

Excerpt: Leading up to and Interview with Lee Anderson



(picture of the Radio Bean in Burlington, Vermont)

Interview with the “Indie” Man

This past summer I was interviewed for a film about “indie” bands. It was more specifically a documentary about trying to “make it” as an “indie” band. The filmmaker was on the road with a band that was trying to do just that. They’re a five-piece outfit from Ohio with two cellos, guitar/vox, bass, and drums. The music kind of reminded me of a mix of Paul Simon’s Graceland and Jack Johnson or something. Not exactly what I envision as an “indie” band in the cool hipster scenster sense, but they are unsigned and hence independent. Anyway, they were playing at a festival I had helped organize. The filmmaker had caught wind that I had toured a lot

in the US and abroad and decided to get my input for his film. The interview took place in the outdoor area of my apartment, which is essentially a barbeque pit. But it was a hot summer day and there was some shade there. He asked me some questions. Here's a sample:

Q: What do you think is more important to establish your music: touring, becoming regionally well known, or putting out a really good record?

(A clique but relevant question, I thought. My response was something like:)

“Hey, what’s the point of touring if nobody knows who you are? You just end up playing to empty rooms all over the place (I’ve done a bit of that myself...). Yeah, you definitely need to establish yourself regionally before you should go out touring nationally, and if you can’t catch on in your region there is no way you’ll catch on nationally without a label or publicity. And a good record? Of course that’s important. Probably the most important...look at Arcade Fire, “Funeral” was a great record and look at what it did for them. Having a solid record and a good live show is probably number one...” and so on and so forth as long winded responses go...

The interview went on like this, I’ll spare you the other questions he asked me about my own career and touring, blah, blah, blah...the only interesting part of this story is what happened *after* the interview. Whilst the guy was packing up his camera we were making small talk. I asked him whom else he’d interviewed for his film. He said a lot of bands and club owners and industry people. When I asked him some highlights he said his best interview was with Lee Anderson of the Radio Bean (the Radio Bean is a great intimate club in Burlington, Vermont).

My ears perked up because Lee is not only my friend but I was going to college in Burlington, VT when he started that venue and was in the group of friends that helped him get the place in shape. We spent weekends helping with construction. I remember painting the door red. And as soon as Lee opened his business my band was the “house band” and we played at the Radio Bean every Friday night in exchange for free beer. So I have a lot of fond memories and attachment to that place. Plus Lee is a really cool dude.

Curious, I asked the filmmaker what was so great about his interview with Lee. And he told me that Lee had given him a really unlikely response to a question he’d asked. I inquired what the question and response was, and here it is as I more or less remember it:

Q: Lee, as a club owner what advice would you give to aspiring bands trying to “make it” in the music business?

Keep your day job. Stop trying to make a living at music and just do it because you love it. Do it to be apart of an arts community where you live and create as much as you have time to do,

but don't do it for money. Instead of aspiring to "make it" as in make a living or be famous, aspire to "make it" as in create art for no reason other than just to make it and love doing it.

I think the biggest problem I see with all these bands nowadays is that they all want to be big and make lots of money and it kind of ruins the whole thing. The best bands I know are local guys who come in once a week to my business and just have jam sessions, share songs they've written, play standards. They all have real jobs and families. They love music but they don't think it owes them anything. They're happy if they get a free beer or if someone asks for a CD.

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And that is what changed everything for me...

Admittedly, at first I felt a bit insulted by what Lee had said, it was as though he was questioning all the effort I had put forth into my own career in hopes to make a living off of my music. But as I stewed on his words more and more over the coming weeks and months I realized that he was undeniably right. That trying to make a living off of music is what has practically ruined it for me, and is basically what has ruined a lot about the music business in general. Doing it for all the wrong reasons.

