met each other at an engineering college.

**LIM: How would you describe your sound, and which artists or genres have influenced your music the most?**

Firdaus: Our sound is still, I believe undiscovered, because of the fact that we don't want and need us to be predictable. One of our songs may sound Punk, Other may sound Classical, and the next may sound Rap/Rock. Totally depends on who has the bluetooth connected to the car's speakers when we are driving ourselves to gigs, LOL. But to name a few, our sound is somewhat influenced by Linkin Park, Blink-182, Greenday and some modern Korean Rock bands which we believe are doing a phenomenal job.

**LIM: What projects or tracks are you currently working on, and what should fans expect from your upcoming releases?**

Firdaus: Having talked about being unpredictable, here's a hint for our fans, You're going to be listening to a mixture of Punk, Rock and Rap in the next 5 songs. We call this set of songs 'Baarwi Fail', where each of the songs explains different emotions and phases of the life of a teen who failed in high school.

**LIM: What has been your most memorable live performance so far, and how do you connect with your audience on stage?**



NO PARKING EXIT

NO PARKING

standard chartered



ETIHAD AIRWAYS

SIEMENS mobile

CHEVROLET



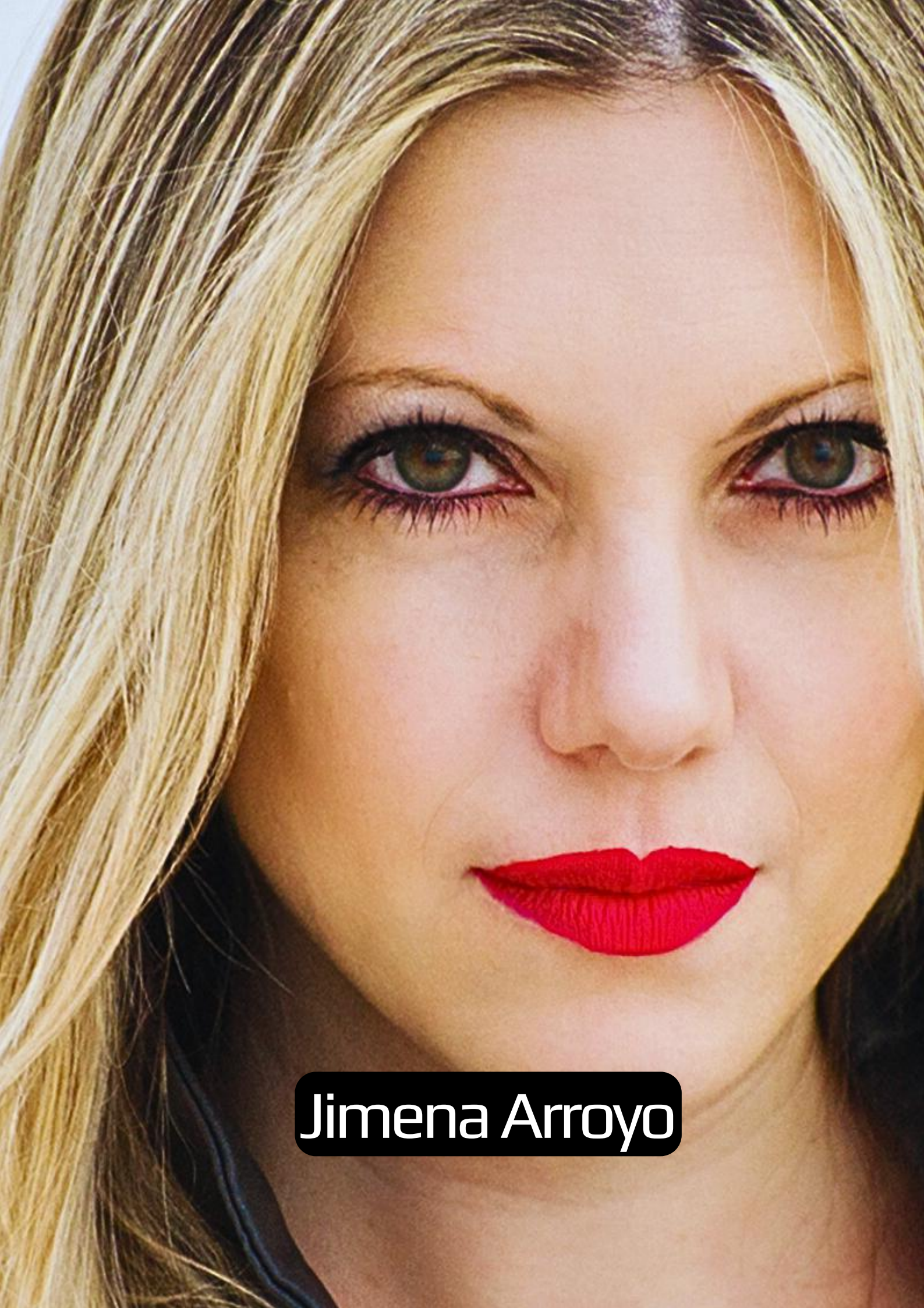
It's weird, but our most memorable performance still has been in our jam room. The midnight jams are always magical, and it's even better when you're gearing up for a ticket show where you're going to play all your original songs for the first time and the feeling of confidence where you're like, 'okay! tomorrow is going to be the best day of our lives'. Yes, there have been moments where we have hundreds of flashlights right in front of us, but everyone in the band always dreamt of listening to the audience sing their songs and feeling it coming was the best thing we've ever felt. We've never planned or studied about connecting to the audience, but we believe there are energies we carry that automatically makes them cheer for us without us even hitting a chord.

