Long & McQuade MAGAZINE 2023/24 long-mcquade.com

WHERE THE MUSIC BEGINS.

INSIDE

3	A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT
4	Gear: Guitars
8	WHERE CREATIVES COLLIDE: KILOMETRE MUSIC GROUP By Manus Hopkins
14	ON THE MOVE: SHERBROOKE
16	Gear: Print
17	LIVING THE FREELANCE LIFE By Christopher Berti
20	Gear: Pro Audio
24	Gear: Recording
28	ON THE MOVE: BOWMANVILLE
30	Gear: Keyboards
32	Gear: Drums
37	THE WORLD OF SOUND HEALING By Rob Gretsinger
40	Gear: Band

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'Tis The Season...

To Buy

Whether you're buying yourself a well-priced treat on Black Friday, spending your gift money during Boxing Week, or purchasing a present or two for the musician on your list, Long & McQuade has what you need and want!

Have a peek inside the Gift Issue for guitar packs and full drumkits, both of which come with everything the beginner player requires. Do you know a fledgling DJ who needs decking out, so to speak? We've got turntables, controllers, and lighting effects galore. You'll also find well-priced studio monitors for the home recording enthusiast, compact sound systems for musicians who play live gigs, beautiful digital pianos to furnish any home, and beginner to pro band instrument outfits for all levels of musicians.

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KILOMETRE MUSIC GROUP WHERE CREATIVES COLLIDE

By Manus Hopkins

Exploring the history of the Toronto music creation and rights management company

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Situated in an old house in downtown Toronto, surrounded by art galleries, coffee shops, and small local stores, is Kilometre Music Group's headquarters. The massive space is bustling with creativity, but also has an open, friendly, and welcoming feel. Anyone you pass - anyone working in a studio, meeting room, or anywhere else you poke your head in - will smile, say hello, and introduce themselves, asking who you are and what you do.

The term 'creative collision' is one that is uttered a fair amount by the artists and Kilometre staff to describe what goes on in this place. So what exactly does the term mean? CEO Michael McCartey uses a comparison to illustrate the meaning, saying his vision for Kilometre is essentially Motown meets The Brill Building.

"There are a million stories of now famous songwriters and artists and music publishers, having these creative collisions inside the building," he says, "or people traveling from across the world with that as their Mecca, and they just want to meet somebody in there and get signed to a publishing deal."

Most of Kilometre's team first came together at SOCAN, before breaking off to form Kilometre Music Group in 2021. Though the



company hasn't been around that long, they've already accomplished a great deal in the rights management sector, and according to McCartey, artist catalogues are what underpins the operation economically.

"We started out with the ambition of buying \$200 million USD worth of catalogues," says McCartey, "and use that as a financial underpinning to segue into the heart of our long-term business, which is to be a traditional music publisher and sign and develop writers and artists."

As President of A&R Acquisitions, Rodney Murphy lays out, the Kilometre team wants to see the next wave of internationally successful Canadian artists come from their company, with Kilometre as the epicenter of the next wave of superstars.

"We really believe that it's possible," elaborates McCartey. "Based on the roster we're building and all the dots we've been connecting throughout our careers, we've seen it before, I've done it before, and we can sense how powerful this is going to be."

A key to seeing Kilometre's mission through is developing personal relationships with the artists the company works with, which ties in with the friendly atmosphere of the Kilometre house.

"We have these deep relationships," says Murphy. "And even though certain creators may be from outside of Canada, they want to be part of our mission and be part of a national culture that we're creating here."

McCartey says he and his team are proud of how quickly the Kilometre brand has grown, saying it is to the point that they're getting unsolicited calls and messages from record labels, managers, and artists from all over the world who want to come and work with Kilometre's team of writers.

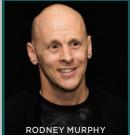
When it comes to discovering artists, there are several aspects the Kilometre team considers. Murphy says he puts people first, even before music, and carefully selects who he works with, weighing talent, drive, and ambition with reliability, work ethic, and cooperation.

"You have a good work ethic, can work well within a team, and you have the sauce, as the kids say, and ability, and you're willing to learn and are hyper-focused on success and getting better – that's what we look for," he says. "And if you have those things, and also have aptitude, and you're good with your tools and hands and mind, and transferring those ideas live in the room and in recording, then you have a real good chance of being an important part of Kilometre culture."

There's not exactly such thing as a typical day in the Kilometre house. The place is bustling with creativity, with recording and songwriting sessions, meetings, interviews, and many other things going on all the time, and both McCartey and Murphy find themselves jumping from task to task and project to project constantly.

