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## **Kathy Simpson: Dayton Music History Project**

Kathy Simpson

Matthew Mercer

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**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Dayton Music History Project**  
**Interview with Kathy Simpson, February 14, 2019**

**Interview Information**

Interview date: February 14, 2019  
Interviewer: Matthew Mercer (MM)  
Interviewee: Kathy Simpson (KS)

**Interview Transcript**

**Kathy Simpson:** Are you nervous?

**Matthew Mercer:** Uh, no, no. I don't really get nervous anymore

KS: Okay.

MM: I've been- life has kind of taken off the nerves for me. So, cool. We're just gonna do a quick introduction. So, I'm Matthew Mercer. I'm a graduate student here at Wright State and we are interviewing Kathy Simpson for the Dayton Music History Project. So, if you just wanna tell us a little bit of a brief personal background. Were you born in Dayton?

KS: No, I was actually born in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. This is probably before your time but one thing it's well known for is the river being so polluted it caught on fire.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: Not once, but evidently several times.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Um, yeah, I was born there in 1952. That makes me 66. I was born to, uh, actually my father was a minister which makes my mother a minister's wife. He had a church in Cuyahoga Falls, Grace Brethren Church. And we moved to Dayton- I think I was 12 when he took a church in the Dayton area. And that was kind of my musical beginning, was singing and playing piano in church. From as young as I can remember, standing on a little step stool, you know?

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: And- and my parents both sang and she played piano- organ in church. So that was kinda the musical beginning, was singing with them in a little trio.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Yeah.

MM: Yeah. So, would you say that the overall kinda of, uh, choir aspect of going to church was really what sparked your overall interest in music?

KS: Oh, I think so because even, you know, when my mom was pregnant with me, I was hearing [laughs]-

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: ...if you believe in that kind of thing-

MM: Yeah.

KS: Music through- from the womb.

MM: Oh yeah.

KS: And she sang and played in church, and I just think, um, there was nine months of that before-

MM: Yeah.

KS: -I plopped out and then it was right into church with, uh, with music.

MM: Nice. Uh, so were your parents from around the Cuyahoga region or did they-

KS: Actually, my dad was from Long Beach, California. My mother was from a little town close to the area called Heartville, Ohio.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: My mother was one of eight children. My father was an only child. Um, so that was kind of interesting. I- I don't even really know how they met other than I believe he was preaching in the area and that- that's how they met.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

MM: Do you know if they had any, uh, certain genres of music that they were interested in more or-

KS: Oh, it was just Christian music at that time.

MM: Christian music all the time?

KS: Yeah

MM: Nothing wrong with that. There's nothing wrong with that. Um, is anyone else in your family, uh, really big into music?

KS: Um, my sisters have a really strong musical ability, but they never pursued it.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: Um, and they're artistic in other ways. I mean they're- they're good artists as well. Um, my one niece pursued music for a while and then she had a- you know, got family and babies and- but they're all somewhat musical.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Uh, so, what was the- the first album that you bought?

KS: Well I was thinking about that, and the back story on that is growing up in a religious home- movies, music, make up, dancing...forbidden.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: It was very strict. Um, but I was allowed to play piano and I was allowed to sing and play in church. So, there weren't any albums until later on. I discovered a guitar in my uncle's closet somewhere around being 12 years old and it was a beat up guitar that had two strings on it, and I was mesmerized and from that moment on I wanted a guitar.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: Well, that wasn't going to happen in my family. But, um, believe it or not, um, when I turned, I think 14, they broke down and got me a guitar. And about the same time, even though I wasn't allowed to listen to music, I sent away and I got this little transistor radio that's shaped like a rocket.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: And the nose cone was the antenna. And if you lift it up and down, you get different stations. And it came with a little ear phone or ear plug- it's not even an ear bud. It was one of those things- mono signal at the time. You stick in your ears and you can listen to it. And after dark when we were supposed to be in bed asleep- I shared a bedroom with my sister- I'd get that little rocket radio thing and stick the little plug and I'd listen to WING. Do you know W- WING?

MM: I do not.

KS: 1410? That was the station in Dayton to listen to for rock music.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: Then I also discovered that if I put an alligator clip on the antenna and also on one of the screws, for a power outlet, you could draw in more channels. But I always came back to WING. When things kind of got a little bit more accepting around the house with music, I remember buying albums by Lou Christie, um, I remember buying- Jimi Hendrix, "Are You Experienced?", was one that I listened to and I thought, "God, he's depressing."

MM: [laughs]

KS: [laughs] But it was like a variety of music. Um, when I listened to WING, that's what they played, was a variety of music. Um, of course I bought more albums after that, but it was kind of a slow acceptance from being so strict.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Was there anything in particular that you could remember that really kind of caused that shift in acceptance?

KS: I think it was just a very, very slow transition. Um, when I was a sophomore in high school I was invited by... I'm not real sure whether it was the board of education, but there was an organization in Dayton that went to area high schools and took two students who were capable of getting really good grades but weren't motivated to do so and they put us in a project called Project Motivation where we stayed down at UD-

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS:... for the summer and we took classes and we- it- the- the idea behind it was motivate you to dig in, get good grades, and go to college, because most of us were kinda like, "Yeah. [laughs] Whatever."

MM: Yeah.

KS: So, during that summer, and a lot of the kids were musically trained or they were really into music. So, we'd do these talent shows, and during the whole summer our parents- we weren't allowed to have any contact with other parents or our parents or our friends, but they were allowed to come down for this one talent show we put on. And I remember that night because my mother and father seemed surprised that not only were we like singing and playing guitars and playing piano and having a good time, but the people were really appreciating it.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: I think if there was a turning point that- that might've been it.

MM: That was it?

KS: Mhm [affirmative]

MM: Okay. Cool, cool. Uh, so, what are the first concerts that you went to? I know you said that you're really into, uh, the whole ministry aspect of it so I guess you can count those as a type of concert. But what would you say were like the first, like overall bands or musicians that you went to go see?

KS: Um, right after I got out- out of high school or pretty soon after that, I joined a rock band around Dayton that was pretty well known called Hot Spit. And they used to go to Hara Arena when the bands were coming in for a concert and act as roadies and help them set up equipment. This is long before, you know, all the security and everything now. But they'd wait at the back load in ramp til the big trucks pulled in and they'd offer to help load in and nine times out of ten they were allowed to do it. Well, I wanted to do it but they said, "You can't. You're a girl."

