

# Rich musicians justify file sharing: music fans

From page 14.

no place to go (to legally download) or 'the selection stinks'."

But what about the people who do not use an industry-accepted means of downloading? A study released in October shows people who download music do not fear lawsuits or criminal prosecution.

"People who download music and swap files do not believe they are at risk," said Markus Giesler, an assistant professor of Marketing at York University's Schulich School of Business and an expert in entertainment marketing.

Mr. Giesler is a former music label owner who left the recording industry following the rise of music file sharing.

"There is a growing sense of strength in numbers. The greater the number of people who engage in the practice, the less likely they are to feel at risk of being sued or prosecuted."

Many downloaders, typically teens and adults in their early 20s, do not believe it is unethical to download music, according to Mr. Giesler.

Michelle Mo's opinion on downloading seems to back up these findings.

The Grade 8 Unionville student says she is not worried about getting in trouble for file sharing. Asked if she

thought the practice was wrong, she said "I don't care". But she is concerned about how downloading will affect the music industry.

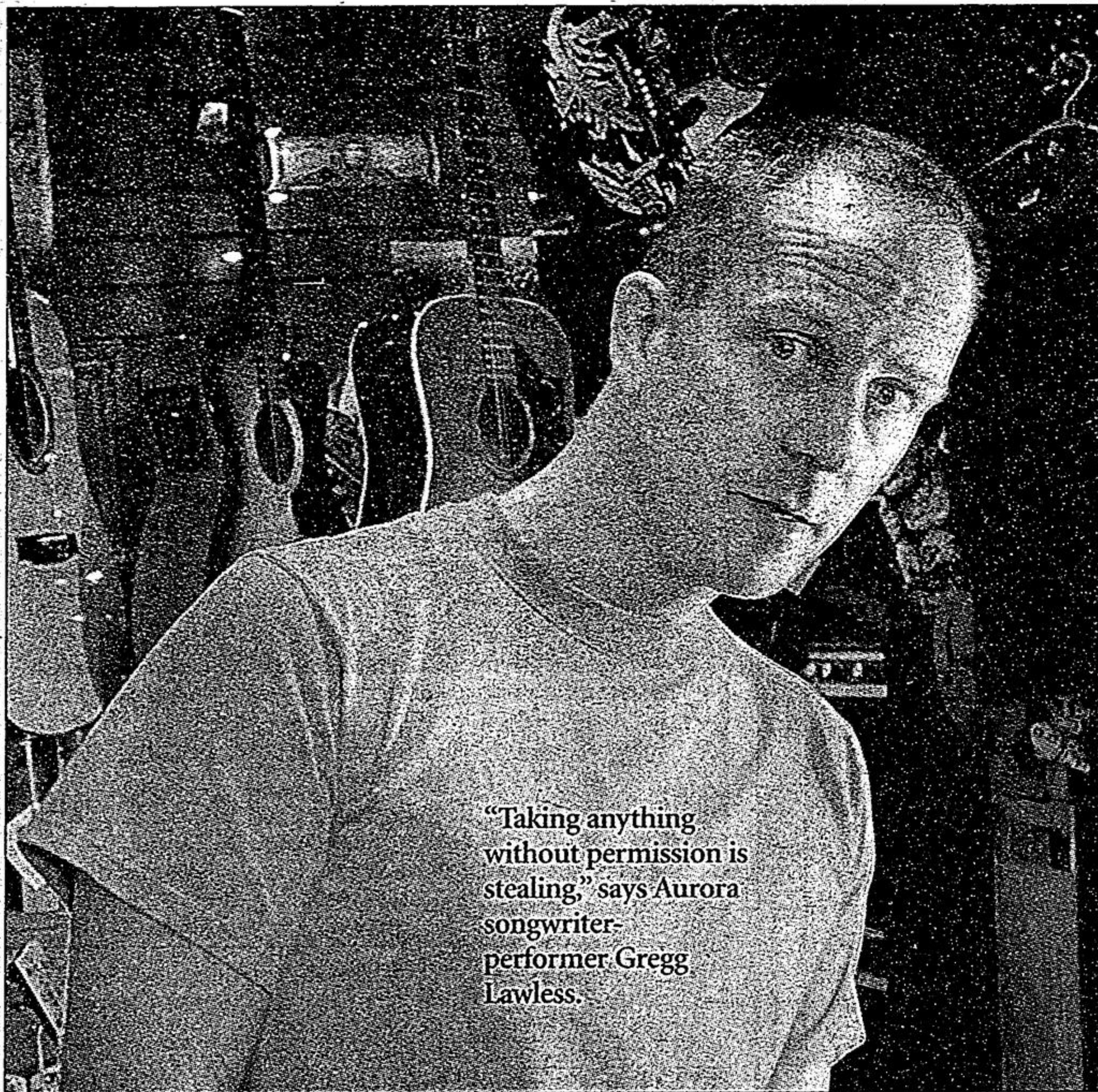
Friends have sent her about 50 songs via MSN Messenger, an instant e-mail messaging service. Despite having these songs, she still buys the CDs they came from. "I have a CD player. I still want to use it," she said.