"Sometimes it could be unloading the dishwasher and then closing a multimillion-dollar catalog deal," McCartey says. "Or listening to a demo from a writer and giving them feedback, then having meetings with our partners and investors, talking about the future of the company and where we're headed."

Murphy believes the people who are drawn to Kilometre Music Group all share a special calling in life. While a career in music can often be seen as a pipe dream, Kilometre aims to be something of a haven for people to realize their dreams. To Murphy, it's a place where artists can come to feel accepted and be part of something with kindred spirits - in such a competitive industry, that is something that is sorely needed.



Using rights management as a financial underpinning of the company was the right move in McCartey's eyes, as it can keep the business afloat and thriving, and serve as a way for people to make a living in music – something that is becoming increasingly difficult to do.

"My dream in music was to be a recording engineer and record producer," he says. "I was actually a failed drummer, record recording engineer, and record producer, and sort of a successful music publisher; when I first got into music publishing there were probably two jobs in the country, and I had one of them."

By seeing people as people and relationships as more than transactional, McCartey, Murphy, and the rest of the Kilometre team are able to cultivate something people want to be part of, and discussions about mental health are commonplace in the Kilometre family as well.

With this approach, Murphy believes the work his artists and team put out is better, and artists have the opportunity to develop, and to reach their full potential with Kilometre's guidance.

"All any of us want to do in life," he concludes half-jokingly, 'is make our parents proud and make our kids think we're cool."



10





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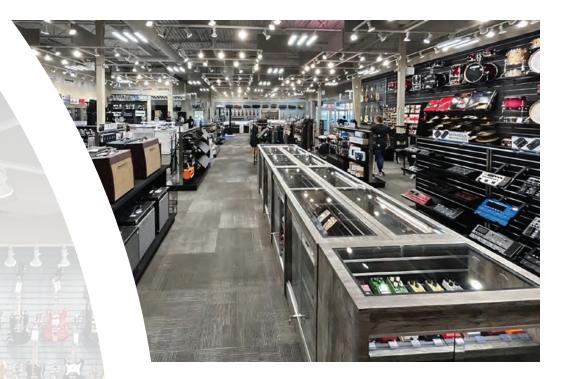
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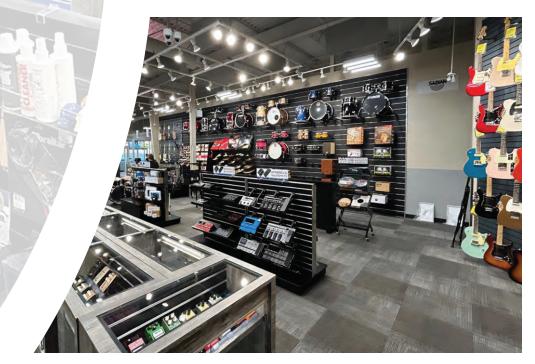


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16

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WHERE THE MUSIC BEGINS.



There are many career options available to a musician who is skilled at their instrument; some folks create original material at home, some play in bands, others might choose to audition for orchestras or perhaps work in the pit for a show that travels the country. The type of work is as varied as the genres of music in which to work: traditional folk music, classical, jazz, metal, funk, soul, big ensemble, small ensemble... So many choices, how can anybody pick just one?

Some musicians, myself included, don't necessarily want to be tied down to any one particular genre or ensemble. They crave a broader experience, and opening up new markets to make a few bucks while expanding their skill set. They don't want to rehearse the same material over and over, but jump in when needed and move on to the next opportunity.

This is basically the life of the freelance musician.

More like a tradesman than an artist (not that you can't be both), think of yourself as the emergency plumber of musicians. Whether you play the piano, guitar, drums, viola, bassoon, or accordion, your instrument is your tool - and chances are there are people looking to hire you to help out with some mess or emergency. So: how do we find this work, and how do we keep getting more of this work...'cause this sounds great! I have to admit It kind of is, and I'm here to give you some tips to get rolling!

First off: you need to know your own limits. This is a tough one, because we all want to think we're awesome, but there are certain requirements to make sure that you can walk into any situation feeling confident and prepared. Being able to read music, proficiently, is a must. There are different ways to get the message across and it's good to be familiar with all of them. Sometimes it's standard notation, sometimes it's lead sheets, sometimes you're reading a choral octavo over the pianist's shoulder – but you have to be able to read or sight read.

For some instruments and genres, it's just part of the deal, part of how you learn.Violinists, pianists, classical guitarists... they all give you what's on the page, every nuance. For others, we can become quite skilled at our axes through other means: by ear, or using other methods like tablature or non-standard notation. Players of this sort might be better at improvisation than the "readers," though not always. Reading is a skill that can be learned like any other, and like most skills, repetition is key.