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: "They won't let us do it if you- if you come along with us." I said, "What about if I dress up as a guy?" So, we tried it, and it worked. So, that was my first concert experience, was meeting the bands, watching them do soundchecks We actually got to get in, you know, for free because we helped, um. I can't remember all the bands we did it for but we did it for Rare Earth, we did it for The Jimmy Castor Bunch, we did it for Grand Funk Railroad. Um, there were several others, but those were kind of the first concerts I got in to see.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Where- was there anyone of those concerts where you just remember seeing them and, you know, "All right, this is what I wanna do for my career?"

KS: Oh yeah.

MM: Which one- which one would you say?

KS: Oh, all of them.

MM: All of them?

KS: Because they're there and they're doing what they loved and- and you know, in front of a big crowd that- that's loving it and I thought, "Yeah. This, this is pretty neat."

MM: Yeah. All right. So, uh, after you were able to kind of get more leniency at home, were you able to actually take lessons besides through the UD program?

KS: Um, I actually started at Wright State, in music education, and at that point I thought, "You know, I think I can make a living at this." And my mom said, "You're never going to make a living at it," and I said, "Well, let me try." So, um, I quit Wright State and went right into playing. At that time, it was around 1970, and I started playing coffee houses and in little rock bands. Once I got into supper clubs, which we don't have any of those anymore but used to be clubs like, uh, Annarino's, Suttmillers, The Tropics, The Colony Club. We worked- this is no kidding, and people don't understand how we did this back then- but six nights a week/ five hours a night we played.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And it definitely was a living. And a lot of the people probably that you interviewed from the sixties or seventies, you know, were doing that. We actually made a living. I did that for a long time. Uh, what was your question?

MM: [laughs] Oh.

KS: Oh. Let's look at our notes.

MM: [laughs] Um.

KS: Oh, because I kind of-

MM: Um, it was the, “Did you take lessons?”

KS: Oh, I did take lessons. Boy, I kind of went a long way off of that.

MM: No, you’re allowed- you’re allowed to go wherever you want with it.

KS: Um, so while I was at Annarino’s supper club, I found out about a gentleman who lived up in Covington, Ohio. His name was Herb Eidemiller. And Herb was from the area, but he had moved to New York where he was a conductor, um, a voice instructor. He worked with people like Eydie Gorme, Dionne Warwick, a bunch of people like that. He’s very well known. Well, he and his wife lived up in New York, and he also worked with a lot of the big bands. His wife got ill so they decided to move back to Covington, Ohio. Bad for him but good for me, because I found out about him and I got the opportunity to go up and study with him for probably a year, before he passed away.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: So, that was- those were the lessons I took. From him.

MM: Mhm [affirmative] So, on here, so a lot of these questions are definitely more kind of- some of them are focused more on the impact in the sixties but the one that I find to be kind of overarching is the impact of the Beatles in music-

KS: Mhm [affirmative]

MM: -and in the US, especially. Did you see any like real cultural impacts, like not only growing up but during your music career, of the impact of the Beatles and bands like that?

KS: Well, for me not so much, but I think that kind of question has to do with your perspective as a musician at the time and what you were into. Um, not being in the sixties, I wasn't involved in the rock scene back then-

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: -as much as some of the people you've talked to. Um, I came more from the seventies, the folk era, coffee houses. Wright State had a coffee house. UD had a coffee house in the basement of Frisch's on Stewart.

MM: [laughs]

KS: This is where we kinda started, and I guess the Beatles were popular then, but as folk artists playing in coffee houses, we didn't perform a lot of that music.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: It was more like Peter, Paul, and Mary, Joan Baez, John Prine, uh, Bob Dylan. That kinda thing.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: That's kind of the difference from- from where I was.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. So, what was the first band that you-

KS: Kitty and the Dewdrops.

MM: Kitty and the Dewdrops.

KS: That was in the seventh grade, yes.

MM: Nice. What was your, uh, your genre?

KS: Uh, I don't know that we had one.

MM: [laughs]

KS: You know, back then it was like your girlfriends in elementary school, "Do you wanna be in a band? I got an idea. We'll be Kitty and the Dewdrops." Um, so of course it didn't last or anything, but you were always looking for somebody to put a band together.

MM: Yeah.

KS: And it didn't matter if they played anything. If they could hold a tambourine or, you know, that kind of thing. But yeah. Kitty and the Dewdrops was it.

MM: How did you come up with that name?

KS: I was Kitty. They were the Dewdrops.

MM: They were the Dewdrops?

KS: Yeah.

MM: Okay [laughs]. Okay. Nice. And so what was like your first... let's say career band?

KS: Um, well I would say, oh, the first band that I played in where we did a lot of jobs was probably Hot Spit, which became Sky King, which became ZsaZsa. That was early on, and it was a rock band and we did a lot of battle of the bands and played a lot of high school proms and after proms and that kind of thing.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: So, we worked really steady, and then it just kind of went on from there.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. So, when you started did you... playing music, did you do more cover music or was it basically just write your own?

KS: Well, I was writing back then, but people didn't want to hear original music when they went out. They wanted to hear-

MM: Covers?

KS: Cover songs. So, it's pretty much been that. I don't think I've ever been in a band where we did nothing but covers.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. What's your-

KS: I mean, originals.

MM: Yeah. What's your favorite song to cover?

KS: Uh.

MM: Or top ten. If you had to pick top ten?

KS: Top ten? Well Joni Mitchell I love to cover. Um, she was a big influence. I listened to a lot of Joni Mitchell. In different bands, it was different things. I was in a Moody Blues tribute band. I loved playing that music. It was challenging, because there's so much going on. I loved the Fleetwood Mac tribute band. I loved doing that- those songs. Um, it's hard to choose and I think you have to really kind of like anything that you're involved in or you shouldn't-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -shouldn't be there.

MM: Yeah. It's understandable. So, what song or songs-

KS: I'm gonna-

MM: Oh yeah.

KS: -spit out my gum. Is that okay?

MM: Oh yeah, no, not a problem.

KS: Thank you.

MM: Yeah. Uh, we've got a trash can over here.

KS: That's alright. I'll put it back in. [laughs]

MM: [laughs] That's all right. Uh, so what song or songs would you say you were most known for from your career?

KS: Well, probably an original song I wrote, called "Stoned Kitties."

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: It was on my album that I released in 1980, which was all originals. It's the song I spent the least time on, but it got the most air play.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And I still get requests for it and I still perform it and people still sing along with it.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Yeah, Stoned Kitties.

MM: Stoned Kitties.

KS: Yeah. Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Alright. I'll have to give that a listen after this.

KS: Yes.

MM: [laughs] Um, so during a performance, what was your usual go-to closer song?

