

# With a song in his heart

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA DANIELLI

Every now and then, you come across someone whose whole personality seems to come out in a full frontal assault on your senses within the first few minutes of meeting. Thankfully, Jordan Grenke is exactly that sort of man. Warm and funny, ebullient and charming, it's no surprise that this musician is quickly gathering a loyal following in Milton.

"I still to this day can play Rod Stewart's 'Do You Think I'm Sexy?' on my recorder from Grade Two," jokes the 22 year old who regularly played to a packed house every Thursday night at Bryden's Restaurant throughout the summer. "That may actually be my greatest accomplishment."

His recorder skills notwithstanding, Jordan is best known as a talented and versatile musician. He single handedly brought the wildly successful "Jam Nights" to Bryden's, offering fellow musicians a chance to jump on stage and perform with him. He may have started with only an audience of a handful of people for those first few shows last spring, but he was playing to capacity crowds as the summer came to a close. "Jam Nights started for me when I would spend summers in Grand Bend," Jordan explains. "They are the epitome of a good time. It is the atmosphere, the music, and the perfection of the musicians. I love Bryden's and I felt that this would be a great place to capture that."

Although more than adept on the drums, bass guitar, electric guitar, piano, flute and harmonica, it is the acoustic guitar he reveres. "I can play electric guitar, but I chose not to," he shrugs. It was the chance finding of an old acoustic Yamaha guitar in a pawnshop in his early teens that turned him onto a new path musically. "It had no strings, no turning keys and a sticker that said 'The Dead Flowers Band' on it," he reminisces with a smile. "It was the first guitar that I ever bought." He laughingly admits though, that the guitar purchase, like so much else in his life, had to do with a girl. "Her name was Sarah Paul and she put a \$20 deposit on the guitar for me," he laughs. "If it wasn't for her, I might have just stuck with the bass."

He repaid that favour from Sarah by writing his first original song about her, and the songs have been pouring out of him ever since. "I write nonsense a lot of the time," he chuckles. "Then I'll sit and realize that there are parts of that song

that are incredible. Still, if it doesn't sound good, just me and the acoustic, I get frustrated."

