

Helen Marketti's Music Corner

The McCartney Project



It is time for some road trips as summer officially approaches. If you are a Beatles fan, Paul McCartney fan or just love music, then you will want to check out The McCartney Project. Tony Burlingame pays tribute to Paul McCartney by entertaining thousands of fans every year. Two shows are coming up in the Cleveland area. The McCartney Project will be playing on Friday, June 21 in Brunswick and Wednesday, July 5 in Berea.

Tony takes some time to discuss how the long and winding road lead him to the door where he finds himself enjoying the connections between the music and the fans. "While I was growing up I had two older brothers who influenced my taste in music. It was a range between James Taylor, Elton John, Jimi Hendrix and Iron Butterfly," he remembers. "As I got older I remember rebelling against the disco craze. I used to go in bookstores and read music magazines such as Melody Maker. The music I was into was more of the punk rock nature like Blondie, The Pretenders and The Cars. Listening to The Knack was also one of my favorites. "Get The Knack" is still one of my favorite albums. For me, this was real music whereas I felt the disco era was more processed music."

He continues, "Being interested in music is different than wanting to be in a band. The interest in music comes first. My family is musically oriented. My grandmother played the organ and could sing opera. Her father played the violin. I now have my great grandfather's violin. My great uncle played the accordion and organ. He was a touring musician and actually played for the Queen of England. My father was a singing drummer in the mid-1950s but gave it up to

start a family. My dad was influenced by Nat King Cole, Johnny Mathis and the Doo Wop groups such as The Flamingos. We had a stereo and played the AM stations all the time."

"I remember as a kid walking down East Broad Street in Columbus and I wandered into a restaurant called, The Ground Round. There was a trio playing. The name of the band was Pay Dirt. I had never seen live music until that day. It finally occurred to me that I could do that for a living. I was nine years old at the time but that memory stayed," he recalls.

"When I got older I had started a band called, Back Beat with a few friends who liked The Beatles. I played "Paul" and we wore the Beatle attire. We played some festivals and car shows. It was enough experience to see what it was like. A few years later, I received a call from The British Invasion band. I joined around 1999 and have been with them ever since in addition to doing The McCartney Project. I actually have played in several Beatles tribute bands. It is quite the industry in California where I honed my "Paul" skills a bit more and fine tuned my performances," said Tony. "I was contacted by a gentleman named John Scherer who manages a company called Music Legends Live. He asked me if I wanted to do some shows where I would just be Paul. That is how The McCartney Project started. I have been doing this since 2013."

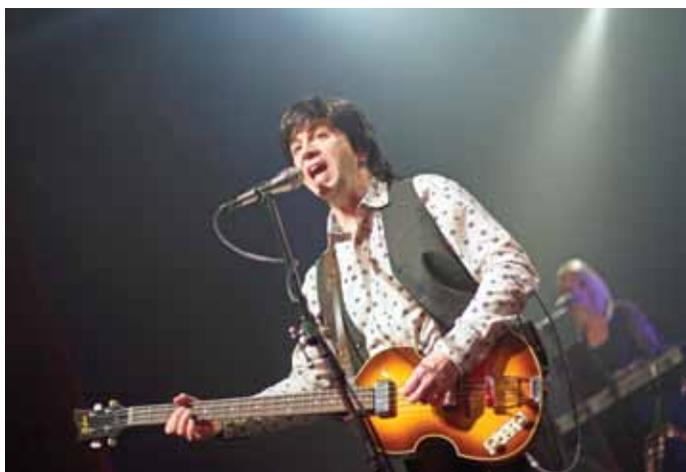
"We are still being exposed to Beatle inspired movies, projects and performances that add to their legacy and attract new generations of fans. I am always reminded every time I play of how grateful I am to be able to do this work. I pick up my guitar, drive to a show and set up my gear. I am earning a living doing what I love but I have to remember it's not even about me. I often talk to people after shows that share what a certain Beatles song has meant to them or what was going on in their life. We are



all going through something and music is the healing tool. It brings people together and as long as they enjoy it I will keep coming back."

www.TheMcCartneyProject.com

Photo Credit: Lori Taggart



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