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## **Janet Ogg: Dayton Music History Project**

Janet Ogg

Matthew Mercer

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**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Dayton Music History Project**  
**Interview with Janet Ogg, March 7, 2019**

**Interview Information**

Interview date: March 7, 2019

MM: Matthew Mercer (MM)

Interviewee: Janet Ogg (JO)

**Interview Transcript**

Matthew Mercer: This is a very comfy chair.

Janet Ogg: Thanks. Yeah.

MM: Very comfy.

JO: Do you wanna be interviewed, too? [talking to dog]

MM: Alright, so I'm Matt Mercer, I'm here with the Dayton Music History Project, talking to Janet Ogg, about her life in the music industry.

JO: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

MM: So, we're just gonna go through and ask some questions and just tell some stories.

JO: Okay.

MM: Uh, if you have any questions for me along the way, just go ahead with them, hopefully it'll just be a very organic conversation.

JO: Alright.

MM: Alright, so first off, I just wanna go over some personal background of yourself. Uh, were you born in Dayton? Um...

JO: I was born in Dayton. Yeah. I was born in Dayton. Um, Miami Valley Hospital. Born on the East end of Dayton, on East Fourth Street. My grandparents- My dad's from here, my mom's from West Virginia. So, my dad's mom and dad were here, and we were all real close. Uh, I grew up here. When I was seven- well, we ended up moving to Huber Heights when I was seven. My grandma and grandpa moved here first, they were like some of the first residents of Huber Heights. And then, we lived with them for a while, about a year or so. And then we got a house up on Chambersburg Road, which is where I- you know, went to school, I graduated from Wayne, um, as far as music goes, you know, I wanted to play the guitar as a child. I had you know, a vision in my mind of myself doing that. And I didn't have a musical family, but I had a picture in my mind of wanting to play the guitar for some reason, and so I started taking guitar lessons when I was seven. I took from a few different teachers around town then: Ballou Music, um, Americana Music. And when we moved to Huber Heights, I think that's really where my uh, correlation to the Dayton music scene got started, because I had a guitar teacher in Huber Heights named Gene Shiverdecker, and he was already a part of the Dayton Music scene, so like this would've been like, 1958, because I was seven years old at that time. So, from then on, I took guitar lessons from him every week, and he turned me on to Jazz. He played some tapes for me one day of um, Julie London and um, Barney Kessel doing "Cry Me a River." And I, it was just a poignant, one of those moments, like, where it's like, something just hit me, it was like, wow, you know, I love this, and from then on, I just fell in love with Jazz- at the time the music that was being played, and actually a lot of it was really created during those years. You know, Miles Davis and all the great jazz players. Bill Evans. My favorite drum player was Tony Williams and I would spend my evenings in my bedroom listening to their albums on my stereo. And I loved singers. I loved Barbra Streisand. I- Later on I got into Billie Holiday. Um, Ella Fitzgerald.

JO: And um, my guitar teacher had like a band, like, made out of guitar students. It was a big band and we all had our part to play in the band. We'd rehearse- I think we got together once a month or something like this in his garage. And all the guitars played all the saxophone and horn parts. Because he had all the charts. Well, I was playing a third horn part. And, um, I really was never a person that could really like hold a harmony or find a harmony in a song. I could always find the melody, but I was playing the music, but I really couldn't hear what I was playing. I was just reading the notes. So, I was doing it right, but I really wasn't aware of what I was doing, to tell you the truth. I couldn't hear, the harmony that I was playing. So, one day, he cleared a great big space in the garage, while we were setting up and I thought, "I wonder what that's all about?" And he said, "We're going to have something new today."

JO: And so, that day uh, a fella came in with a set of drums and I had never seen drums before. We didn't have MTV then. You know, we didn't have all this media hitting us in the face daily about so many things. And um, I don't know, it was like when we started playing- when I heard these drums it's like I could hear them, and it just sparked this desire in me to want to start playing the drums. So, I was- I told my mom I want to play the drums. You know, how when you're a kid you want to do something, you just have to work on 'em, right? I think I spent about a year, you know, asking for drum lessons and they finally, you know, relented. And there was a drum teacher in Huber Heights at that time, uh Jimmy Greene. He was the house drummer at Sutmillers, Supper Club. So, Gene- Jimmy knew Gene, so that's how we found out about him.

JO: And I started taking drum. I was still taking guitar lessons and I started taking drum lessons from Jimmy once a week. He was up on Brandt Pike at the time. He had a, like, his garage he had turned it into a studio, and that's where he taught. And, you know, I teach now, and one of the things that I- not with all kids, but for me- I went to my lesson, I listened to what the teacher said, I'd go home, I'd practice, I'd come back, and I never really questioned what I was being taught. I sort of like just listened to what they said, and then practiced, and then went back. You know, and that's how I learned.

JO: So, I took lessons for years. I mean, from seven on I had guitar lessons every week. At 12 I started with the drums every week. And, um, there was a lot of music going on in Dayton, you know, at that time. Super. Lot of great musicians, a lot of great music, a lot of great night clubs. The night life was- it was a lot. It was very classy, I guess you would call it. The clubs were beautiful, gorgeous. A lot of them were supper clubs. You know, you'd go into a beautiful room, people got dressed up, everything was beautiful. And everyone was enjoying the evening with music, maybe dinner, dancing. Just the whole atmosphere and way that music was approached and celebrated back then was completely different than it is today.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JO: You know, and growing up like that, and being a part of that, it was just something you... It was a beautiful experience, you know? And I have great memories of it. Um, there was a band that played in town during that time. It was an all-female cabaret band. They played 40's type music, all the standards of jazz, the Latins, all the different rhythms that went with the ballads. The brushes, the Latin rhythms, the swing, the jazz, the straight ahead. All the music in that genre, they were playing it. And they were all women. They were a family, basically. The mother played the piano, that was Nina Kindig. And her daughter, Bobbie, or Roberta Kindig, she was a, trumpet player. She played trumpet, baritone, banjo, bass, trombone, and she sang. She was multi-talented and great at all of them. They all played by ear. Well, Nina, her mother, was a classical-uh, studied classical music, in college- she was a classical pianist. And, uh, it was a common occurrence for classical musicians to end up in Jazz, you know, as they went out to find a career, because everybody couldn't be a classical piano player anywhere in the world. So, that's how she got into the kind of music she was into. So, she really knew what she was doing. She knew how to play it all. And then her other daughter, Terri, was the drummer and she sang. So, what happened was, Terri was playing bass and they had this other girl playing drums with them, not part of the family, but Ann Eckland. She was their drummer at the time, and her mother got sick. She was from Seattle. Her mother got real ill, and so Ann had to leave to go to Seattle to be with her mom. And they had to