**LIM: What are your goals as a band, and where do you see yourselves in the next few years?**

Firdaus: Apart from recording more songs and albums which of course every artist wants and needs, we see ourselves not just making and playing music, but actually living together, with our families, see each other every day of the week and hope that the fantastic life we are living right now never ends and it stays the same till our body stops following our brain and our grandchildren form a band.

**LIM: Thank you members of Firdaus ... Wish you all the best and keep in touch !!!**

Firdaus: Thank you ! Will sure do !!!



**Jimena Arroyo**

# Jimena Arroyo

## With love from Argentina

We have spoken to her some time back and it has been quite some time so let us talk to her again !!! For our readers who have missed her first interview ...here is a brief about Jimena ...

**Jimena Arroyo** is a singer-songwriter, topliner, author and English-Spanish sworn translator from La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

From an early age, she has shown a talent for inventing her own songs and stories, so much so that she used to make up her own nursery rhymes at kindergarten and, at the age of 8, she wrote her first song in English, her second language.

At the age of 19, she won a car in a singing competition on the TV show "1,2,3 OUT!" From that moment on, she started performing live and worked as a touring singer in a prestigious local cover band. For over ten years she performed in bars, theaters, restaurants, resorts and some local TV shows in her country while studying translation at the National University of La Plata .

After graduation, she kept pursuing her passion: Writing. She has published seven children's books so far. But just like we all go back to our first love, it was writing music that really drove her, so she started writing songs again with very talented musicians, composers and producers from all over the world.

Her songwriting talents have not gone unnoticed and since her comeback to professional music in 2017, she has been nominated for several international independent music awards, such as the 2018 Nashville Universe Awards and the 2018 Josie Music Awards . Both in 2020 and 2021, she won an ISSA ( International Singer-Songwriters Association ) award for Best International Female Vocalist (Silver) and her music is being played on multiple radio stations worldwide.

She released her first album with multi-instrumentalist Torbjørn Vagle (Norway) " Ten Waves " on January 3rd, 2020 . She's also the singer of the band " Excorde " with Jonnie Cook (USA). Her solo album " But First We Burn " (produced by multi-instrumentalist CJ Teffner ) was released on December 31st, 2021. It includes 12 original songs. This album won an ISSA Award for International Female Album of the Year 2022 (Gold).

