

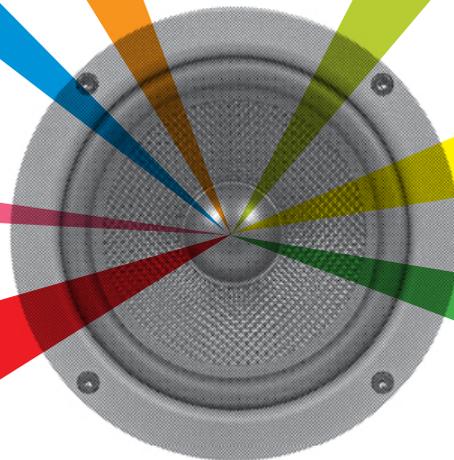
MADISON ROCKS!

AND GROOVES,

Swings AND **JAMS.**

TUNING IN TO THE CITY'S MUSIC SCENE

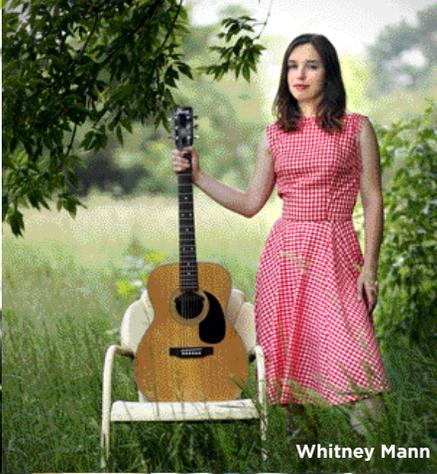
BY KATIE VAUGHN



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS UNLESS SPECIFIED; BUILDINGS ON BUILDINGS BY HEIDI JOHNSON; SEXY ESTER AND KYLE HENDERSON PHOTOS BY ROBERT WYDRA



Buildings on Buildings



Whitney Mann



Kyle Henderson



Madison County



Mascot Theory



Mama Digdown's Brass Band



Natty Nation



Alison Margaret



Lords of the Trident



Lucas Cates



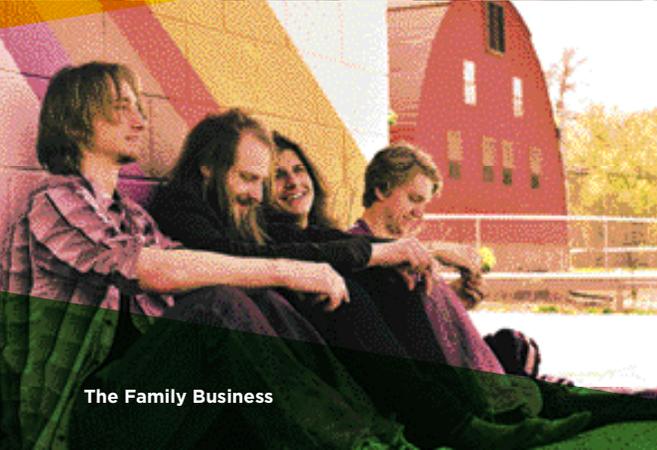
VO5



DJ Pain 1



Cowboy Winter



The Family Business



Sexy Ester



Aaron Williams and the Hoodoo

AS

soon as Tony Castañeda's palms hit the congas, as soon as his bandmates join in with trumpet, bass and keyboard, the energy inside the Cardinal shifts. Friends stop chatting about the workweek, grab their drinks and hurry to seats inside the wood-walled downtown bar. Toes begin tapping and heads start bobbing as full, rhythmic sound expands across the packed room. Soon, a silver-haired woman can hold back no longer; she swivels her hips, her arms slowly rising above her head to meet the beat. The music is infectious, the crowd eager and it feels so good to be part of it. ¶ This is only 5:30 on a Friday evening in one corner of Madison. At the same moment over on the Capitol Square, the Currach is cranking out Irish music at Brocach, and in an hour, blues, jazz and Cajun tunes will heat up Louisianne's, Liliana's and the Bayou.

If I wanted to spend the whole night listening to live music, I could continue on to hear the Madison Classical Guitar Society showcase at Lakeside Street Coffee House or pianist Richard Shaten at the Fountain, country musician Frank James at the VFW on Cottage Grove Road or the Mad City Jug Band at the Wil-Mar Center. I could catch bluegrass at the Brink Lounge, Americana at the Up North Pub, progressive rock at Mr. Robert's or Brazilian beats at the Alchemy Café. Soul at the Knuckle Down Saloon, jazz at Tempest or electro-pop at the Frequency. Or maybe I'd rather jam out at the People Fest Pre-Party at the High Noon Saloon, or catch a DJ spinning at Segredo, Mickey's, the Tip Top Tavern or Merchant. These are just a few of the live music options tonight.

