

**A Conversation with David Mead**  
**by Frank Goodman (Puremusic.com, 6/2004)**

The first thing that hits you is how high he sings. Right behind that is how beautifully he sings. His songs are deeply melodic, radically but not dramatically. They are Rufus-esque, Sexsmithian, and beyond, unto themselves--because David Mead's vocal range is beyond the latter, and he's a little more pop and less popera than Rufus. (And believe me, there are few artists we like better than Rufus or Sexsmith, though we are digging the *hell* outta this artist.)

David Mead put out two pop albums on RCA. This new one, on Nettwerk, is more acoustic oriented (except for the monster ballad "Beauty," where electric guitars appear to great effect) and organic, if you'll pardon the expression. David Henry at True Tone Studios turns in another fantastic disc, he is a quiet wonder, and a superb cellist to boot. (See our review of *Brother Henry* for the debut with David and his brother Ned.) Many of our favorite and recurring characters appear, and it all comes out in the interview. David will tour widely with various duo partners behind this great record, *Indiana*, and you should not miss him.

Although we met the man recently, we do not know much about him, and indeed his website reveals little more. By his fruits one shall, apparently, know him. We certainly found them sweet sustenance, and hope that either AAA radio embraces this disc wholesale or that even bigger formats will recognize his excellent cover of "Human Nature" or his own "Beauty" as badly needed singles for melody starved ears. Slowly or quickly we do believe he will rise into view and earshot, and bid those who like to get out in front of a good thing to check out the clips of this fine artist on the Listen page, and buy *Indiana*, right here.

But let's converse with the man awhile, and get to know him just a little bit. Here is a fine songwriter and one of the best singers we've heard in eons, David Mead.

[I began our conversation by recounting our recent meeting at a little club in Nashville where I was playing a gig along with our mutual friends Joe Pisapia and Swan Dive, and Leslie Riley.]

**Puremusic:** So *Indiana*, wow, it's a major work. It's a beautiful record. I'm so proud of you. Congratulations.

**David Mead:** Thank you!

**PM:** And it's some time in the making, it's easy to see.

**DM:** Yeah, but it actually took much longer than usual just because I toured a lot last year while we were making it. So it really took almost an entire year, but we never worked for more than four days at a time, probably. It was a luxury to work that way, because you got to take plenty of time off from recording and having your head in that space. You could back off for a little while and then evaluate things and come back to it. So it was cool.

**PM:** And obviously you literally change over that year's time, and you come out with a more evolved recording, inevitably.

**DM:** Sure.

**PM:** Although I've known of you for some time, this is really, I'm sorry to say, the first record of yours with which I've become very familiar. But for our readers who may know even less than I did, perhaps we can sketch a little bit of your musical journey so far. For instance, I'm not sure where you come from.

**DM:** I was born in New York--Long Island--and moved around quite a bit when I was a kid. We mostly lived in the south. And I settled in Nashville in, let's see, it would have been '87, I guess. Then I moved back to New York City in '97. And now I've moved back to Nashville, as you know.

**PM:** Got it.

**DM:** And I hang out at the 5-Spot on occasion. Although, you know, I still haven't actually been back there since that night.

**PM:** No, neither have I. Just busy...

**DM:** I really like that place.

**PM:** Yeah, it's a good little room. And were you not one of the founding members of one of my favorite bands, Joe, Marc's Brother? [That's Joe and Mark Pisapia on guitar and drums, and James "Hags" Haggerty on bass. Joe has been out with Guster a lot lately, and the rhythm section has been on world tour with Josh Rouse.]

**DM:** I guess you could call me a founding member. I think they played as a three-piece for a while before I came on. But I was definitely in version 1.0 for a very thrilling three years or so.

**PM:** [laughs] And was there a recording during your tenure with them?

**DM:** No. Theoretically, there wasn't. They had finished their record called the *Debut of* before I joined the band. And we did some demos for a few record companies along the way, but it was nothing that was ever released.

**PM:** Right. So you came to Nashville in '87--when did the Pisapias come and how did you hook up with those guys?

**DM:** I think they moved here around '93. I had been living in Florida for a while, and had moved back, and just wasn't really sure what to do with myself. And I had heard about them because they were making a name for themselves around town. And their manager at the time was a mutual friend, Rick Clark. You might know him. He still lives over in East Nashville.

**PM:** Oh, sure. Yeah, he's a buddy of mine. [See our review of Rick's fabulous book, *The Expert Encyclopedia of Recording*.]