Lazie Indie Magazine featured Jimena Arroyo some time back and we have always been keen to know more about her progress ... So we caught up with this fabulous Singer Songwriter from Argentina again to get latest updates from her... let's check out !!!



Jay from Lazie Indie Magazine speaks to Jimena Arroyo

**Jay: Hi Jimena, welcome to Lazie Indie Magazine, great to catch up with you again ...**

Jimena Arroyo ( JA): Hi, my dear friends! It's always great to catch up with you!

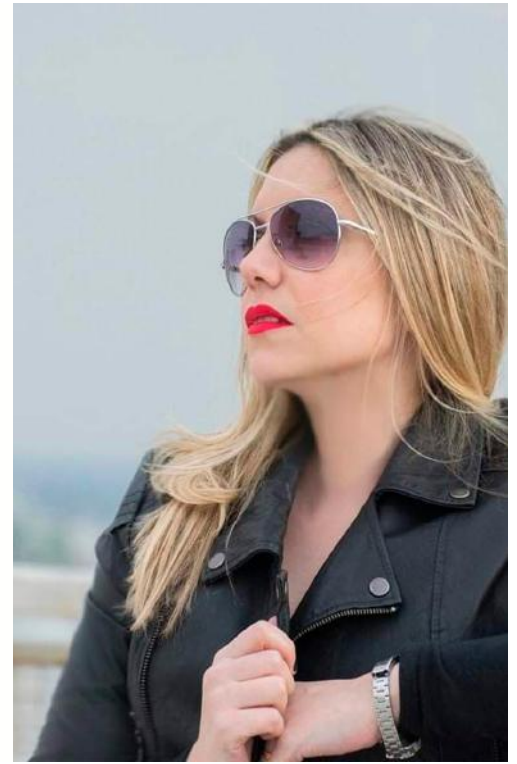
**Jay: How has your music evolved since our last interview, and what new experiences or influences have shaped this growth?**

JA: I would say my music has evolved into a more adult-oriented rock sound. I feel I'm more mature and experienced now. The lyrics are deeper and more focused. I believe working for sync agencies, which create music for TV and films, has given me a lot more focus and opened my mind to being more attuned to feelings and reflection.

The new experiences that have accompanied this growth in my songwriting and overall sound have not been all great: these include health issues that led to surgery last year, but also the fortune of making music with incredible producers and musicians worldwide.

**Jay: Can you share any standout moments or milestones you've achieved over the past year?**

JA: After winning the International Female Album of the Year Gold award in 2022 from the International Singer-Songwriter's Association, I was fortunate to become a judge for this year's award ceremony, which was both an honor and a privilege. There's so much talent in the independent music world! I've also released an album for sync with Likha Music International, exclusively for TV and film.



**Jay: What challenges have you encountered recently, and how have you navigated them as an independent artist?**

JA: There are always challenges in the life of artists, especially independent ones. It's always tough to get our art out to the general public, which is why I'm super grateful to Lazie Indie Magazine and all the radio stations that promote music from artists like me. It's also challenging to stay relevant and active on social media. Being an artist and a mom isn't easy, but the rewards are plenty at the end of the day, as I get to teach my daughters that it's worth fighting for our dreams.

**Jay: How has your approach to connecting with your audience changed, especially in light of new trends?**

JA: Social networks are wonderful ways to stay in touch with my followers and supporters. The audience is different on each platform, so I try to remain active in all of them, but I'm more engaged on some than others. Instagram is my favorite one, but I've had to get up to date and open a TikTok account to connect with younger people. I love interacting with those who comment and message me, so I try to stay in touch as much as possible. You'll find me everywhere with the handle @iamjimenaarroyo. Let's connect everywhere!