KS: Well, again, it depends on the band. We had certain closers for the tribute bands, and the other bands it kind of depends on. You try to read the audience, and base it that way. Sometimes it's something that's planned, sometimes it's something that you just pick because you think it would be a good closer.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Um, if it's a quiet concert, you know, it would be different than the one with the rock bands.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Yeah, yeah.

KS: Freebird! [laughs]

MM: There's always that- there's always that one guy. [laughs] Uh, so building off of that as well, if you were to do an encore for a performance, um, did you have like a set list of songs that you would perform like for an encore?

KS: The Fleetwood Dreams band, uh, has a set- a set list, show list- and we follow that, and then we get up to a certain point and we have a song that we kind of hold back as the encore that we really like. So we'll get done with the concert, and we'll wait and see how loud they're clapping and cheering and calling. Hoping they call us back for the encore.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Yeah.

KS: And if that doesn't happen then one of us will pop our head around and go, "Don't you want an encore?" [laughs]

MM: [laughs] So, is there, for like a performance like that, there is like a set? Like for when I got to concerts now?

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Like it's kind of just a play, sort of like, "All right, if they clap loud we'll come back and do an encore."

KS: Right.

MM: But they always come back.

KS: Oh yeah.

MM: Was there every times you just didn't?

KS: Yeah, when we played an encore and they wanted a second one, and we were out of songs.

MM: No, yeah.

KS: Then we didn't come back.

MM: It's like, "Nah, we're- we're done." [laughs]

KS: Yeah, about the only time we do encores is... well sometimes it happens with the smaller groups.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: But, you know.

MM: Uh, how would you describe just the environment, when like you just finished a set, you just closed out, and like you're trying to... you just hear the crowd is going crazy. Could you describe that feeling?

KS: Um, it's pretty good because you know they enjoyed your performance and they don't want it to stop. Um, yeah, that's a pretty nice feeling.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And- and also you feel like the people who hired you, that they're seeing that you did a good job and the crowd that came into see you who either paid or, you know, they feel like they've done the right thing by hiring you. So it's good all the way around. To get an encore.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Keep that in mind. [laughs]

MM: [laughs] Are there... I know you've done countless shows, but are there any encores in particular that stand out the most that were like the greatest?

KS: We had a really good show down in Boone County, Kentucky, uh, two years ago, Fleetwood Dreams did. And I think they expected 500 people to come and it turned out to be perfect. The weather was perfect. It was outdoors and, um, a very nice sound system. And we ended up having I think about 2000 people. And it was great because the people were singing along. And that's always a cool thing, too, when you're performing songs and people are singing along. They sang along, they really enjoyed it, and we did an encore there and I think that was probably the coolest, because of the large amount of people.

MM: Mhm [affirmative] Yes.

KS: Good concert.

MM: Nice. So, did you have any local airplay, when you started out?

KS: Well, I did when I did the album in 1980. I don't know the radio stations that did it, but like I said, Stoned Kitties got the most airplay, and still from time to time it'll pop up on WYSO.

MM: Love it.

KS: In fact, my husband and I- Oh, it's been maybe five years ago now- we were doing some work around the house and all of a sudden we heard Stoned Kitties and thought, "Where is that coming from?"

MM: [laughs]

KS: And it was the radio, and it was WYSO. Um, my most recent CD, not so much, but things are different now. You have rever- or, um, Reverb Nation or whatever it's called and Spotify and all those things-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -where you can, you know, do your videos and MP3s and stuff so, they're listed all in there.

MM: Yeah. Cool. So how did you go about booking gigs? Did you have a manager? Did someone in the band take care of it?

KS: Um, back in early days, we kind of... in rock bands we just kind of had one guy maybe, or all of us, that would contact somebody. I don't remember exactly how we got the gigs planned for the high schools and all that. And then, it kind of went onto there were several agents around town that would book you. They'd get like a circuit going- Holiday Inn circuits, supper clubs- and they'd have so many groups and you'd just kind of rotate.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: That was sweet because we were working all the time then. So we did through agents for a while, and then it kind of got to the point where, um, disco... do you know that term?

MM: Yes. I know all about disco.

KS: [laughs] Disco kind of took over and a lot of the clubs switched to disco.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And put us out of work. Not out of work, but it really cut into our gigs.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Um, and now it's kind of like we don't work through agencies anymore. We haven't done that for a while. I think the bands go in and we play, and there's several clubs around town where we play, and then they invite you back and you just kind of book your gigs like that.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. So, uh, what clubs did you play at?

KS: Well, when I was playing full time it was the supper clubs. Like I said, Annarino's, The Tropics, Suttmillers, all the Holiday Inns.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: There was probably about five different Holiday Inns we'd rotate around. We'd head up North. There was some restaurants and places up there, up in Northern Ohio, that we'd play. And it was a pretty good rotation and we stayed pretty busy. Um, now, I'm in five different bands or projects, so it's the wineries or it's the clubs like The Phone Booth, The Brick. Places like that, with the rock bands.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: So, yeah, it's kind of changed.

MM: So, would you say the overall community back then for like club managers and promoters, they were all more accepting and would really like push to get you guys in the door, or was it kind of a cutthroat kind of environment?

KS: Well, food always came first.

MM: Yeah.

KS: I mean, you know, it's a restaurant and a supper club, so those kind of places food is first, and if there's anything that has to be cut or anything that's going wrong it's the entertainment.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Um, I don't know. I just- I think music ... is always kind of secondary.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And a lot of times, unfortunately, it's the first thing to be blamed, and maybe sometimes rightfully so. You know? It kind of depends on the whole situation.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Yeah.

KS: But you have to be good, you have to be prompt, you have to be concerned, you have to care about the product that you're putting out.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Yeah.

KS: Because there's a lot of music going on right now. A lot of good music going on.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: I don't think it's cutthroat. I don't see that going on now.

MM: Um, let's see. So, what were some of your favorite bands? Growing up, but then also during your career, and even today?

KS: Well, growing up there was a local band, a local singer that I loved and adored and wanted to be exactly like, and that was Trudy of Trudy and the Hopple Street Exit. They played at a place in the Salem Mall called Tijuana Lounge. Um, she also played at The Forvm, with Lenny Davis and that group.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And I used to sneak in before I was old enough, just to see her, and sat in awe of her whole persona. Uh, her voice, her dress, the way she presented herself, the songs she sang, and I thought, "I wanna be like that." Well, you can't be like that. You have to be, you know, what you are. But I was mesmerized by her. I would listen to people, back in my era it was people like Lesley Gore, Petula Clark, Joni Mitchell. People like that, that I listened to. And I think Joni Mitchell really inspired me to go pursue some writing- Rickie Lee Jones, Laura Nyro- into the writing aspect.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Did you ever have a fan club or a big following?