keep up this image of having an all-female band, and I was only 14 at the time, but I was the only girl in town that was playing the drums at all. And my teacher, Jimmy- who was like the house drummer at Suttmiller's- they all knew one another. You never... all the musicians knew one another. The Green Derby, where the Debutantes- was the name of this group. Where they were playing was just a block and a half down the street from Suttmiller's. It was just a corner bar called the Green Derby. Right at the highway. And in fact, if you go there now, it's just like, um, a plot of land.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JO: That building isn't even there anymore. But, you know, they wanted to know if Jimmy wanted to know if I could do it. He asked my parents if it would be alright if I would sit in for Ann while she was away. Of course, I wanted to do it. I was still in high school, so I remember they had to get permission from the union, and they had to get permission from the liquor board, because I was underage. You know, I would be going to a bar every night, 9-2. They played five nights a week. And that's what most of the clubs do. It's like five nights a week, 9-2. People were earning a living back then. People were supporting their families, you know, just like they had a job. Like any other job back then, and they were capable of doing that, and that was another wonderful thing about that period of time was that the best musicians could do that, you know? And you had quality music, and you had people earning a living, and you had a union. You had a strong powerful musicians union, that enforced their rules and their laws, which we don't even have that today. And that all went away, through time.

JO: And I mean, like, my dad and mom- My dad would take me down there every night and then he'd come and pick me up. I started playing down there, the drums, and that's where I learned to play all the standards and all the rhythms and all the beats, and the fills and everything that went along with that kind of music. They taught it all. Well, I had been learning it in my lessons, but down there I really got the practical, uh, experience of actually doing it, along with the music as a drummer, and it was just- I just loved it, you know? It was- It was great. So, I was still going to high school, then I was going down

there and playing, and that went on for quite a while, I think. I'm not sure exactly how long it was, uh, when she came back. Then I always, like, sometimes I would substitute, but then other things started happening, you know? I would start getting calls from other groups that needed, like, a drummer for a wedding reception or a drummer for some kind of a party or gig somewhere. You know, I played continuously after that as a drummer in this area, like out at the base, I'd play at the different clubs there. I played lots of wedding receptions, that was a big, you know, gig for people to play. And parties, private parties, blah, blah, blah, etcetera on and on.

JO: And, you know, you'd always get, like, some of the jobs you'd get dressed up for. I had clothing that, you know, I would get really super dressed up for when I played. And then I also- some of the jobs were like you'd wear a red blazer, and black slacks, and a white shirt. Like, everybody wore the same thing. So, it was one or the other. And so that was always... you always knew what you were going to wear. And everything happened on time, you know, there were- you play forty-five, you break fifteen. You know, you didn't say you were going to be there at nine and then start at ten or eleven. [laughs] And, uh, you know, it worked out, and then you made your money doing it. So, I did that, you know, for years. And then I remember my mom took me, one year- she took me one night to a club in Fairborn, to hear Roy Meriwether Trio, he was playing there. He's from here. He doesn't live here anymore, but he's a piano player that grew up here, and was really kinda like famous. He was just such a great, you know, piano player. Everybody knew him, loved him. He played all the time. He had a trio- piano, bass, and drums. And I just remember when my mom took me out there, I was like, just flipped out. I just loved him. It was, like, he was so great and everything. And then eventually, like, I filled in for him a couple times, when his drummer was sick, and he told me- he said, "I like your feeling. If I ever need a drummer, I'll get in touch with you." And I said "okay." And that's kinda how music went, you know? It's still like that. It's like, you're on your own, you know? For everything, you're depending on your own self, and your own ability to meet and to find and to make things happen with people in order to play music.

JO: So, anyway, I did that and then like- what happened was- oh, I went to Wright State. I went to Wright State after I graduated from high school and I studied music education there. I really wanted to go to Berklee in Boston. That's where I wanted to go. My dad wouldn't let me go, so I went to Wright State for a couple of years and then I finally- my dad finally let me go to Berklee. And then I- I was going up there to study my drums, and then at that time Roy Meriwether came back to my school at Berklee in Boston and asked me if I wanted to join his group. Well, I feel it was a mistake. I should- I shouldn't have joined his group, because I should have graduated. I should have got my degree. I left the school to play with him because I wanted to play, and after about nine months the band- the whole band thing fell apart. And so I was really devastated, and after that, that's when I left here and went out to California.

JO: So, as far as the Dayton music scene goes that was kinda like the end of my period in the Dayton music scene. Um, you know, it was a great beginning, and I had so many wonderful people who influenced me, and loved me, and helped me, and just the whole scene back here back then was a big- to me, it was a big love fest. Everybody supported one another, and it was a wonderful time, you know? We played at the Forum Club with Roy. I played with him there for, God, at least a year or so. Well, the whole time I- we played there, we traveled a little bit. But we played at the Forum Club and then, uh, we had different singers. We had his sister sing with us for a while, Bettie. And then we had Bobbie Brookshire. Bobbie, you know, Brookshire-Gordon. She was from here. She had been on the road with Duke Ellington Orchestra. When she came back home, she sang with our group, with our trio at the Forum Club, and it was a really great musical group at that time. You know, the trio, and her singing, it was really good. And then after that, you know, I felt like, well, there's nothing more I can go on to here in Dayton, and I wanted to keep pursuing. I wanted to be a jazz drummer. That was my whole goal in life. And so that's why I left here and went out to California.

JO: So, and I think I went out there in like 1971 or 2, maybe 2. So, from like '58 to '71, I was a part of the scene. There was a lot of other musical acts here in Dayton at the time. I didn't hear a lot of them, because everybody was always playing at the same time.

But, you know, there was, like, Annarino's, like with Suttmiller's, there was constantly groups coming in and out. Travelling throughout, you know, tours. I got to go with Jimmy to the rehearsals and sit in at his rehearsals and see how the charts were read for the shows and how they were played. And see all the great performers doing their rehearsals, you know. And um, you know, the club scene was really- I can't say enough about it back then. It's like too bad, you know. Too bad it all had to go away.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative] So, uh, going back to kind of your childhood and upbringing. Uh, was there any kind of music typically playing at home? Or was your family really into any specific genre of music?