**DM:** So he and I saw the band, or I just came to one of their shows once, and I thought it was great. They were looking for a fourth member, a second guitarist and backup vocalist or whatever, so I just kind of weaseled my way into it eventually.

**PM:** Wow. And how did it come to pass, then, after your tenure with them, that you moved on to a solo career?

**DM:** Well, I think part of that breakup, which was, for the most part, pretty amicable, was them basically telling me--well, by the end of my time with the band, and probably something that contributed to its demise, I was writing and we were playing my songs as well as Joe's songs. And it really wasn't what Joe and Marc had set out to do. Although it was definitely working on a lot of levels, it just wasn't really what they wanted to be doing.

They were familiar with the songs that I'd been writing since I'd been in the band, and they basically pushed me out the door. They were like, "We really think it's time that you start doing this yourself. You've got great songs and everything, but it just doesn't quite line up with what we want to do." So I give them a lot of credit for that. I kind of went kicking and screaming at the time, but once I did it... I guess I sort of booked myself into a residency at Guido's Pizzeria. I don't know if that still exists or not.

**PM:** It's still around, yeah.

**DM:** Okay. And I started playing a lot of stuff from this back catalog of songs that I had.

**PM:** Started playing them solo or with a couple of guys or...?

**DM:** No, I was just playing solo at that time. And I just sort of worked stuff out there, and met my current manager, through that process.

**PM:** And who is that?

**DM:** His name is Kip Kroner. And so he and I put our heads together and tried to focus the direction of everything a little bit. And once we did, I went in and cut some demos. Kip got them to record labels, and I got signed to RCA, and did two records for them which were released, and a third one which has yet to be. That relationship came to an end in, I guess, the beginning of last year. *Indiana* kind of came about as a byproduct of that, because I had done this record and turned it in right as RCA merged with another huge record label. So basically, anybody who hadn't sold 500,000 records [laughs] at that point was kind of let go.

I was worried that I wouldn't get my record back and decided to go ahead and start making another one in the meantime so that I could have it ready to put out myself. I didn't want too much time to go by. But then, once that was all done, it turned out that I felt more comfortable with where *Indiana* was at, as opposed to the record that was unreleased. And so when we did a new deal with Nettwerk, *Indiana* was the one that we went for.

**PM:** So you're not even trying to get that third RCA record back at this point?

**DM:** Well, I did actually end up getting it back, so I have it. Now I'm not exactly sure what to do with it. It would be kind of a big leap [laughs] from this one, stylistically, because it sort of went in a different direction.

**PM:** Wow.

**DM:** Well, I think *Indiana* works with the first two in its own way, but the one that didn't come out sort of works with the first two in a completely different way. But to go from this one to that one, that might be too big of a left turn. We'll see. I'm sure it will see the light of

day somehow. I mean, I think it's really good. I'm very proud of it, but I guess the time needs to be right for that kind of thing.

**PM:** Right. How would you characterize the difference between the unreleased record and *Indiana*, which has an acoustic organic feel--

**DM:** Yeah.

**PM:** --for what is still a great pop record.

**DM:** The other record still has acoustic instruments on it, but it's probably the most rhythm oriented record that I've done, and it's the biggest sounding record. I wouldn't say it's as glossy as the first two. It actually is rougher around the edges. But it just has a lot more colors and elements to it. I don't know, it's not really a rock record, but it's more of a big pop record somehow. And *Indiana* kind of strikes me as a big pop record in a very small scope. You know what I mean?

**PM:** Yeah. For all its grandness--and I don't mean grandiosity--but for all its grandness, it has a very intimate feel.

**DM:** Yes. We kept it pretty small, intentionally, partially in response to having just gone through the process of having done the other record, which felt like a long process. But I guess it was about two months, all said and done.

**PM:** Right. Well, can we talk a little bit about that period in New York City? I suspect you were living there during the RCA years, right?

**DM:** Yes, I was.

**PM:** And so, New York City and the big time, relatively speaking, what was that time all about?

**DM:** Well, I'd always had kind of a romance going with that city, since I was a kid. And when I started with RCA, I finally had the freedom to just get up there and do it. So, yeah, that was just a really big creative metamorphosis, because for once I didn't have to go to a day job. I mean, my job for a while was really to just walk around and soak it up. And I did. So it was great for that.