When I look back at my entire musical career I think that the most fun I ever had was back in college when I was in the "house band" at the Radio Bean and was just jamming for free beer. We had such a good time. In many ways it was the best time of my life. Maybe because I was still in school and had a purpose other than music, to get good grades, and all the realities of life and paying the bills hadn't set in yet. But really I think it's just that music was this burning passion inside of me and I was so happy to be doing it out at my friend's venue with my friends. And that free beer tasted so good. We thought it was the coolest thing on earth that you could do on a Friday night, play music, hang out with your friends, do what you love, get a buzz on, and not have to pay for it. At the time I don't think I ever thought of actually getting paid money for a show. It wasn't until I was out of college and trying to "make it" that all those things became a top priority. And I miss that now. I miss the jam sessions I had in my living room with my friends and at the Radio Bean. Maybe that was musical bliss and I was just too ambitious to realize it. But now, six years after college having played hundreds of gigs and being paid for them as a means of survival, well, it's changed everything. It's work. Sometimes you hate a gig and you do it anyway because you need the cash. And I guess that's as bad, if not worse, than any nine to five you could have just to pay the bills.

Interview with Lee Anderson who in some ways was the inspiration for this book because he started to really make me think with his answer to just one question.

Q: So Lee, I guess I should tell you now that your answer to a question that some dude asked you last summer is what inspired me to write this book. In a nutshell he asked you what your advice to aspiring bands wanting to conquer the music world and your response was something along the lines of “no, don’t try and “make it”, keep your day job, do art because you love it, and enrich your local community”. Basically you urged musicians to keep the emphasis off of money and making their music into careers and keeping the focus on enriching your local music scene and doing art for the sake of art. Did I get this right? Can you elaborate a bit on this second hand information?

Yeah, you know, what I was saying to him is that there are a lot of people who can’t wait to quit their day jobs or they feel that making a living as a musician is going to make them happier whether it does or doesn’t. If your day job sucks you should quit it anyway. I think a lot of people think of a musical career as something that is going to give them all this freedom to create and stuff. But I find that a lot of my friends and other people who I’ve seen at Radio Been who try and make that jump to a full time performer, it doesn’t always help their art. Because then their music becomes something that they have to do rather than something that they want to do, and do in their spare time which is more fun and frivolous. A lot of art suffers when people have tried to make that career jump. Not always, I have seen people succeed at it as well. But I think a lot of people put pressure on themselves if they’ve had some success as a songwriter or in a band that they now have to try and “make it”. I feel that for a lot of people when they make that decision to try and “make it,” it becomes a transfer, which happens once there’s a monetary aspect of music. Like William Blake says, “Where any view of money exists, art cannot be carried on.” Basically people can make money at their art but when it becomes the primary focus of why you’re making art, then the vision of the artist becomes distorted.

I think just shifting your vision of success can help a lot. There are a lot of different levels of making it. For instance being a local celebrity and enriching others to want to make music has a lot of value. I think there are a lot of people who don’t always think that way and think they have to tour. As a community the more people that are making art the better in that you don’t have to go out and spread what you do all over in foreign lands. Especially if that’s not what you really want and it creates frustrations for you and makes your life at home less enjoyable.

It’s kind of a double-edged sword. Because on the other hand you’ve got the touring musician out there cross pollinating cultures and whatnot, I think that’s really important that people bring what they’re creating in their own communities to other communities as well. So that people can see that there are common denominators that are shared.

Q: So I have to play devil's advocate here a bit. What would you say to me. I'm sure you know I've been working at my music career almost tirelessly for about six years now. I've toured a shitload, I've made lots of recordings, I've probably played about a hundred and fifty shows a year for the last four or so years. I've definitely tried to make a living off of my music. And I've had lots of successes and endless amounts of disappointments as well. But do you think I had the wrong idea in the first place? Should I have just gone to graduate school like everyone thought I would/should? Do you think it's wrong to be ambitious about art for everyone out there? Because if no one was ambitious about artists we'd have no role models right? Basically, do you think that being ambitious about art as a career really makes any sense?