JO: Not really. I would say no. I- I mean, we didn't even- I don't even remember. We would- I guess we listened to the radio in the car, but I don't really remember- Well, my sister, now she loved music. And she was all into- She is like 4 or 5 years older than me- she was all into like the popular music at the time, right? She had a stack of 45's and she'd play them in the bedroom at night, and so that type of music. It wasn't jazz, but it was the popular music at the time. I heard all of that because of her. You know, she knew every word. She could sing every song and whenever we'd take a trip, you know, we'd sing songs together in the car. But yeah, she loved music and there was a- places around here back then like dance clubs. People danced. You know, there was the Avondale club, which was not that far from here. I think it was somewhere down near Valley Street. My sister used to- they used to go there every weekend, and they just had a ball listening to music and dancing, you know? It's like a shame that people don't still do things like that anymore.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JO: Um, but there was always somebody, like, there was the Fairborn skating rink had a dance club that she would go to. And every now and then, I'd talk my parents into letting- making her take me with them, you know. [laughs]

JO: But yeah, no. My parents were never really huge music fans, like, they didn't present music at home. We watched it on television when it would come on. Not really the... like I remember seeing the Beatles on Ed Sullivan. Um, there was a couple of shows like Soul Train, that would come on once a week with popular, like, funky music. But my mom was like- my mom loved country music. She was from West Virginia. She loved country. Now, I can't say she wasn't musical, or- or creative. She was. She loved country music. So, um, I don't remember hearing a lot of it around the house. Uh, I know she had tapes that she played in the car. But, like, all the great country music. She loved Waylon Jennings, and um, you know, I don't even know the names of all of them. Loretta Lynn, of course, I love Loretta Lynn, too, and there's probably a lot more of that older music that I could appreciate if I listened to it more, you know? I- I used to listen to it, when I had her tapes. When I'd listen to 'em in the car, and they- they were very good. But my dad wasn't really musically inclined. He'd always, like, try to mimic 'em, "That's A'more." What's- what was that fella that... "When the moon hits your eye, like a big pizza pie, that's A'more." Dean Martin!

MM: Dean Martin. That's always the, uh, biggest debate when I talk to people that are really into music is who do they prefer between Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. That's a really big divide among musicians, yeah.

JO: Really? What are they? Is there a percentage factor, or-

MM: Uh, I know of New Mexico. A lot of the ranchers out there, the long-term family ranchers, they can't stand Sinatra.

JO: Really?

MM: They are full fledged on board with Dean Martin.

JO: Wow.

MM: Yeah, one of the- the house museum that I work at, they have everything from like 45s to, uh, one of the first-generation iPods. But not a single Frank Sinatra track in that house.

JO: Huh, that's interesting. Because, I mean, it took me a long time to appreciate Frank Sinatra, too. I never was into him, you know, growing up or anything at all. But I remember one point in my life, later on, I did really become interested in him because he was so pitch perfect. And he took a song and he respected the song. He sang it just the way it was written, perfect pitch. He presented the song really well and that's what I learned to appreciate about him. Yeah, my friend Terri- that was the drummer and the bass player in the Debutantes- we were kind of close in age, she was a little bit older than me, but we became really good friends. And I'd go over to her house, and she loved Frank Sinatra- she played Frank Sinatra. She played- She turned me on to a lot of music. And we would sit for, I mean an entire day, hours upon hours. And I'd take my guitar and we'd work on figuring out the chords to these songs, you know, that she would put on and play, and that was a big influence on me musically. Her. In fact, our friendship was- like, it was so wonderful to have friend like that. That you could share the thing you love the most with.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

JO: Yeah, she was fantastic.

MM: Do you remember the first album you ever bought? Or one of the first albums?

JO: The albums that I remember would be like Miles Davis, um, well, Tony Williams, and then Barbra Streisand, "My Name is Barbara", with "Free Again" on it. Those were probably the first couple of albums that I bought. And then, my collection, you know, as a kid consisted of more of the same. And I had a pretty great album collection. It wasn't huge, but it was like valuable to me and had a lot of good quality to it. And it was funny-

It wasn't funny, but it was unfortunate- when one of the trips after I'd moved to California, I packed up my stereo and my album collection, to take with me on the plane to have out there, and it got lost.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

JO: So, all those albums. And I don't know how it could have gotten lost, but I never got'em back. Nor my stereo. You know, I had a Marantz, um, amplifier. This great Marantz amplifier. I had my turn table, everything. And it all- it all got left somewhere. I think somebody may have taken it. I don't know what else to say about it. What else could have happened?

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JO: But it took me like- and in fact, it's so funny because that Barbara Streisand album that I wanted to hear so badly, that "Free Again", you know, the way she did it on that one album- and I think she only did it on one album- I never could find it again. I think some of the Miles Davis albums I never found again. I would always look for them. And then, they had a- up here in Huber Heights they have a radio station up here. And then once a year they'll do this massive album sell, and it was maybe about 3 years or something like that ago. I went through it and I found the Barbara Streisand. So, I finally did get it back.

MM: Nice, nice.

JO: Yeah.

MM: Uh, were you, an avid concert goer? Did you go to a lot of performances?

JO: Yeah, a lot of jazz, you know, night clubs. It was a small intimate, you know, setting. And I went to many of them. I- Well, I played in them, you know. I mean around here.

Gilly's, you know, the first night... the first Gilly's was the Green Derby, where I played after it was the Green Derby. It became the first Gilly's. So, it was just a little bar, and I used to go there all the time. I heard George Benson there, I talked to George Benson, you know. I told him I wanted to play with him. I, um, heard Bill Evans there, I met Bill Evans there. I took Bill Evans out to breakfast at Dominic's.

MM: Ooh, nice.

JO: Yeah, and I saw Elvin Jones and talked to him at the big Gilly's. This was later on. And I was trying to think of... yeah, there was like- Oh, I remember one time I went- I drove to Chicago to hear Tony Williams, with a couple people. I went up there because I wanted to hear him so much in person. So, I did do that. I never did hear- well, I did hear Miles Davis in person, but that was out in LA, years later when he wasn't really doing the bop thing anymore. He was doing a different thing. So, it wasn't as thrilling, you know, it wasn't what I would have liked to have heard. But, yeah, those were the people I can remember hearing. And, just there used to be a lot of jam sessions here. I went to them all the time. There were a lot of musicians that lived here that were like, um, some of the big bands. Like, I think like some of the Duke Ellington and some of the big bands musicians lived around here, and they'd be at the jam sessions. So, you had a really good quality jam session going on. You had things happening where, you know, the love of music was just... with jazz, it's the kind of music that you share, you know? Everybody knows the same tunes. Everybody shares, and you play off of one another. It's a really- it's like a conversation.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JO: And they don't have that going on- even with rock. I mean, there was a lot of rock going on, too. In fact, I played in a lot of rock bands around here. I played in, um, well, Gene Shiverdecker's son Gary... not Gary, but his older son had a rock band, and I played with him and their rock band for a long time, and we played at like battles of the bands. They had battle of the bands, mostly at the skating rinks. You know, I played in

several of these. Um, when I was 18, I joined the Johnny McCoy Orchestra. Which was a seven-piece society band that read big band charts, but were condensed down to a seven piece band. And, um, I was asked to join that band when I was 18, which I did. And we played a lot around here. We played a lot around in Columbus. We played shows for people like- you know, people that would be coming through that needed a band to back them and do a show- we played with them, for them. And then, um, Frank Kalenoski, Bernie Edwards, these were local people that were musicians around here that I played with. Bernie Edwards was a piano player. Um, Frank Kalenoski was a guitar player I played with a lot. Chunky Lohman Orchestra, or combo, it was usually 4 or 5 people. I played a lot with him. And, you know, the things- things just kept rolling. It was a wonderful beginning.