Also know if you have stylistic limits. Maybe you can't improvise as well as you'd like but it's required on the gig. Or perhaps you can shred 'til the cows come home but can't really play finger-style guitar. It's ultimately filling the expectation of whoever is hiring you.

You should also know the limits of your gear. There are many different ideas of what a professional quality instrument is. Do I have to have a five thousand dollar guitar or keyboard, isn't my alto sax from high school just fine? Of course, the result is what is most important. Many players have made huge careers getting by with very little in the way of equipment. It's always good to have a realistic expectation as to what your gear is capable of. If you walk in to accompany a full choir with just the speakers on your keyboard, you've either not asked the right question or are underprepared for the situation.

Second: it is hinted at above, but you need to know what you are walking into. It's all about being aware of what's expected and making sure there are no surprises for you or your client. Is the gig a big show or small (affecting how much equipment you might need to bring), is it 5 hours out of town (can you get a ride, or is there compensation for travel?), do you need to bring more than one instrument (so bring your alto, tenor and a flute?), do you need to bring your own music stand? You get the idea.

In the quest to be a "professional" freelance player, it is up to YOU to know all the details. If you show up unprepared to a gig, whether you're unable to cover the parts, or your equipment fails or is substandard, you can almost guarantee that it won't be a situation where you will be called back in the future or recommended to others. We have to be good communicators. Don't be afraid to ask the questions YOU need answered from someone who is trying to hire you: is there backline provided? Will there be a sound check or rehearsal? Do you need to dress a certain way? How much might you be getting paid? If possible, a signed contract is a wonderful thing, and in many cases, you many need to be a member of your local Musicians Union – but always be aware of what you are getting, when you will be getting it (sometimes, even in this modern age, the cheque is in the mail) and how (I actually had a recent client who pays only via PayPal...)

Finally, and most importantly, we need to get ourselves out there!

In many ways, this is easier to do now than it has ever been. Being slightly older, I can still remember booking gigs through ads in the newspaper on a rotatory phone with an answering machine. Now of course, you can flaunt your talents over the world wide web for all to see. Having a variety of content that shows off your skills as a player online, as well as having an up-to-date resumé (again, either on a website or as an easy-to-forward document) is a great first start. Always put your best self forward – dress nicely, clean yourself up, get all the gunk off that guitar.

There are many places online where you can find musicians wanted or classified ads. Many cities have a social media group dedicated to such matters. There are the local union offices that can sometimes be helpful (and depending on the gigs you are looking for, often require a membership in your city's Local). There are also bulletin boards at many Long & McQuade locations, where musicians can offer or look for help!

Ultimately you are selling yourself, and often the best way to accomplish this is live and in person. Go where the musicians go. Find local jam sessions in your town. Attend concerts, big and small, featuring local artists you admire. Hang out after the show and talk to the bass player or keyboardist, or see if you can say a few words to the conductor of that ensemble you love. It may sound old-school, but have a business card you can hand out that points folks to your social media and gives them a way to contact you.

Take gigs. Sometimes this may mean stepping out of your comfort zone, or maybe taking a gig that doesn't pay quite what you'd expect, but getting out and actually playing gigs with other folks lets them know that you can cover what's required, that you are an easy person to work with and that you are professional in your interactions both on and off the stage. Word spreads – in some places faster than others, and soon rather than you having to hunt for work, work will be hunting for you!

I would like to finish off with some general tips for the freelancer just starting out.

- Don't be afraid to flaunt your successes. With the internet being what it is, it is easy to put up a few good words about what you've accomplished and who you've been playing with. Looks good on you and the people who've hired you.
- You should have the right clothing for the right occasion. Get a good quality used tux from a rental place (Top tip for ya right there), have a dark or black suit, nice shoes, a few ties. You're more likely to be called out for being under-dressed than over-dressed.
- If you get a call to play in a musical or other large show, and you have some qualified friends who you have played with in the past, don't be afraid to mention that you can offer help locating other players if required. People like a team player.
- But with that in mind, remember in the end, you are a hired hand, not the conductor, and not a rehearsal coach. Your job is to cover your part to the best of your ability. Sure, there will be times when there are challenges beyond your control. It could be that there are some weaker players pulling things down, maybe the director has unreasonable expectations, maybe you jammed your finger the night before. Best advice is to always be polite and professional in your conduct and communications. If you've noticed the problem, there's a good chance someone else has as well.
- Lastly, we live in a great country with lots of gigs in the biggest of cities and the smallest of communities. Being a freelance musician is an awesome way to see this land, meet other players, and expand your network. Sure, it's not for everyone, but if you are able to make a living playing your instrument, criss-crossing Canada, I say it's a great career and a rewarding life!

