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TORONTO audiofest

SHERATON TORONTO AIRPORT HOTEL
AND CONFERENCE CENTRE
OCTOBER 16-18, 2026





THE GREATEST ROCK BAND COFFEE TABLE BOOK EVER?
16

SCHRÖDINGER'S CABLE AND THE QUANTUM STATE OF VALUE
12

ALBUM REVIEW
ROLLING STONES' FOREIGN TONGUES
21

le pouvoir de la musique et de l'audio
PMA MAGAZINE
the power of music and audio

FRONT COVER: KONDO ONGAKU HERITAGE AND ALSYVOX BOTTICELLI
AT WYNN AUDIO - MUSKOKA III

TORONTO audiofest EVENTS



Friday, 2 PM
Georgian Bay
Friday, 4 PM
Ambrosia IV
Saturday, 2 PM
Georgian Bay
Saturday, 4 PM
Ambrosia IV

Anne Bisson



Isabeau Corriveau



Meet the Author
Friday, Saturday & Sunday
1-3 PM
Golden Delicious

Bob Wegner



Vincent Bélanger

Friday
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 PM
Saturday
12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 PM
Sunday
11, 12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 PM
Room 348

earvanafest
TORONTO audiofest



All weekend long
Ambrosia III

Welcome 2026 to the Audiofest

Welcome to the Toronto Audiofest and to our new home at the Sheraton Toronto Airport!

A new venue brings a fresh energy to this year's Audiofest, while keeping everything you love about the show: great music, incredible audio systems, exciting new products, and most importantly, a community of people who share the same passion for music and sound.

Over the next three days, take your time. Explore the exhibit rooms, discover new brands and products, meet the people behind them, and experience systems you may have only dreamed of hearing. From traditional two-channel audio to headphones and personal audio at EARVANA Fest, there is something to discover around every corner.

Take a moment to discover the magic of live acoustic performances and fine-tune your ears along the way. And why not wrap up your Friday evening by joining us for Pitcher Perfect Pairings, our fun craft beer tasting event!

Supporting our local audio retailers, whether in-store or online, continues to be an important part of keeping this industry and our passion alive. We encourage you to take the time to speak with them and benefit from their expertise. They'll be happy to help you find the system that best suits your needs and preferences.

And remember, sometimes the best part of Audiofest is simply finding a comfortable seat, pressing play, and enjoying the music.

One small reminder: please speak softly in the listening rooms. After all, we're here to listen and let the music do the talking.

Enjoy the show, enjoy our new home, and thanks to participate to the Toronto Audiofest 2026!

The Audiofest Team

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Program designed by

rusé.
AGENCE CRÉATIVE



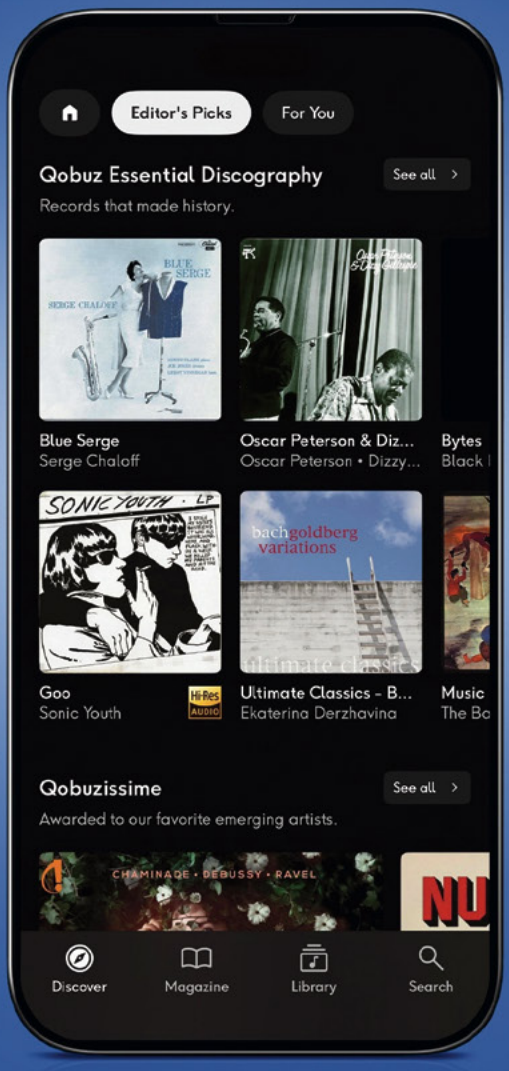
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Exhibitors List

TORONTO audiofest

A

Accuphase	Northern Spy, Ambrosia IV, 230, Haliburton
Aeon Stage	Earvana Fest
Altitudo Audio	MacIntosh I
Angela-Gilbert Yeung	340
ANK Audio Kits	K7
Anne Bisson	K5
Anthem Electronics	Algonquin
Artistcloner	Golden Delicious, T9
Artysan Audio Inc.	T7, T8
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Exhibitors List