MM: Yeah. So, you mentioned uh, the Beatles. Uh, were there- I mean they obviously had a huge impact on the music scene everywhere. Uh, were there any other bands besides them that had a major influence on the Dayton music scene?

JO: Yeah, I- you mean big names?

MM: Yeah.

JO: I, personally, myself, like as far as the rock world went, the people that I really loved and listened to and probably influenced me, as a guitar player, you know, I played Beatles songs. You know, and I started in that direction, too, with my guitar. Uh, but like Janis Joplin. Who we don't hear nearly enough of. You know, we always here Jimi Hendricks, but we never here quite enough or hardly at all of her. I guess because she's a female. That really bothers me. But Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrick, The Allman Brothers, Jim Morrison and the Doors, um, these were the people that I can think of off the top of my head that I would like, you know, I'd go to my friend's house when I wasn't playing where my regular aged friends would be, you know, that I was hanging out with. That's what we were listening to.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JO: And I loved it. They were great. I mean, they were great musicians. So, yeah, those were the people, I think they influenced all of us, and the Southern Rock, and the Acid rock, the emotional singing. Like, Trudy and the Hopple Street Exit, you know, was a very great, um, example of rock and roll during that time.

JO: It could've been anywhere, you know?

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: Trudy, um Glazer, her name is now. Trudy and Hopple Street exit, she's like a singer that could've been anywhere, one of the greats, and she still lives in town. And I got to know her real well later on in my life. But yeah, the Hopple Street Exit was a great example. Then, there was another... um, gosh, I'm having trouble remembering the name but there were a few rock bands around here back then that were really, really good. I just- there's one girl that I can't think of her name right now, I wish I could. But I remember she played, they played, all the time. And then, she sang so much that she kinda like lost her voice. I remember she had to lay off for a while, and I think she came back, but I- I wish I could remember her name. I just can remember it off hand. Yeah, definitely.

MM: So, Dayton has a very, uh murky kind of history as far as like geographical division between the city. Um, just based on a bunch of different things, but was there any kind of divide based on music genre? Were there certain parts of town that were allocated to like jazz and like to the east, rock to the north, anything like that?

JO: No.

MM: Or was it pretty much kind of a big ...

JO: We were one big happy family back then, and that's one thing I really miss. You know, there wasn't a divide, and that was the beauty of it. Everybody loved one another

and everybody... we didn't have that going on, you know? We were all together and we all played music together, and everybody was mixed up. And, I mean, as far as I knew, like around town, there was all different kinds of music all over town.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That's one of the reasons that I really got interested in this whole project, is the fact of music's really the one area where, like, it wasn't segregated. You can't really force a segregation with music. Music's music. It doesn't really know race, gender and anything. If you have the gift, you have the skill.

JO: That's the way I feel about it.

MM: Yeah. That's-

JO: I mean, I think that there's been some separation that's been created over- over the years here. You know, you've got the Ohio Players, you know, they section themselves off into the funk you know. They're the ones that you know are responsible for that. They made all that happen. And then, it's sad, but there have been divisions that have been created that used to not be there. I mean, you know, Roy was black, I was white, his sister was black, Bobbie was black. Amel, our bass player, he was white. I mean the funny thing about- I'll tell you a funny story. We went on the road- it was me and Roy and Amel and his sister Betty- to Iowa. We were going to play a week there at this hotel, and we drove. Well, Roy had his piano on the back- he always took his own piano with him, you know, he had a Kawai baby grand. So, he had it on the trailer hitch on the back of his car. He had a real nice car, and we were all in the car driving to Iowa. [laughs] Well, we pulled in this diner for lunch. It was in the middle of the day, in the middle of nowhere, and before we get out of the car- and we're listening to like, you know, Miles Davis and all this in the car on the way up there. It's like, "Oh, this is great!" Roy said, "Now wait a minute," he says, "before we go in here, I wanna do something." And we were going, "Uh huh [affirmative]." We were all naïve, I was totally naïve, and um, so anyway, he puts his arm around me, and then he has Amel put his arm around Betty.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

JO: And he wants to walk in the restaurant like this, you know, to do a shock factor thing. Which I didn't know what he was doing. I thought- I just went along with it. We go in the restaurant, and everybody's like, "Huh? Huh?" Right? So, it was just a big fun thing, you know? We all- Roy had a great big laugh out of it, and it was- it produced the result he was looking for. You know, he knew a lot more about all that than I did, right? I was just young and didn't know anything. But that was one thing that happened. But when we were back here, like at the Forum Club, that was our home club. Every night after we got done playing there, there was usually- everybody would go somewhere to somebody's house. And nine times out of 10, it was Bobbie Gordon's house. We'd go to her house, it was a big party. You know, people were like partying, just about every night, all night long as far as what I can remember. And there was never any problem about color at all. I don't even remember thinking about it really.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: But I can... I can say that I certainly have grown to think about it through the years of how it's increased, and it's like social, you know? Separation and the awareness factor of like, you know, something's wrong. [laughs]

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: I don't know. I... yeah. No, back then it was one big happy family, and I think it was a lot better off that way. It was for me, anyway. Yeah, I never thought about anything like that.

MM: So, do you have any, um, local air play on any of the stations around here?

JO: Back then?

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: I don't think so. Not that I know of.

MM: Any more, like, today? Not today, but as of recently or later on in your career?

JO: From back then?

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: I've never heard any of it on the radio.

MM: Those monsters. I'm gonna call up NPR.

JO: Right. I don't even know where they would... I mean, I guess there are recordings of it. I don't even have any recordings myself of it.

MM: Hmm. Dang.

JO: Yeah.

MM: Um, did you guys have managers? How did you typically go about booking gigs?

JO: There were booking agents here at the time, there were a few. Um, that that's what they did. Shane Taylor was one. Uh, there was a woman, um, Mary, I can't think of her last name. Jimmy Mays, he had a big band and he was also a booker. Those were the three that were around here that would- that actually did that for a living. With Roy, he was his own booker. He did his own booking, so I don't think he relied on anyone that I know of. And for myself, I was just too young to even know that that was something that you know... well, I mean, I knew these people, but it was something I never had to

participate in. I was always just a drummer. You know, somebody would call me or else- and then I would go play a gig. I never had to get involved in the booking part of it.

MM: Where was your favorite place to play, state-wise?

JO: In what state?

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. What's your favorite venue to play in?

JO: In here, in Dayton?

MM: Anywhere.

JO: Anywhere?

MM: Anywhere. Both.

JO: Gosh. Back then during that time, you mean?

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: Well, I was here the whole time, so- gosh, I guess the Forum Club. That's where I- that was a great, beautiful place to play. And then, like, the places out on the base were beautiful places. And then the country clubs, wonderful beautiful places to play, all of them. Um, the small bars like the Green Derby- well, they were just small neighborhood bars and, um, The Turf Club, the Tropics, those were- the Tropics was a real beautiful place to play. Memorial Hall was a wonderful place to play, the acoustics were great there. They were great everywhere, really. Yeah, those were the places I can remember that were-

MM: What about after your career in Dayton?