KS: The Stoned Kitties Fan Club.

MM: The Stoned Kitties?

KS: And I will invite you to join, if you'd like.

MM: Okay. [laughs]

KS: No, I do not.

MM: Is there a... is there a membership fee?

KS: No. [laughs]

MM: [laughs]

KS: I pay you.

MM: Okay. Cool. What would you say was the high point or greatest success of your musical career?

KS: Well, I think being able to do the recordings was certainly a lot of hard work, but it was rewarding to see those projects through. Um, got to work with some really good musicians, and that's something that I'll leave. Also working with some great musicians. When I was working Annarino's supper club, I got to work with Dave Carpenter, very well-known bassist from the Dayton area who has since passed away. But he went on to play with- in fact, I think I made some notes about Dave. He went on to work with Buddy Rich. He moved out to the west coast, recorded with everybody, Barbara Streisand, just everybody who is anybody. And I remember he worked at Annarino's for a while, and he would share his knowledge with me and that's I think another sign of a great musician, when they say, "Hey, let's try this," or, "Do you know you can do this kind of voicing on this chord?" or, "We can do this as an intro." He was very sharing with his knowledge. And when he said he was leaving to go work with somebody else on the road, somebody famous, it was like, "How could you?" But, you know, you support him, because he was a great player and he deserved everything... all the best.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Yeah, so those were high points, I think.

MM: Uh, how far did you get to travel, I mean, like in your career? Did you go around the US? Certain tri-state area?

KS: Yeah, mainly tri-state area.

MM: Tri-state area?

KS: Um, still do.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: I think the furthest we went was maybe Syracuse, New York.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]

KS: Detroit, Michigan.

MM: Could you tell any differences in the music scenes from when you traveled outside of Dayton?

KS: Not really.

MM: Not really different than-

KS: Because those were like Holiday Inns, and it's a lot different when you're playing those kind of clubs. It's kind of like a cookie cutter. Bands play there and they're kind of all the same, and I don't remember that we went out and listened to anybody, because we were playing six nights a week or five nights a week, you know, five hours a night. So, there wasn't a lot of opportunity to go out and inspect anything other than-

MM: Yeah.

KS: -than golf courses, you know? And a bar.

MM: Yeah.

MM: Uh, so what would be your favorite concert venue that you've been to outside of Dayton?

KS: Hmm. Well, concert that I've been to outside of Dayton? You know, most of the concerts I've been to have been in Dayton, either at The Frazee or the Nutter Center, and the ones I go to... I'm, not a big concert goer-toer. But the ones I go to are what I consider to be the legends, music legends. And my requirement is that I'm sitting on the phone the minute the tickets go on sale so I can get up front because I want to study those people. I've been lucky enough to see Joan Baez and Willie Nelson and Bob Dylan and, um, Tony Bennett, Diana Krall. Those are like a lot of different genres of music. Michael McDonald, Boz Scaggs, uh, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. Not Young. Crosby, Stills and Nash. Sitting down front where you can study their musicianship and the way they present themselves, what type of equipment they're using and what the roadies are doing, what the requirements are. Yeah, those are all my favorites.

MM: Yeah. Ever gotten a chance to go out West to see any concerts, like maybe at Red Rocks?

KS: No.

MM: Red Rocks is one of my favorites.

KS: It'd be cool to go out there and see Stoned Kitties.

MM: Yeah.

KS: I would love that.

MM: Red Rocks is by far my favorite

KS: Is it?

KS: You've been there?

MM: Oh, I've been there.

KS: Who did you see?

MM: Uh, I saw the Avett Brothers and Lake Street Dive, back in 2015.

KS: How did you get out there? You knew it and you just went out there?

MM: No, I work at a Boy Scout camp in New Mexico, during the summer, and we just found out about it, bought tickets, and-

KS: Wow.

MM: Just booked it up there real quick. It was awesome.

KS: That is amazing.

MM: Yeah, yeah, it was. It was a great performance.

KS: Lucky you.

MM: And that was actually... Lake Street Dive has become one of my favorite bands. I don't know if you've ever heard of them before.

KS: No, I'll have to check.

MM: They're more of a kind of blues, more new age blues I would say. The lead singer has a voice that will just send shivers down your spine.

KS: Like who? Can you compare it to anybody?

MM: Not- not- not even.

KS: No?

MM: Nah. Yeah, because just the range that she has, it's phenomenal.

KS: Oh wow.

MM: Oh you'll... I feel like you would enjoy it a lot.

KS: I gotta check that. Yeah.

MM: I actually... besides that concert, I also heard of them on NPR as well.

KS: Oh.

KS: That's a great place to discover new music.

MM: Yeah. It's... I can't listen to the radio anymore these days. I just-

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Just hop on NPR, just cruise.

KS: Once you listen to that.

MM: Yeah.

KS: It's hard to do anything else.

MM: Just... I'm not a big fan of pop music-

KS: Yeah.

MM: -is my big thing. What would be your overall opinion of popular music and how you've kind of seen it, um, evolve through the years?

KS: Well, some of it I'm not real happy with. I mean, I don't care for it. I don't see any substance to it. But there obviously is an audience for it.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Because people buy records, they go to the concerts, they win awards.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: It's just not my idea of- of something that's good. You know, I like substance. I like melody. I like chords. I mean, there's some chord progressions that give me chills-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -when I hear them, and I don't know what it is. I try and think about what is it about that? But, um, I just... I hate to say this, certain things that, you know, what genres I don't like. But it's because I can't relate to it or I don't see substance in it.

MM: Hmm.

KS: But it's good that it's there.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Other people enjoy it.

MM: Yeah, yep. Always. Always when I talk to people, just debate them about, uh, the merits of certain genres of music-

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Uh, I always tell them you always have to look out for the commercialized-

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: -music, because commercialized music is made to make money.

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: But those people did not get into that just to make money.

KS: Right.

MM: They got into it to make music.

KS: Right.

MM: So, like if you buy their album, just avoid the tracks that are on the radio.

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Because you'll actually find what they're actually putting out there. Like it's hidden in the other songs.

KS: That's a very good point. Hadn't thought about saying it that way. But yeah, that's a good point.

MM: Just because they gotta make money.

KS: Yeah.

MM: But you also want to get your best product out there. So, bringing it back a little bit, would you say there were any low points, during your career?

KS: Um, I would say... low points? There were a few times that clubs closed, for various reasons and that took, you know, venues-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -out for us to work. Certainly the drunk driving laws and disco that cut into things- that was kind of a sad time, because that certainly affected those of us who were doing it for a living. Um, losing musicians who passed away. You know, you're never prepared for that. Those are low points.