TORONTO audiofest

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Z

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Zidel Marketing	Courtland

Opening hours

FRIDAY 11 AM – 8 PM
SATURDAY 10 AM – 6 PM
SUNDAY 10 AM – 5 PM

toronto.audiofest.ca/
facebook.com/torontoaudiofest

Our Upcoming Dates

MONTRÉAL audiofest
Hôtel Bonaventure
March 19-21, 2027

TORONTO audiofest
Sheraton Toronto airport
October 15-17, 2027

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Brands List

TORONTO audiofest

2xHD	K3
432 EVO	444
7HZ	Earvana Fest
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Acapella	MacIntosh I
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Brands List

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Zesto Audio	MacIntosh II
ZiiGaat	Earvana Fest
ZMF Headphones	Earvana Fest

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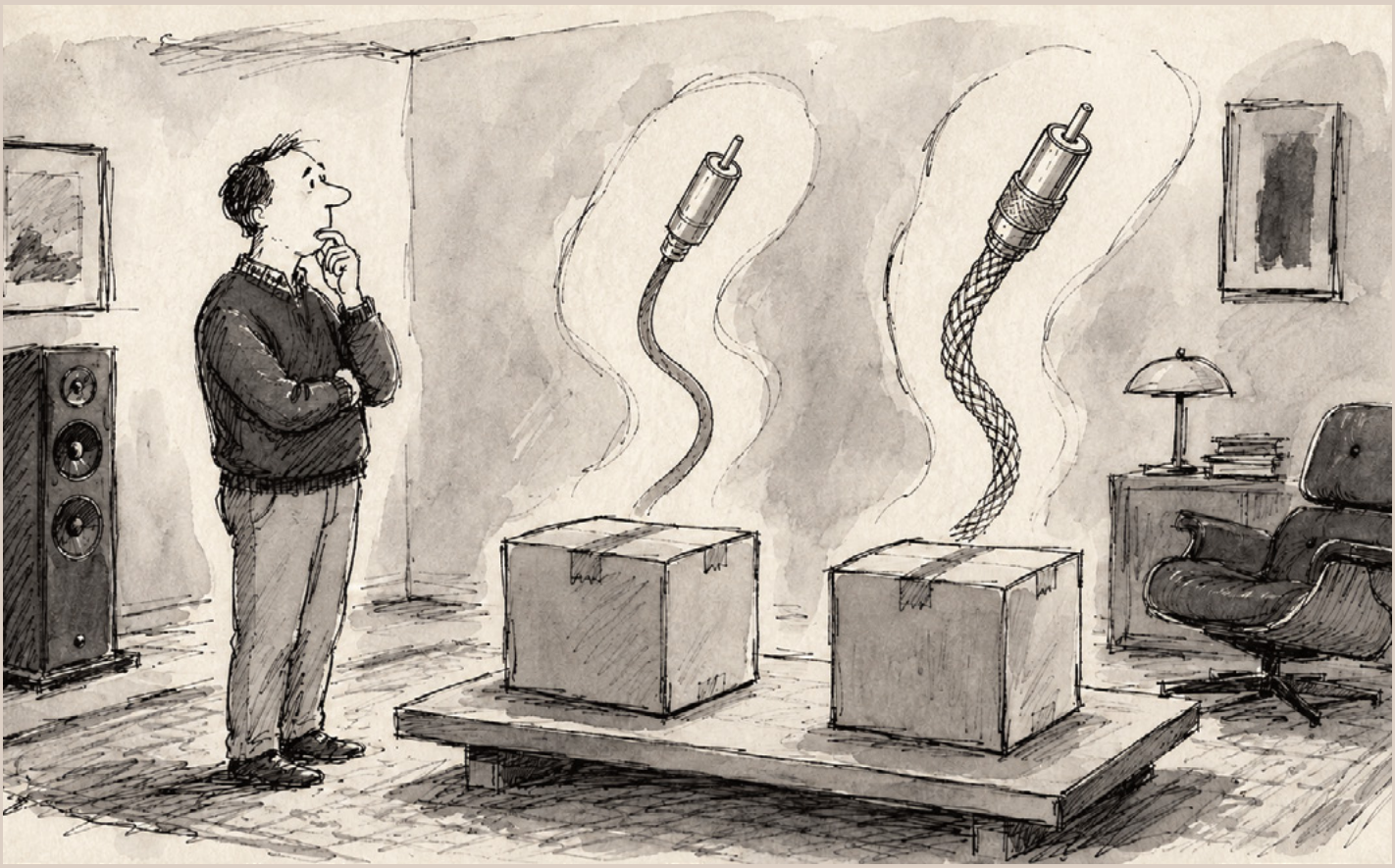
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Schrödinger's Cable and the Quantum State of Value

BY OLIVIER MEUNIER-PLANTE

Put a cable in a blind test and you take away its value. For a moment in time it isn't an adamantium interconnect with a silky woven jacket. It is, simply, Cable B. The eight-dollar one is Cable A — or maybe Cable A is the expensive one, which is rather the point. Nobody in the room knows, and for the next ten minutes nobody is allowed to find out.

Normally, a cable arrives with a price, a finish, maybe even a forum thread or a salesman who raises one eyebrow when you ask whether it really makes a difference. Past a certain price point, it might even come with palanquin bearers and a 21-gun salute. And by the time it's warming up in your system, you already know how it's supposed to sound, or whether it's supposed to sound at all.

