

On This Road

I'm one of those guys who actually followed his dream from day one, and so far it has worked out pretty great. An eternal optimist, I have faith in my ability to make people feel better and I'm absolutely convinced that music heals and inspires.

So, where's the map to success? Don't know, because I'm still on this road I'm on. I left home at 18 to tour the world as a drummer & singer with the international youth group Up With People, which was a great life experience, but I've also done dumb things along the way like dropping out of school (Berklee) just days after Freshman orientation in favor of hitting the road with a really hot band. I ended up gigging a LOT, got to practice daily, helped write songs and chase record deals - some things worked out, others, not so much. Eventually though I was the drummer in THAT band which opened for really great acts in the 80's like Earth, Wind & Fire, Chic and Tavares.

After a few years on the nightclub circuit I decided it was time to return to NYC to pursue a solo career. Auditioning, drumming, singing and taking dance classes, getting call backs *and* being rejected, with a few surprises along the way like recording and performing with cool NY cats and innovative artists like Tomek Lamprecht of Model Citizens. I got to drum for Martha Reeves, Mary Wells and Phyllis Hyman until a big break came my way via a recording session which led to my becoming a founding member of Warp-9, one of the first electro-hip hop groups in NYC. Hit singles included Nunk, Beatwave, Light Years Away (Prism Records) and No Man Is An Island (Motown) all produced by Jellybean Benitez, Lottie Golden and Richards Scher.

It only took one NYC winter too many for me to decide L.A. was the next stop - so I put all my energy into recording sessions and live shows. A chance meeting at a club I sang at called Simply Blues led to an agency putting me to work so often that I became known in town as The Wedding Singer. It was a great time actually, working with great clients and playing swanky hotels. I learned a ton during this period about being a good bandleader, staying alert to what was needed, shifting on a dime, juggling personalities, soothing frayed nerves and, oh yeah - singing while event planners yelled changes in my ear at the same time.

Now however, I've cleared the deck - exploring exactly what I'm capable of as a vocalist and entertainer and signing off on all that should stay in my rear-view mirror. I've set up a second camp in Europe, Prague to be exact, while still keeping the career in L.A. simmering along. I chose Prague because it has a great jazz scene with top musicians, cool venues and best of all a really supportive community. Jazz clubs are packed every night - my theory being that having great public transportation allows folks to go out and enjoy great live entertainment, have a couple of drinks and still get home in one piece - as a result, there's always an audience!

For 2018 I'm excited to be involved with several projects: first, my jazz quartet/quintet where I get to work with amazing players as I croon the classics, a brand new 10-piece R&B funk band I've put together, multiple dates as Guest Artist for jazz festivals in the USA and Europe, and starring in a Broadway-style show called The Original Vintage Orchestra where I get to channel Cab Calloway AND Justin Timberlake. I still have a life goal in this old heart of mine to perform with the Metropole Orkestra and many other experiences I want to accomplish before I get too crooked or blind to even find the stage, so I hope you'll check in every once in a while to see what I'm up to. ~ Chuck