JO: In California?

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: Gosh, it was so different out there.

MM: Yeah.

JO: Well, I started in L.A., and I was gonna be a jazz drummer, and it was, like, it was a totally different- It was like night and day from leaving here and going there. It was like a 360, it was like it didn't matter. Your talent didn't really matter, it was who you knew and how much money you had. And I was very young and naïve, I didn't know that that's what mattered or that's what was gonna matter when I got out there. I just had my heart on my sleeve and I just wanted to play, and I couldn't get anywhere.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: But I found out that a lot of people were doing a lot of immoral things to get places, and I wasn't about to do anything like that. I never would do anything like that, so I never could get anywhere. That's the way it worked. And, I mean, I did some playing. Nothing like what I expected that I was going to do out there. I got real disillusioned out there. At a certain point, I packed up my drums and put 'em away. I just- I said I can't do this anymore. And then I got into, you know, meditation and I got into a spiritual life with Guru Maharaj Ji out there. The Divine Light Mission. And so that's what I ended up really enjoying, and so from there I came back here for a little while, then I went to this millennium festival at the Houston Astrodome, it was in 1973. It was, uh, 12 days and 12 Nights of Peace, that was the-the name of the festival. And we just lived in this Houston Astrodome, waiting to receive knowledge for Guru Maharaj Ji, and I finally got the knowledge, and after that, it was like, then it really didn't matter what you did. [laughs]

MM: Yeah.

JO: It was like there was no more problems or no more anything. I mean, it was like bliss, and I've lived like that for so, so long. It was just such a wonderful... I'm just so grateful.

MM: Yeah.

JO: You know, that... I know that I've never had to worry about God or anything like that after that since, and I'm so grateful for that. And then I went back to California, and then I ended up in San Francisco. I had a girlfriend, Diane, we had received the knowledge together, and from L.A. I said, "I'm gonna go to San Francisco. I'm gonna try it up there." So, we drove up there, and the first night I was up there- when I got up there, we had like seven dollars and something. I remember leaving L.A. with seven dollars and something, and I had my car and my drums, and we got up there, I said, "Where's the jazz club?" You know, I asked somebody, "Where's the jazz club?" and they said, "Well, there's a jazz club called the Sand Dunes, it's out in the avenues', and I said, "Great!" So, I drove out there, and that night Chet Baker had just gotten out of prison, that day, for heroin use. I guess it was heroin use, I don't know. I shouldn't say that, because I don't know what it was because I didn't talk to him about it.

MM: Yeah.

JO: But he was there playing at the Sand Dunes, and I'm sitting at the bar, and I'm sitting right next to the music critic from the San Francisco Chronicle, which I had no idea. We're having this great conversation about music, he's a terrific person, and I end up sitting in with Chet Baker on the drums that night, and I thought, "This is where I'm gonna stay." I just- and so it was a completely different, San Francisco and L.A. are two completely different, you know-

MM: Yeah, they definitely still are.

JO: Yeah.

MM: 100%.

JO: And so, I stayed there.

MM: Well that's awesome. Did you play with anyone else in San Francisco?

JO: Oh my gosh! I did, yeah. After, you know, I think I was out in California a total of about eight years before I finally met people that I could come together and play music with, on a spiritual and same creative level. It wasn't jazz, it was punk. So, I had- I kept trying with the jazz, kept running into the same kind of difficulties with, you know, people- you know, what they wanted- and so finally this punk thing started happening around the city, this was the mid-70s. And you could tell, you know, the safety pins and the hair-do's and all this and that. And I remember, like, I went, I bought these glasses. They were shaped like diamonds and they were red rimmed diamonds, just little ones. And I found this big safety pin on the sidewalk- because I used to walk, I walked the city every day.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: And I found this pin and I thought it was a sign, you know, this is a sign, so I had the pin on and these glasses, and I'm walking around San Francisco. And this woman saw me, I didn't know this at the time, but she was a resident of the city. She was a great artist in the city, well-known, from there, all involved and connected to all the artists of San Francisco at that time. There were a lot of really beautiful, creative people living there, doing all kinds of things- furniture making, music, jewelry, dance, theater, just every type of art- and everybody was together. It wasn't like all this separation, you know, like, 'well, you can't play your drums with a ballet, because they don't do that.' Because I tried to do that here, when I came back after being in California, I wanted to play my drums with the ballet. And I remember going downtown and going up to the ballet, knocking on the door and asking them about it, and they acted like it was something they- they

couldn't believe that I had even asked this question. That's the kind of things I'd run into a lot. Um, I don't know if it's here, it could very well be here. But anyway, out there what happened was, I ended up... this woman that had seen me on the street- I had this friend, and she asked me, she says, "Have you ever"- she says, "Do you know Esmeralda?" And I said, "No. I don't know her." And she goes, "Well, you need to. Because she's really good and you should meet her." And I said, "Sure, fine." And she goes, "Well, she's doing a performance down on Church Street at this church with the Angels of Light", which was a theater, an original theater company that was made up of artists from San Francisco. And I said, "Yeah, I'll go down and check it out." So, I went there that night to see this performance, and at a certain point during the play... there was like a two-story, it was like a Spanish theme. There was a two-story house that they had constructed, you know, like the set. She came up this ladder, and then she busted through this window upstairs and her hair was like flaming red and real long, and she would like- came out of this window singing this torch song. And we were about the same age and everything, you know, we were in our 20s, and I heard her sing, and I thought, "Man, she's as good as I am." [laughs] That's what I thought. Because that was a part of the problem I had. I was very talented, and I had trouble finding people my own age, my own race and everything that were as equally as good. And that's why I had trouble getting into the other kinds of music. But when I heard her, I thought, "Yeah, we could do something together." So, I found out where she lived, and I went over to her house and I talked to her about it. And she invited me over, she said, "Bring your drums and come over." So, we made an appointment and I took my drums over to her studio. And I set 'em up, she played the piano, I played my drums, and then she said, "Yeah, I think we, you know, you've got power," she goes, "I think we could do something together." So, we had this fantastic duo all during the punk/new-wave movement that happened in the middle to late 70s. It was the original punk. I'm an original punk, you know, there was a whole... it was like something that just emerged out of the energies of the universe. Punk. And it was like all the people that were there at that time were the original punks. You know, we never got credit, we never got recorded, we never got, you know, anything done with our music. But we were there for, like, oh I'd say a good five years. We played all around the town.