The blind test takes all of that away and leaves the cable to fend for itself, which it does, quietly, and without the benefit of representation. For a brief time the living room becomes an arena, and the blind listener raises or lowers his thumb in approval or disapproval. And so we listen with a temporary innocence. Cable A seems a touch fuller. Cable B sounds a little cleaner. One listener hears better separation; another hears nothing at all and begins examining the room, as if it might offer a second opinion. For a few minutes everyone is responding to the sound instead of to the receipt.

Before the price is read, the cable is both things at once: the bargain and the triumph, the waste of money and the revelation — Schrödinger's interconnect, the cat in the box neither alive nor dead until somebody looks. Reading the price aloud is the act of observation that collapses it into one.

If the cheap cable won, it becomes "surprisingly capable," a proof that the emperor had been overdressed all along. If the expensive one won, the result is "consistent with what a resolving system reveals" — a phrase built to flatter the cable, the system, and the listener in a single breath. And if nobody could tell them apart, the conversation develops a sudden, intense interest in the test conditions, because test conditions are where results go to recover.

None of this makes anyone a fool. We do it with everything. Wine tastes better from a heavier bottle. The restaurant improves the moment you learn it's hard to get into (though the average audiophile might walk into the most exclusive place in town only to complain that he could cook the same meal at home for a tenth of the price). A scratch on a chair becomes a catastrophe once somebody mentions it's Italian. The mind never meets an object cold. It meets the object plus everything it already believes about it, and it would rather defend a decision it has already paid for than concede that the decision was partly about the paying. Audio simply runs that old experiment through nicer connectors. The good news is that this kind of cognitive dissonance won't ruin Thanksgiving. Your children and grandchildren won't inherit generational shame over a cable. They may wonder why you spent so much on copper, but not why you kept defending the hat.

Which is why treating the blind test as the final word misses half the instrument. Listening at home is never blind. You always know what you bought, what it cost, and the argument you used to justify it, and that knowledge is part of the experience, the way the glow of the equipment is part of the room.

Reviewers get a fancier version of the same trick. For the buyer, the reveal is the price; for the reviewer it can be the terms. A two-week loan invites caution. An open-ended one invites patience. A sample you get to keep creates a warmer climate for the word "nuance." None of it manufactures an opinion from nothing, though it can make certain opinions easier to hold — and easier to hold at length. By the third draft "hard to tell apart" has matured into "subtle," and "subtle" has found steady work as "rewards long-term listening."

The collapse

The honest thing about the blind test isn't that, for ten minutes, it deletes the story and lets you hear what your ears do without it. It's what happens the moment it ends.

The prices go back on the table, the names come back, and everyone spends the rest of the evening trying to get the story back, because the story was never really sitting apart from the sound. It was just waiting outside the room while the test was on.

And once it comes back in, there is no use pretending it can be removed for good. Trust your ears, but don't pretend they arrive alone. The sound, the price, the room, the story you bought with the box: all of it gets into the listening eventually. The blind test can clear the room for ten minutes. Then life walks back in.

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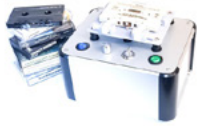
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OCTOBER 16-18, 2026

CONFERENCE LEVEL FLOOR



TABLES	EARVANA FEST
EV01	AEON STAGE
EV02	QUEBEC ACOUSTIQUE
EV03	QUEBEC ACOUSTIQUE
EV04	FIIO
EV05	HIFIMAN
EV06	NOBLE AUDIO
EV19	ASONA
EV20	ASONA
EV21	PPA DISTRIBUTION
EV22	LINSOUL
EV23	LINSOUL
EV24	ERIKSON CONSUMER

KIOSKS	
K1	AUDIO SENSIBILITY
K2	AURALIS DISTRIBUTION, NOTEWORTHY AUDIO
K3	AURALIS DISTRIBUTION, FORTE ART AND MUSIC
K4	HEARINGLIFE
K5	ANNE BISSON
K6	MARIE DOOLEY
K7	ANK AUDIO KITS
K8	REGA / STEREOGROUP
K9/K10	SENNHEISER

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T3	EQ AUDIO VIDEO
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T8	ARTYSAN AUDIO INC.
T9	ARTISTCLONER, SATURN AUDIO LTD.
T10	SATURN AUDIO LTD.

CONFERENCE ROOMS	
COLLINGWOOD	BLISS ACOUSTICS
ALGONQUIN	ANTHEM ELECTRONICS, JVCKENWOOD CANADA INC., PARADIGM
MUSKOKA I	AXIOM, BRYSTON
MUSKOKA II	AUDIO GROUP DENMARK, WYNN AUDIO
MUSKOKA III	WYNN AUDIO
GEORGIAN BAY	KEVRO INTERNATIONAL, MICHI BY ROTEL, MONITOR AUDIO
NIAGARA	KENNEDY HIFI, ISOACOUSTICS, MOTET DISTRIBUTION, PS AUDIO
HALIBURTON	MOTET DISTRIBUTION, ACCUPHASE, KIMBERCAN
AMBROSIA I	HARMAN, SOUND UNITED, BOWERS & WILKINS
AMBROSIA II	HARMAN, SOUND UNITED, BOWERS & WILKINS
AMBROSIA III	EARVANA FEST
AMBROSIA IV	EQ AUDIO VIDEO
NORTHERN SPY	EQ AUDIO VIDEO
SPARTAN	AUDIO BY MARK JONES
GOLDEN DELICIOUS	ARTISTCLONER, BAETIS AUDIO, SATURN AUDIO LTD., TOUGH NUT AUDIO
EMPIRE	AUDEZE LLC
COURTLAND	VINYL SOUND, ZIDEL MARKETING, MOFI DISTRIBUTION
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MACINTOSH II	TRI-CELL ENTERPRISES INC.

