

**MAB'S MUSINGS** Oct. 7,2017  
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## **"I'M HEADED TO NASHVILLE!!!!!"**

We see it all the time. Someone posts on Facebook or Social media the big news that they are "HEADED TO NASHVILLE" and very excited for their trip. And of course everyone wishes them luck, "*Always Knew you'd make it*" messages..." pretty much the same all the time. And it IS GREAT! An opportunity to see a VIBRANT city, on the move, tons of exciting things happening, and a lot of people just like themselves, all sharing music, performing, being a part of a CULTURAL MOVEMENT!!!

For those of us "OLD TIMERS" we say "WELCOME HOME!" We are glad to have you. Tons of people visit here each week, many move and settle in. Of course, the down side is that MANY ALSO MOVE HOME, having lasted about 6 months to two years. So while you need to be optimistic and excited, you also need to inject some REALITY into those big dreams and focus on what you can get accomplished and not get too caught up in what probably won't happen.

### **WHAT CAN HAPPEN:**

THERE ARE BASICALLY THREE THINGS YOU WANT TO GET ACCOMPLISHED.

- I. NETWORKING
- II. PERFORMING
- III. CO-WRITING

What is probably NOT going to happen is you waft into the Bluebird, they have a last minute cancellation, and pull you onstage, to be heard by a record president who just happened to be there to see the person who didn't show up, and they rush to you with a RECORD DEAL IN HAND!!! I know that happens all the time on "NASHVILLE" and other Hollywood productions, but it doesn't exactly happen in real life.

You are more than likely going to stand in line, wait your turn, participate in an open mic after most people are gone, *PLAYING TO TABLES AND CHAIRS*. (Yeah I already wrote that one). There are writer's nights all over town and you HAVE TO ATTEND THEM AND WAIT YOUR TURN! Just part of "*pledging the fraternity*".

### **BUT:**

You can make the best of that time. There will be dozens of people performing. Watch THEM! See what they are doing, what makes the audience TUNE INTO the songs and performances, and what makes the audience TUNE OUT!

A majority of performers are very inexperienced. Most songs sound just like other songs. A lot are steeped in Negativity, anger, bitterness, despair, preachy, self-absorbed.... DON'T WE GET ENOUGH OF THAT ENDLESSLY ON THE NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA?

Many are things you CAN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD OF WHAT THEY ARE SAYING OR UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF THEIR SONGS. If you need a decoder ring to figure out what they are about NEED TO RE-WRITE THE SONG!

Many performances are substandard, with no flow or dynamics. Many are BALLADS, which can slow an entire night down. So THINK about what YOU WANT TO DO. Do song and artist RESEARCH. Make your moment in the spotlight as appealing as possible.

### **PERFORMING**

Got ONE CHANCE TO MAKE A BAD FIRST IMPRESSION. Make sure you DON'T WASTE YOURS. Choose your songs wisely. If you do the introspective "*all about me, whining, depressing, bitter songs*" you are going to fall into where 98% of other people who are ignored. Doesn't mean you have to be all "HAPPY!!!" Like Pharell Williams (although that one did pretty good!), but if you can NOT BE SO DEBBIE DOWNER, it will MAYBE make people put their cell phones down for a few minutes. Make sure you are IN TUNE! Be ready to go on BEFORE THEY HAVE TO CALL YOU! Know where your place in the line is. Make sure the HOST KNOWS YOU, and you are ACCESSIBLE to go on. There just MIGHT be a cancellation, and being aware and ready is EVERYTHING!

Perform WITH DYNAMICS. ENUNCIATE. LOOK AT YOUR AUDIENCE. ENGAGE THEM! That is what you are supposed to be doing but most people don't. Don't just CLOSE YOUR EYES and sing to yourself. Those that do, only end up SINGING TO THEMSELVES!

### **NETWORKING:**

"Networking is simply MAKING FRIENDS." If you see someone who impresses you, GO UP AND TELL THEM. If they have family members, talk to them. (BUT DON'T DO IT AT THE TABLE WHERE YOU ARE DISTURBING THE OTHER PERFORMERS. GO TO THE BACK OR OUTSIDE!) Learn about their journey's. Share information, business cards.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

DON'T GHERM!!! (Giving out CD's BEFORE they are asked for.) This is mainly for established or hit writers, producers, publishers or anyone in the industry. That is a VERY BIG NO, NO! (see my web site for definition.)

But for most newer people, or out of towners, it is fairly common to trade CD's. If you like something ASK FOR IT, OR OFFER TO PAY FOR IT! (Hey, what a novel concept!!! Paying for someone's music you like!)

### **CO-WRITING:**

This more than likely WON'T happen over just a couple of days in Twang Town. It is something that needs to be built up to. But starting those relationships, seeing when people are open, long distance or SKYPE writing, all are viable opportunities. If you MAKE FRIENDS while you can, you can EXTEND those relationships later. But there are opportunities sometimes with others that are in similar circumstances, in town for a few days, and might have some open times, TRY TO MAKE USE OF IT. Most IN TOWNERS or established writers are going to take longer to build up to. So expect that.

DON'T SCARE PEOPLE AWAY. Just keep it light, friendly, and build for your future. Usually every trip to Nashville SETS UP FOR THE NEXT TRIP!!!!

### **KEEP EXPECTATIONS MANAGABLE.**

Expect to stand in line, expect to meet a lot of people like yourself. Expect a lot of things NOT TO WORK OUT. This is the musical version of SPEED DATING. You will see a lot of people, but very few will actually pan out. With every writer you will meet THREE other writers. And you will hear of other shows, venues, social events, guitar pulls, etc.

**BE PATIENT**

It all takes time. This is a very slow town. We call it a "TEN YEAR TOWN" because it takes a while to get known. But the more you put out there, the more you get back. Support others and they'll support you. We're always glad to have you. And you can go home with a great experience. Just realize that you are one of many, and everyone wants their own "moment in the sun."

Make sure you don't waste yours!

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