**Jay: Tell us more about upcoming projects or collaborations are you most excited about heard you are coming out with a new album.**

JA: I'm super excited about my new album *From Ashes We Rise*, coming out on August 29th. It's a collaboration with CJ Teffner, who produced it and co-wrote the songs with me. The album features 13 tracks that range from alternative rock to acoustic ballads, with some pop-rock in between. I'm very proud of these songs, and I hope they resonate with people on a personal level, empowering them and making them feel supported in their journey to find their purpose in life.

**Jay: What can your fans look forward to in the near future?**

JA: I hope my new album fills you with good moments and inspiration, and as always, I'll be working on songs that touch your heart and become the soundtrack to both your good and not so good times. Sending you all a big hug until we meet again!



# Aaron Lazars Project

**NEW  
RELEASE**

# Aaron Lazars Project

## “Impossible Dream”

### REAL TALK WITH KSHIP

Aaron Lazar’s album “Impossible Dream” is set to release on August 23rd, 2024, but the much anticipated single “Let Your Soul Guide You”, a duet with Josh Groban was released August 2nd, 2024.

The project has garnered the attention of major news networks, as well as popular media outlets, including Good Morning American, Entertainment Tonight, Extra, People Magazine, Billboard, Variety, Broadway World, SiriusXM stations and more.

Why so much attention? The backstory is quite extraordinary.

Aaron Lazar, a Broadway star known for his roles in *Les Misérables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, Sting’s “The Last Ship” and many more, was diagnosed with ALS, bringing his career to an abrupt halt.

With the encouragement of his friends, he decided to record an album to help establish a legacy and promote awareness for ALS. It didn’t take long for stars such as Sting, Josh Groban, Neil Patrick Harris, Kristin Chenoweth, Leslie Odom Jr (two-time Tony and Grammy winner), Loren Allred (the *Greatest Showman*), Lin Manual Miranda (creator and star of *Hamilton*), and 40 other Broadway legends and stars to sign on to record tracks with Aaron.

One driving forces behind doing the project was Aaron’s good friend, Jonathan Estabrooks, who contacted Kitt Wakeley to help produce the project.

As duets were being recorded with major stars, a bigger track was being planned for the finale track “The Impossible Dream”, which was recorded in NYC with over 40 Broadway legends and stars. A “who’s who” of Broadway talent. The media started dubbing it the “We Are the World” of Broadway.

Kitt reflected, “I knew this was a significant project when we were recording the duets with all the individual stars, but it didn’t hit me until the NYC recording session of ‘The Impossible Dream’. I walked in the studio and there were teams of techs, media, and cameras everywhere. When Good Morning American asked me, ‘what’s it like to produce Broadway history in the making’, I about fell out of my chair, right in front of the camera. That’s when it hit me. Jonathan and Aaron’s ambition of an album had taken on a much bigger persona that anyone expected. The whole world would be watching what happens with this project and I better step up my game. To be honest, it became very intimidating at that point.”



Kitt continued “However, once I processed the question from GMA I answered, ‘there are over 200 musicians on this project, at least 9 recording studios, 7 engineers, a myriad of attorneys, artist reps, and at least 3 different PR firms pulling on this rope. The anchor of it all, is an amazing human being, Aaron Lazar. A brilliant talent, who’s love and energy are why we are all here. In actuality, I’m a very small part of this project. In fact, I brought in more producers such as Patrick Conlon, Christina Giacona and David Das. I emphasized; this project does not cross the finish line without them.”