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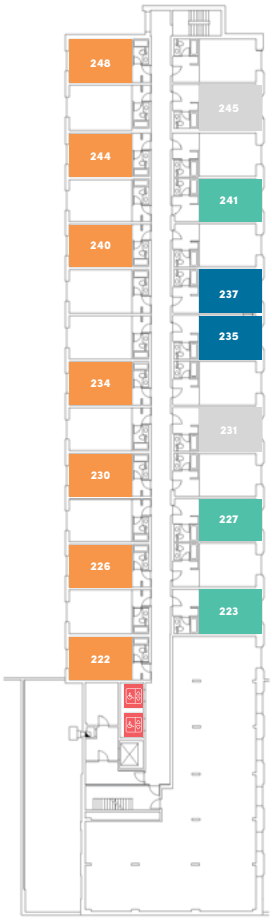
PLANS

LEVEL 2-3-4

TORONTO audiofest

Opening hours

FRIDAY	11 AM – 8 PM
SATURDAY	10 AM – 6 PM
SUNDAY	10 AM – 5 PM







ROOM #	LEVEL 2
222	MONO/STÉRÉO
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Max Webster: High Class

The Greatest Rock Band Coffee Table Book Ever?

BY ROBERT SCHRYER

Music historian, multi-instrumentalist, radio show host and author of the beautiful and exhaustively researched book on the band Max Webster, Max Webster: High Class, Bob Wegner will be the first to tell you: he's a fashion disaster, with hair that makes him look like he just stumbled out of a closet.



[Photo: Bob Wegner, Westmount, Montreal]

That's how he self-deprecatingly introduced himself to me when we met up for this piece in a Westmount park in Montreal. Except I didn't think he looked like a fashion disaster at all; sporting a designer shirt and a spiky tuft of blond hair, I thought he looked rock-musician lean and indie chic—not unlike the first time I met him a couple of months prior, at the 2026 Montreal Audiofest which I was reporting on.

It was Saturn Audio's René Evans who introduced us for the first time. A big Max Webster and Kim Mitchell fan whose mind had been blown by Bob's book, René had persuaded Bob, an expat Torontonian now based in Montreal, to sell it from a table set up in the hallway of the show venue.

That's where I met Bob, who in turn introduced me to his sprawling ode to Max Webster—all 450 pages of it, 12 in x 12 in, in full colour, filled with day-by-day band anecdotes and gleaming photographs, many of them contributed by band frontman, guitarist, and vocalist Kim Mitchell.

The sheer volume of information contained within those pages was staggering—as though Bob had been a fly on the wall throughout the band's entire career, beginning with its earliest days playing six nights a week on the grueling Toronto bar scene.

It was certainly one of the most impressive-looking tomes I had ever seen written about any band, which explains half my reason for wanting to write this piece. The other half was Bob himself, a man who embodies music like few others and who devoted a decade of his life to scrupulously researching and assembling the book.

> "The number of hats I've had to wear is insane."
>
> Bob Wegner

One of those hats was as financier: aside from a small government grant, Bob financed the entire making and publishing of the book out of his own pocket, a considerable undertaking, especially given that, as he recounted, he was "living out of a suitcase for the better part of fifteen years."