And that's the thing about music in Madison: Find yourself in the right place, with the right people and the right music, and magic happens.

SOUNDS GOOD

Let's get the comparisons out of the way. When we talk about Madison as a city for music, we're not saying we're a Nashville or an Austin, a Seattle or a New Orleans. We're not renowned as a hotbed for a particular genre, we don't expect live music along with every restaurant meal and we don't boast blocks upon blocks of clubs with music blasting into the street every night. And that's okay.

Because what we offer is an eclectic collection of homegrown musical talents whose respective sounds reverberate from concert venues and festivals all across the city—giving music lovers the chance to find what they love or discover something new.

We've got big venues that bring in big touring acts, and smaller clubs and bars that showcase local musicians. The Madison Area

Music Awards and Madison Hip-Hop Awards spotlight the best performers and create buzz about the local scene, while programs like Launchpad, an alternative band competition for high school students, ensure a pipeline for emerging talent. Festivals fill the summer, as does the ever-growing number of outdoor concerts.

We have places like the Madison Music Foundry, where bands can rehearse and record, and groups like the Madison Folk Music Society, Madison Blues Society and the Greater Madison Jazz Consortium that help build awareness and opportunities for their genres. We've helped nourish bands like PHOX, who's bursting onto the national stage, and support such long-running

acts as the Gomers and Harmonious Wail, who've both jammed around Madison for a good thirty years. Indie folk rock has a steady following, but a fan can also connect with passionate pockets of jazz, classical, punk and hip-hop. All these elements combine to create a scene packed with potential for audiences to make musical discoveries.

It's hard to find someone more tuned in to local music than Rick Tvedt, who founded the Madison Area Music Association in 2003 and covers many of the hundred-plus recordings

put out annually by the city's hundreds of bands on his Local Sounds website. And so it means something that he is pleased with what he's been seeing lately.

"Madison just continues to astound with the level and diversity of the talent, with several acts currently capable of breaking out. Things tend to swing in pendulum-like waves, and we are definitely on an uptick," he says. "The trick now is to develop in an industry sense so that artists don't feel they need to relocate to break into the next level."

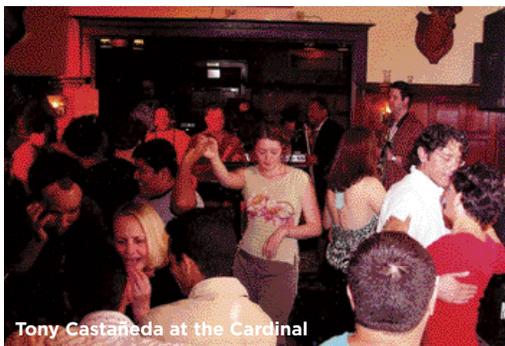


PHOTO: COURTESY OF TONY CASTAÑEDA

ECLECTIC OPPORTUNITIES

Whether you're a fan or a musician, Madison offers options, but you need to know where to find them.

"You have to sift through and make your way, but there's the chance to do that," says folk-indie-soul singer and violinist Ida Jo, who moved to Madison in 2005 to study violin performance at the University of Wisconsin and has stayed on to pursue her music. "For me, it's finding the right people and the right venues. My music isn't great at bars late at night. That's not really where I thrive."

Instead, she looks to more intimate settings, like Crescendo Espresso Bar + Music Café on Monroe Street or Art in the Barn out in rural Oregon, with occasional bigger shows at places like the High Noon Saloon.

"The opportunities are limitless if a musician is willing to invest the time and has a little talent," says Beth Kille, a rock, country and blues musician who started performing in 2000 and now helps teach others through Girls Rock Camp and Ladies Rock Camp. "It's not an easy game, though. You've got to be constantly creating opportunities for yourself if you want to make a living as a performing musician, but I think the Madison community can be very supportive if you've taken the time to engage them in meaningful ways. There are certainly a ton of great venues and plenty of festivals to play once you get your foot in the door."



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF IDA JO

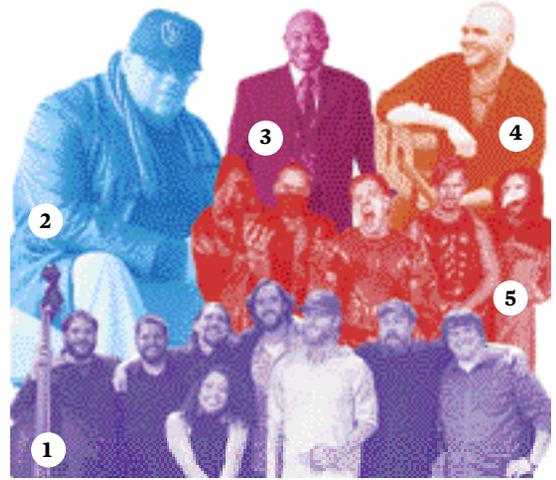
Jimmy Voegeli, head of the Jimmys, a popular blues band that's been playing locally and regionally for seven years, has found regular gigs, like at Tofflers Pub in New Glarus, and festivals to be a nice mix.