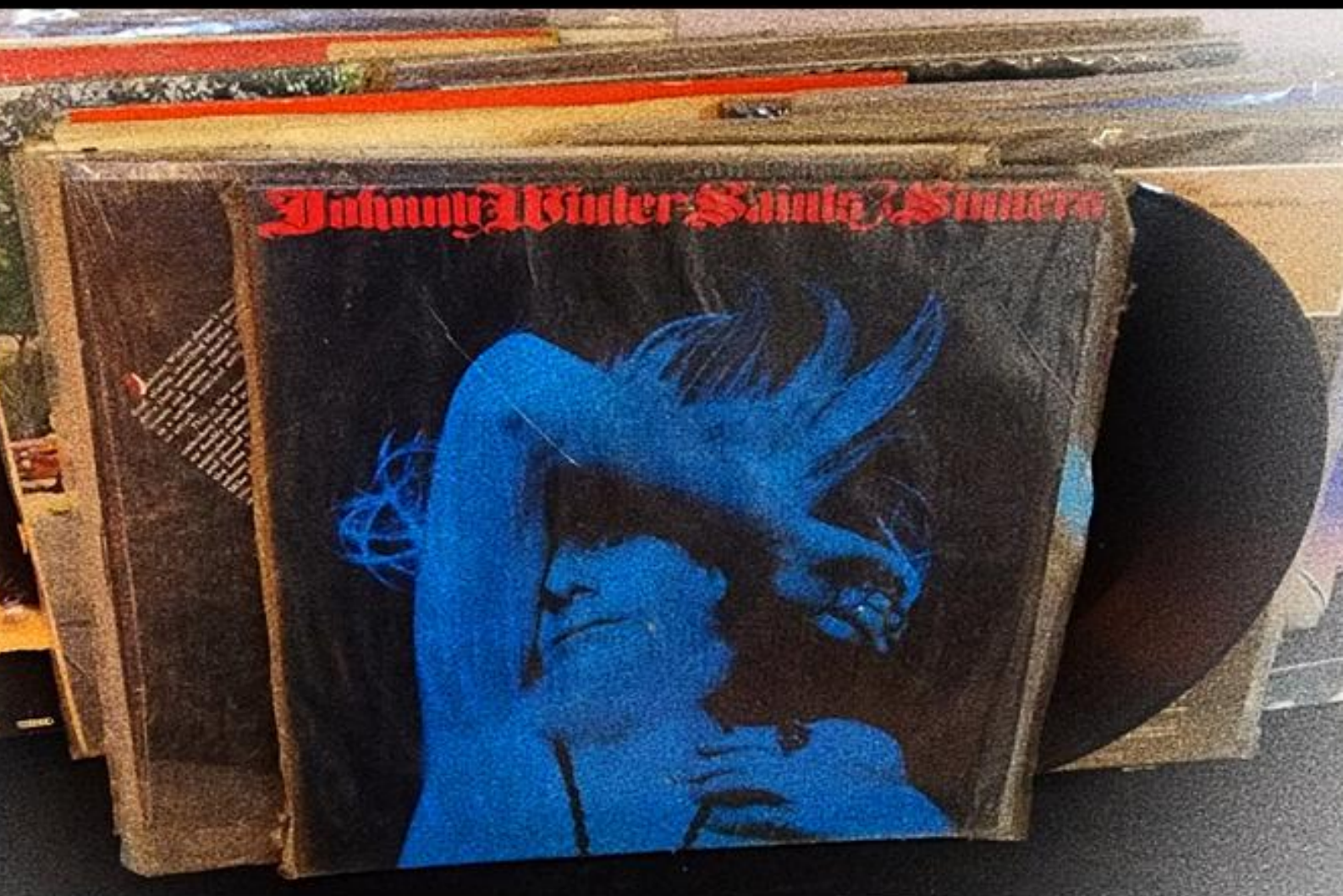
With the support of the media, a social media campaign hitting hundreds of thousands a day, and celebrity involvement, Aaron and Jonathan’s passion for a special project is coming to a head with much anticipated success.