I really appreciate that people are ambitious because I run a business with music seven nights a week and it's what keeps the doors unlocked. It's not only the musicians that live here in Burlington and want to play in their community but also its all these other acts that come through from all sorts of different places. There's something I like about the Radio Bean that keeps me out of the politics of the music business because we don't offer a guarantees, people just play for tips and merchandise sales. I'm glad that there are venues out there that do pay with guarantees because that is a critical part of touring and knowing what you're going to make on the road. But for me and for what I choose to contribute to the music industry a lot of it comes from the fact that there are no politics involved with money, like a band saying to me "you said you were going to give us 50 bucks," or whatever, it's just such a small amount of money but it changes things quite a bit. Of course some people choose not to play here because they can't make enough money to justify driving from wherever to play because they don't know what their going to make.

It's a tough question because I really support people who feel driven to do whatever they want to do by passion and need, I say go for it. I think that's essential as an artist, to try for anything. I've certainly done enough absurd art that only has meaning to me. Like it probably didn't have much value to other people, but to me, as an artist, it was fundamentally essential.

So when it comes to touring and playing 150 shows a year and trying to make a living off of music, I think as long as it's something that the individual feels a need to do as art as a driving force, you need to express your music, you have something to say. You just have to ask yourself, "is this my ego that needs to go on tour?" or "is this my art that needs to go on tour?" Basically you have to evaluate and understand why you are doing it. "Do I need this attention from people, from strangers, meeting exotic men and woman, and have these experiences from life on the road." Or is it is that "I feel my art is special and different and will be inspiring to other people." Basically: will there be some other purpose besides ego that is driving the momentum? It's just something that each individual has to check in with at some point.

Yeah, I know a lot of artists who are not very good at separating their ego from everything else because their music is such a personal thing. And that's the problem with songwriting

in general, that it's just so personal, and that you can be so shut off from the rest of the world and reality by indulging in your art. And ego plays into that big time. But there's no rule on this, there's no policeman out there saying "you have more ego than talent," people just do it anyway.

I think traveling musicians have to ask themselves, "what's driving me to do this?"

I see that in my own band, you have to evaluate what your message is, what your intention is. Ask yourself questions like: How do I keep creating original material and having it feel fresh and still have it have meaning to me even if I'm playing the same song for repeated gigs? Am I just going through the motions of art? How do I make what I do more universal while still having personal meaning to me and not trying to homogenize towards the taste of the majority?

An artist can have some really interesting, original music but they then try to emulate someone else really specifically. Basically when people are trying to become more successful they look at what has had some success in the past and try to put themselves through that lense. And they try and have other people perceive them through that lense. I think that when people are using that method a lot that tactic gets stuck rather than expansive. But it's not always the case, I've seen people at the Radio Bean play every six months and grow immeasurably. They can start out good and become awesome. The growth of an artist can be so drastic with audience feedback and touring and such, all that can really change them.

Q: One kind of interesting side story is that when we were in college back at UVM I remember when you decided to drop out in order to start the Radio Bean. All of our mutual friends were really happy for you, most of us helped you out with construction and were the first people to be patrons of your business. Hell, I painted the door red, supposedly spent the first dollar, and played in the first house band. I feel like I have my own history at the Radio Bean. But funny enough, I have to be honest with you, when you first announced that you were going to quit college to open a coffeeshop in Burlington, VT where there is already a "Muddy Waters" and a few other thriving coffeeshops on Church Street, I have to admit, I was skeptical. I wasn't sure you could pull it off. But you clearly had a vision of a place that would be completely different than all the other places out there. That you would have your own niche to fill. A lot of it had to do with the atmosphere you created, the fact that you serve organic coffee, some great beer, wine, and liquors, and the fact that you have tons of live music and performance there. Also you have a real strong political stance that is clear to the community, you run a very liberal business and hence very liberal people are your patrons...but I guess my questions is this: is the vision of starting a business like Radio Bean any different than an artist having the vision to create art and make it public for people? In a way isn't our ambition just a way of us trying to defy what everyone tells us we can't do? That we can't make something that doesn't already exist?