JO: And there were so many groups at that time, like, um, the Pink Section, there was the Dead Kennedys, there was, um, Flipper, from L.A. There were so many groups that was all a part of that scene. And these different clubs we would play constantly around town. The Café Flore. Now, we do have recordings of that. In fact, we got our music re-engineered and redistributed in 2012 from a fellow that went from Cleveland to San Francisco and loved the music so much that he actually took it upon himself to find these musicians and take their music. We had music on cassette tapes and reel-to-reel tapes. And he took all that and re-engineered it and created vinyl for us and CDs and all this and that. And so that was something that was really nice. I mean, we didn't really make any money off of it, but we did get, I guess- I don't know... the satisfaction of somebody caring or, you know, [laughs] doing something for us. But yeah, that was my- that was my moment of fame or my claim to fame, as far as my trip out there and all that I wanted to do, and it lasted for maybe, you know, four or five years and then after that, it was like that was it. You know, it was over.

JO: So, it wasn't too long after that that I came back here, and I've been back here ever since. And, you know, the whole thing about doing that is, like, I kind of split up my career. It's like I either never should've left here or I never should've come back. Because all of the people and all the connections I had here when I left, by the time I came back they were all either dead or gone or not involved in music anymore. And so, you know, I came back to a whole... almost all people that I didn't know, you know, that didn't know me. I didn't have a reputation here anymore. And so, it was sort of like, well, I've never had like a satisfaction back here since I came back because of that. I did do a lot of playing back here over the years with my... I do write songs on the guitar and I had a lot of bands that I've made with my guitar and my songs. It's all original music. And I've done that ever since I've been back here. You know, you get a group for a while, it happens for a while then it ends and then you just do that over and over and over. I never did a lot of traveling from here, which I could've done. I guess it was just my own lack of desire to, you know, spend my life on a bus or whatever. I just never really wanted to do that, and I probably could've done a lot more with my music. I still do play. I teach now. I've been teaching for the last 20 years. I'm down at Guitar Center now teaching, and then

I teach in Fairborn, and I teach at Wittenberg University privately. But as far as the playing went, with the jazz and the drumming, it's just something that I never got to fulfill, you know? So, it's been a very miserable, um, realization for me in my life that I never... all that stuff that was going around in my head, all that play that was going on in my head, I never got to really manifest, you know, into a physical reality. That's been a disappointment for me in my life and a bitterness. You know, I have a bitterness. I'm a bit bitter about it.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: But ...

MM: Well, that's the beauty of, you know, teaching music, though. Because you can just kind of pass it on to the-

JO: Yeah, I wanna pass it on.

MM: -next generation.

JO: It would be nice to get some drummers that... really, I could pass a lot. I have so much that I could pass on.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: If I could just get some students that, you know, I could do it with. Most of the time, I get, you know, just small children and they're there for a little while and then they're gone. But, yeah, it could be a lot. I could be a- I really should be teaching at a college level is what I should be doing, because that's where I could be effective with what I know.

MM: Yeah.

JO: Um, I don't know if I'll be able to do that or not. I do teach at Wittenberg, but I've never had, um, I still have never had any drum students up there. Well, it's not really a jazz-based school, and they do have a jazz band. It's a classical oriented school. And I could be doing- I could've... I could pass on a lot more with the drums than what I'm able to do. I don't know whatever happened with that.

MM: Yeah. So um, did you ever develop any kind of like fan club or following at any point? Like, when you were in San Francisco?

JO: Oh yeah. I think that No Mercy had a great- we had a great following.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: And a great- I mean, all my people, that's where they're at. You know, all my spirit family, you know? All the people that I met and made my connections with as an adult in my life, that's where they all are. You know, that was the misfortunate thing about me coming back here, because I left everything where people did love me. I mean, people adored me out there and were constantly wanting me to do things. And I left all that and came back here, basically just because of, you know, lack of funds. And um, so it had a big effect on, you know, what I did with my life. You know, big effect.

MM: So, you said that you've never had like a high point of your entire career. What would you say was your highest, high point?

JO: I think, you know, when I was playing with Roy. You know, that's when I developed my playing skills to the highest level. And that's why I left here and went to California, and then when I finally met Esmeralda and we did No Mercy together, that was definitely another high point, because I got to, you know, manifest my talents with that music which was... it was just drums and voice, so there was a real big, uh, statement that I got to make as a drummer in that group. It was sort of known as the drumming and the vocal. Um, after that I can't say that there's been anything that I can- that's sticking out in my

mind about, 'Wow, that was really great.' I mean, I always get a big thrill. I love performing. So, I always get joy in everything when I do it. So, pretty much every time that I have performed, it's been a joyful experience. Yeah, I gotta say that, because it's a gift, and when you exercise your gift, it feels great, you know? And when I do play out, people love it. I just- I haven't been doing much of it lately because I'm getting older, you know? But I did play out last night, actually, for the first time that I've played out in quite a long time. I went and I played at an open mic down at South Park Tavern, some of my songs that I still write. You know, it's something that I do, so I played a few songs down there and, um, the people I met at Guitar Center have been really... it's been like opening a new window for me. You know, new people. They're wonderful people, beautiful people down there that I've met, and they're all into music. They're all- most of them are musicians themselves, and so we had a big group of us that went down there last night and played, and it was a lot of fun. But it's just that Dayton is, now... I don't know. I guess there's probably people here that are real involved in music and doing well here and are happy about it. Um, for me, I don't see that here. The whole jazz thing here, I'm not connected with the jazz musicians that are here. I wasn't welcomed into the jazz community here when I came back from California. In fact, I was kind of snubbed and pushed away from it for reasons I don't really understand, but it was a very hurtful period of time for me to be snubbed by the other younger, you know, musicians in jazz. The drummers that were here and coming up. So I went through a lot of- you know, I got my feelings hurt, really. And I kind of like stepped back and it just took... I just stepped away from it. So, I don't know. There's not a lot of jazz here, anyway, to go. There's that one jam session down at, uh, Jazz Central.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: Gosh. I went... I used to go down there religiously every Sunday. This was during probably the 80s, 90s or whatever. Every single Sunday I'd go down there. I knew, like, um, Miles. He was the drummer. And then the- you know, the organ player that was so great that was down there, he passed away. He used to run the show down there, and it was always fun sitting in with him. He was a really energetic player that you could really,

you know, smoke some music with. But it was the same kind of thing happened down there. It's like, yeah, I could go down there and spend my whole Sunday sitting, waiting to play a song or two. You know, but nothing ever came of it. I never could- of all the people I ever met down there- I never was able to form a group. Like, if I got a gig, you know, if I got a gig, I could. And I said, "I want you to play with me." They'll come out and play with you, if you pay them. They'll come out and play a gig with you if you pay them what they want. But I never met people that I was, like... that wanted to like be in a group together and work on something because they loved it, and we're gonna go out and we're gonna, you know, be a group and we're gonna play because we're great and we wanna do this thing. I've never met people here like that in jazz since I came back. And for me, it's just like, I almost feel like I would have to go somewhere else if I really wanted to try to involve myself in playing jazz. I just- I mean, I've been here so long now. I'm pretty sure it's not gonna happen. But I stay here for a long time because of my mom, I took care of my mom for, you know, a good 20 years. And so I had to do that and now that my mom passed away, which has been- 2017 she passed away. I'm not sure, you know. I'm still kind of wondering what, where will I end up, really. I don't know.

