

Art Darts

written by Rob McMahon

PEAK Performance Project anticipates a different kind of music industry



The PEAK Performance Project gets real with aspiring musicians, training them to do for themselves

Social networking, local talent, industry trends and networks of performers and fans come together in the [PEAK](#)

[Performance Project](#).

Chances are you've heard about the event by now. It was created by radio station [100.5 The PEAK](#) and [Music BC](#) to develop emerging BC-based artists like [TV Heart Attack](#), [Adaline](#) and [Wassabi Collective](#).

A seven-year, \$5.29 million contest open to all B.C.-based musicians, the event offers 20 finalists an intensive week-long industry training program slash boot camp and the opportunity to perform—with the top three artists receiving money for career development. Visit the [Peak Performance Project site](#) for scheduling and information.

I was curious about the project and so asked local singer-songwriter—and Peak Performance Project participant—[Ben Sigston](#), for his thoughts, and for ideas that other independent artists might find useful.

How does the PEAK Performance Project tackle recent changes in the music industry?

The highlight of the Peak Project is that they have been able to access guest speakers and lecturers that are some of the most innovative independent publicists, promoters and marketing strategists in the Canadian scene.

As technology keeps moving forward at such a rapid pace, the revenue streams from selling CDs are almost gone. Musicians are being forced to get out on the road and seriously work for themselves.

Ben Sigston live at the Cellar

[Catch Ben's show this Thursday, November 5, 2009, at the Cellar Nightclub at 1006 Granville St.](#)

Many new musicians are now having to take care of all of their own business affairs in order to get ahead.

As a musician, is this daunting for you? Having to handle the business side as well as the creative side?

In today's music climate it is imperative for all artists to be business-savvy. Honestly, it is so difficult to make enough money to employ managers, agents and anyone else that may help. It seems to me that the best way to move forward is to understand your vision as an artist and then try to put the plan into action. And putting that plan into action means having no money and playing as much as possible.

Can you describe the PEAK Performance Project Boot Camp?

The boot camp was amazing. It was at a place called the Rock Ridge Canyon nestled in the mountains near Princeton, BC. There

was limited cell phone reception so basically there were no distractions. Every day we heard lectures hosted by different faculty—about five hours of lectures per day.

Some highlights were Ken Beatty from [Kill Beat Publicity](#), Vancouver-based producer [Jeff Dawson](#), Shawn Verrault from [Wide Mouth Mason](#) and [Erin Kinghorn](#), an independent publicist from Toronto. There was so much great advice that it was a bit of an information overload.

Personally I really enjoyed Ken Beatty who shared his experiences as a musician and publicist, and encouraged all of us to get out there and work hard.

How do you use tools like social media sites to promote your work?

Ah, social media. This has not been my strong point as a musician but I'm definitely getting better. Social and interactive media are becoming the main way of communicating with new and potential fans. I'm beginning to use [my website](#) as kind of my main hub for all of these other sites... The only thing that is a bit crazy is that it is really time consuming to keep up with all of the new sites. I do feel a little overwhelmed at times because there are so many.

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