

Excerpts from Chris next book, which include essays, articles and short stories written by Chris.

## My inspiration...

...All my closest friends know about these night visits from my inspiration, and they all consider the whole thing very strange. I cannot blame them, because, even if I grew used to it, I still think that composing music while dreaming is not really a common thing! However, even if I am sure that a scientific explanation of the phenomenon exists (it must be something that has to do with the unconscious and the subconscious), I personally like to think of my inspiration as something a little mysterious, which does not want to be grasped.. [...]

## “The Dream of Constance” project.

(Conclusion)

The Dream of Constance Project, with Professor David Isbister, has been the most interesting, challenging, and helpful study effort in my business curriculum at Wake Forest University. More than any of the other courses that I have taken in College, this independent project has had a dramatic impact on my professional career, and the knowledge and expertise about the music industry that I have gained from this course will prove to be extremely beneficial to my musical activities, not only in the short term, but in the long run as well.

### ***What I have gained from the project***

1. A clear vision of the music business industry structure. This includes who are the major players, who has the power, what is changing, and where the whole industry is going.
2. A clear vision of my role within the music business. This means a clear understanding of what my skills are, and how the market values them.
3. A hands-on familiarity of how business is done in the music industry. I am now very

knowledgeable about all the common "tools of the trade" such as record contracts, demos, music publishing, production contracts, etc.

4. A "road map" to success for me as a songwriter and artist. What are the steps that need to be taken, what can help me, and what are the dangers to avoid.

5. The seeds of an effective network of contacts with professionals in the industry, who can help me achieve my career goals. During the duration of the project, and as part of it, I made contacts with several people that could have a potentially great impact on my professional career. [...]

## The Beatles' music.

I was driving my car down Peters Creek the other night, and I had the radio on. All of a sudden, they played a very beautiful song; a song with a sweet, mellow, memorable melody, and a mesmerizing and intriguing harmony.

This song had something very peculiar about it, something which made it sound simple, sincere, and spontaneous, but also refined and classy, at the same time.

It was one of those songs that make me wish there were more like them, even if it was not the first time that I had listened to it. Actually, I had probably listened to that song for the first time when I was a child, and since then I must have listened to it many other times.

While I turned the radio a little bit louder, I started thinking about the band who wrote and sang that song, and how great it was at composing music that we all still love, thirty years later.

The name of the song was "Michelle" and the band who wrote it, as we all know, is "The Beatles". [...]

Everybody loved their music, and the new generations also love their music.

Fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, at last, can sit side by side and enjoy these songs.

If I asked my grandmother, for instance: "Hey Granny, how about listening to some techno music?", she would probably say "Well, Christian, how about some Caruso, or Mantovani?", but if I went for the Beatles, I am sure we would reach a perfect agreement.[...]

## Ara's thefts.

When was the last time that someone ripped you off? If it takes you more than two seconds to figure out the answer, then you are on the wrong track. Let me help you and rephrase the question: when was the last time that you purchased something from ARA, the food service company here on campus?

Almost all students agree that ARA is overcharging us, yet nobody does anything to actively promote a change in the situation. [...]

the issue was never considered under a serious perspective, and remained more as a naive, childish complaint of the students.

I believe that we, as students, have both the right and the power to get a better service on campus, and action should be taken. [...]

## Universities in Italy

Imagine having to wake up at 4:30 am 5 days a week, spending hours in the traffic trying to find a parking spot, and standing up, pushed in the middle of a huge crowd for more than half of your day. Sounds terrible, doesn't it? Well, what I've just described to you is the daily routine for most Italian students at the universities in Italy. [...]

My friend Gianfilippo Cameli, an Italian freshman here at Wakeforest who spent one year at the university of Rome, made me laugh when he told me that he used to bring a chair from home when he went to his lectures, so that he did not have to worry about taking a seat in the classroom, and he could sleep "late", until 6:30. [...]

## Sagan's salt, the salt of science

The unknown > questions > answers > knowledge: this is a process that has been going on since man appeared on the Earth. The continuous effort to understand how life in the universe works and the need to be aware of what surrounds us is something intrinsically human, leading to what is generally referred to as "knowledge".

According to the French philosopher August Comte, considered the founder of positivism, human knowledge developed through three successive stages in history: the religious stage, the philosophical stage, and the positive or scientific stage. Religion, philosophy and science can in fact be considered as three different approaches to the "knowledge problem", and, at the dawn of the year 2000, scientific answers, if available,

are often regarded by many people as truer than the others. But is science the surest and the fastest path to knowledge?[...]

“How do I make important decisions?”

Here are the facts. Since 1994 I have been actively interested in the topic of health and nutrition. By the word actively, I mean that I have been reading several books, magazines, periodicals, scientific articles, and I have also talked to several different experts in the field, both professionals and non-professionals.

As a conclusion of my investigations, in October of '95, I eventually decided to discontinue the intake of all animal products in my diet, being strongly convinced that such foods (meat, fish, dairy products, and eggs) are not only unnecessary to human nutrition and well-being, but are even rather harmful to human health.

My current diet now consists of predominantly raw fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and, secondarily, legumes, bread, rice, pasta, grains, and other cooked vegetables.

When I went home for Christmas, and told my parents about my dietary changes, this seemed to scare the hell out of them! [...]