"We have the luxury of even though the blues genre is a small one, it's a mighty one," he says. Fans are loyal, and when they hear something they like, they look to buy entire albums and other merchandise. "They want it all, and I dig that," he adds.

An eclectic approach to offering music is also an economic reality for venues trying to make it in a tough business, says Steve Sperling, general manager of the Barrymore Theatre. The eighty-five-year-old theater—with a green dome, purple marquee and down-to-earth vibe that fits its Atwood Avenue location—brings in nationally touring musicians and comedians, plus hosts some local events.

"You have to be all things to all people in order to survive," he says. "Each night is a completely different audience. If you limit what you do, you limit who's coming to see you."

Since re-opening King Street's century-old Majestic Theatre in 2007, co-owners Matt Gerding and Scott Leslie have picked from different genres when booking shows to appeal to as many fans as possible. These days, popular touring rock, punk and indie bands headline several nights a week, making the Majestic a staple among local concert-goers. "We're a reflection of what the music scene wants," Gerding says. **(Cont. on p.46)**



LOCAL MUSIC SUPERSTARS

How do you know a show will be good? Well, if one of these musicians is headlining, it's practically a guarantee. The eight-piece rhythm and soul **People Brothers Band** is known for getting crowds grooving. Also high on the fun factor are **VO5**, a funk-disco-dance outfit that's a highlight at Dane Dances each August, **Super Tuesday**, a party band that's been rocking since the late '90s, and the rock-, funk- and blues-mixing **Blue Olives**. **Madison County** specializes in country, while **DJ Nick Nice** spins tunes late night at the Majestic and midday at the Great Dane for Kid Disco. For reggae, turn to **Natty Nation** and **Roots Collective**; for salsa, you can't beat **MadiSalsa**, and don't miss **The Cajun Strangers** for Cajun and zydeco. **Rob Dz** inspires the local hip-hop scene and **Anthony Lamarr** infuses faith into his R&B, while **Leatha Stanley** leads the Mt. Zion Gospel Choir and a Martin Luther King Jr. community choir each January. **The Family Business** is solidly rock 'n' roll, while **Lords of the Trident** is pure metal. Guitar drives the rock and blues music of **Kyle Henderson**, **Beth Kille**, the **John Masino Band** and **Aaron Williams and the Hoodoo**, and standouts in the acoustic singer-songwriter arena include **Ida Jo**, **Mark Croft** and **Lucas Cates**. Singer and pianist **Michael Massey** does rock, pop, country and instrumental—and wrote the rock score for Madison Ballet's *Dracula*—while Emmy Award-winning multi-instrumentalist **Scott Lamps** is a prolific composer. And the city boasts not one, but two major electrifying brass bands—**Mama Digdown's Brass Band** and **Youngblood Brass Band**. – KV

1) People Brothers Band 2) Rob Dz 3) Leatha Stanley 4) Mark Croft 5) Lords of the Trident

MADISON MUSICIANS YOU NEED TO HEAR NOW



Sexy Ester

RIDE THE WAVE

SEXY ESTER

While the 1980s led to some majorly questionable fashion choices, the decade also inspired this alternative new-wave rock band. Fronted by the always-fierce Lyndsay Evans, the five-member Sexy Ester is constantly evolving. Its self-titled album, released in April, offers up a grittier, more garage-pop sound accented with some throwbacks to an even earlier era—the '50s.

OPPOSING FORCES

COWBOY WINTER

Take a heap of smooth R&B, put it through a garage-rock grinder to roughen up the edges and what you get is this four-man band. Lead vocalist Kevin Willmott II is known to throw screams into Cowboy Winter's rhythms during live shows, and the effect is raw and earnestly authentic.

ELECTRIC CHARGE

ANNABEL LEE

Since she went solo in 2013, there's no stopping this indie-electronic star. Annabel Lee stole the show at last year's Madison Area Music Awards with her live performance—oh, and she also left with five big wins. While her music aims to get a crowd dancing, her lyrics also offer up important messages of acceptance and empowerment.



Annabel Lee

CREATIVE CREW

DOLORES

"Funky indie psych rock pop fusion" is the long way to describe this four-member band named after a children's book. You could also call Dolores mellow, cool or, when they blast into outer space like in "Why Do You Think Astronauts Like to Fly in the Sky," even a little playful, experimental and jam-y.



