

Hit Songwriter Rand Bishop to Release Songwriting Memoir on Dec. 4

By Chuck Whiting

Rand Bishop, a Grammy-nominated, BMI Award-winning tunesmith who has written songs for such acts as Toby Keith and The Beach Boys, will release a new book on songwriting during a special Dec. 4 launch day at Amazon.com.

Makin' Stuff Up (secrets of songcraft and survival in the music-biz) is described as "a songwriting course wrapped in a memoir." The book includes a number of life- and career-changing stories from Bishop's often misguided rock 'n' roll past, as well as invaluable insights on songcraft. Readers will see how Bishop found success as he learned on the job how to select the right song concept and apply his hard-won writing tools to penning a hit song, while persevering in a highly competitive field. He plans to use the book as a springboard for an on-line mentoring program for emerging songwriters.

Hall of Fame lyricist Cynthia Weil (Just Once, Here You Come Again, Somewhere Out There, You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin') calls Bishop's new book "...a master class in songwriting (and) a must read for anyone who aspires to a career making music."

"My new book and web site are all about giving something back to an industry that has provided me with so many opportunities to express myself creatively over the last 40 years," said Bishop, who won BMI's Million Play Award for the Toby Keith hit, My List. "I want to help give developing writers the tools they need to become more successful. Hopefully, by reading the book, they can avoid some of the mistakes I made in my checkered past."

Anyone who orders Makin' Stuff Up at Amazon.com on Dec. 4 or 5 will receive a free 30-day VIP membership on Bishop's new songcraft-coaching web site, <http://www.MakinStuffUp.net>. Membership includes an on-line song evaluation/coaching session and a chance to make the inaugural "Feedback Loop Top-10" chart. Other valuable bonus gifts will be announced as launch day approaches.

Makin' Stuff Up readers will learn about Bishop's journey from a promising, cocky, rock performer -- who nearly made it big several times in the '70s and '80s -- to a highly successful hit songwriter/music producer and publisher in this new millennium. The tricks of the trade Bishop learned along his bumpy road are revealed candidly with a "wry sense of self-deprecating humor". The reader is invited into a virtual co-writing session with Bishop as he composes two original songs. The book covers every decision in the process, including choosing a title, what feedback to accept and apply, and mixing a demo -- as if the reader is in the room with the author.

Thirty-five years ago, Bishop stepped onto the stage of Montreal's Place Des Arts Theatre Maissoneuve believing he owned the world. He was fronting a band (the Wackers) that was called the "greatest rock 'n' roll band in North America" by a Creem magazine critic. The Wackers released three Elektra albums, opened for the Doors at Carnegie Hall, and played Alice Cooper's Billion Dollar Babies tour. However, Bishop's presumed rock-star success proved elusive when his group was abruptly dropped from the label by David Geffen after their first and only Top-40 single. He went on to score two consecutive top-five hits in Canada as a self-

produced artist, then subsequently signed recording contracts with the major U.S. labels, A&M, MCA/Infinity, and Pasha CBS.

Bishop's song, (We Dance) So Close To The Fire, featured in the Saturday Night Fever sequel Staying Alive, garnered him a Grammy nomination. Other Bishop compositions were recorded by The Beach Boys, Cheap Trick, Vanilla Fudge, Heart, and the Indigo Girls. He worked in the studio with David Foster, Graham Nash, Karen Carpenter and Brian Wilson, and carried on a friendly rivalry at the famed Troubadour with Glenn Frey and JD Souther.

The shag-haired, blonde artist derailed his career time and time again by acting self-destructively, making numerous impulsive, ill-considered, egocentric, and extremely risky decisions. He glibly offended Clive Davis, blowing off a contract with Arista Records and getting himself temporarily blackballed from the L.A. music business in the process. A collaboration with Sylvester Stallone taught Bishop a hard lesson in the brutal realities of the Hollywood film game.

By the time he moved to Nashville in 1995, the tunesmith/producer had more than 150 songwriting credits, a Grammy nomination, and BMI awards. But in Hollywood, the pop music capital of the world, his lengthy, journeyman resum?© only served to brand him as obsolete. At the turn of the millennium, entering his 50s and "flat broke," Bishop was reduced to applying for a government job at \$9 an hour. Finally grateful for his many years of making music, Rand Bishop said what he thought was a last good-bye to the industry that had provided him with so many chances to shine.

The author tells readers how everything changed when he learned Toby Keith was about to record a song that had been collecting dust for two years. In the spring of 2002, My List spent five weeks at number one on the Billboard country singles chart and, according to Radio & Records Magazine, was the most-played song on country radio for that year. Bishop co-authored a companion book, My List (24 Reflections on Life's Priorities) with collaborator Tim James, published by McGraw-Hill. Other country artists who have recorded Bishop's songs include Tim McGraw, Lorrie Morgan and Tracy Byrd.

Bishop has also received accolades as a writer for film and the stage. The Viewing, his 90-minute darkly comedic stage play, had a successful eight-day run at Nashville's Darkhorse Theatre. His first solo-authored screenplay, The Tin Roof, won first place in the 2004 National Screenplay Showdown. His second screenplay, The Shepherds of Wildwood, was optioned by No Negative Pictures. He is presently in discussions with a Hollywood director/producer to adapt an as-yet undisclosed film into a stage musical.

Bishop is a founding partner and chief manager of Writer Zone Music in Nashville. He lives in Music City with his wife Stacey and youngest daughter Glendyn.

According to Kent Blazy, the songwriter responsible for five Garth Brooks chart-toppers, Bishop has "maneuvered the minefields on his way to the mountain of hits. Aspiring songwriters will learn from his honest and heartfelt view from the front lines."

Mark Volman of The Turtles, an assistant professor at Belmont University, writes that "the book is more than educational; it is fun and entertaining."

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Former general manager of RCA Records, Thom Schuyler, calls Makin' Stuff Up "a joyful documentary from an individual who has been paying attention to the rhythm of our culture."

For more information about Makin' Stuff Up, call (615) 944-5308, send an e-mail to randbish@comcast.net, or visit <http://www.MakinStuffUp.net>.