MM: So, kind of a travel itch coming on?

JO: I do have a travel itch.

MM: Yeah. That's what I'm dealing with right now as well. Uh, so Dayton really has a pretty vibrant music history. Um, do you think it's kind of missing something these days? I mean, obviously they don't really have, like, the music clubs anymore, and really you wanna... like, there is live music everywhere, but you really have to know where to look for it. What would you say is missing the most from the Dayton music scene right now?

JO: I haven't... I know there's new clubs that I haven't really gone to. Like, Jimmie's Ladder is one of the newer clubs um, but the clubs that I have been to when I've gone out to listen to music, it's just the environments of the clubs. They're- everybody stands, there's no comfortable seating. You can't sit down, have a conversation. The music

doesn't start until 10, 11 o'clock at night. I mean, music should be happening all day long, in my opinion.

MM: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JO: Um, you know, it's always so loud. For me, you can't even hear yourself think. You can't talk. There's no really good food in the places.

MM: Uh huh. [affirmative]

JO: Uh, they should be more, um, health oriented. Lot of people don't want to go out and get drunk anymore. I- You might want a healthy drink, or a smoothie or something. Some organic food to eat, you know. I mean- and the restaurants that are- the few restaurants that are like that, they don't have any music in there at all.

MM: Uh huh. [affirmative]

JO: There could be so much. People could do so much with the beauty of music instead of like associating music with alcohol and drugs. It's like, take it away from there because music has nothing to do with alcohol or drugs. Music is like a course, it's a study, it's a language. And if you learn it, and the quality of musicianship, you know, the good musicians stop playing because they don't want to go out and play for nothing. People don't pay people to play music, and that's what happened to the whole situation through the years, you know? Like I said, a union used to be in force here. Union workers used to go around the clubs. They- while people were playing, they go in the clubs. They would make sure that the people were being paid. They had wages, they had scales, they were... they would make sure they were being paid to scales. If they weren't, they had to stop it.

MM: Uh huh. [affirmative]

JO: You know they were. It was power and it- and it made people. And so, you had better music and you had people were making money for what they knew how to do, which is only natural. Um, now it's like, I don't know, whatever. Classic rock around here is the big thing everybody seems to want to go out and hear and they're gonna pay you to play it. Now that's- I know that because I have friends that do that. That's the kind of music, if you want to make any money around Dayton. That's the kind of band you're gonna get in or form, and it's gonna sound just like the record.

MM: Uh huh. [affirmative]

JO: And then you're gonna go to a few, the few clubs around here and play, and you're gonna make a little bit of money. Other than that, if you're any other style of music- uh, well there's really nobody playing jazz anywhere around Dayton. Maybe once or twice or something like that a year. Maybe you'll hear something, but- that you might as well just- that's almost dead here. And the other kinds of music that there are, say, like original music. There's tons of it. And there's tons of good musicians. There's tons of great blues players, original musicians. Uh, I know so many of them. I know everybody here in the original music scene. They're going out and they're playing probably for nothing. Who wants to do that? That's such a disrespect, it's such a shame and a waste of a part of our- you know, the network of society of life. We're not treated in accordance with like any kind of a system that should be organized and maintained and like any other kind of job, you know? And maybe if there were, maybe we'd have a little bit better quality in what we're going out to pay to listen to. Because you're paying to go into these places, or you're paying to have a few drinks or whatever you buy there. But the musicians aren't really being paid to do it. You know it's like... you spend like... so many people say this, "I spend a whole entire day, you know, first you gotta pack up, you gotta load up, you gotta go, you gotta set up, you gotta play, you gotta unload." You spend a whole entire day, and you have all the money invested in the equipment. It's just not, I can't- It's just not right.

MM: Yeah.

JO: You know.

MM: My, uh, my few friends that are actually in bands they say, like, you can't just stay local and actually turn profit for what they're trying to do. You have to tour around to at least the Tri-State area to even break even more times than not. Just because a lot of the places here, they pay, but it's not enough. And there's so many other bands that are forming. Uh, it's really kind of hard to get in the door and then keep a routine performance, like every other month of-

JO: Yeah, and then the whole, like, I mean everything being on a major level, you know? Nothing, you can never- uh, you're never gonna succeed unless you're in like a one percent, you know? And like music, and there's so many people that need to make a living. It-it- like, you know, like recording. There's no real recording industry going on around here. There's nothing, you know, everything's online. I mean, everything could be developed to incorporate music and make a financial base out of it all, locally, instead of like, okay, like OnePlay. We've all gotta go to New York. We've all gotta go to L.A. I've done that, it- it- it's-

MM: There's no soul. There's no soul in the big city.

JO: It just doesn't work. It just doesn't work.

MM: Uh, so just to kind of wrap things up here, because I know you have to get going. Um, what would you say is Dayton's greatest music legacy? Band-wise, sound-wise? I mean, obviously a lot of people think- They'll connect Dayton to the funk scene.

JO: Yeah.

MM: But, um-

JO: I think they're trying to make that the connection, because that's the first thing that popped into my mind when you said that. They're trying to create that and maybe that is part of it. I wouldn't say that would be all of it though. You know, it's hard to say. I mean the- the- the style of music that we played back then was wonderful. I mean the standards, uh, the shows, um, we had lounge music. And then- but then, you've had other kinds of music, too. There's a lot of good blues that's come out of Dayton. And still lot of good blues players in Dayton that compete and win and go on down to the different, you know, competitions that they have yearly. Uh, the original music, there's a lot of good original musicians around here that probably nobody or the majority of people don't even know exist or have never heard. You know, and I think there's always some- well, you know, like Canal Street Tavern. I mean, look at [Mick] Montgomery. I mean look what all he did for this area. He was probably the greatest single impact musically in the recent years of anybody that had a great impact on music here.

JO: Because when you would go down to the Canal Street Tavern, I always felt at home there, you know? It was like, my living room, I- it wasn't based on alcohol. It was based on music and it was always comfortable, and I think his influence was unparalleled here as a single person promoting good quality music of all different kinds. You know, he was open-minded, you know, he had to hold the lesbian music, the any kind of music. He had- and it was all good music. So, I think he's probably the one single most important person as far as like... well, back then with Lenny, you know, the Forum Club. Look what all they did for music and I was- I got to play there. Suttmiller's, that supper club, that whole era of time, it was so long ago. People don't even know it existed anymore. It was great at the time, but now it's gone. It's- It's just disappeared, it's just, you know, disintegrated into nothingness. Now the kind of music we have here- like for now, like with Mick gone, Well, then, Jerry Gilotti, now he's gone. You know, he did all that for jazz around here for so long. For as long as he could. Then he started bringing in other kinds of music, because the jazz scene was just dying. And um, he was a big influence in this town for music, Jerry Gilotti. Huge. Him and Mick. Now, they weren't musicians, but as far as like power, and influence, you know, and what they provided the Dayton area, for a musical venue, they were the ones I would say definitely, they were the ones.