Chris is a sales and rentals associate at the Long & McQuade Henderson location in Winnipeg, MB.



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21

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26



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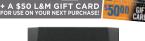




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27

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The Bowmanville post office has long been a fixture in downtown Bowmanville with its unique mid-century modern charm.

We felt this building would be the perfect location for us to offer a great shopping experience while maintaining many of the unique features of the building. Construction began in early 2021 and was completed in late 2022.

From our stunning lesson centre on the second floor with windows overlooking downtown, to the spacious ground floor full of guitars, drums, PA equipment and more, you won't want to miss checking this store out!

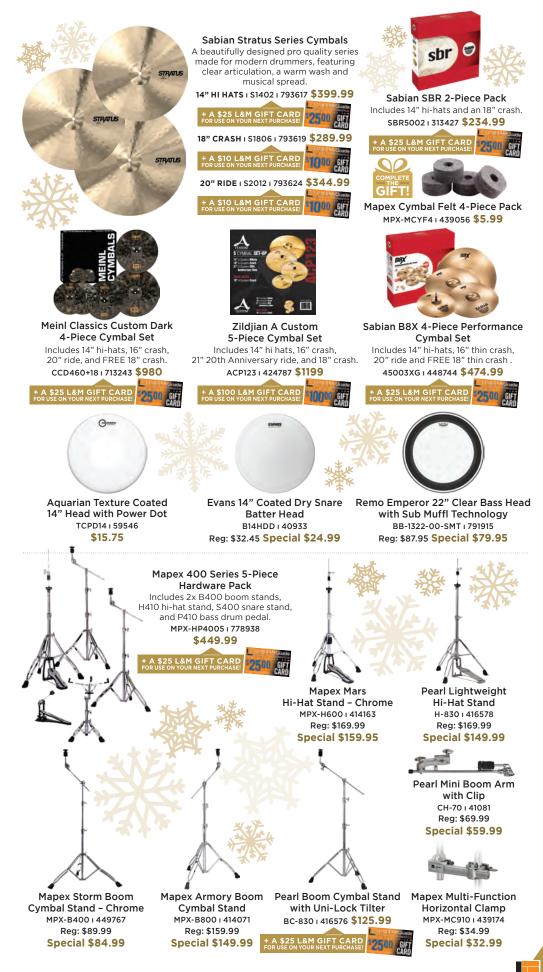








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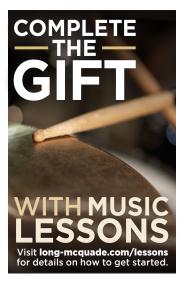
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36

THE WORLD OF SOUND HEALING





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In recent years, there has been a growing interest in exploring the therapeutic uses of sound. Drum Circles, Sound Baths, and Sound Meditations are growing in popularity. Books like **Human Tuning** (John Beaulieu), **Sound Healing With Gongs** (Sheila Whittaker), and **Himalaya Sound Revelations: The Complete Singing Bowl Book** (Frank Perry) are just a few of the many titles currently on the market that explore sound on a deeper level.

While this development is not exclusive to drums and percussion, the percussion industry has really stepped up to offer a wide array of instruments with sound therapy in mind. Below is a brief introductory tour of some of these instruments.

Singing Bowls and Crystal Bowls 1. SINGING BOWLS

One of the most popular instruments used in meditation is the singing bowl. Singing bowls have a long and rich – and occasionally mysterious - history. The company Meinl has been busy diversifying their line of bronze singing bowls (sometimes called "Himalayan singing bowls"). Let's have a look at some of the different series of bowls Meinl offers.

The Universal Series: This is where Meinl's bowls start in price. There is a good range in size offered within this series. They are also offered in sets. All of Meinl's bowls come with a felt cushion and cover.

The Origin Series: These bowls have a dark, unfinished appearance. This really gives them a special "antique" look. They are available in three sizes.

The Energy Series: This series of bowls features a reinforced "lip" around the edge of the bowls. According to Meinl, this will "produce a high tone at first, followed afterwards by a deep tone". These bowls have a lovely sustain.

The Cosmos Series: This series has a beautiful range. The smaller **SB-C-250** has a small rope attached to it. This can be very effective when swung over other bowls. A very interesting sympathetic vibration can start happening! The "Cosmos" bowls have a warm, deep tone.

Each singing bowl is different, although some may have a similar tone. I recommend building a collection slowly by carefully auditioning each bowl. Don't be afraid to mix the different series. Also, you can never have too many mallets – each mallet (or striker) will draw a different sound character out of your bowls.

