

Hit Songwriter/Author Rand Bishop Calls for Uplifting Musical Messages

During every economic downturn, the music business has actually thrived by giving the world positive, hopeful songs. Rand Bishop, the Grammy-nominated author of a new book, [Makin' Stuff Up](#) -- secrets of song-craft and survival in the music-biz, advises his peers that keeping the message upbeat can lead to a win/win for both the industry and the public.

Nashville, TN ([PRWEB](#)) December 30, 2008 -- During every economic downturn, the music business has actually thrived by giving the world positive, hopeful songs. Rand Bishop, the Grammy-nominated author of a new book, [Makin' Stuff Up](#) -- secrets of song-craft and survival in the music-biz, advises his peers that keeping the message upbeat can lead to a win/win for both the industry and the public.

"In the Great Depression, the biggest hits -- like I've Got the World on a String, Pennies From Heaven and They Can't Take That Away From Me -- shared a common spirit of optimism, romanticism and idealism," observes [Rand Bishop](#), a 40-year music-business veteran. "With the serious challenges we face today, the airwaves will surely embrace more of those same uplifting musical themes."

Rand Bishop knows a thing or two about crafting a tune that hits the perfect note in troubled times. It was during the somber, reflective aftermath of 9/11 that his song [My List](#) rose to the number-one spot on Billboard's Hot Country Singles chart and remained there for five consecutive weeks. The timely Toby Keith recording ended 2002 as country radio's most-played single for that entire year.

Since its initial release, [My List](#) has racked up nearly two million radio spins and sold in excess of six million copies. Grateful letters and emails responding to the megahit's life-affirming message inspired Bishop and collaborator Tim James to author a successful companion book, [My List -- 24 Reflections on Life's Priorities](#) (published by McGraw-Hill in 2003).

In the fall of 1999 -- even though the journeyman tunesmith had earned more than 150 songwriting credits, a Grammy nomination and several multi-platinum albums -- Rand Bishop was nearly flat broke. It was then that he began finger-picking the chords to [My List](#) in the moldy attic studio of his rented Nashville house. A few months later, at 50 -- with no viable music industry options in the offing -- Bishop reported for work at Census 2,000, earning a starting wage of nine dollars an hour. After his first day on the job, a \$3 debit-card charge at the parking lot overdrew his bank account.

Meanwhile, [My List](#) languished, unnoticed and unrecorded. It was two years later that Toby Keith smartly recognized the universal resonance of the Bishop/James composition. [My List](#) turned out to be just the right musical message for a uniquely painful moment in American history, and its success pulled Rand Bishop right back into the thick of the music business.

"[Makin' Stuff Up](#) is a songwriting course wrapped in a memoir," Bishop says of his latest book. "By sharing some of the cautionary tales from my mad-mouse career side-by-side with the secrets of my songwriting success,

I hope to give something back to an industry that has provided me with ten lifetimes' worth of chances."

A good number of the chances to which the now grey-haired Bishop refers are recounted in the book's autobiographical chapters. As a cocky young performer, Bishop once looked Clive Davis in the eye and informed the music business' most powerful exec exactly where he could stick his offer of an Arista Records recording contract. Bishop partied hard through the '70s, bouncing between record labels -- from Elektra, to A&M, to MCA, finally to Epic. On two regrettable occasions, he was beaten within an inch of his life -- simply because his aggressors didn't care for the blonde rocker's androgynous image.

In the '80s, Bishop sang in the recording studio alongside Brian Wilson -- just as the fragile Beach Boy genius was struggling to emerge from years of drug-related mental illness. Sylvester Stallone put Bishop through a crash-course in surviving the often-brutal Hollywood film world during the production of the mega-platinum soundtrack for Paramount Pictures' *Staying Alive*. By then, The Beach Boys, Cheap Trick, Heart, Vanilla Fudge, Peter Noone and The Outlaws had discovered and recorded Bishop's songs.

The '90s found Bishop turning his talents to more meaningful creative pursuits. He co-founded the not-for-profit Songwriters and Artists for the Earth (S.A.F.E.) and helmed production and A&R on two compilation albums (for the benefit of Earth Island Institute and Save The Children), working with Cyndi Lauper, Richie Havens, Indigo Girls, Dr. John, Willie Nelson, Kenny Loggins, Olivia Newton-John, Boyz II Men, Al Jarreau, Lorrie Morgan, Los Lobos, Wynonna, Ziggy Marley and Richard Marx.

Now having chalked up well over 200 songwriting credits, numerous awards and accolades, Bishop resides in Nashville with his wife of 21 years and youngest daughter. He divides his busy schedule between helping burgeoning singer/songwriters develop their talents and pursuing his literary endeavors.

Still vital and prolific at 59, Bishop encourages aspiring song scribes to express their musical inspirations in a positive way through an innovative, [online songcraft-coaching program](#).

The book, *Makin' Stuff Up* -- secrets of song-craft and survival in the music-biz, is available at [Amazon.com](#) and <http://www.makinstuffup.net>, the website where Rand Bishop also offers aspiring songwriters ongoing instruction, coaching and career guidance.

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