Dolores

OLD MEETS NEW

ALISON MARGARET JAZZ QUINTET

Alison Margaret is a true student of jazz. Not only does she hold a master's degree in music from UW-Madison, she's also been schooled in Chicago's legendary jazz scene. Here in Madison, the singer, composer and pianist brings her crystal-clear voice and elegant sound to jazz venues and festivals, and her quintet is known for offering creative arrangements of classics and reviving lesser-known tunes from the jazz repertoire.



DJ Pain 1

HEAVY HITTING

DJ PAIN 1

Think Madison's removed from the national hip-hop scene? Well, this DJ, producer and educator missed that memo. In addition to making his own music—his most recent album is *The Waiting Game*—DJ Pain 1 has produced for Young Jeezy, Gucci Mane, Chuck D and Trey Songz and recently created a beat for Ludacris' song "Money."

GOING DARK

MASCOT THEORY

Those who prefer "the bright side of the dark side" should dig this alt-folk, alt-country rock quartet. You might catch a tinge of Ryan Adams or Mumford and Sons in Mascot Theory's sound, or perhaps you'll detect a more vintage influence. The New Music Review rated their most recent album, *Hand Me Down Miracles*, a 9.5 out of 10, noting it's "as good as any folk rock album from 1967."

FARM FRESH

WHITNEY MANN

This farm girl from Michigan plays "country ballads and barn tales," but don't mistake Whitney Mann's modesty for weakness. There's power in the purity of her achingly beautiful voice. Need proof? Check out her delightful version of the church classic "This Little Light of Mine."



MOOD MUSIC

OH MY LOVE

Steady beats and haunting, atmospheric sounds set a beautifully layered stage for sweetly soothing voice of Hannah Luree, part of this indie-electronic trio that also includes Christian Lisser and David Dickson. *Oh My Love* released their second album, *Free_Ways*, back in January, and it's filled with songs that feel simultaneously familiar and other-worldly.

MIX MASTERS

FRINGE CHARACTER

If you're not familiar with "nuelectrosoulhop," no worries. All you really need to know is the ten-member Fringe Character uses guitars, horns, keyboard, percussion and voice to meld elements of funk, dub, hip-hop and electronica—likely in ways you wouldn't expect. Take "Rain Mission," for instance; the sounds of falling rain, a mysterious melody, thunder and a trumpet tune segue into a driving rap.



CRANK IT UP

DAMSEL TRASH

What started out as a side gig for two members of the alt-country group Little Red Wolf has morphed into a fast, frenetic, feminist and funny trash punk rock band. Listen to Damsel Trash's songs loud, for sure, but pay attention to the words—songs include "Feelings R Boring," "More Drunk, Less Pregnant" and the twenty-seven-second "Pugs!"



ALL-INCLUSIVE

BRANDON BEEBE

With influences ranging from Cat Stevens to Beck to Marvin Gaye, this multifaceted singer-songwriter melds seamlessly from folk to soul to funk and beyond. A Best of Madison darling, Brandon Beebe also incorporates elements of his Native American heritage into his music, such as in the drum-driven "She's the Moon."

—KV

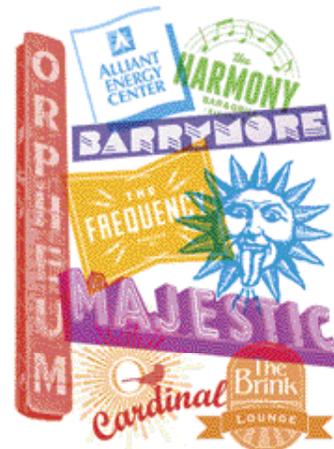


SOUND CHECK

Who else should you tune in to? For a fixin' of home-style folk, bluegrass and rock, go with **Whiskey Farm**. Or turn to indie singer-songwriter **Corey Matthew Hart** or Amanda and Allen Rigell, better known as **Count this Penny**, for a soulful country-folk blend. Slow and somber, **Faux Fawn** spins stories into chamber folk, while the flexible **Crane Your Swan Neck** offers a unique take on folk, surf and rock. **Modern Mod** plays edgy yet peppy basement pop, the **Sharrows** specialize in "farm rock," **Buildings on Buildings** goes moody and indie, **Jeremiah Nelson's** sound is mellow and eclectic and **Anna Vogelzang** creates "songs about feelings." And **Good Morning V** does straight-up rock. Are we witnessing a punk renaissance? Consider the gritty surf sound of **Venus in Furs** or the garage-trash style of **the Hussy**, or try **Screamin' Cyn Cyn and the Pons**, the **Skizzwhores** or **Masked Intruder**. The **Darren Sterud Orchestra** is reviving big band, while **Golden Donna** prompts dancing with electronic tracks. The **Material Boys** set—get this—Madonna hits to bluegrass. And the eight-piece **the Mustache** promises performances of "nasty funk."