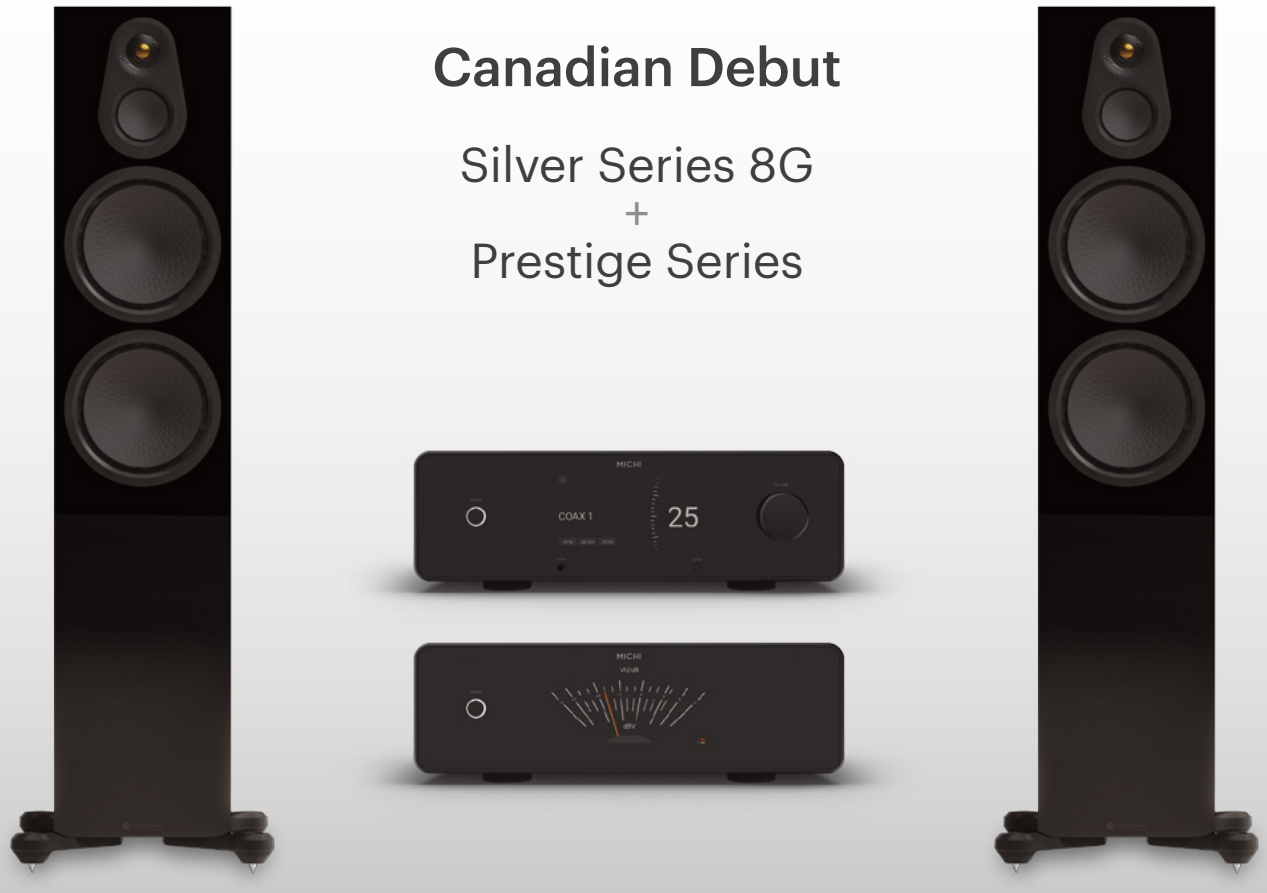
And while the book has turned a modest profit, its biggest dividends have come in the form of unanimous acclaim from fans, music critics, the press, and, most importantly, the band members themselves.

"At his concerts, he would announce my book between songs," Bob said of Kim Mitchell. "He'd describe it and how we got together. What better endorsement?"

Of course, getting rich off the book was never the point. Raised in Ontario, the band's biggest fanbase along with, of all places, England, Bob is, at his core, a devoted Max Webster and Kim Mitchell fan.

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Bob's fixation with music has always been atypical, concerned as much with the music itself as with the circumstances that brought it into being.

"I was very curious about how music is made," he said. "I didn't realize initially that this wasn't normal. When I was in high school and listening to the bands I loved, unlike my peers I was never just satisfied with the music. I was always curious about what was going on around the band to help make this happen. The background is so interesting to me.

"Now we live in a world where you just go to YouTube and find the Beatles bible, 'You Can't Unhear This,'" he said. "There are these amazing dissections of how Beatles music was made. The video version of 'Explain These Things' is just above and beyond. The historians and musicologists who do this work—what a cool time to be alive, that we get to hear this kind of in-depth analysis at the click of a mouse."

The music historian in Bob began to emerge when he was barely an adult.

"I think the first thing I did that I would now see as some form of music history work—and of course it wasn't work—was on one of my favourite albums growing up, Queen's live album Live Killers. I was around 18 at the time.

"And all the liner notes said was, 'Recorded in Europe, between Jan to March '79,' or however it was worded. Then I discovered there were people in the audience who recorded concerts back then—uncut, unaltered, un-overdubbed Queen shows. I started comparing them to the live album and matching songs to specific performances. And it was ah-ha!: half these songs came from this show, the other half from that one, and I would wonder, 'why did they do that?'

"And then you realize you're not the first person to do this," he said. "Others have been dissecting albums like Kiss Alive!, Live and Dangerous, and The Song Remains the Same, trying to figure out what night things were recorded on and where was it overdubbed. People are curious.

"He's a bit like Zappa—just painting and decorating time with a piece that's never the same twice when he plays it. Kim's a genius."

Bob Wegner on Kim Mitchell

"And I started collecting more of that stuff and putting together more of Queen's history, and I contributed since to a lot of Queen books, starting in my early twenties because I was known for having this Queenlive.ca website.

Bob's journey with Queen came full circle when he was selected as a guitarist for the jukebox musical We Will Rock You, based on the band's songs, at Toronto's Pantages Theatre (now the Ed Mirvish Theatre).

"It was the most exciting moment of my life up to that point," Bob said. "Brian May and Roger Taylor were very hands-on when it came to choosing who would play them, and they had final approval. I even got to perform with them on stage."