2. CRYSTAL BOWLS

An extension of the singing bowl is the crystal singing bowl. Meinl offers quartz crystal bowls in a range of sizes (8"-14") and in different tones. Crystal bowls offer a warmer tone than bronze singing bowls. They are also more precisely tuned.

I personally use a combination of bronze bowls with my quartz bowls. I find them quite complementary. As with metal singing bowls, it is worth trying some different mallets.

Drums

The world of hand drums offers a wide range of sounds. Here are some varieties.

Remo Buffalo Drums: Buffalo drums are basically a synthetic version of traditional frame drums. These are available in 8", 10", 12", 14", 16" and 22" sizes. Each drum comes with a mallet. The **22**" size has a beautiful deep, warm tone. I like to alternate between the mallet and my hand for different sonic effects. One benefit of Remo's design is that their synthetic head is more durable and more resistant to temperature changes than traditional hide drums.

Remo Ocean Drums: Remo's Ocean Drums are basically like their buffalo drums except they have a second clear skin on the other side. Inside are tiny ball bearings. When moved slowly, the sound of ocean waves can be effectively produced. Ocean drums are available in 12", 16" and 22" sizes. They come with either a plain or colourful finish. I use the **22" Ocean Drum** as a wonderful tool for opening sound meditations.

Toca Djembes: Toca offers some great sounding djembes. One of my favourite



Toca Freestyle 12" Rope-Tuned Drum 322100 **\$259.99**



Meinl Harmonic Art Handpan 497291 **\$3825**



models is the **Freestyle 12" Rope-Tuned Drum**. It is available in 7", 9", 10", and 12" sizes and some attractive finishes. These djembes have a goat skin head but a synthetic body. This makes for a light and portable drum that can easily be transported to drum circles. These drums also have a great bass tone (especially the 12" size).

HANDPANS AND TONGUE DRUMS

Handpans: The Handpan (also known as the "Hang Drum") has become very popular in recent years. Handpans look like an upside down "steel drum" with different zones which create different notes. They are meant to be played with hands and are available in many scales. Pearl offers a couple of different Handpans including the **22"** "**Euphonic**" model in the key of F-Minor. Meinl offers a variety of tunings and finishes with their version of the Handpan.

Tongue Drums: A similar yet distinct instrument to the Handpan is the smaller Tongue Drum. Tongue Drums are made to be played with mallets (although they certainly can be played with hands). Pearl offers different options such as the **"Metal Spirit Series"**. Groove Masters Percussion offers some beautiful Tongue Drums, such as the **TDM-HP**. Meinl also offers Tongue Drums including the STD1BK in the key of A-Minor.

Gongs

It would be difficult to discuss sound therapy and not mention the gong. Since I last wrote an article on gongs in our 2014 Gear Issue, the world of gongs has expanded even more. Paiste has introduced a series of 7 bronze gongs with fascinating new designs. MeinI has introduced the 32" **Eight Corners of Heaven Mirror Gong** designed in collaboration with renowned gongmaster Don Conreaux.

Here are some popular gongs that would be a great starting place in a collection, or perhaps even an addition to an existing set-up:

Dream Wind Gongs: Dream is a company that offers a great selection of authentic Chinese-made gongs. The **Feng** or **Wind** Gong is available in sizes ranging from 6" to 60". A great choice with a lot of sonic range is the 28" size. These gongs have a great "shimmer" when played near the edge, but can produce nice bass tones when played in the centre.

Sabian Zodiac Gongs: Sabian's Zodiac gongs are available in 24", 26", and 28" sizes. These gongs offer a fairly warm tone when played at soft to medium volumes.

Paiste Symphonic Gongs: A very popular "main gong" in a percussion set-up is the Paiste Symphonic Gong. These are available from 20" to 80". These gongs have become very popular with Yoga studios. I recommend the 32" size as a great first choice. The 32" size is quite portable and has a lot of sonic range.

Conclusion

I encourage you to investigate any of these instruments mentioned above. I also recommend combining these instruments. You don't need a big collection to get started – starting with a single singing bowl can be very powerful. You may be surprised where this leads you. These instruments will be your tools. By bringing your own healing intention, and by following your intuition, you may find a whole new world of sound possibilities opening up. It is certainly a world of serenity, stillness, and deep peace.

Rob Gretsinger has been a drum and percussion specialist at Long & McQuade for 22 years. He has an extensive collection of gongs and other percussion. He offers monthly sound meditation concerts and occasionally gives workshops throughout British Columbia. www.YouTube.com/robgretsinger









1





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