—KV

JAM ON! We're happy to report that there's no way we could fit all the city's incredible, inspiring musicians in this list—there's just too much talent here! Check out the tablet edition of *Madison Magazine* and madisonmagazine.com for additional content, including audio clips, videos and more.



SIZING UP: LOCAL MUSIC VENUE CAPACITIES

The Frequency: **126**

Cardinal Bar: **160**

Wisconsin Union Theater's Fredric March Play Circle: **186**

Harmony Bar: **195**

Brink Lounge nightclub: **200**

Brink Lounge main lounge: **300**

High Noon Saloon: **400**

Majestic Theatre: **600**

Barrymore: **1,000**

Capitol Theater at Overture Center: **1,200**

Wisconsin Union Theater's Shannon Hall: **1,165**

Orpheum Theatre: **2,000**

Overture Hall at Overture Center: **2,251**

Alliant Energy Center Exhibition Hall: **5,000**

Alliant Energy Center Coliseum: **10,230**

Cont. from p.43

The eighty-eight-year-old Orpheum Theatre on State Street has also worked to diversify its offerings, showcasing major rock bands and comedians a few times a month. General manager Perry Blanchard believes there are more opportunities today to see big bands from elsewhere play in Madison, but fewer chances to catch local musicians.

“We’re lucky enough to live in a city that supports all music,” he says. “For bars and small clubs, it’s expensive and risky to bring in local acts that may not have a draw. God bless the ones that do, but it’s a risk for them.”

Darwin Sampson, who’s been in bands “forever,” opened the Frequency just off the Capitol Square in 2008 with the intention of offering Madison musicians opportunities to play—and the small club has since earned a reputation as being a solid spot both to perform and hear music. “Initially, I just wanted a place with quality sound where locals could play,” he says, adding that now he books both local and touring acts.

When Brad Czachor started working at the Harmony Bar & Grill in 1999, the place was known for blues. Since buying the Atwood Avenue watering hole in 2013, he’s expanded the approach to music, adding in rock, reggae, bluegrass and more and doubling the number of nights he books bands, most of them local.

“I want to have the band in here that years from now people go, ‘They played the Harmony,’” he says.

Cathy Dethmers specializes in those kind of chance discoveries. At the High Noon Saloon, the revered East Washington Avenue venue she opened in 2004, she hosts everything from punk to pop, folk to metal—much of it by local musicians—almost daily.

Even though the Internet’s changed things—concert-goers often check out bands online beforehand instead of taking the chance on seeing a new one in person—Dethmers still makes booking decisions hoping for “those magical moments” when an unknown band floors the audience with its talent. “I love having my hand in that,” she says.

BIG VENUES, BIG IMPACT

Can you imagine quirky-cool Atwood Avenue without the Barmore or hip King Street without the Majestic? State Street certainly wouldn’t be the same without the historic Orpheum or the newer Overture Center, which features some national music acts, plus local bands in its MadCity Sessions series.

“Venues are engines for driving economic development of neighborhoods,” says Sperling, who add that they anchor smaller venues and businesses, particularly restaurants, bars and retailers.

East Washington Avenue is poised to become another such hub, but the details have yet to be solidified. Last June, Madison’s Frank Productions, a nationally ranked concert promoter, proposed a two-thousand-seat entertainment venue on the 1000 block of the street that’s been the focus of redevelopment the past few years, but plans were scrapped after city planners and neighbors spoke out in opposition.

Charlie Goldstone, president of Frank Productions Concerts, says his company is exploring different blocks of East Washington and other areas of the city for a new site. “We are still interested in developing a music venue in Madison, although not at the previously proposed location,” he says.

Elizabeth Brink, co-owner of the Brink Lounge, the nine-year-old club known for consistent rock and jazz concerts that sits with the High Noon and the Brass Ring on East Wash, says this trio has long been drawing music fans. “The whole building **(Cont. on p.67)**



PHOTO: NOAH WILLMAN

MADISON'S MUSICMOGUL

ROY ELKINS IS COOL. While he’s not one to bring it up, he’s worked with the Allman Brothers, the Beach Boys, Joe Walsh, Boyz II Men, DJ Jazzy Jeff and other legends and heavyweights in the music industry. He’s even played with a few of them.

“I’ve had the opportunity to jam with some of the best,” he says.

But when you press him for details, when you ask him to drop names of who else he knows, who he’s still friendly with, he humbly and kindly changes the subject.