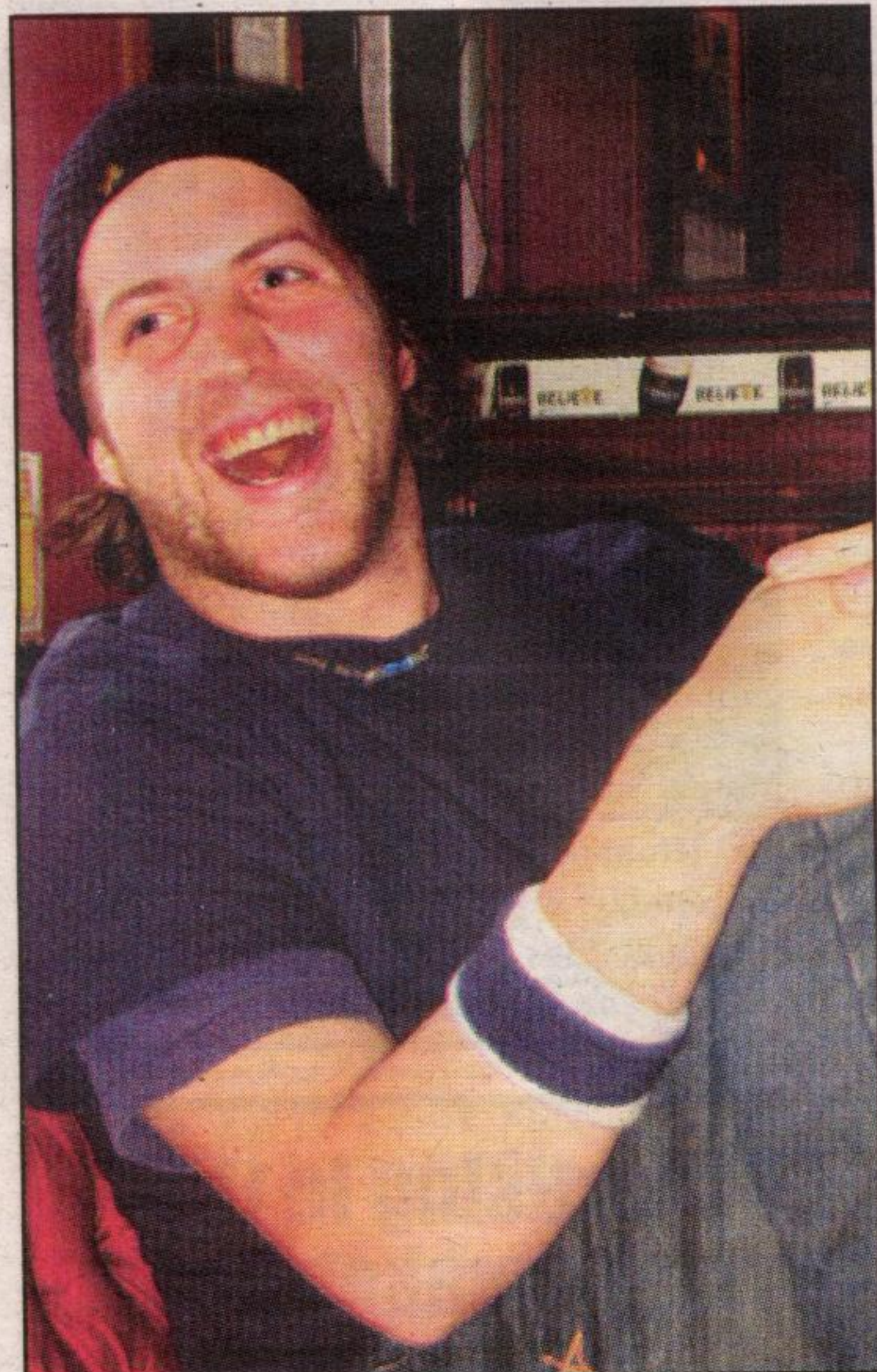
One of the most astonishing things about Jordan is his ability to play almost every request thrown at him from his audience at Bryden's. A typical set can seamlessly segue from Pink Floyd and Nine Inch Nails to a good-natured rendition of a Britney Spears hit. "You can't escape pop music, it's everywhere," he sighs. "You have to take it with a grain of salt, or a spoonful of sugar, whatever the case may be." Still, the mental encyclopaedia of music he seems to be able to draw on is astounding in its depth. "I don't ever forget a great song," he states with a quiet emphasis. "Those truly unforgettable songs... not only are you not going to forget them, your audience will never forget them either."

"Jam Nights" may have drawn to a close with summer's end, but Jordan isn't wasting time cooling his heels. He's hard at work, on the road and in studio with Carl Brady in "The One and Only". Brady is perhaps best known for his work as part of 3MDM (3 Men and a Drum Machine), work that Jordan doesn't hesitate to call groundbreaking. "They definitely started the pub band revolution," he insists, adding that it is pub bands like 3MDM that are directly responsible for the success of the best selling "Frosh" series of albums amongst university students. The work with Brady is some of the best Jordan has ever been a part of and he couldn't be happier. "It's the fact that I needed experience and directional guidance," he points out. "Carl needed a rejuvenation, someone who was young and hungry." Still, Jordan can't pass up the opportunity for a lighthearted jab at the musical partner who is almost two decades older than he is. "He's showing me things I need to know and I'm showing him what it's like to be twenty again."

"The One and Only Experience" will be bringing their popular performances to Bryden's for two shows in October, on the 14th for Bryden's third year anniversary party, and again on the 29th for a Halloween bash. "We have everything ranging from Bob Seger to Bedouin Sound Clash," enthuses Jordan. "Your pub favourites and hopefully some new favourites."

As well, the duo are hard at work in the studio, recording what Jordan refers to as "recomposed versions of our favourite non-radio songs, along with original music from Brady and Jordan."