**PM:** And where were you living?

**DM:** I lived in the East Village.

**PM:** That's the best.

**DM:** Yeah. It was. It was definitely a very fun time.

**PM:** And were you playing gigs, many solo or band gigs or--

**DM:** Yeah. I played a lot at the Living Room.

**PM:** What a great room.

**DM:** The Living Room and Fez and Arlene's Grocery, I think, were probably my three

primary gigs.

**PM:** Three of my favorite New York joints. Were you playing those solo or with guys who might be playing with Richard Julian or Jennifer Jackson or some of our other friends up there?

**DM:** Both, actually. I played solo and with two guys, one named Ethan Eubanks and one named Whynot Jansveld. And they toured with me throughout the whole cycle of the second record.

**PM:** Touring around the Northeast?

**DM:** Yeah.

**PM:** Cool. And when you decided that you would come back to Nashville, what was that whole process about?

**DM:** Well, I think I was a little bit burned out on New York. I think I lived there long enough where it actually became fairly normal. And once that happened, I just wasn't sure if it was worth it to me anymore, just the expense of it and the hassle of it. I mean, there are a million great things about it to counter that, but suddenly it was like, "Well, this is where I live, this is my home." And once I had that sensation, it just wasn't as great anymore.

[laughter]

**PM:** Yeah, once you been there, done that.

**DM:** Right. So I kind of decided to go back to Nashville temporarily and just recuperate a little bit. And a couple things happened. Well, I met the woman who became my wife, for one thing. [His wife is the artist Natalie Cox Mead.] And it just felt really good down here, and it still does. So I'm happy I did.

**PM:** Yeah, I like it here.

**DM:** Me too.

**PM:** Thanks, that kind of catches us up, and we'll continue in present time.

So that's such a special voice that you have--first of all, I mean, you sing, obviously, very high, which stands you apart from most singers. Your falsetto voice is so strong and so controlled. Has it always been that way? Has it always been a huge feature of how you sing?

**DM:** It has been for a while now, but it wasn't always. I think I sort of learned to sing singing along with the first Jeff Buckley record, which I discovered, I guess, like back in '93, just a little EP he put out. And I'd really never heard a man who had that level of control. And it just went from there.

**PM:** Of course, his dad [Tim Buckley] was a remarkable singer as well.

**DM:** Absolutely.

**PM:** Yeah.

**DM:** But I think the turning point was that I figured out how he did it. And it's actually a much more economical way of singing. At the end of the day it's a lot less taxing than trying to shout. So yeah, I think that's probably when it changed.

**PM:** Wow, interesting. Yeah, because listening to Jeff Buckley might inspire one to work on that part of one's range and that kind of approach.

**DM:** Definitely.

**PM:** Including your falsetto, since it's so usable and so under control in your case, how big is your vocal range, would you say?

**DM:** I think it's four octaves, Frank.

**PM:** Because that's what it sounds like to me, brother man. It sounds like four.

**DM:** I haven't tested that out in a while. I knew that Jeff Buckley had a four octave range, and that was always my goal. I was a lot more concerned about it at one point than I am now.

[laughter]

**DM:** But the only curse of having that range is the tendency to want to write songs that use the entire thing, which is good on some levels, but--

**PM:** Exactly my next question.

**DM:** --being that I kind of write pop songs, it's always--you can kind of cut down on the singability of them, too, without meaning to.

**PM:** Exactly where I'm going. I think that the range and your control of it must've influenced your songwriting greatly, because at some level, one is writing to showcase one's talents, and also working within one's limits. But when your limits are pretty extensive, you're tempted, as you say, to write to the limits, and yet that's not necessarily the way you get your best pop song out.

**DM:** Yeah. It'd be one thing if I were writing arias--

**PM:** [laughs]

**DM:** --but I'm not nearly that good.

**PM:** Yes, that'd be a good arena for writing to the limits. But that said, your melodies are something truly extraordinary. I mean, I love the melodies of Ron Sexsmith, but you write great melodies that few people could sing well.

**DM:** Well, thanks.

**PM:** And great background vocals, too. I mean, the ones on "Bucket of Girls," for instance, are fantastic, Rufus-esque.

**DM:** Yeah, right, right. That song was definitely influenced by Rufus, for sure. [see our interview with Rufus Wainwright from a few issues back]

**PM:** And as influenced as a lot of us would like to be by him, I mean, I could actually hear it there, and that's a real trick. It's beautifully done.

**DM:** Thank you.

**PM:** So you mentioned your wife, but we'd like to talk about her. Why don't you tell us about Natalie, whose artwork adorns the new record, where and how you met and all that?