Because that’s not what he wants to talk about. He’d rather discuss how his company helps independent artists. He’d like to tell you that Madison is a great place to work in music. He wants you to know that the future of music starts with getting instruments in kids’ hands and teaching them to toil at their craft.

A Michigan native, Elkins started out as a musician. After moving to Memphis and fulfilling a dream of playing Beale Street, he eventually turned to the business side. He sold keyboards, then moved into technology, working in training, media production and artist relations for a global corporation.

A job at music software developer Sonic Foundry brought Elkins to Madison in 1997, and about three years later he started his own business, Broadjam. “I wanted to cater to songwriters,” he says.

Foreseeing the time when the music industry would favor singles over records, Elkins created a company that maintains a searchable database of more than 500,000 songs. Broadjam



MUSIC FOR HIRE:
Roy Elkins at
Broadjam's offices on
the near-east side.



What is Broadjam?

Broadjam is an online community and resource for musicians and fans. With more than 150,000 members in 190 countries and a searchable database of more than 500,000 songs, the company helps musicians promote their tracks and helps with music licensing to get songs in films, TV shows and advertisements. It also offers members feedback from industry professionals, songwriting contests and connections to other artists.

also helps members get their music licensed for placement in film or television, plus connects them to a social network and opportunities for reviews. The company has four full-time employees, a few part-timers and more than 150,000 members in 190 countries. It's fared better than Napster, MySpace and other web start-ups of the same era.

"The reason we were able to survive is we're in Madison," Elkins says, citing lower costs, access to talent and a community conducive to the work Broadjam does. "Generally small towns don't have killer computer programs, killer music programs and creative environments where people want to stay."

Elkins listens to thirty or forty songs every day for work, and he's especially excited about the talent he sees in Madison. "We truly have some of the best musicians in the world sitting right here in our town," he says.

Serving as chair of the Madison Area Music Awards and being a sponsor for the Madison Hip-Hop Awards has increased his passion for local musicians, particularly the younger set.

Technology makes it easy for musicians to create music that sounds good, but it doesn't force them to develop their skills, Elkins says. "We're trained to want things instantly and quickly. That's not how art is perfected."

So he encourages budding musicians to practice daily—as he does—and apply some old-school techniques, like writing a song with just a pencil and piece of paper.

While he wouldn't pass up the chance to be a full-time musician, Elkins is grateful for his place in the music world, where technology and talent meet.

"I tell people I have the second-best job in the world," he says.

—KV

PHOTO: PAULIUS MUSTEIKIS



Ear Wax

ON THE RECORD

Madison's vinyl stores thrive in the digital age

Vinyl has crept back into the hearts of music fans—and picked up some new enthusiasts along the way. Over the past decade, Madison's independent record stores that survived the introduction of mp3 players and digital downloads have experienced a gradual upturn in their vinyl sales.

The popularity of vinyl has always ebbed and flowed; however, Rob Cleveland, owner of Ear Wax Record Shop, credits much of the recent uptick in sales to the young people coming into his shop looking to purchase LPs.

"I think a lot of the people that are buying vinyl never had it as a kid," he says. "It's a lot of younger people who really just grew up on CDs. [Vinyl] is something new [and] cool."

Ron Roloff, owner of Strictly Discs, and Steve Manley, owner of B-Side Records, both say their customer bases include just about everyone, from teenagers to longtime collectors and "record heads."

Every customer gravitates toward the format for different reasons, Roloff says. Some choose vinyl because they feel the sound quality of digital downloads pales in comparison, others because there's something rewarding about having the music in its physical form.

"There's nothing quite like the moment when the needle hits the groove, and you can sit back and really give a record your full attention," says Manley.

Madcity Music Exchange owner Dave Zero says his customers are now more likely to buy physical copies of new music on vinyl, and many want to replace albums they have on CDs. "This is exactly the opposite of what was happening twenty years ago, with people trading out their vinyl for CDs," he says.

Most of Madison's stores, like Sugar Shack Records and Resale Records, have weathered the unpredictable music market for more than twenty years. The city has retained more independent record stores than many cities more than double its size.

Zero says it's the nature of Madison's music fans that have kept his store and others around for so long. "Madison folks are usually a bit more conscious about shopping local and shopping local first," he says.

—Allie Johnson

MORE: Check out a video on the local vinyl scene in the tablet edition of the magazine.



Former home of Smart Studios

GET SMART

On the northwest corner of East Washington Avenue and Baldwin Street stands a two-story brick building. People mill around the corner waiting for the bus or getting coffee at a café nearby, and the two-tone bricks keep an incognito cover over the old home of one of the greatest rock production studios in history.

