

LOOKING FOR HELP?

Nothing will replace your own hard work. But there are lots of people out there to offer advice:

- Irwin Oostindie, *Under the Volcano* info line: (604) 252-5184. Weekly Sunday meetings.
- Jim Rota, World Records (Internet record label, search engine, marketing tool, online booking agent, industry database, etc.: www.worldrecords.com. Fantastic resource.
- David Jewer and Don Bregg, Pacific North Studios Ltd: (604) 990-9146
- Crosstown Studio: (604) 985-4268
- Baker Street Studio: (604) 987-7383
- Hoke Nissen, Studio 55: (604) 916-7744
- Bob D'Eith, Spark Music Inc: (604) 980-9855
- Umeeda Switlo, e.space management: (604) 904-5657

There are also countless lists available through the Pacific Music Industry Association, the Canadian Music Industry Association, SOCAN, and FACTOR that together will list almost every manager, entertainment lawyer, professional songwriter, promoter, and other musical resource in the country.

presentation of material: Don't forget about your graphics! "Many musicians," he says, "are excited about recording, then they don't put enough time into graphic design, when that's one of the most important areas." Take the time and make your project look like it deserves the attention you're asking for.

Umeeda Switlo, owner of CBO ticketing agency and e.space management, and a member of the North Shore Arts Commission, is a typical example of who will be on the receiving end of your tapes and CDs. She receives hundreds of submissions each month, from industry and unknown talent alike, asking for thoughts, comments, and representation. She is happy to offer her ears, but gives any song only ten seconds to take effect. "The song must have immediate impact," she says.

"Emotional, physical... something." Otherwise, it's heading straight to the trash. Keep that in mind when choosing the songs you'll be sending out.

We should also remember that a healthy local music scene is not just

about individual quests for stardom. It is a vehicle whereby youth can find a collective voice and the community can increase its economic and social power. Irwin Oostindie organizes the Under the Volcano Festival, the Kootenay Moving Pictures Festival, and the Mayworks Festival of Art and Working Life. "Kids need to hear themselves," Irwin says, "and hear other good bands—live—in order to reinforce and develop skills." But are there enough venues to provide local talent with that kind of reinforcement? According to Don Bregg, there are not. "I can count the number of live venues in North Vancouver on one hand," he says. "[And] that's just not enough."

It's a bit of a problem for which Umeeda Switlo sees a solution. "It's a zoning issue," she points out. "There should be more venues licensed for live music. That way, artists can improve and showcase their talent and some of the millions of dollars North Shore residents spend on live entertainment each year can stay in the area."

In the interest of brevity, I've drastically simplified my discussion of the subject for this article. On your own trip, you'll also have to deal with shifty eyes and uncertain motives, with insecurity, embarrassment, brick walls that seem to never end, and all those other fine things that go along with forging your own path in the world. Hell, sometimes the music business makes Dorothy's adventures in Oz seem like a quiet evening in an isolation tank. But the more you practise your craft and love what you do, the fewer chances you'll have of being traumatized on the way.

Finally, remember that you're dealing with people, and they form strong impressions that will impact on your career. Whether or not those impressions are positive is ultimately up to you and how well you do what you do.

Ronan Reinart is a singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist (specializing in guitar), and a member of the band Spike.