*"It's not right to take something you don't have. At the same time, you know everyone else is doing it..."*

Stouffville's Shannon Parsons also file-shares, despite her belief it is wrong. File sharing is readily available to a small online group she is part of at Carleton University in Ottawa.

"I don't feel entirely comfortable. You know the music industry is losing money. It's not right to take something you don't have. At the same time, you know everyone else is doing it and at the same time, you know the musicians aren't suffering. They are walking around in their million-dollar clothes," the first-year student said.

People often use Ms Parsons' argument to justify



"Taking anything without permission is stealing," says Aurora songwriter-performer Gregg Lawless.

PHOTO/D. OSMOND

downloading music, according to Mr. Lawless.

The argument goes like this: Big-time musicians have large record contracts and millions of dollars and don't need more money.

But small, independent

musicians are also trying to make a living, he said.

"Whether or not I can survive is dependent on record sales. There's this perception that either musicians are making millions, so it doesn't matter or it's a

hobby for them."

People also argue having music available on the Internet is free exposure, but Mr. Lawless disagrees.

"There are a million opportunities to get exposure for free. What they (musicians) want is to get paid for what they are doing," he said.

Given a choice between having 500,000 people listening to his music online but not paying, or 1,000 people who buy his CD, he would choose the latter.

"Many people consider music to be a recreational thing ... file sharing is a euphemism for file stealing," Mr. Lawless said.

Music downloading hurts studio musicians, said Bill Skolnik, executive director of the Toronto Musicians Association, a union with about 3,200 members.

These musicians are paid from a fund, which draws

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from sales from the entire industry. So, when CD sales decrease, this diminishes the amount available to musicians, he said.

"People think they are entitled to it (the music). I don't see (that) we're making big inroads in getting through to them that they are taking things that don't belong to them," he said.

Songwriters are particularly hard hit, he added. They earn a living from CD sales and playtime on TV and radio.

But Aurora native Adam Halim, of the six-member band Rebel Emergency, argues downloading can benefit unknown musicians who strive to be noticed.

His group has played at Toronto's The Horseshoe Tavern and most bands performing there have music on the Internet, he said.

"That's one thing we would agree on — get your music online. The young bands all benefit from file sharing."

He also attributes his band's success and record deal to the Internet.

"We were able to build a following without a CD," he said.

His band only had a website and an online newsletter. The band encouraged people to download from its website.

Mr. Halim also believes online music sharing has an added benefit: it forces musicians to travel.

"Rather than just rely on CD sales, you have to go live. If you don't, you're in trouble."