MM: Hmm.

KS: But there's something about music and musicians in Dayton, there's a lot of camaraderie. I think we do look out after each other. Yeah, not a whole lot of low points, I don't think.

MM: Well, that's good.

KS: Yeah.

MM: I'd say that's a highlight.

MM: Um, so, we were talking, before we started, how you played here at Wright State?

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Do you wanna run us through that?

KS: Oh, yeah, when we were talking about that earlier. Um, and I'm one of those weird people that has every gig I ever played. There's probably a handful of us.

KS: Oh, my gum.

MM: [laughs]. Watch out for it.

KS: Yeah. And I happen to... I kind of vaguely remember this, and sure enough there was a job I did out here at Wright State in October of 1970, and this was through one of the agencies early on that I worked through. And it was basically me and my guitar, sitting out on a... I don't know where it was at Wright State, I'm sure it was a lot different back then, the campus. But just sang folk music for a couple of hours and that's how things started.

MM: They called it Wright Stock?

KS: No, no, Wright Stock was something different. This was something I did as a single.

MM: Hmm.

KS: Wright Stock came after that, and that was a weekend concert where they had I don't know how many bands. Thousands of people came out and attended the first one. And I worked with Gary Hill, on a version of I think it was Blue Max. I don't think we were called anything different. And it was a cold weekend. I think it was like 35 degrees and sleeting.

MM: [laughs]

KS: And, uh-

MM: So middle July?

KS: Yeah.

MM: [laughs]

KS: Why couldn't they pick then? [Laughs] But yeah, that was- Wright Stock came later. And then the year after that they tried to recreate it, Wright Stock 2, and it just couldn't compare.

MM: Is that the- it's like the Woodstock of the '90s.

KS: Yeah.

MM: Just didn't pan out.

KS: Yeah, it just doesn't.

MM: Yeah.

KS: I mean, you can't recreate stuff like that.

MM: Yeah. Green Day is not Jimi Hendrix.

KS: That's right [laughs]

MM: So, do you still go out for live music around the area?

KS: Yeah. Yeah, when I can I do. My husband and I usually go to bed after Jeopardy, so [laughs]

MM: [Laughs] Nothing wrong with that.

KS: But, yeah, I go out when I can and hear other bands. I have a lot of friends that are playing and other bands and we all try to support each other.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Do you have any, uh, favorite venues to go to?

KS: Um, I like the wineries, because I like wine.

MM: Uh-huh.

KS: Uh, they tend to be in a little bit more subdued.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: I like the wineries.

MM: There's nothing wrong with that. Because, you know, especially for me growing up, at least once I really got to venture out and actually go see music, uh, the Oregon

District, downtown, became a key, um, that's really where you go to listen to live music anymore. Was that kind of the same kind of thing back then?

KS: Um, well depends on what you mean by back then. Oregon District has been around for a long time now-

MM: Yeah.

KS: -and it is still a popular place to go. I kind of, when I'm not playing, I tend to want to be more mellow.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Go to the mellow. I'm not a big crowd, party and loud kind of thing.

MM: Yeah.

KS: But, yeah, it's still a very popular place to go.

MM: Did you ever get to perform or see a show at the original Canal Street?

KS: Yeah.

KS: Uh, the Moody Blues tribute band I was in, it was called Days of Future Past, we did a show there and it was exciting. It was fun.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Something about a smaller listening room that was packed, and again, people singing along to the music and everything. There wasn't and there hasn't been a whole lot of Moody Blues-prog rock stuff going on.

KS: Um, yeah that show was great, and I also played there as a single a couple of times. Something about the small, listening room atmosphere.

MM: Yeah. I- I like those. I had friends who were in, uh- they formed a band through high school and they played there all the time.

KS: Did they?

MM: Oh it was-

KS: What was the name of the band?

MM: Ooh. Why can't I... I can't think of it right now.

KS: Oh.

MM: I'm a terrible person.

KS: They're your friends and you can't-

MM: They are my friends.

KS: -and you can't remember the name of the band?

MM: I know, I know, and I have their album which is the worst part about it.

KS: Oh no.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Picture the album-

MM: I can see it.

KS: Come on, in your mind.

MM: I- yes, I can remember the- the album name, it was “The Man With the Octopus Arms.” But I can think of the- I can't think of their name right now.

KS: What was the genre?

MM: It was more rock.

KS: Was it?

MM: It was more rock, it was rock, yeah. And my friend Jack, he's the lead singer, he-

KS: They're still around?

MM: Uh, he's actually in Austin right now.

KS: Oh.

MM: He's doing more, um, mixing and he's more on the producing side. He's also in like three or four bands right now. But, yeah, he wanted to be the lead singer but didn't have the voice for it.

KS: Oh.

MM: So at first it was- we were there for moral support, as friends. But they definitely got better, and it was cool being friends with them because we got to really travel around. Like we all went to Nashville, for a performance-

KS: Wow. Well, that's great.

MM: Yeah. I think it was at the In and Out Bar down there. They put on a show just for a random weekend.

KS: That's wonderful.

MM: Yeah, it was.

KS: And you can't remember the name of the band?

MM: I don't know why. I'm just- It's just completely-

KS: He remembers, he just doesn't want to say. [talking to camera]

MM: Ah, that's what it is. [Laughs] That's what it is. So, yeah, what would you say would be like the biggest difference between the Dayton music scene now and then, back during your career?

KS: I think it's a lot more, uh, there are a lot more genres and subgenres-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -now than there was back then. Um, boy, there's a lot of good musicians and a lot of good bands and they're playing all different styles of music and the original stuff, the writing is incredible. Um, and I don't know if it's something in the water around here- well certainly we don't want to discuss that now.

MM: Not today.

KS: Because- no, not today. But it's just amazing.

MM: Hmm.

KS: And of course with being able to post things on YouTube and- and, Facebook and everything, you get to hear the stuff, and it is truly amazing what all's going on.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: You know, I think back then it was a lot more, um, a lot less different varieties and genres being performed, and there's more places now where you can do it. Um, it's like you said, down in the Oregon District, those are great venues to be able to present your music.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: So yeah, I love what's going on now, it's great.

MM: The one thing I love about the Oregon District is just how you can go from going to Blind Bob's and seeing like a death core heavy metal band, and then jumping down to maybe Tumbleweed-

KS: Yeah, walk away.

MM: Yeah, just a hop, skip and a jump and then you have a country band playing.

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: And across the street from there, maybe just a blues singer.

KS: Exactly.

MM: I love it.

KS: It is.

MM: I really do.

KS: It is. It's very cool.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Okay, you convinced me. I'll start hanging out down there now.