If someone would like to support Aaron and the ALS network, feel free to click on:

<https://emithastudios.limitedrun.com/products/770235>



# CLASSIC CUTS



**BLUE**

Compiled by Lyia Meta

*“I have an aversion to being mislabeled. Here’s a label I’d accept: I’m an ‘individual.’ I’m someone who can’t follow, and doesn’t want to lead.”* **Joni Mitchell**



**PHOTOGRAPHER: TIM CONSIDINE**

*“I have an aversion to being mislabeled. Here’s a label I’d accept: I’m an ‘individual.’ I’m someone who can’t follow, and doesn’t want to lead.”* **Joni Mitchell**

Mitchell’s use of open tunings on the guitar, a technique she began exploring in the mid-1960s, is a hallmark of the album’s sound. This technique allows for rich, resonant chords and a unique harmonic quality. The album is considered a significant departure from Mitchell’s earlier work, as it represents a move towards more personal and introspective songwriting.

This shift towards greater artistic freedom and experimentation was a hallmark of the early 1970s singer-songwriter movement. “Blue” by Joni Mitchell is a seminal album in the singer-songwriter genre, known for its introspective lyrics, innovative use of open tunings, and Mitchell’s distinctive vocal style. Blue is the fourth studio album by Canadian singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell, released on June 22, 1971, by Reprise Records. Written and produced entirely by Mitchell, it was recorded in 1971 at A&M Studios in Hollywood, California.

Release date: June 22, 1971

Genres: Folk rock, folk music

Label: Reprise

Length: 36:15

Studio: A&M, Hollywood, California

Joni Mitchell recorded "Blue" in 1971 in just a few months. The album is known for its intimate and raw sound, which was achieved by recording with just Mitchell's vocals and acoustic guitar in many cases.

### **Track List**

Despite the album's title, there is no song called "Blue" on the tracklist. The title is believed to reflect the overall mood and emotional tone of the album.

### **Side 1**

All I Want – 3:34.1.

My Old Man – 3:34.2.

Little Green – 3:27.3.

Carey – 3:02.4.

Blue – 3:05.5.

### **Side 2**

California – 3:51.1.

This Flight Tonight – 2:51.2.

River – 4:04.3.

A Case of You – 4:22.4.

The Last Time I Saw Richard – 4:15.5.

"Blue" was met with critical acclaim upon its release and is now widely regarded as one of the greatest albums of all time. It has been included in numerous "best of" lists by music publications and is considered a classic of the singer-songwriter genre. Countless artists who came after Joni Mitchell have been influenced by "Blue," especially in the field of confessional songwriting. The album has had a profound impact on the singer-songwriter genre, and its songs remain deeply resonant with audiences to this day.

**Trivia:** "You could write a song about some kind of emotional problem you are having, but it would not be a good song, in my eyes, until it went through a period of sensitivity to a moment of clarity. Without that moment of clarity to contribute to the song, it's just complaining." Joni Mitchell.

The song "Little Green" is about Mitchell's daughter, whom she gave up for adoption in 1965 when she was a struggling folk singer. The song's lyrics hint at this painful experience and Mitchell's longing to reconnect with her daughter. In 1996, Mitchell received the prestigious Polar Music Prize from the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, followed by induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1997. Her outstanding contributions were further recognized with a Grammy Award for life time achievement in 2002, and she was honored as a Companion of the Order of Canada two years later.

"Blue" initially did not achieve commercial success but has since amassed a dedicated following, often hailed as one of the greatest albums, earning a Gold certification from the RIAA.

Its influence extends beyond music, leaving a lasting cultural impact evident in literature, film, and television, with its songs covered by numerous artists. In 2020, Joni Mitchell marked the album's 50th anniversary with a reissue that included remastered original tracks, along with outtakes and demos from the recording sessions.

**Interesting fact:** One intriguing aspect of Joni Mitchell's life is that she originally aspired to be an artist, but her path shifted to music after she contracted polio at nine years old, preventing her from pursuing her initial dream of becoming a dancer. Her background in visual arts heavily influenced her musical style, inspiring her unique guitar tunings and innovative approach to songwriting.