On facts he posts, do people sometimes try to correct him? "Oh yeah. Usually, they're wrong. But it can be a very collaborative thing. This is where communities and internet forums come in handy. I'm friends with people from all over the world who research my favourite bands."

I asked what prompted him to do a book on Max Webster.

"I always loved the band," he said. "And I had already launched the concert archive maxwebsterlive.ca and was co-admin of the Max Webster Fan Club Facebook page.

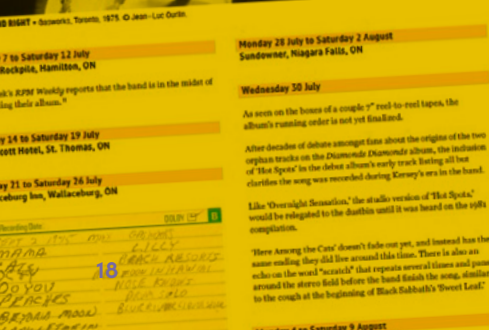
"Then I came to realize that there were great books and documentaries on all my favourite bands, but almost nothing on Max Webster. Martin Popoff wrote a book about them, which is good, but I wanted to go further.

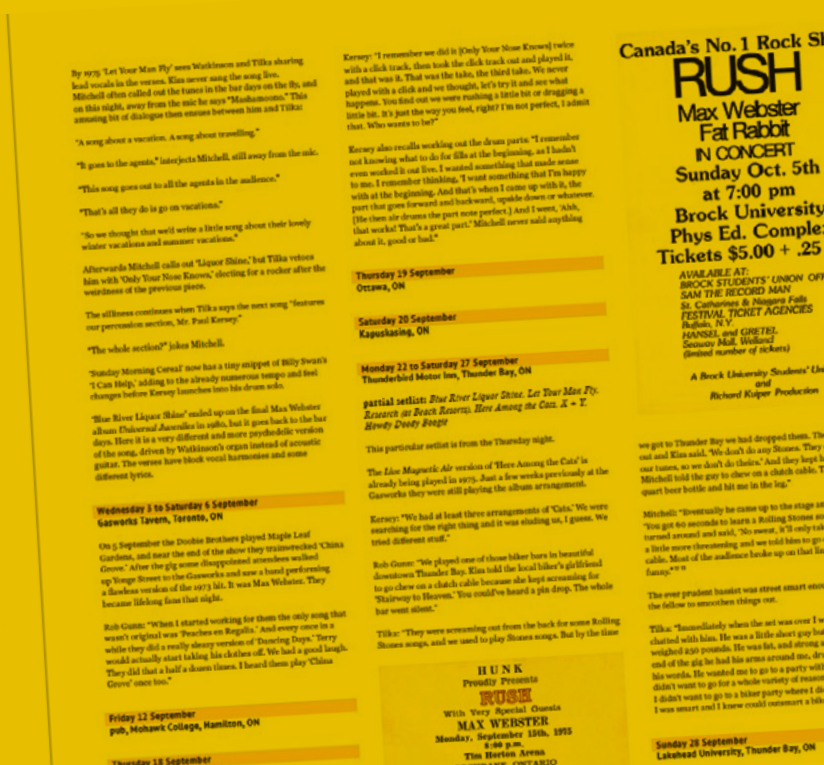
"I wanted to do a day-by-day chronology and fill in as much information as I could. The early years, when they were just a bar band and broke, that's where a lot of the best stories are, some told by the roadies.

"So the band members opened up their collections to me and I ended up having a lot to work with."










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I asked him how he got Kim to agree on collaborating.

"I had been bugging him for quite a while," he said. "Eventually, what made it happen was I went to The Rex in Toronto—a very cool jazz club on Queen St.—to see Kevin Breit, who played guitar for Norah Jones. And sitting on the other side of the room was a guy named Lou Pomanti who played keys with Kim in the early 90s.

"I happened to be carrying my sample copy of my book, and between sets I elbowed my way up to him into a conversation. And Lou opens the book up, and his eyes pop out. He said, wow, this is great, does Kim know about this? When I said yes, but that I hadn't heard back from him, Lou said, Kim's hesitant about a lot of things. I promise you, by tomorrow at this time you will hear from him.

"And I did. Kim wrote to me and said congratulations on the book, and I'd love to get together and see it. And we got together at some sushi place in the west end of Toronto—a friend joked; you might as well go for sushi," Bob said with a chuckle, referencing Kim's hit "Go for Soda." Added Bob: "Kim was amazing. He went through the book with me, and he hadn't seen a lot of the stuff in there before.

"He's going through it and looking at the picture of the tape box from the very first Max Webster demo and he starts humming these songs to me he hasn't thought about probably in 50 years," Bob said. "And we're singing these songs together in a little sushi restaurant. What a beautiful experience that was.

"We're singing these songs together in a little sushi restaurant. What a beautiful experience that was."

"He remembered every single guitar he had—where he bought it, for how much, how much he sold it for, and in most cases the name of the person who bought it from him. His memory recall is amazing.

"There was one photo, and he said: oh, my head's tilted back, my mouth is open, I'm holding a D chord on my Ovation acoustic guitar—that's the last note of the song 'Words to Words' at Massey Hall.