**DM:** Well, we actually met at 12th and Porter in Nashville.

**PM:** How seedy.

**DM:** Yeah, I know.

**PM:** [laughs]

**DM:** It's kind of cool: after all these years of hanging out in bars and trying to meet girls, I actually met my wife in one.

**PM:** That's beautiful.

**DM:** But yeah, it was kind of an unremarkable way to meet. But we had a couple of dates, and then I had to go--hey, Frank?

**PM:** Yeah.

**DM:** I don't know what the deal is with this cell phone. I'm going to call you back on my home line. This is just really annoying.

**PM:** Yeah, it's starting to get fuzzy.

**DM:** I'll call you right back.

**PM:** Great, yeah, because it would never do to get fuzzy right when you start talking about your wife.

**DM:** [laughs] That wouldn't be right.

[He calls back and we resume.] So yeah, Natalie and I had a couple dates, then I had to go to England for a month to finish that other record. So we had a long distance courtship for a little while and then it kicked into higher gear when I got back, and here we are.

**PM:** Natalie's artwork is beautiful on the record. Well-chosen, and it really casts a mood.

**DM:** Thanks, I'll tell her you said so.

**PM:** So why did you have to go to England? Who was producing that album, or what was happening that was English?

**DM:** It was a guy named Steven Hague, who's actually an American, but he's been living in England for a long time. This is the other record. the one that didn't come out. And the guy who was mixing it, his name is Tchad Blake--

**PM:** Oh, right, yeah.

**DM:** --and he pretty much likes to work at Real World Studios exclusively because it's close to his house.

**PM:** How do you like that...

**DM:** Yeah, I didn't complain at all.

[laughter]

**DM:** So that's what I was doing there.

**PM:** "I'm glad it's close to *your* house. It's 3,000 miles from mine."

**DM:** Yeah, right.

**PM:** [laughs]

**DM:** No, it was great, though. That's an amazing place to work. It was just very slow-paced, but it was definitely an experience.

**PM:** Let's talk about your very talented co-producer on *Indiana*, multi-instrumentalist David Henry.

**DM:** Well, let's see. I'd actually done a track with David that was on my first record, and I think that's probably when we met. And he was getting his studio up and just testing out his new gear more than anything, and wanted to do something. So I came over and we did this song called "She, Luisa." It turned out so good we just basically used that version for the record. And this one, *Indiana*, we started because we had played some gigs together, and one of the new songs that we were doing was "Nashville," the first song on the record.

**PM:** Right.

**DM:** And he was like, "Man, I've got a new studio now and I would really like to cut that. Do you want to just come over and try it?" I went, "Yeah, sure." So we did that and then we did a few others. And they just all sounded so good, and he's so incredibly easy to work with.

**PM:** Yeah, what a guy.

**DM:** Yes. Very, very transparent and attentive. And that was definitely how I wanted to be doing it. So we kind of holed up in his place on 12th, and as I said, over kind of a long period of time, a lot of short sessions, that's how we did it.

**PM:** Wow. Is Brad Jones playing upright, or as you put it, concert bass on all the tracks?

**DM:** It is an upright bass. I thought that was a concert bass.

**PM:** I'm just not used to seeing that term on a pop record. I thought it was pretty classy.

**DM:** That's why I used it.

[laughter]



**PM:** And I wondered if Brad stipulated that it be listed as “concert bass.” [laughs] So was the decision that it be upright bass made at the outset, or did that just kind of evolved tune by tune?

**DM:** Well, part of the ethic of the whole thing was just to limit ourselves to acoustic instruments. The only time we backed off of that was with Joe Pisapia’s lap steel. And there’s one song, “Beauty,” where he finally broke down and put some electric guitars on it. But I’d seen Brad play upright before, and I think he has a really cool approach to it. He’s such a melodic pop bassist, and he obviously knows his way all over an electric bass, but he’s also really limber on an upright. But he doesn’t come from a school of music that, I think, maybe more obviously lends itself to playing upright bass, so he has a certain way of playing it that I thought would work out really well, and I think it did.

**PM:** Yeah, he didn’t come from any of the upright angles. He didn’t come from bluegrass, jazz, or classical.

**DM:** Right.

**PM:** And so, as you say, he’s got his own touch on the upright, as he does on electric. It’s amazing. I remember not so long ago, when Brad heard that I was getting my own studio up, he said, “Hey, Frank, you got to pay to get me to track on electric bass. But if you want me to come in and play upright, I’ll play for free.” And this was a while back. So as soon as I saw that he was playing upright bass all over your record, I said, “Well, that’s the end of that offer.”