Source: Time Magazine  
Joni Mitchell Library



### "CLASSIC CUTS"

A column by Lyia Meta that celebrates the finest records and albums ever produced. Join her as she shares her thoughts and explores her personal collection or those she has just discovered, offering a fascinating look into iconic music.

**NEW  
RELEASE**



**'AIN'T THINKIN'  
BOUT YOU"**

**BEKKA  
DOWLAND**

This song is a part two to my previous single "Malibu." It was inspired by a text I received from a guy whose number I thought I had already blocked. We never even dated, but he sent me a novel of a message asking to play a round of golf or go get coffee, which are some lyrics that ended up in the song. "Ain't Thinkin' Bout You" is a sassy summer anthem that I think gets straight to the point... definitely not thinking about him. I feel like anyone who has politely tried to tell someone they are not interested can relate to this song. It's fun, it's upbeat, and it's the perfect song for a summer playlist.



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**NEW  
RELEASE**

**TAKE ME  
AWAY**

**SHERISSE**



# AN EXCITING DUET COMING SOON!



**@shannonksinger and kumarsanuofficial**

"9 to 5" incorporates lyrics in Urdu and Hindi sung by the renowned Bollywood singer Kumar Sanu and Shannon K, and produced by GRAMMY nominee Lugo Gonzalez, is a modern global fusion of three very different music worlds. Bollywood, Hollywood, and the Latin Music world. While the up-beat song will lift the listeners' spirits, the song is also a statement that reaches out to those stuck in the loop of a 9 to 5 job and in the same every-day routines, encouraging and inspiring them to break away from the predetermined paths in their lives and find themselves and explore their passions. The song asks society, "Will you let me live the life I want to live? Free me, from the sins that you commit" referring to the effects of big corporations on society, the environment, and the mental health of people and how the common man is expected to work their lives away to sustain the economy and make adjustments to their lives to save the planet, while the ones in control pull the strings. This will be Shannon's first entry to the GRAMMY Awards as a new voting member, in the area of Best Global Performance!

# Antonio Vergara Releases His Much-Anticipated Album “The Fury” on August 29

A Musical Odyssey That Fuses the Essence of Blues with Mystical and Spiritual Elements, Produced by Antonio Vergara and Featuring Recording Engineering by Claudia Correa.

Antonio Vergara, one of the most visionary musicians and composers in the contemporary blues scene, is set to unveil his latest masterpiece, *The Fury*, on August 29. This album, which features 13 captivating tracks, was entirely produced by Antonio and boasts the impeccable recording engineering of Claudia Correa. Together, they have created a sonic experience that not only resonates with the tradition of blues but also explores new musical and spiritual frontiers.

## **A Deep Journey into the Heart of Blues**

*The Fury* is much more than a simple blues album; it is an artistic statement that captures the essence of a rich musical tradition while pushing it into new territories. With an eclectic mix of themes ranging from superstition and mysticism to personal resilience and celebration of life, this album is a testament to Antonio’s ability to channel the deepest emotions into his music.

Each of the 13 tracks on *The Fury* is infused with the energy and passion that only a true blues master can convey. Songs like “My Buddy The Crow,” “Superstitions Lead the Way,” and “Nocturnal Bohemians” explore the connection between man and the mystical, using powerful metaphors and evocative lyrics that invite listeners to reflect on the mysteries of existence. Tracks such as “The Fury’s Blues” and “No Fear in Heart” channel an indomitable energy, with a performance that is both fierce and captivating.

## **Mastery in Performance and Instrumental Experimentation**

One of Antonio Vergara’s undeniable strengths is his mastery of guitar performance. In *The Fury*, Antonio not only demonstrates his skill with the traditional guitar but also incorporates lap steel guitar and resonator, instruments that add a rich sonic texture to the album. These instrumental elements not only reinforce the authentic character of blues but also give it a distinctive and evocative tone that resonates deeply in every track.

