

A Life in Music

How it all started

- started piano at 4 (Sesame Street story)
- fell in love with classical music (Juanita Ryan); RCM method; got to level ARCT; aspiring classical pianist, listened to cassette tapes of Chopin, Rachmaninoff, etc while going to sleep at night and pictured myself sharing this music with audiences (positive visualization from a young age)

A turning point

- car accident at age 15
- went to Handsworth (Mr. Reb, Renee Rosnes, Darcy James Argue and Sharon Minemoto, Brad Turner, Ingrid Jensen)
- talk about Darcy lessons; didn't connect with Coltrane, but fell in love with Keith Jarrett (***play All The Things You Are & My Funny Valentine intros**; point of connection for me, nexus of classical & jazz)
- was going to pursue occupational therapy and psychology; got scholarship for sciences at UBC; was planning to follow in footsteps of doctor sister
- ended up being offered a scholarship to Humber for jazz (mention Brandi) as singer

Off to college & really discovering jazz

- depressed, jazz felt foreign (was singing not playing), arm was still an issue (*talk a little bit about psychosomatic component and various modalities of treatment; importance of getting up and stretching the body during longer practice and writing sessions)
- THE GIFT OF MY INJURY (“silver lining”) = DISCOVERY OF VOICE AND COMPOSITION AS A MEANS OF EXPRESSION**
- composition in particular became an outlet because I wasn't limited by my arm and fear of improvisation; I could actualize the ideas I was hearing in my head because there wasn't the pressure of instant delivery in real time

Witnessing how jazz could be fresh and modern

- heard Geoff Keezer at Montreal Jazz Bistro (**play Venus as a Boy**)
- heard Kenny Wheeler at Humber (**Play Kind Folk** – both versions); talk about Don Thompson (played with Kenny, became my mentor) - the way he taught, being in his nonet, wanted to write large ensemble songs and put together an octet, but not practical

Opportunity & Overcoming Fear

•Sisters in Jazz (talk about experiences, good and bad; touring, personal dynamics, tough setups) **TAUGHT ME TO BRING MY A-GAME, NO EXCUSES. NO HIDING BEHIND FEAR.**

- had to also reclaim the joy of making music and exploration by jamming with supportive, non-judgmental musicians in a safe environment

OVERCOMING FEAR:

- picking up new instruments so as to reclaim that childlike experience of discovery, joy and freedom; no pressure
- working with people I love, who come prepared but are concerned with the collective experience of music making (not insular or self-focussed)
- embracing my unique voice as an artist, including the things that I perceive as strengths and weaknesses; the human voice is like a sonic fingerprint (utterly unique to each individual because we are all built differently)
- focus on the exchange that we get to be a part of as musicians, with one another and with our listeners; music is a universal form of communication and transcends language and cultural differences

The business of music

- talk about starting to apply for grants (so lucky in Canada!!!), approaching bookers, the business side, corporate bookings

Embracing my own voice & arranging as a distinctive tool

- Chris Botti/Billy Childs/singing
- CBC: From Sea to Sky - transition; started singing; Canadian songbook
- play Ice Cream (Sarah's version)**, then play my version; talk about points of connection
- play Autumn Leaves (Spotify: Cannonball Adderly)**
- talk about Marc Jordan (collaboration)/**Still The One**

The Pop/Songwriter years:

- The importance of connecting with an audience; engaging listeners; being generous in spirit
- **PAULA:** taught me about giving 150% no matter what the audience size; resuscitating a career in music; courage; authenticity
- **SUZANNE:** storytelling (folk tradition); relaxed delivery (less visceral, but equally powerful; the music and storyline take centre stage); consistency (costume, pre-show protocol; 3:30 pm soundcheck every single show)
- **STING:** work ethic; creative exploration; trusting one's musicians (didn't correct me when I made a mistake)

Here and Now

- pregnancy/marriage/touring
- management/agencies challenges
- current day - new non-jazz project/songwriting/collaborating
- longevity; self-care; relationships
- REQUESTOMATIC**

QUESTIONS???