"I said Kim, you're never ever again allowed to say you have a bad memory because that memory is completely spot on."

When I suggested that Kim must have been flattered by the book—that it was, in a sense, a monument to him—Bob was quick to add: "To him, and to the rest of the band. Terry Watkinson just died. I was at the family's private memorial, and they were so grateful that he got to see the book. But they were also grateful that their father's—or brother's, uncle's, or close friend's—life is now documented for future generations. That's a whole other trip from fans.

"And fans have been appreciative. Max Webster fans are a very special bunch. They speak in the tongue of (lyricist) Pye Dubois lyrics. They're unique in how they talk to you to show their appreciation.

Playback-wise, Bob has a substantial vinyl collection, and a nifty audio system based on vintage 60s Dynaco speakers and a Yamaha receiver. "Of course, I'm a bit of an audiophile myself," he said.

There's one piece of audio gear he never leaves home without: his iPod Classic. "This device has an album cover flow you can swipe through and browse like a record collection," he said. "This technology is over 20 years old and there's not been a single improvement made on a portable music player—the cover wheel on the Classic is so unique."

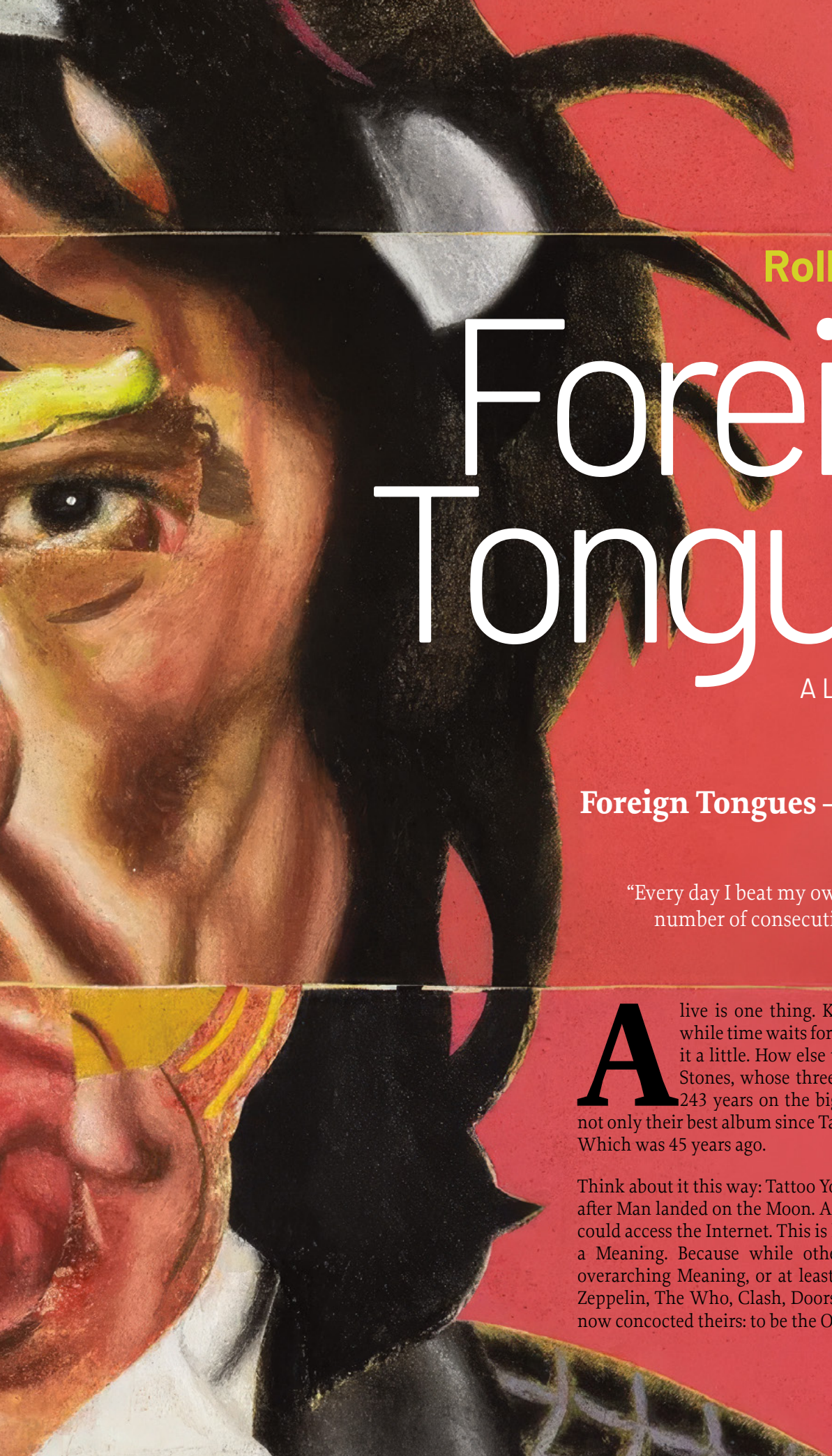
I ask Bob what's next for him. "Right now, I'm doing research for a music history book for a well-known British author. It's so much fun. I've also got a nice theatre gig in Toronto playing my solo acoustic guitar with a looper pedal and layer parts. I do complete Pink Floyd albums, and a whole variety of stuff—classical, too.