Lyricist, music maker, guitarist, and let's not forget those recorder skills - Jordan Grenke is eclectic and surprisingly humble. "I don't consider myself a talented person at all," he insists. "I just do what I do, how I do it. With what I have to offer, I know for a fact that I do it to the best of my ability. I think I do it well." He pauses for a moment before flashing a grin that threatens to split his face it's so wide. "This is the greatest time of my life right now. I wear my heart on my sleeve and how I feel is written all over my face. I can't even begin to tell it in words in the human vocabulary." He laughs as he recalls seeing a brochure in the library recently for the "Music Makers" program, something he took part in when he was five years old. "The same lady is still teaching it," says an astonished Jordan. "I feel like calling her and saying 'you don't know what you started Miss, what you did for me.' The odds are though, it will only be a matter of time before she, and everyone



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**Wednesday, Oct 12, 7:30 pm - 10 pm**  
**Just Milton Folks: TERRY TUFTS IN CONCERT**  
 Terry Tufts, a Canadian folk musician, with 30 years experience, and 3 CD's, has backed up just about every famous Canadian vocalist either on the road or in the studio. After the concert he heads to Quebec and from there to the northeastern U.S. for his third annual 2-month "The Way We Feel" Gordon Lightfoot tribute tour. Tickets \$20 Hugh Foster Hall 905-876-2645 [www.justmiltonfolks.ca](http://www.justmiltonfolks.ca)

**Friday, October 14, 8:00 pm**  
**Fr. Mark Curtis: CHRISTMAS CD LAUNCH CONCERT**  
 You are invited to join this internationally recognized artist as he sings songs from his latest CD. St. Paul's United Church, 123 Main St. Milton. Tickets \$15/\$12/\$8, Jack White: 905-878-6807, Church: 905-878-8895, Information: 905-876-3379.

**Wednesday, Oct 19, 6:30 pm**  
**Fine Arts Society of Milton: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
 Milton Police Station Meeting Room, Child's Dr. Details Gwen Gent: 905-876-2837

**Thursday, October 20th, 6:30 pm**  
**Milton Historical Society: THE HISTORY OF REDPATH SUGARS**  
 Fall BBQ at 6:30pm, \$5.00 includes cheeseburger, salad, beverage and dessert (bring your own utensils), followed by the presentation at 7:30pm. Location, Waldie Blacksmith Shop off Main St. Milton.

**Thursday, October 20th, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**  
**Milton Music Teacher's Association: STUDENT RECITAL**  
 In our free monthly recitals students gain confidence to play in public. Hugh Foster Hall, Milton, 905-878-5980.

**Friday, October 21, 7:30 pm**  
**Milton Players: CAUGHT IN THE NET**  
 Camelot revisited. Do you remember John Smith and his two lives, I mean two wives? Well here we are again, 15 years later, and you are being brought up to date. Oh my! And you thought it couldn't get worse. Directed by Geoff Ford. Reserved seating for subscribers only. Reservations 905-875-0629. Milton Senior's Activity Centre Auditorium on Child's Drive south of the Milton Mall. [www.miltonplayers.com](http://www.miltonplayers.com). Show Only. Cash bar & refreshments available. Doors Open - 7:30 pm Curtain - 8:00 pm. \$15 per person.

**Sat, Oct 22, 6:30 pm Dinner Theatre.**  
**Sun, Oct 23, 1:30 pm Show Only**  
**Thurs, Oct 27, 7:30 pm Show Only.**  
**Fri, Oct 28, 7:30 pm Show Only**  
**Sat, Oct 29, 6:30 pm Dinner Theatre**

**Friday, October 21, 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm**  
**Milton Concert Presentations: VIVA VIVALDI**  
 Antonio Vivaldi - most know for his famous work "The Four Seasons" wrote many beautiful pieces including opera, concert, and symphonic works. Join Maestro Kerry Stratton in an evening's exploration of some of the works of this musical genius. St. Paul's United Church, 123 Main St. Milton. Tickets \$30/adults \$25/seniors and students. 905-878-4732.

**Saturday, October 22, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm**  
**Milton Historical Society: INTRODUCTION TO BLACKSMITHING**  
 Basic beginner introductory class where you will learn the traditional art of Blacksmithing taught by Mr. Darwyne Hourie. Cost: \$100.00. Some of the things that will be taught include: fire lighting; hammering techniques; drawing out steel etc. Students will complete a simple project. You must be at least 18 years of age. Maximum enrolment of 4 students per class. Waldie Blacksmith Shop, 16 James Street, Milton. 905-875-4156, [miltonhistoricalsociety@bellnet.ca](mailto:miltonhistoricalsociety@bellnet.ca)

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