In some ways I started the Radio Bean as an art project. It was a bold undertaking and there's other people I have to credit for having the motivation to unleash this project, to pound nails and help recruit people. Ultimately one way the Radio Bean has identity and meaning to this community and could be some sort of model for art and all that, is that I feel that what happened here is that I provided a form. Basically like a canvas in a really nice room, or something like that. And then the community made it into this. I mean, I didn't know that there would be music here every single night of the week. I thought I might do it occasionally and I'd be part of it, but then it was really people like you, James, the Clearly Brothers, the Black Sea Quartet, and these bands that came and said "hey, I want to play music here, I want to create in this place." And once the ball started rolling more and more people came in wanting to play, and I was like "OK." I opened in November and by August we had music every single night of the week booked a month or two in advance. I was like "wow, now I'm like a real music venue."

And if there's one thing I can say about the Radio Bean and why it's succeeded was that by being open to how it was going to evolve and not being so regimented like "this was my vision, this is what I wanted to create," made it possible. Basically allowing it to be what it is, trying different things, some things caught on, and other things faded away.

I think what you said about ambition being defying what other people say you can't do is true. One example of this is the idea of the crazy inventor who tries to make something new and he fails and fails and the public is telling them, "hey, you know, that light bulb is never going to work." And then he doesn't give up and now we have light bulbs. But the other side of ambition can be trying to ram something down people's throats that isn't really working. That type of ambition is different. I'm not sure that metaphor really worked...

I think it does work, the mad scientist isn't doing it because he's worried about what people think of him, he's doing it because that is what he does and that's who he is, and he has something that needs a life. You meet artists sometimes and you could never take it away from them because their identity is so intertwined with their art. And then you meet other people for whom it's a passing idea, like I saw a clip of a reality show where they had this band that was living in a bubble recording a record and had a limited amount of time to catch on and make it big and they interviewed one of the dudes in the band and he said "yeah, this is our only shot, if this doesn't work I have to think about what else I'm do for a job," basically he wasn't a true musician, he was just some dude who had an opportunity in the music business and it could have just as easily been in tennis or advertising. There's a big difference between artists for whom their art is a part of them and artists who are using it as a vehicle to attain fame or fortune. Some musicians would just as soon be actors or models as play a guitar.

Yeah, another concept that I've been interested in recently is this idea of "experimental" music and people doing stuff that really pushes the envelope. Basically this self titled "avant guard" stuff. Basically, whether or not I enjoy it I usually say to myself "well at least it's something

different.” Even if it’s completely unpalatable. But the thing I’ve been really experiencing with those “experimental” acts, it’s like they portray themselves as so different that the audience and the experience those people have in general at these shows is not taken into consideration at all. And that it becomes really masturbatory. Like “oh wow, I can make this thing feedback really loud for a really long time.” But then again people were doing that in the 1960’s, it’s been done for a while. There’s probably nothing you’re going to do that is that invasive that hasn’t been tried before. I mean, I can appreciate that it’s just the chaos of electricity or whatever, but again, what drives people to make the art that they’re going to make? Is it because they’re so fed up with the men in suits and commercialization and they feel the need to break that down? But actual ingenuity can come in a lot of different ways, but oftentimes people assume that it has to be really loud to be experimental (which I think I think is really a horrible route avant guard music has taken). And then there’s that idea of ramming something down someone’s throat, where whether or not they’ve chosen to listen to it they have to be completely involved in it because it’s so loud. Do you actually believe the person up there with screaming feedback for the last ten minutes is enjoying themselves?....maybe? But couldn’t they just be doing this in their room and having as much fun as they are up on this stage? Is it just an ego up there? And I think that can happen with singer-songwriters as well. Where people are taking something that isn’t that digestible and making others listen to it.