JO: And then before them, like Suttmiller's, all that, and the Tropics. All those clubs, the Forum Club. The clubs themselves seems to have a big influence on the impact of music, you know? Right now what clubs we have- well, they have different clubs. Uh, I guess the Yellow Cab Company is really doing great things for original music. It's uh, it's not, you know, fancy or anything, but I guess they're doing the best they can. You know, they're doing the best they can.

MM: Yellow Springs area, they have a lot of good music opportunities out there. Especially Peach's. Peach's Bar and Grill.

JO: Yeah.

MM: It's not, it's not, like, comfy seats or anything, it's just a typical bar. But they, I mean, they have pretty good music there. I've caught a few pretty good shows up there from time to time.

JO: Huh? Like who?

MM: No one big. It's no one I've ever heard of. I've never gone there specifically for anybody, but it's just happened to be playing there. I'll go hiking out in Glen Helen all the time. I'll just stop there for a drink before going home and end up spending three or four hours there because of the band

JO: That's great, yeah because I remember like, uh, Kelly Richey. I saw her play up there once and she's fantastic. You ever hear of her? She's from Cincinnati, but she's a great guitar player. And the Emporium, too. I've heard a lot of great music at the Emporium. It's a good venue.

MM: It seems like it's one of those things where you just have to be at the right place at the right time anymore, just because-

JO: Right.

MM: There's so many... there really is a very vibrant music environment around here and there's so many people that just want to play. And there are really a lot of options for them to go out and play, but they're not making any money for it, is what is a really big deterrent. So, a lot of- like, once people will start to become good enough, they feel a need to kind of move away to like a Nashville, or L.A., or New York.

JO: Uh huh.

MM: It's kind of sad because then people like us kinda don't really enjoy it anymore.

JO: Right.

MM: But, I mean, it's good for them because they kind of push their career forward, but-

JO: Then it makes you wonder, like, when they go there- is it really going to work out, or is it gonna pay off? Are they gonna end up coming back here? It's a- it's a gamble that people just naturally take, and just never know what's gonna happen. Usually, it doesn't happen. It's a hard road.

MM: Yeah.

JO: Yeah, you're right, though. There is a lot. There's a lot- there's a lot going on that I'm not saying, because I'm not involved in it. You know, like, there is a lot going on around here. A lot of festivals, too.

MM: Yeah, especially, uh, downtown Dayton. They've really pushed for more, uh, open air live music. Especially with the new Levitt Pavilion that just opened. Offering free shows for you to come out.

JO: Right.

MM: I love that most. I'm very much in favor.

JO: Yeah. And I haven't been there yet, but I think that's a real good place, you're right.

MM: Especially because there's some people that never get to actually go to, like, a live show performance. And there it's just smaller bands from the area that now get to have light shows.

JO: Yeah.

MM: From like a big kind of-

JO: Yeah, that's nice.

MM: Yeah.

JO: And it's all local, right?

MM: Um, the bands mostly are local, but it could be some people traveling through as well.

JO: And the Rose, you know, I mean, talking about- I've gone to see great concerts at the Rose.

MM: Oh, yeah.

JO: At the Frazee, I mean I've seen some fantastic, you know, national shows here in town, And the Schuster, I've seen Diana Ross at the Schuster Center, that was incredible.

I, just, I've seen so many great shows. Diana Krall, the Frazee, just so many- yeah, they do it. And the Rose is a great venue.

MM: Oh, absolutely.

JO: It's really, really, very good.

MM: And there's, uh, there's been kind of a movement recently, too, where a lot of these bigger bands- the bigger named bands who will actually prefer to play smaller venues, just because of the more intimate setting.

JO: I like that.

MM: Yeah. There's one thing to go to a concert. Like a giant arena, because- that's one feel, or a giant festival in a big field full of 20,000 people. When you're in, like, a small room, or a small concert hall that only seats maybe a couple hundred, it's a completely different feel.

JO: Exactly.

MM: Uh, I-

JO: Now that's a kind of concert I would go to, I don't go to the big huge concerts. I- I don't want to.

MM: Doesn't sound the same.

JO: Hmm.

MM: It's too... it's too spread out.

JO: Yeah.

MM: But yeah, uh, I know you've gotta get going here. Are there any last words you wanna impart? Words of wisdom to whoever might be watching this later on down the line?

JO: Yeah, let's all get together and develop a plan that will support the financial security base for musicians and somehow see that it gets enforced somehow. Create. That's one thing I've thought about so much in my life, you know? You look at a paper, you have all these jobs, well, we need our place in the paper where we get jobs. We get to- we get to live. We get to make a living. I mean, I've lived a whole life of poverty because of being a musician. And it's like, of course I've tried a lot of other things, but you eventually have to follow your heart. You know, I mean, or you're in misery. But in order to do that, you're gonna live a life of poverty. And I think it's something that needs to be looked at and corrected, you know? I really do. I hope someday in our country that it gets... somehow a group of people, uh, in the government or wherever it would have to be to start to make it happen.

MM: Uh, I think the government is too focused on STEM education to help out there. So, it would have to be a grass roots kind of movement for sure.

JO: Well that would be great.

MM: We can't even get them to fund art classes or ...

JO: Yeah, that's- that's just, you know, it's just wrong. Well, maybe we could start a grass roots movement of somehow start organizing a working, uh, base of information that would allow the musician to first of all have more opportunity to create more opportunity where everything doesn't have to necessarily start at ten o'clock in the evening and be based around alcohol. You know, or else you're taking a music lesson, and that's one thing about being a music teacher, it's like you get these kids in and it's like, you feel kind

of guilty in a way. Because where are they gonna go with what they are learning? What are they gonna do with it? You know, it's like they're spending money to learn, they want to learn, but then what? What are they gonna do with it? You know, I mean, we should have music happening all day long, all around. It would be so great for, you know, humanity itself.

MM: Yeah, oh yeah. I always think of how many musicians or teachers are out there that have just never had the opportunity to-

JO: And painters, too. All kinds of artists. And to take down the walls of separating the arts. Bring all the arts together. We're all artists. I feel like I'm an artist who happens to play the drums. I write songs, but I feel like I'm an artist. I'm a poet, you know, and when I think about what I'm doing creatively, it's coming from an artistic viewpoint. It's not coming from a place of like "I know how to go boom boom chick, boom boom chick." You know, I mean, there's just different consciousness levels of creative people, and we should all come together and work together as like, you know, artists, musicians, dancers. You know, we should all work together instead of separating ourselves. I feel that's something that really needs the walls to be taken down.

MM: Absolutely. Well, thanks, thank you for sitting down for this.

JO: Thank you, thank you for coming over.

MM: Great time ... get this recording. Hopefully it recorded.

JO: [laughs]