[laughter]

**DM:** Well, you’d be surprised. I’ve pretty much paid for the whole thing myself, so I didn’t really have a lot to pay him with either. But he was very gracious about that.

**PM:** I just figured, “Oh, now he’s a frickin’ session guy on upright bass. Yeah, now he’s gonna cost me...”

**DM:** [laughs]

**PM:** And you have two of my favorite musicians and people on the record, both Marc Pisapia playing drums throughout, and I don’t know how much lap steel Joe played, but those are just two of the greatest musicians and guys that I think we both know.

**DM:** I would agree.

**PM:** I thought Marc was an inspired choice for a drummer, because when you play things so intimate, I mean, his dynamic range, it’s unparalleled. He can get just as quiet as you want, and as loud as you want. And he’s all about the song.

**DM:** Yeah, absolutely. He has little nuances that he does, which I think kind of--I mean, it’s not like he has signature licks, exactly, he just sort of has a way he--how do you say it? I mean, it’s sort of stiff in a really good way. It’s almost orchestral in a sense, the way he approaches it. Do you know what I mean?

**PM:** Yeah. And as you’re speaking I can picture him sitting there doing that kind of orchestral thing.

**DM:** He definitely has his own groove. And I also thought that since he's done a few records now with Brad--Brad's a big fan of the way that he and Hags play together, his kind of approaching it from a scientific angle before, apparently. So it was fun watching Brad lock in with Marc, and see the two of them get their own particular boogie on.

**PM:** Wow. And so to give me a picture of the recording situation, how does it go on at David Henry's? Is it iso rooms [isolated booths, to keep the microphones from "bleeding" into one another, so that each track is independently mixable later] or is everybody in one room with baffles, or what's it look like?

**DM:** Well, the studio is basically a converted house. And I think he has the capability to do it however you choose within reason. But another decision that we made from the outset of the record was that we really wanted the pulse to be driven by me, and the way I play solo. Because generally I've gotten together with a band or musicians and done the standard pre-production rehearsal routine. And then we go in and start cutting from the basic tracks up. That's what we had done on, for instance, the record that hasn't been released. And I wanted to try relying a little bit more on my own musicianship to propel it, I suppose.

So that's the way we started. We recorded just live takes of me doing the song on guitar or piano, and then we'd go on from there. So everyone was recorded separately, to the best of my recollection.

**PM:** Oh, you mean you'd cut them on guitar or piano, and you'd have a vocal, and you'd have both of those tracks done and then you'd do drums by themselves and bass by itself, and each element would be added a track at a time.

**DM:** That's correct.

**PM:** That's the way I might like to do my next record, so that's very cool to hear you did it and it worked out well.

**DM:** Yeah, I think so. It got away from us, too. I feel like most of the production aspects of this record were more about editing than they were about desperately trying to come up with ideas, because there wasn't really a shortage of those between all of the people who were playing on it.

**PM:** Not with that crowd.

**DM:** Yeah, right. It was more about making sure that the element of the singer and the main instrument stayed in front of it without being obnoxious, you know what I mean? Because they were live takes, so there's definitely, like, warts and mistakes all over my part.

**PM:** Thank God.

**DM:** Yeah, definitely. And actually both David and Brad were very good about making me leave a lot of that stuff alone, because my tendency would probably be to try to correct it more.

**PM:** But they always become our favorite parts of the records, right?

**DM:** Yeah, they often do. And Brad and David were very good about reminding me of that. So I like that balance. It has a little bit of stink on it, it seems like, but I think at the end of the day if it's a good song and it's got some soul in it, then it's going to work. It doesn't

really matter if there's some clunkers along the way.

**PM:** And the other benefit of doing it the way you did it, starting with the artist and his principal instrument on the tune, is that now that song is much more credible when you perform it solo.

**DM:** Yes. That's very true. And I knew the reality of touring for this record, whether I put it out by myself or on another label, was probably going to be, at least initially, having to tour either solo or pretty pared down. I didn't think I was going to be able to take four guys on the road with me. And that was important, because although I've never really felt responsible for the fact that I couldn't tour with a band a lot, I have wished my audience could have seen many of my previous records in that formation a little bit more, because they are a lot more about a band performance. But this one doesn't bear that burden, I don't think.