## **Production and Collaboration**

The production process of *The Fury* was a laborious and passionate effort led by Antonio Vergara. Antonio, known for his perfectionism and dedication to authenticity in his music, ensured that every note and every line of this album were a true representation of his artistic vision. Under his direction, the album was recorded with an approach that combines both traditional and modern techniques, achieving a sound that is both nostalgic and contemporary.

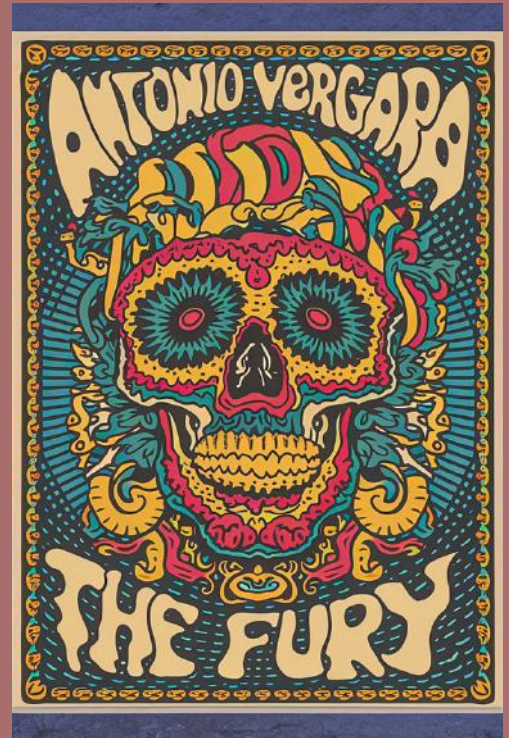
Claudia Correa, who was in charge of recording engineering, played a crucial role in creating the distinctive sound of *The Fury*. Her ability to capture the raw and emotional essence of the recording sessions has allowed the songs to shine with a clarity and depth that deeply resonates with the listener. The collaboration between Antonio and Claudia is evident in every track, where the balance between meticulous production and visceral performance creates an unforgettable listening experience.

## **An Art That Complements the Music**

The cover of *The Fury* is as intriguing and evocative as the music it represents. With a vibrant and colorful psychedelic design featuring a skull adorned with floral and geometric patterns, the image captures the energy and intensity found in the album’s songs.



**NEW  
RELEASE**



This powerful visual representation symbolizes the deep connection between tradition and modernity, unbridled creativity, and the strength of the human spirit. It is a visual reflection of the emotional and artistic journey Antonio Vergara offers to his listeners through his music.

#### **An Invitation to a Mystical and Musical World**

The release of *The Fury* marks a new chapter in Antonio Vergara's career, who has been praised for his ability to keep the flame of blues alive while reinterpreting it for a modern audience. With this album, Antonio not only reaffirms his place as a master of the genre but also invites listeners to immerse themselves in a world where music and mysticism intertwine.

The album will be available on all major streaming platforms starting August 29, and it is expected to be enthusiastically received by both blues fans and those who appreciate music with deep and resonant meaning.

#### **About Antonio Vergara**

Antonio Vergara is a musician, composer, and producer with a career spanning decades. His unique approach to blues, combined with his passion for exploring spiritual and cultural themes, has established him as a prominent figure in the contemporary music scene. *The Fury* is his latest creation, a work that reflects his unwavering commitment to artistic authenticity and his desire to connect with the soul of his listeners.

*The Fury* by Antonio Vergara: An album that is not only heard but felt. Don't miss it on August 29.

#### **Producer:**

**Antonio Vergara**

**Recording Engineer(s): Claudia Correa at AVA Recording Studios**

**Mixing Engineer: Antonio Vergara at AVA Recording Studios**

**Mastering Engineer: Antonio Vergara at AVA Recording Studios**



LAZIE INDIE MAGAZINE