MM: It's [laughs], you should probably check Blind Bob's before you go. You never know, if you end up at a Daikaiju concert, they set all their instruments on fire.

KS: What?

MM: It gets insane.

KS: Oh my god.

MM: After this wraps up, I can show you some videos of it.

KS: Yeah.

MM: It's basically, it's like a jam-band-heavy-metal, but they don't- they don't sing and they just go through the crowd, like they're crowd surfing, like they're holding up the drum kit and the drummer who's playing on top of the crowd with the drum set on fire-

KS: What? On fire?

MM: It's- it's insane. Yeah. Don't go to that show.

KS: No, I won't. I just wonder what the fire marshals say.

MM: Well it's-

KS: Does it ever set off the sprinkler system?

MM: I've been to two of the shows, and not yet, but yeah.

KS: Wow.

MM: You think the local music scene's missing anything?

KS: Yeah! Drummers who set their sets on fire.

MM: We need more of that?

KS: I'm gonna suggest that.

MM: Hey, it's pretty good.

KS: Is it missing anything? No, I think it keeps expanding, as far as- I mean, the venues kind of come and go and they change ownership and everything like that, but the musicians, I think they just keep branching further and further into who knows. It's great.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Uh, what would you list as the best bands to come out of Dayton?

KS: Well, Dayton is really known for the funk bands.

MM: Yeah.

KS: And, of course they have the funk museum now, but I mean there was a time when that was what was going on, and man those bands were hot. I don't know why they're- I don't know that much about the history of it. I should go to the funk museum and read or see about it.

MM: It's by appointment. You should call before.

KS: Oh really?

MM: Yeah.

KS: Okay.

MM: I wrote a paper for them, my first semester of grad school, on the history of Dayton funk and funk music, and just trying-

KS: Well, why do you think it was such a big thing? Or you probably know since you went out there and did a paper.

MM: Well, to me I think the funk music, uh, explosion out of Dayton was just more of a more of a consequence of the, uh, kind of the racial tension that was forming in Dayton-

KS: Okay.

MM: So just, uh, the overall just anger that was there.

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: It was just an outlet that people had-

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: -and funk music really kind of gave people a way to kind of look past everything that was going on politically or socially and just come together for good music.

KS: I see.

MM: And a lot of other genres, like, it's not on purpose that they're limiting, but they're only really subject to certain fans-

KS: Okay.

MM: -and the funk music kind of brought in a lot of people, kind of similar to how the blues did-

KS: Yeah.

MM: -in Chicago. They just really brought in more people.

KS: That's neat to hear about.

MM: Yeah.

KS: So, you went to the funk museum?

MM: I've been there a few times, yeah. It's pretty- it's pretty cool.

KS: I bet.

MM: Yeah, but it's by appointment only.

KS: Okay. Write that down. By appointment. Cool, I'll check that out.

MM: Yeah, but they work around when you're available to come in, so-

KS: Yeah. Yeah, I think that was what Dayton's best known for.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: I mean, there have been other great people that have come out of Dayton, but as far as that era, that certainly has stuck.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Yeah.

MM: Um, is there anything distinctive about the Dayton music scene that makes it unique?

KS: Well, you know, we talked about that [funk].

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Um, I don't- I don't know. I mean, that's the first thing that comes to my mind. And- and again I think it's all from the perspective of the musician that you're asking that question of. Um, there's certainly been a lot of well-known musicians come out of this area. Maybe it's no more than the next town or the next city, but I would say Dayton is best known for the- the funk music that came out.

MM: So, are you still friends with most of the people you played with?

KS: Sure.

KS: You know, there's a few that- I mean, as you go on in music, it's kind of like you cross paths and then maybe you get involved in different things, and then you cross paths again. It's kind of fun reuniting with people, mainly on Facebook-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -that I lost track of and, "Oh, you're still around? What are you doing now?"

MM: Yeah.

KS: And, you know, there's different genres of music that maybe you weren't involved in before, and the opportunity comes along and you get to work with musicians who you've known for years but never had a chance to work with. So that's kind of neat.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: You said, uh, you and Lenny Davis play euchre?

KS: Oh yes.

MM: Yeah? Are you guys partners or-

KS: Well, the way we play, it's me and my husband and Lanny Davis and then Janet Ogg- a very fine drummer around town- and we play what we call progressive euchre where we take turns playing-

MM: Oh-

KS: -with each partner.

MM: Okay.

KS: So, we kind of invented our own rules.

MM: Yeah. I was in a tournament recently that kind of did that.

KS: Progressive?

MM: Yeah, you're- you pretty much play by yourself, but you just work around different tables.

KS: Yeah, yeah. I think I've done that before. That's kind of fun.

MM: Yeah. It was a good time.

KS: Did you have prizes?

MM: There were.

KS: There were prizes?

MM: It was a kind of a charity kind of thing and they were just raising money for I think the Dayton food pantry. So, they had door prizes there to give away and then whoever won the overall- like first, second, third- got like a cash back prize.

KS: Man, we need to do those.

MM: Honestly, it was a good time.

KS: It's a little hard to do with only four of us, though.

MM: Yeah.

MM: So, my problem-

KS: How big of a cash prize?

MM: Uh, it was a buy-in to come in. I think it was about \$15, \$20-

KS: Oh.

MM: -to come in.

KS: Well, that still makes it fun.

MM: But yeah, you get... they have food-

KS: Ah!

MM: -so you get-

KS: Food and money?

MM: Oh yeah.

KS: Wow. What an idea.

MM: They gave away a flat screen TV, too.

KS: What?

MM: Yeah. I didn't win it.

KS: Are they still doing this?

MM: Uh, yeah. It's- they do it once or twice every year at Flanagan's Pub down by UD.

KS: Flat screen TV.

MM: I know. I didn't win it. I was a little upset. That's where all my raffle tickets went, was to the flat screen.

KS: What a great idea.

MM: Yeah, it was a fun time. My biggest problem with euchre is, uh, trusting my partner.

KS: Oh yeah?

MM: Always just trust him for one. Can only give him one. But that's just me.

KS: Well, we're not real hardcore, you know. Mean, kind of.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Yeah.

MM: Yeah.

MM: My competitive nature sometimes just takes over.

KS: Oh, okay.

MM: When I'm playing cards.

KS: Well, especially if you're talking about a flat screen TV.

MM: Yeah.

KS: I mean, you can't cut any slack there.

MM: You gotta- you gotta win it.

KS: You do it or you don't.

MM: We all know why I'm here.