"But in general, I just want to keep doing what I'm doing," he said. "I want to be involved in music history things. That's what I'm passionate about."

In a world where the line between AI-generated content and human creation seems increasingly blurred, Bob's genuine passion for what he does feels profoundly, reassuringly human.

To support Bob and get your copy of the second edition of Max Webster: High Class before it sells out, click here. The new edition features a foreword by Ron Sexsmith and expands on the original with a wealth of new stories, behind-the-scenes revelations, and photos, many drawn from Kim Mitchell's personal archive.

Max Webster : High Class
Second edition · Foreword by Ron Sexsmith



Rolling Stones'

Foreign Tongues

ALBUM REVIEW

BY MARK LEPAGE

Foreign Tongues – Rolling Stones

★★★★☆

"Every day I beat my own previous record for the number of consecutive days I've stayed alive".
Keith Richards

Alive is one thing. Kicking, another. Apparently, while time waits for no one, you can at least bully it a little. How else to explain how these Rolling Stones, whose three full-time members tally up 243 years on the big blue marble, have released not only their best album since Tattoo You, but easily its equal. Which was 45 years ago.

Think about it this way: Tattoo You was released only 12 years after Man landed on the Moon. And about 12 years before you could access the Internet. This is how long it takes to generate a Meaning. Because while other legendary bands had an overarching Meaning, or at least a Theme—The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, The Who, Clash, Doors, etc.—the Stones have only now concocted theirs: to be the Oldest Best.

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It begins with the crunching "Rough and Twisted," harkening back to "Black Limousine" (from Tattoo You) and hanging a lotta racket on Keith's (no surnames, right?) simple riff. "In The Stars" Frankensteins a vintage '80s riff to a newfangled-ish melody to remarkable effect and is better than any U2 song in the last—what, 30 years?—before bumping into the giddy, slutty-falsetto Stones of "Jealous Lover."

"Mr. Charm" is the most intense, aggressive Stones song in a lifetime, detonating into a canyon-sized chorus and the singer's hilariously best lyric in ages: "Life's too short for just makin' money / show me how to spend it with ya, honey." It is a Mick Jagger album, and you can always hear the singer, delivering some of the most Mick Jagger vocals ever... because, oh yeah, you damn sure knew there was only ever going to be one Exile on Main St. where the singer had to fight to be heard over the guitars.

just makin' money / show me how to spend it with ya, honey.

— "Mr. Charm"

Foreign Tongues is also a genre-flex throughout. "Divine Intervention" could be a Tattoo You outtake and might have been that album's best track for its vigour. There's the disco bassline of "Never Wanna Lose You," the punky "Hit Me in the Head" with Charlie Watts driving the engine, and the cautionary-tale banger "Side Effects." When you hear the blues harp and falsetto, you think, Are they doing Amy Winehouse? And they are. While I'm not sure we needed a Stones version of "You Know I'm No Good," they pull it off with the requisite swag. I mean, yeah, they started as a cover band, right? So Chuck Berry's stripped-down "Beautiful Delilah" sees us out.

The guest stars—Paul McCartney, Robert Smith, Bruno Mars (on cowbell!)—would be invisible had we not been provided their names, save for the immortal Stevie Winwood, whose faultless keyboards are all over the album. The song doctors make a house call on "Covered in You" (Paul on slippery bass), but otherwise the Stones make little concession to the zeitgeist or prevailing fashions. Foreign Tongues arrives on their own terms.Ah yes. About that above-mentioned racket. Andrew Wyatt is justifiably hailed for lighting a fire under 240-odd years of rock legends and amping the energy levels to the moon. You might nickname him "Nature," though, because Wyatt abhors a vacuum and stuffs every song like a guitar piñata, so packed with tracks and overdubs that they sometimes fuse into a bristling monolith. He's like a traffic cop pushing everyone into the crosswalk at once, which is something of an acquired taste.



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The countrified (and terrific) "Ringing Hollow" finally allows some air into the mix, with another great (and slyly political) lyric: "Liberty's not looking too well / She's got another crack in her bell" and "Let the dreamers get the dream they want / My favorite joke / So pass 'round the fenty / Pass 'round the coke." Elsewhere, he hammers "mad mogul Mr. Musk" (which he'll doubtless take as an homage) and wakes up "sick and tired of all these autocrats / You know they seem to be / Breeding like a swarm of dirty rats."

And then there is Keith's quite remarkable "Some of Us," which unfolds from a skeletal guitar figure into a towering paean to humility and stands as one of the loveliest and most affecting songs in the band's discography.

So. Good time to be a Stones fan. Good time to be a Stone. The true test of a new album is this: would you want to hear any of these songs live, or do you just want "Jumping Jack Flash" and "Brown Sugar" for the 999th time? There are probably four or five on this album that will sound cracking good in the Las Vegas residency I called for a decade ago. Talk may be cheap, but Foreign Tongues speaks volumes.

Foreign Tongues
Rolling Stones
★★★★☆

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