There are people that can engage in a music career and try and make it happen for themselves. Like you feel your going to try and take a shot at it, try and making a living off touring, to see if you can make it. You say to yourself “I can play guitar, I can play these couple songs I wrote, and if it doesn’t work out, I’m going to go to law school”. If music is something that is beside the point then I would say you should just get right with it. Just go to law school and skip you little dream to make art for a living. Because art is a lifelong journey for the people who are really doing it, that the art is not beside the point, it actually is the point. And it’s not whether success or failure comes out of it, it is inevitable that you keep creating and moving forward. And I think that’s the difference between some people and others. If someone is playing music just waiting to see if they make it or not and if it doesn’t work out they’re going to get a day job. I’d say just skip it. Because I think there are other people out there that have to do it, like you can’t do anything else. The art can’t be beside the point, it has to be the point.

Q: So Lee, you’re actually in a band. You’ve even played at Bonaroo. What does the band mean to you? What do you want to get out of it? Do the other band members have any ambition for fame and fortune? Or even just making a living?

It’s always convenient when we do make money. Two of the guys in the band have kids so that really limits our touring potential or how much time we could really invest into “making it” or whatever. I’ve found that the one thing about our music when we’ve played in New York or at Bonaroo, is that it’s really more apparent to me in larger cities, where there are bigger music scenes, that we’d be much more successful than we are in Burlington. We do have shows here

where we bring out people, we book the places and have an audience. But I think if we were on tour we'd probably have a situation where we could work towards something.

But as far as what we want to get out of it? It feels like a need for all of us. It's been the longest running art project I've ever been involved in, unless you want to call the Radio Bean an art project. And it's the fact that these guys are so busy, especially the two guys with kids, they have so much else going on in their lives, and yet they show up every Monday for practice and we gig every ten day or two or three weeks. And that they make all this time to do something their not getting paid for. It really just makes me so happy that we're doing it. When we get offered a gig we have to make sure it works with all of our schedules, and it helps that we all do have our own independent means of an income. And that we're really just making this for the sake of art and for our own artistic development.

What really changed my feelings towards the band was after I heard this interview with Leonard Cohen from like 1966, it was before he even released his first album, and it was on the Canadian Broadcasting Company. This woman said to him "the critics have said that your love poetry has often bordered on greatness. What do you think makes a love poem great?" And he looked at her kind of sly and he said, "when you don't give them the woman's phone number." And then he went on to talk about how you can write something that is intimately personal but also universal. When you can make an audience feel an emotion for themselves, and that they can relate to that emotion and it actually brings an emotional response in them, and they're not just feeling pity or compassion for you because you wrote that love song or that political song. But to actually make somebody feel it in themselves. I think that is a really important part of art, how to actually inspire someone to feel it, or to inevitably feel an emotional response in themselves.

So what the band means to me is a combination of how can I both feel satisfied as an artist and feel good about the music I'm making and moving forward while there is a little underlying agenda of trying to inspire people to make their own music. It's the idea of liberty. If we have an agenda it's to make it clear to people that we're a liberty band. That we're out there making music to promote the idea of personal liberty and freedom and trying to encourage the audience to arm their desires. Being in an artistic cocktail with people that also believe that and think the same way, people come up to us after shows, it brings up discussions, and sometimes it's like a sermon in the middle of a show, of like taking shit out of your closet and playing it, and that the world needs creativity in all forms, and that it's essential to be creating constantly.

So when you ask me this question of whether or not you should be doing what you've done with your music, like touring, I would say undoubtedly. Because otherwise there would have been a feeling of "could I have? Should I have?" You'd have to ask yourself if you'd put your dreams on hold to have a functional career. And I think it's something that people never regret doing when they look back on it. They will never regret taking a shot at their ambition or their art. But there just always has to be a balance of thinking: is this still fun for me? Is this still what I want to be doing? Am I doing it because it's all I know how to do? Am I doing it because people are telling me to keep doing it? Am I doing it because I'm afraid to do something else?