Gregg Lawless and The Acoustic Orchestra perform at Toronto's Hugh's Room Jan. 22 at 8:30 p.m. For tickets, call 416-531-6604. For more information about Mr. Lawless, go to <http://www.gregglawless.com/>

## DOWNLOADING BYTES

• A Markham native is working in Seattle, WA, for a company that helps consumers download music.

People can download the company's software free, said Shelley McIntyre, vice-president of content for Shared Media Licensing, Inc. and weedshare.com. This software allows you to buy songs.

The service, which was launched in August 2003, has 84,000 songs in its catalogue.

"Instead of punishing

fans, we wanted to reward them (for sharing music) ... Fans are the best marketers of musicians. We wanted to empower them," she said.

The service is geared to independent musicians and requires their permission to include their music in the service. Musicians are allowed to set and control prices and the musicians make money from every sale, she said.

Several Canadian musicians have signed up to be included.

To access weedshare.com, go to <http://www.weedshare.com/>

• Aurora native Adam Halim of the band Rebel Emergency has experienced the dangers involved in music downloading.

He was at a Manhattan party about four months ago, when the band decided to play a song from its debut label CD which had not yet been released.

Band members just wanted to see if people would like the song.

It was a hit, Mr. Halim

said, but within half an hour, a woman at the party had the song on her laptop, ready to file-share it.

They told her they may get into trouble with the record label.

"Anybody who downloads music, they don't mean anything bad by it. She just liked the music. For a band like us, it could hurt," he said.

The woman was cooperative and they got their song back.

# Special orders no problem for restaurant staff

From page 14.

of appetizers including freshly prepared soup (\$3.95). The food at Mama Mia is hearty, homestyle Italian cooking — nothing fancy but plenty to eat and very well prepared.

On the evening I visited Mama Mia, I was dining with some rather finicky eaters so I got a chance to see first-hand how they handle special requests and alterations to their menu.

We were quite pleased that not only didn't our server get flustered but she accommodated our every

request with a smile and a reassuring "not a problem".

We began our meal with a heaping, steaming bowl of plump P.E.I. mussels (\$8.45) served in a fresh, chunky marinara sauce that had a slight kick and plenty of bits for scooping up with crusty bread.

You could plow your way through all the mussels yourself but the order is definitely large enough to share if you add an order of garlic bread (\$2.45 for three pieces) — if you love garlic then you won't be disappointed.

The caesar salad, which is served cold and crisp, (\$6.95) is prepared in a homemade dressing falling some-

where between a vinaigrette and cream-style dressing.

For entrees, we went with a classic spaghetti with meatballs (\$10.95). Be forewarned, this is not your ordinary spaghetti and meatballs.

We're talking two baseball-sized, lightly spiced veal meatballs that can best be enjoyed with the assistance of a knife and fork.

The gnocchi (\$13.95) sports a portion that is a little small for the price but if you love gnocchi, these are quite tasty and light.

Although the menu suggests either a tomato basil or creamy gorgonzola sauce for the gnocchi,

we opted to sample the alfredo sauce, which was quite heavily seasoned with nutmeg and a little on the thin side. I would suggest going with one of the recommended sauces instead.

Along with the 15 pastas and two risottos, there are also eight main dishes on the menu, including salmon (\$16.95) and three veal choices (\$14.95 to \$21.95).

We thoroughly enjoyed our veal parmigiana (\$14.45), which featured two large lightly breaded cutlets prepared in the traditional fashion with tomato sauce and mozzarella cheese.

Again, not fancy, just good,

hearty food.

The chicken piccata (\$14.95), two tender and juicy boneless chicken breasts, were lightly sautéed in a lemon and white wine sauce that could have used a bit more lemon but was very tasty nonetheless.

All entrees are served with your choice of pasta or freshly steamed vegetables and potato.

Sadly, as is the case with more and more restaurants these days, the desserts are primarily brought in with the exception of the tiramisu and New York style cheesecake. Either provides a nice ending to a satisfying meal.