## Ethical, Legal, and Economic aspects of vaccination

Zachary Helms, a one year old baby from St. Moreno Valley, CA, died on January 27, 1995 within 33 hours after receiving the following eight vaccines at one time: MMR, DTP, Hib and Oral Polio). Zachary died that night, just after 33 hours after his visit to the place where Michelle Helms, his mother, like countless other mothers, take their precious children to immunize them, and supposedly safeguard them against deadly diseases. She, like countless other mothers, didn't recognize the symptoms of the deadly reactions to those vaccinations. Unaware of what to look for, and unaware of the true dangers, she kissed Zachary good night and laid him in his crib where he quietly slipped into a coma and died. [...]

If it hadn't been for Katy...

"From small things big things can happen". Nonna Elena used to say this quite often, and I think it is true. Events of apparently little or no importance, upon which, sometimes, we do not even have much control, can turn out to have unpredictably considerable repercussions on our lives. Meeting somebody, visiting a place, or reading a book are just a few examples, but there are thousands. Even receiving a present, as I will show, might change somebody's life.

Nonna was right. Today, if I had to single out the most important thing in my life, I would immediately say music, and music entered my life in a very unexpected way, almost undesirably, but, nonetheless, discreetly. It seems funny to me, today to think about Katy and how it all began. At that time I considered her such a small part of my life, and would have never thought that she could be so important. Now I owe her a lot.

Here follows a sequence of three "snapshots", illustrating my "musical path" from Katy to nowadays, and showing how my love for Katy, and for music, bloomed. These memories mean a lot to me, they are beautiful memories, and they also prove that Nonna was right. [...]

## PDU prepares for the recording session of the year 2000

Massimiliano Pani, executive producer at PDU records, in Lugano, Switzerland, was walking into the studio to check with Carmine Di, the sound engineer, on how the new album was progressing.

"Sorry Max," said Carmine, "but I am afraid we're going to have any guitars on tuesday."

"I just spoke with Minotti," he further explained, "and he said that they just canceled tomorrow's flight due to bad weather."

"Have you tried to get in touch with Braidò?" Massimiliano asked, "I know he's going to cost us more, but he's the best for hard-rock solos, and if he's available..."

"Unfortunately we are out of luck," interrupted Carmine, "I was on the phone with him five minutes ago, and he's got a session scheduled in Paris wednesday morning. He can't make it."

"We're out of luck indeed," lamented Massimiliano Pani, "It looks like we will have the whole album project fall behind just because we can't find a guitar player who can be here tuesday! It's the second time in three months that something like this happens. Is there anything that we can do about it?"

"I guess not" Carmine answered, "unless we implement some RR technology..."

"Remote Recording technology you mean?" Massimiliano asked, "I've heard about it, and I think they have something like that in Milan and in London. I know it's extremely expensive but... let me think about it."

## Arming the Victim

Crime in America is at a higher level than ever before. People blame many different things for this peak. Amongst many other things, people consider guns to be a major contributing factor to the problem of crime. I do agree with this, however I disagree with the methods that many people propose will end this vice. Although most people believe that gun control and firearm restrictions will end the problem of gun-related crime, I believe that the answer to the problem of gun-related crime in our country is mass proliferation of firearms throughout the general public. This proliferation plan would be based on giving a government issued firearm to any citizen, age 18 years or older, who does not have a criminal record.[...]

## Peer Evaluation

Unfortunately, this groupwork experience was not a very good one, in my opinion. I feel very confident saying that the effort that I put into the researching/writing/organizing process was by far greater than everybody else's in the group. Almost half of the paper was made up of my individual effort, all of the promotional material for the presentation was mine, and I was the only one in the group that ever went to interview somebody at the Wachovia building, downtown, and actively researched the company and the product.

What really let me down, however, was the fact that while I had done my research, written the paper, interviewed Ms.Lisa Powe, and gathered the promotional material for the day that was due, (according to the schedule that we had planned on our first meeting) everybody else had not even started thinking about the project.

## Project of a research study in Absolute Pitch Training

Absolute Pitch (also commonly known as Perfect Pitch) is the ability to recognize actual notes, chords, and music progressions by ear alone, without the help of any instruments.

Most music teachers believe that AP cannot be taught or developed, and that only some lucky musicians just happen to be born with this “supernatural” ability. The only person in the world that publicly claims to be able to teach AP is professor David L. Burge, a worldwide famous musician who has developed his unique approach to music, instruction and ear training. Most people who know about his AP Training Course are very skeptical about it and, even though they do not even take the time to actually verify the course’s effectiveness on themselves, they remain rigid in their belief that AP cannot be developed and that musicians can only be lucky enough to be born with it. [...]

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## The first time I’ve ever heard about Perfect Pitch

The first time I’ve ever heard about Perfect Pitch I was 16 years old. The high school rock band where I was the lead guitarist was competing in a contest for emerging groups, and we had made our way to the final rounds. There were only 7 bands left, and we were confident we were better musicians than most of the other groups, whose members we knew very well. We really thought we were going to win the first prize. There was only one band, called The Faith Healers that none of us had ever heard of. Those guys were from another state, and seemed to have somehow climbed their way to the top just like we had. Our band was scheduled to go second-to-last, and The Faith Healers was the closing act. I was hanging out in the back-stage, about 30 minutes before our performance, and all of a sudden something caught my attention. [...]