But for our band, none of us have any hope that it's all going to all pop. We're just driving for a scene, we're just doing this to make new friend and see what common denominators exist between people in different area and how we can tie those things together.

Q: Just so you know, I do agree with you. I agree that enriching your local arts community is far more important than striving to be an international rock star. That's why I run a DIY show series in the town I live in: because it improves the quality of life and enriches the local community to have an awesome space to make music outside of the clubs. Do you think if all of us stopped trying to be so ambitious on a national and international level and just focused in on our local arts communities that this would be a much different world? Do you feel that a lot of the reason artists become so fame obsessed is because our culture has an ever-increasing obsession with "celebrity"?

It's an interesting idea that if we all stopped trying to be so ambitious and focused on the local, would it be a different world? Yeah. But I have to admit that I'm really glad that certain artists are celebrities because I get to know their music and that their fame is because they are really good, and it's liked by a lot of people and that the music industry machines make it possible for me to hear that. I think that's really amazing. So I can't say that I wish that nobody would make it in the business, that everyone would have to be extremely localized. I think that as a whole looking at all the people making music I really can't discourage people from touring or trying to get out there and trying to spread their stuff, if it's really what they want to do and if they really feel driven to it, I think it's essential. But at the same time, you have this DIY space, and creating environments like that are super super important, especially outside the clubs. Like the house show movement in Europe is huge. They've had a lot of success with that. And I think that that's a really special contrast to club scene where people are maybe paying attention, maybe not.

But back to the idea of celebrity, it all comes back to ego. Are you doing it to have people looking at you? To have people fantasizing about singing or playing guitar like you? Or are you actually trying to create an emotion response and create art? Or just trying to be a symbol for something? The idea of celebrity has completely run amuck. There are people out there that are dying to be famous, literally. Killing themselves through starvation diets or plastic surgery to try and make that happen. But at the same time for me, I kind of like that grotesque stuff that celebrity nature brings out because that's what sits on the other side of the scale of sincerity. The monster mankind is a monster in that as an artist having that creates the balance of the world in a way.

What I sometimes say to people when I get in these conversations about art is that I feel that the smallest efforts you make in the world today, whether it's some political action, or trading some music, those actions have an enormous amount of weight, it weighs way more than you would ever suspect. Like going out and doing a random performance art or putting up a poster up about some manifesto you believe in, participating in anything that is for the artistic

good and helps you identify yourself as an artist. I think that stuff has an enormous value today, putting that little feather of effort can weigh in gold. Because the world wants to find it's balance right now with more grassroots and more human experience arts and the small things like the DIY spaces. I think that people are striving and starving for sincerity because of all the celebrity and all the bullshit and plasticization of the arts, that when things do pop out, like people generating local music scenes, I think that stuff has a ton of weight right now, in that the world is constantly conspiring to assist that to happen. Because the world wants to balance itself. In that ultimately the audiences are all kind of bored of the glam shit, whether they admit it or not, because when they see it sincerely they freak out about it.