KS: [laughs]

MM: So, um, just to kind of wrap up, one question that I always kind of run by people is today you see- like especially with everything financially going wrong with Wright State and all the schools basically nationwide, that they seem to be cutting arts and music

programs. Um, do you have any thoughts on that? Do you agree with it? Not agree with it?

KS: Well, no, I don't agree with it. Um, I think a lot of musicians that I know who have worked, really- I mean, as far as I know- didn't really study a lot-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -in the music departments, but yeah, I think it's important. But if you can't do that or if they were to cut it, there's certainly other ways you can get your fix.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Um, I would hate to see that happen. But if something's gotta go, what do you do?

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: Me, I always said just cut the school day in half.

KS: Yeah?

MM: Because, I mean, if the main focus for a lot of schools these days is the science, technology, engineering and math-

KS: Mhm [affirmative]. Sure.

MM: Focus, and that's fine, but I- I personally don't think that kids should be in class from 8:00 to 3:00 only learning math. If you want to do that, have them in there-

KS: You're not asking their parents, though. Their parents probably feel differently than you.

MM: Yeah, true.

KS: So, you think cutting the school day is a good solution?

MM: Yeah, you do like an 8:00 to 12:00 and you focus on all your STEM classes, and then the rest of the day they can go and be part of other extracurricular activities. So, like if you want to go practice music, you can go somewhere, get lessons or join a group. If you want to have art classes-

KS: Yeah.

MM: It's like how they have the art center downtown-

KS: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: -have like classes there, just because I personally think that- like especially with music and, you know, art, too- it really helps bring out the creative side of people.

KS: Sure.

MM: And to do like science and engineering and all that, you need a creative aspect to it as well. Otherwise you're just gonna get stagnant and robotic and-

KS: Yeah, I see what you're saying.

MM: There's no fun there.

KS: Yeah.

MM: No one likes that.

KS: Makes a lot of sense.

KS: What's the name of the band?

MM: My friend's band?

KS: Yeah.

MM: Uh, I can look it up for you.

KS: [laughs]

MM: I don't know.

KS: You still don't- can't remember it.

MM: No, and it's bugging me.

KS: Well, give it a little bit of time, it'll pop up.

MM: It will.

MM: Um, so do you have any other, um, big stories, anecdotes you'd like to talk about?

KS: Well, I told you the story about sneaking in, concerts at Hara Arena

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Um-

MM: Authors and Audio.

KS: Authors and Audio?

MM: Yes.

KS: But you had to look it up. Well, that's cool.

MM: I- I remembered it.

KS: All right. I'll have to check that out, too. You gotta email me all this stuff now that I need to look up and introduce myself to.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Um, there are just so many anecdotes of playing with all the bands and so many memories and so many fun times. I wouldn't have- I wouldn't trade it for anything.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: I am so glad that things went the way they did and have turned out the way they have- and the opportunities and the people I've met and just being able to make a living doing music, you know, since basically since 1970 and still in it. And even though things have changed a lot, it's like every opportunity with another band, I get to learn something. It's like one of the bands I'm in now, some of the music they're playing, I thought, "I can't play that. I don't play like that." But I'm playing those songs now because it gave me the opportunity to learn a different style.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And I think that's what keeps it fresh and interesting and motivating, is that, you know, I wouldn't have felt this way if I stayed in one place-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -you know, all this time, but different bands and different music and I'm just loving it. You know?

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: I love- I love where it is now.

MM: Do you have any favorite instrument that you like just love to listen to? Listen to or have someone play?

KS: I love alto sax. I think it's very expressive. And one thing about the wind instruments that hit me, um, is that it's not only the instrument that's making the sound; it's the breath of the person using the instrument. And I just find that mesmerizing. Those two things-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -together that make the sound. Yeah, that's true of a lot of the wind instruments, but I really like the alto sax.

MM: I needed that kind of energy back in middle school playing the clarinet.

KS: Yeah. Clarinet. But you didn't get the girls with it, did you?

MM: I got... none of the girls. [Laughs]

KS: [laughs]

MM: They wanted nothing to do with me. Me, I love listening to a cello or a violin.

KS: Oh yeah.

MM: Cellos. Haunting.

KS: Yeah it is.

MM: But it's like that's one of the reasons I love going down to see Dayton Philharmonic.

KS: Oh.

MM: Or just any of- just going to see if the plays, or like the ballet, when they come through. Like I don't- I'm not there for the play or the actors. Like I'm looking down at the pit-

KS: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

MM: Just looking down there. That's my favorite thing.

KS: Yeah, cello's a great instrument.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: That was always what I wanted to play back in the day, but, uh, they-

KS: You could see about a trade in.

MM: Yeah.

KS: Um, on instruments.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Yeah. Well-

KS: Cello can create a lot of different moods.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

MM: You don't see a lot of them at garage sales.

KS: No, you don't.

MM: That's where I found my clarinet, so-

KS: [laughs]

MM: That's why I had to play that.

KS: You're hanging out at the wrong end of town. [Laughs]

MM: Yeah. [Laughs] Pretty much. Pretty much.

KS: Yeah, cello is cool.

MM: I do love the cello.

MM: Uh, so do you have anything else you wanted to share?

KS: Oh yeah, I was gonna give you this for Valentine's Day.

MM: Oh?

KS: This is my, uh-

MM: Nice.

KS: My CD. It's not real new-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: But it's the latest one.

MM: Very cool. So, what would you classify your genre as?

KS: Um, well, as far as that?

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Um, that is a hodgepodge of music and I say so in the liner notes. Because I came from a lot of different genres in the past, you know, kind of still enjoy a lot of genres. I think that's a good thing- and a bad thing. Because you can't, you know- people can't say, "Well, let's go hear so-and-so." Because they do bluegrass. Or they do rock, or they do this. It's just too wide of a variety. And I think in a way that was bad because there's no slot to put it in. So that's just kind of a- a hodgepodge.

MM: Very cool.

KS: Some are originals, some are covers.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. Very cool. So, what are your aspirations for the rest of your career?

KS: The rest of my day?

MM: Day, career, week, month?

KS: I wanna keep playing as long as I can-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: -physically, you know? As long as there's opportunities and, you know, we're all getting older.

MM: Yeah.

KS: It's like Gary Hill says, "We only have so many shows we can do that are left", or "only so many shows left", oh, so- so many shows left. You know, saying that there'll come a day. But as long as the opportunities are there, I want to keep playing. I want to keep learning. If I'm not learning anything... I just can't see that happening.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: I just can't. I think, you know, I just want to keep learning.

MM: Yeah.

MM: Are there any venues that you still want to get out so you can see? Like Red Rocks, for example?

KS: Yeah. I'd like to go to Red Rocks. Somebody told me about- you aren't the first person to tell me about Red Rocks. Did you drive there?