In the early 1980s, Butch Vig and Steve Marker launched the future of garage band music with Smart Studios. Over the course of nearly three decades, they recorded and produced some of the most influential music of the genre, including Smashing Pumpkins' debut album *Gish*, Killdozer's *Twelve Point Buck*, "Polly" by Nirvana from *Nevermind* and nearly every album from Vig and Marker's own group, Garbage.

When the studio shut its doors in 2010, Madison filmmaker Wendy Schneider announced a documentary about the space, *The Smart Studios Story*. Schneider connected with Vig and Marker in the 1990s as an engineer at the studio. In 2014, she launched a Kickstarter campaign to fund the project.

As of this spring, Schneider was collecting archives and submissions for the film. The projected distribution is scheduled for October.

"The film's production is in line with the ethos of Smart-DIY," Schneider told *Madison Magazine* in 2014. "It's a people's history and with Kickstarter, it's a people's film."

— Lanni Solochek

A Sound Year

Mark your calendar with these annual music events



Brat Fest

JANUARY

- Funky Dance Madison at Monona Terrace (January and February)
- Isthmus Wisconsin Punk Fest, Isthmus Wisconsin Funk Fest, Isthmus Wisconsin Bluegrass Fest, Isthmus Wisconsin Folk Fest at the Majestic
- Martin Luther King Jr. Community Choir

FEBRUARY

- International Festival at Overture Center

MARCH

- Charity Jamboree at the High Noon Saloon, Brass Ring and Brink Lounge
- Tunes at Monona Terrace (March and April)

APRIL

- Capital City Jazz Fest
- The Madison 4/20 Festival at the High Noon Saloon
- The Madison Area Music Association's Breakthrough Artist Competition
- UW Band Concert

MAY

- Brat Fest
- Festa Italia
- High Noon Saloon Summer Patio Series (May through September)
- Wurst Times Festival at the High Noon Saloon and Brass Ring

JUNE

- Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society



Flannel Fest

- Concerts on the Rooftop at Monona Terrace (June and July)
- Concerts on the Square (June and July)
- Fruit Fest
- Isthmus Jazz Festival
- Juneteenth Day Celebration
- Live on King Street (June through September)
- Make Music Madison
- Marquette Waterfront Festival
- Olbrich Summer Concert Series (June and July)

JULY

- Central Park Sessions (July through September)
- La Fête de Marquette
- Madison Area Music Awards
- Madison Early Music Festival
- Madison Music Foundry's Rock Workshop at the High Noon Saloon
- National Women's Music Festival
- Opera in the Park

AUGUST

- Africa Fest
- Dane Dances
- Jazz at Five
- Orton Park Festival
- People Fest
- Sugar Maple Traditional Music Festival
- Triangle Ethnic Fest
- Token Creek Chamber Music Festival

SEPTEMBER

- Madison World Music Festival at the Wisconsin Union Theater
- Mexican Independence Festival at Warner Park
- Midwest Gypsy Swing Fest
- Thai Fest at Olbrich
- Willy Street Fair

OCTOBER

- Freakfest

NOVEMBER

- Flannel Fest at the High Noon Saloon
- Hmong New Year Celebration at the Alliant Energy Center
- Madison Hip-Hop Awards

DECEMBER

- A Madison Symphony Christmas
- Olbrich Holiday Concert Series
- Wintersong: An Indie-Acoustic Local Holiday Harvest

HIPTO CHANGE

When Dexter Patterson was performing as a hip-hop artist, either solo as Tefman or with his group L.O.S.T. S.O.U.L.S, he found it hard to secure gigs around Madison.

“I started a band and I can book any venue,” he says, adding that two hip-hop vocalists, a metal guitarist, a bass player and a punk drummer add up to Dogs of War, a group that’s categorized as “alternative.”

“We do have a hip-hop problem,” Patterson says of the city.

Patterson, Pacal “DJ Pain 1” Bayley and Mark “Shah” Evans all have stories about lack of attention from clubs and radio—and overblown attention from police and media—just because they work in hip-hop. And “work” is the proper word. “We want to make music, make money, feed our families, give back to community,” Patterson says.

So they got to work trying to change the stigma. In 2010, Evans and Patterson helped organize the Madison Hip-Hop Awards, which led to the creation of the Urban Community Arts Network to encourage positive growth of the local hip-hop scene. The group has fostered discussions with police, city leaders and venue owners. They’ve also developed guidelines they’re hoping the city will approve that will guide venues in booking bands of all genres.

And the network’s reaching out to youth. This spring, members of its board made visits to Black Hawk Middle School to help students turn what they learned in a unit on climate change into raps. They’ll perform at a school assembly as well as a family-friendly event at Warner Park on June 7.

The network is also hosting a series of hip-hop events this summer on State Street and in city parks (find details at urbancommunityartsnetwork.org).