For instance we had these little shows on a side stage at Bonaroo and we had a couple hundred people at the most. We were playing on a little cart with a little generator and these little amps. Our best show at the festival was when Kanye West was supposed to be playing on the main stage and hours went by and he was super late and they couldn't get all his crap set up and it was supposed to be this big huge spectacle show. And when he finally came on, we were already playing, and all these people were leaving the main stage area and everyone kept yelling "Fuck Kanye, fuck Kayne." Everybody was so pissed, and it was basically like this huge mega-corporate music industry bullshit glam scene was barfing all these people out of the main venue spot and they were all coming by our cart on the way back to their tents or wherever they were going. Cause now it was 4:30 or 5 o'clock in the morning. And we kept playing, and kept playing, and kept playing. And everyone was so supportive of what we were doing. We weren't even trying to be a contrast to Kayne, we didn't even know what was going on at first, that he was really late, that everyone was pissed, and that when he finally came on it was just him, and he was doing this weird Christ resurrection thing. All these people flooded in and we had a freak out jam, we just kept playing and had non-stop music until 7:30am. And it was this super magical ceremonial thing. People would come up to me saying "this is Bonaroo, this is why I came." It was just so small, we were probably the smallest act of the whole damn festival. And people just really felt us, and hunted us down online and emailed us. It's not like "we were the best band there." It was just that we provided that grassroots smallness in the midst of the belly of the beast, it just reiterated to me the importance the small and the grassroots, the hungry human experience that people are starving for. And as far as music scenes right now, that's where it's at right now.

Q: I guess we've about covered it. I can't think of much else to ask you that isn't pretty much redundant. But maybe you could help me make a closing statement to the people who might read this. The book, just so you know, is entitled "The Need to be Heard" and is partly a confessional of my experiences and partly a bunch of interviews with other DIY (and not DIY) musicians I know. It's a lot of stories and opinions all thrown together in a very much "DIY" fashion, with no real rhyme or reason. But it's meant to be read by both aspiring musicians and people who are already in the thick of it. Hopefully for fresh souls it will give them some insight into the industry and culture of which they are about to enter. And for veteran musicians I hope it provides a bunch of stories and experiences that are similar to their own they can relate to. And for myself I suppose it is what all creative endeavors are: absolutely cathartic...

There isn't really much of a distinct message I've intended. But if there was it probably would be what you originally said, that making art for the sake of art is a much more chaste reason to make music than to be a rockstar. However cliché that sentiment might be. But I guess knowing the audience this is intended for, what would you say to them that you haven't already said?

If I were to have any advice to someone embarking on a music career and journey, it's just that if you want to be a poet or you want to be a musician, if you want to have a creative output, I think you really have to be living your life creatively. I don't think that art is beside the point. I think it's a trap artists fall into that they think they are special or unique because they are an artist. And I think that re-envisioning your audience and realizing that everyone is an artist in that we're all special. The old manifesto is, "arm your desires, disarm the authorities." To me what that means is that the authorities are telling you "no" in your head. Trying new things and not becoming stuck in them, constantly upping the authorities of your own fear and pressure of all different sorts that are telling you "no" and to "stop" and "change" or whatever. That disarming the no's, and always encouraging the yes's, and moving forward constantly with desire, whatever that is, whatever you completely desire, if you go broke working your butt off touring, if that is your desire then you have to arm that shit and find ways to make it work so you can fulfill that dream. But at the same time, and to say what I've said numerous times already, is really thinking about why you're doing it and what you want to get out of it. And is it something just for yourself or is it something you hope to give to other people? One of my manifestos at the Radio Bean is that more efforts to the people motive and not the profit motive. I mean, I don't want to go broke doing it but I often sacrifice profits for the people. Like I do things where I book bands repeatedly that don't really have much of a draw but I like what they're doing and I find that they're evolving as musicians and artists and that I want to encourage them to do that. Because I feel that their desire is why I'm in business. And in fact it's why I'm doing what I'm doing, it's to provide a platform and a space for people to grow and live out their dreams and desires.

Again it all comes back to "arming your desires and disarming the authorities", I think it's the way to create new music, to create a feeling of goodness among your fellow artists in your community. I guess that would be my lasting advice to people. When it becomes a bore or it becomes excessively frustrating you have to change your approach. That there's a lot of different things that are you can still do things artistically, you can be an artist in a million different ways. You don't have to go out on tour or doing whatever the stereotype of an musician today would be. I think there are a million different options out there that people don't always look at. You can be an artist, musician, and a poet everyday of your life.