

Helen Marketti's Music Corner

Scotty Kormos

As the drummer for the house band on The Singing Bee (CMT), Scotty Kormos knows that opportunities are about timing, networking and going after what you want.

Originally from Garfield Heights, Scotty left Cleveland in 1992 and has lived in LA ever since. Nearly twenty years after he took his drum set, a bag of clothes and \$150 to live in a city he knew little about, Scotty has proven that determination and ambition can help make dreams a reality.

“As a kid I loved listening to RUSH. I thought the drumming of Neil Peart was amazing. I’m also a fan of KISS, Led Zeppelin and The Who. I love all those great, classic rock and roll bands.”

“Playing drums is a way to be in front of people yet still have a barrier between them and myself. I don’t think I would have the guts to be a singer and be out there in front of people. I’ve always been completely happy being in the back. As long as people can hear me then that’s all that matters.”

“There is some sort of primal connection when I play the drums,” said Scotty. “I often play barefoot. People sometimes ask me why I do that. It makes me feel more connected to the drum kit. I can feel the bass guitar resonate on my feet more than if I wore shoes. Playing barefoot also helps with keeping things consistent because shoes vary with thickness.”

Moving from Cleveland to Los Angeles seemed to happen at the right time. Scotty continues, “When I moved out here I got a job working at the coolest Mac store around since I had experience and knowledge with Apple computers. I worked in the store that some of the celebrities would go to. Some of my clients were Tommy Lee, Drew Carey, John Goodman and some of the guys from Poison. It seemed if any of the celebrities wanted a Mac, they came to our store. I was a geek but I was a cool geek.” (laughs) I dressed a little more “rock and roll” than my coworkers. After awhile, I got to be the “Mac guy” for Steve Dorff who is a major, major songwriter for many artists.”

It is through Steve Dorff that Scotty became the drummer for the house band on The Singing Bee (CMT). “The Singing Bee” is through CMT but is filmed in Hollywood,” said Scotty. “It was interesting to find a house band in LA that could also play country music.”

“Anyway, Steve called and said the gig was for a game show that might not make it past the first season but he needed a band that could play country. I didn’t even have to audition for it. I sent a picture to him of DSB (Don’t Stop Believin’) which is the Journey tribute band I’m in also. I suggested to Steve that maybe he could use the guys in DSB since we all knew each other and worked well together. Steve sent our picture to CMT and we were hired without an audition because the network trusts Steve and in turn, Steve trusts me. That’s how it works out here. Your friends get a gig and bring you along or you get a gig and bring your friends along. Getting gigs are mostly by referral. It’s all networking.”

“People often have asked me how I became successful,” said Scotty. “I always say that the phrase “music business” is two words: “music” and “business”. Many musicians just focus on the music and not on the business. I call these guys “basement geniuses” because they will work on their craft so they can be the best player. There are drummers out there who are better than I am but what you need is your bag of tricks so you can keep working. You need to network and make contacts. You need to work with people and understand them. You are a professional and what you are doing is a service to others. You play drums and get a check. You’re being paid to help fulfill someone’s vision of a song. If you’re not good at taking advice and direction, extending your hand and asking for a chance then no one will ever know who you are.”

Another business venture is endorsing drum products. “I am very picky about what I associate myself with,” said Scotty. “I have to believe in the products that I am using. I’ve had relationships with these companies for a long time. I wanted to be loyal to them and it has paid off. If I need something, they are able to accommodate



me. I endorse DW Drums, Paiste Cymbals and Vater Drumsticks.”

Scotty has been able to stick with what works for him and it has worked well. He said he has learned a lot over time and just in the past year alone. “You have to continue to network and connect. You can’t just sit back and think, “I’m a great musician so why isn’t this happening for me?” You have to play the game to stand a chance of winning the game. I guess I’m too stubborn to quit.”

For more information on Scotty Kormos: www.scotykormos.net

Helen Marketti loves everything about The Beatles, enjoys attending concerts and interviewing people who like to share their musical and life journey. For more rockin’ news, please visit: www.helenrosemarketti.com

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