Patterson hopes these performances help Madisonians understand and appreciate the face of local hip-hop.

“We’re all people,” Patterson says. “We’re husbands, wives, children, business owners; we pay taxes. We’re regular people, not ‘hip-hop.’”

- KV



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ALL THAT JAZZ

Improvisation. The concept has produced some of the most memorable jazz music, and it's also a tactic that's helped maintain Madison's jazz scene.

While both the Madison Jazz Society and the Madison Music Collective have been promoting jazz for thirty years, their respective presidents, Linda Marty Schmitz and Chris Wagoner, say they have to make opportunities wherever and whenever they can.

"There are strong pockets of jazz around the city," Schmitz says. "There's more going on than people realize," Wagoner adds.

The Madison Jazz Society specializes in early jazz through the bebop era, and "the Madison Music Collective picks up where we leave off," Schmitz says. Both groups are part of the Greater Madison Jazz Consortium, formed in 2012 to bring together organizations, events and educators to raise the profile of jazz.

This spring, the group launched the inDIGenous series, highlighting original jazz music by local artists. The series picks back up this fall.

Can't wait that long to get a fix of jazz? The Cardinal Bar, Brink Lounge, the Fountain and Liliana's

Restaurant consistently offer live jazz; the Coliseum Bar, High Noon Saloon, Tempest Oyster Bar, the Bayou, Alchemy Café, Mason Lounge and Tip Top Tavern do sometimes. And events like this month's Isthmus Jazz Festival and the Capital City Jazz Fest, Jazz at Five and the Midwest Gypsy Swing Fest have helped solidify jazz's place in the city's diverse music landscape.

"It's maybe not dominating, but certainly part of the tapestry," Wagoner says. - KV



CLASS ACTS

Overture Center is probably the first place that springs to mind when the topic of classical music in Madison comes up, and certainly the **Madison Symphony Orchestra**, **Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra** and **Madison Opera** are all resident companies that give performances befitting the crown jewel of local venues. But one can encounter great music all over—and beyond—the city.

One of the newest ensembles is also one of the most adventurous: **Sound Ensemble Wisconsin** is as likely to perform in a gourmet restaurant as in a science building. Another chamber group, **con vivo! ... music with life**, is usually found at the First Congregational Church in the shadow of

Camp Randall stadium. Led by the incomparable performances and historic legacy of the **Pro Arte Quartet**, groups representing the **UW School of Music** perform at various venues in addition to Mills Hall (and most of their events are free). The **Oakwood Chamber Players** are another beloved ensemble with a long tradition of stimulating programming.

Each year, the **Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society** finds fresh ways to welcome summer as they bounce from downtown to Stoughton to Spring Green in consistently scintillating programs, while the **Madison Early Music Festival** now garners national attention as they perform in a variety of locales in July.

Something for everyone? You betcha.

- Greg Hettmansberger

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is an entertainment center,” she says.

While some club owners aren't sure the city needs another major venue, Brink sees more development as a means of enhancing the music profile of the corridor and the city as a whole. “There's great potential to be a great music district,” she says.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

Another way music in Madison is growing is in summer concerts and festivals. From classical events like the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra's Concerts on the Square to Madison Opera's Opera in the Park—now in their thirtieth and fourteenth years, respectively—to popular neighborhood festivals, such as La Fête de Marquette and Atwoodfest, and the Wisconsin Union Theater's Madison World Music Festival, Madisonians love to mix live music with food, art, fresh air and community.

But newcomers are finding eager audiences, too. Inspired by an event that started in Paris that has since spread to more than seven hundred cities, Make Music Madison is now in its third year. Held annually on the summer solstice—this year it's June 21—it turns the entire city into a concert venue. More than four hundred musicians perform in unconventional spaces—in parks and storefronts, on sidewalks and street corners.

“This is as good as it gets for community building,” says managing director Katherine Davey. “It really is all about creating events where everyone can participate.”

Also focused on community is Central Park Sessions. Created last year to celebrate the new near-east-side park, it has grown into a series running July through September and highlighting three to six performers in each themed session. “It was so embraced last year,” says organizer Bob Queen, who also coordinates the Marquette Waterfront Festival and La Fête de Marquette.

And in just four years, Live on King Street, the free music series held on six nights from June to September in front of the Majestic Theatre, has become a summer must.

Seeing such enthusiastic reaction to the first concert inspired Gerding and Leslie to continue the series. “We said this has to be a tradition, part of the fabric of what makes Madison special in the summer.”

And it's another way to continue making the city a place where musical magic can occur—for artists and fans alike.

“The more live music that's happening in Madison, the better,” Gerding says.

KATIE VAUGHN is managing editor of Madison Magazine.

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