MM: Yes.

KS: How long of a drive?

MM: So, from Dayton to my camp is 23 hours and I've made that straight multiple times.

KS: 23 hours? Wow.

MM: It's- it's terrible. A lot of coffee.

KS: Well, uh, I'm retired so that's not out of the realm of possibility.

MM: And there are planes.

KS: There are planes.

MM: And trains.

KS: True that.

KS: Uh, my car's kind of junky so I may have to check into that.

MM: Yeah.

KS: So, um, how's the whole Red Rock thing happen? I've heard that you can go there during the day, get up on the stage and play?

MM: Yeah. Uh, so it's- like I guess a good example from around here is Island Park?

KS: Yeah!

MM: You know the band shell that's there?

KS: Sure.

MM: It's basically just like that.

KS: Oh.

MM: If you just put giant rock pillars up around it-

KS: Yeah.

MM: And then like a- like the seats coming up this way. It's pretty much how it is. But when there's a show, yeah, it's just like any ticketed event.

KS: How many people does it seat when it's-

MM: Oh, it's not like a ton. I've never been there where you're shoulder to shoulder, having a bad time.

KS: Hmm.

MM: You have plenty of space to move around. But there's- there's always a decent crowd.

KS: Is the sound acoustics good?

MM: The sound is amazing.

KS: Wow.

MM: It's so good. Yeah.

MM: And one thing I love about the venues out west is that some of them actually have a lot of... like they're outside venues but they're in kind of enclaves like that.

KS: Okay.

MM: There's an opera house in, uh, either Santa Fe or Albuquerque, New Mexico, where it's an outdoor venue that's kind of in basically just a rock enclave. It's-

KS: I wonder if there's something about the rock-

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: And the acoustics.

MM: Yeah.

KS: You think? Hmm.

MM: Not sure.

KS: I think Yanni played there at Red Rock? Didn't he? Wasn't there a concert? You know who Yanni is?

MM: I don't know Yanni.

KS: [laughs]

MM: [Laughs] Do not know. I'm sorry.

KS: Well, Yanni is a New Age artist. Yeah. Are you into New Age music?

MM: Um, I'm into everything, you know. I've always kind of stuck with the theory that music doesn't really have a certain clientele. If you feel it, you feel it.

KS: Do you write?

MM: Not well. Or not for other people.

KS: Really?

MM: Yeah.

KS: Where does your inspiration come from?

MM: Uh, everything, you know? It could be just walking down the street, see a flower, see a person, a puppy. Who knows?

KS: You're allowing your feminine side to show, then. Now that you have a girlfriend or a new girlfriend, you have more inspiration to write.

MM: Yeah, a lot of love songs. Love songs or heavy metal, anger songs.

KS: A heavy metal love song.

MM: It depends on the day, I guess. Uh, but yeah, I mean, to me as a history major, in undergrad and now in grad school, just being able to write and being able to take my thoughts and put them on paper, it's really something that I've really fine-tuned over the years and I've just been better at expressing myself more.

KS: Great.

MM: That's one thing I love about coming here is just having teachers and everything.

KS: Mhm [affirmative]. Sure.

MM: They've been really supportive. Um, as far as writing like songs and everything, not really into that, never have.

KS: Well, don't use your clarinet.

MM: No clarinet.

KS: Stick with the guitar or keys. It's a lot easier.

MM: Yeah. The problem is I was really good at the recorder. You know, how they make every third grade class play the recorder.

KS: Yes, with the three holes on it.

MM: I was so good at it and like, oh, you should play the clarinet.

KS: What a harsh-sounding instrument. Wasn't it?

MM: Hey, I made it sound beautiful.

KS: I don't think you can do that. Let's just stuff a sock up in there.

MM: No, you can.

KS: Yeah, that was a harsh-sounding instrument, I don't know why they pick those for pre-school kids or elementary school kids. Huh?

MM: It's terrible.

KS: You still have yours?

MM: Of course I do. Of course I do, I still have that. My brother played trumpet so I still have his trumpet, my clarinet, and my guitar. The piano was just a keyboard but that broke.

KS: Oh. The keyboard is a great instrument to know how to play because it's a good segue to the other instruments, from a theory standpoint and just in a lot of ways.

MM: Mhm [affirmative]. And one thing I do love about writing, too, is that I've always been interested in poetry and I know that kind of moves over into writing lyrics. Poetry definitely helps out and just different literary devices and how to actually twist words.

KS: Sure.

MM: Different sentences to mean different things. I always loved that.

KS: Some people really have a skill for that. It seems so effortless.

MM: Mhm [affirmative].

KS: Like, oh, man, why didn't I think of that? What a cool little twist there. Yeah. That's exciting.

MM: Yeah, so, that's all the questions I have. If you had anything else you want to throw in or talk about?

KS: I think I-

MM: I don't want to keep you here forever.

KS: I don't think I have anything. I appreciate you asking me to come out here and talk. It was fun.

MM: Yeah. Thanks for being a part of it.

KS: Kind of took me back on down memory lane, thinking about a lot of different things when I was looking over your questions, and made me think about, you know, what was the beginning? And when did it start? Like I told you earlier, I don't remember a beginning. It just was there from the beginning, so that's kind of interesting, and then you start thinking about all the bands and you start thinking about all the weird stories and people you worked with, and it was fun. It was fun to go back through everything. So, yeah, I appreciate the opportunity to do that.

MM: Very well. I thought I'd give you something to talk about over euchre. You're next euchre game.

KS: Oh, yeah. That's tomorrow at 1:30.

MM: So, I'll have Lenny in here next week.

KS: He'll be bringing more suitcases of stuff.

MM: Yeah. I'll just siphon him off onto Chris in that aspect, and I'll stay for the interview.

KS: He's told me, I've just scratched the surface with them. He has a lot of stuff.

MM: Can't wait. And then Janet Ogg as well. She has some interest in doing this as well.

KS: Mhm [affirmative]. Yeah, she'll be playing cards with us tomorrow.

MM: Once we get through all three of you guys, you guys can hold it up against your husband. Like, "Ha ha, you weren't part of the club."

KS: He has to put up with us in the euchre, that's enough.

MM: Yeah. Well, awesome, thanks for coming in.

KS: Oh, thank you. It was fun.

MM: I just have to turn the camera off. Hold on, how does this work.

KS: I wish I knew a good joke to wrap this up with. Uh, oh, geez.

MM: Oh, I got a good one. What is Beethoven's favorite fruit?

KS: Beethoven's- what is Beethoven's favorite fruit?

MM: Banana-na.

KS: Banana-na.