**PM:** So will you be going out solo now?

**DM:** I'm doing the first three tours, I guess, with one musician.

**PM:** With whom?

**DM:** They're all different, actually. I'm about to go out with Ron Sexsmith next week, and I'm bringing a friend of mine from Toronto named Stuart Cameron, who's playing guitar and lap steel and singing. And then I'm going straight over to England to do a tour there, and I'm using a cellist named Andy Nice. And after that I'm coming back to do about eight dates, kind of in the Northeast, and I'm going to be using Ethan and Whynot on at least four of those.

**PM:** So you use only one or two people and they're different every place you go. That's great.

**DM:** Yeah, I love it, really. It does make it a lot more economical. And also, it keeps it interesting, frankly. I love having to make adjustments and switch up the song. When you're doing the exact same thing night after night, it's so easy to get a little bit bored with it.

**PM:** So speaking of some of the incredible musicians on this project, we also review the Butterfly Boucher CD [*Flutterby*] in this issue. She sang some incredible backups on "One Plus One," and--was it "Ordinary Life"?

**DM:** "Oneplusone" and "Human Nature."

**PM:** Right. What was she like to hang with and to work with? We really think she's amazing.

**DM:** She's great. She's actually a really good friend of my wife's, so I've gotten to know her fairly well over, I guess, almost two years now. But she's great. I mean, she's another one of those people with no shortage of ideas. She just came in one night and banged it out in a couple of hours. I'd had a different vocal approach to "Oneplusone." But my thing was a lot more kind of Jeff Lynne multi-layered harmonies in the chorus. When she came in and started singing it, her ideas were so strong and her voice had so much more character, we just ditched all of mine--

**PM:** Wow.

**DM:** --and used primarily hers. So it's one of those things, I think it went from being like four background vocals to one or two that are both heard, just because her voice speaks so well. It really cuts through a track and it has so much character.

**PM:** Yeah, she's astounding. I thought that the record she made with Brad was unbelievable.

**DM:** Yeah, me too.

**PM:** And that's kind of working, right? I hear that "Another White Dash" [the first single from *Flutterby*] is kind of a big hit or getting to be.

**DM:** I think she got Most Added at AC Radio. I don't know how long ago that was, but--

**PM:** Wow.

**DM:** --it was a huge feat because I think she beat out Gwen Stefani's new single and Sarah McLachlan's new single and Dido's new single.

**PM:** Whoa.

**DM:** Those all went to radio the same week, and Butterfly got Most Added. We'll see what happens. I would be really surprised if--I mean, she's getting a really, really great push from her record company. And it's like that combined with the fact that she's just such a really--what's the word I'm looking for?

**PM:** Dynamic?

**DM:** Or "empathetic" kind of performer. You know what I mean?

**PM:** Yeah.

**DM:** Like when you see her play, you're like, "Wow," and I think you just immediately want to know what she's about.

**PM:** Oh, yeah! When she played at the Slow Bar, I stood about twelve inches from her nose, both nights. I thought, "Well, I don't care. I'm not budging from right here [laughs] because this is the seat I want."

**DM:** Absolutely. I mean, she's *got it*, as they say.

**PM:** She has unbelievable energy.

**DM:** Yeah.

**PM:** So in the opening song that you mention, "Nashville," there are two lines that I thought I'd like to touch on. You say, "I guess you got to run sometime." Does that mean running from here to New York City, or just--

**DM:** It just means running from a situation, really. It's such an obvious thing, that you have to deal with your problems head on, and you need to communicate with people and you

need to talk about things, and just that basic approach to living your life is the healthiest one. And I would agree with that, but that line was just kind of about, well, fuck it, running is still what you might have to do sometimes.

**PM:** And what about the other line, “Laughing at a bad break, what’s the use of wondering why”? Is that a certain bad break or just a bad break in general?

**DM:** Yeah, I was referring to the relationship I was talking about in the song. It was kind of unlucky.

**PM:** Right. So what’s the single on *Indiana*?

**DM:** “Beauty” is the first single. Then I don’t know what the second single is going to be in the States. I think the second one in the UK is going to be “Human Nature.”

**PM:** “Oneplusone” deserves a look, too, as a single. I think you must agree.

**DM:** Absolutely, yes.

**PM:** But not “Human Nature” in the States just because it’s where Michael Jackson is from, or...?

**DM:** I think they haven’t really gotten that far. The way my record label works, I feel like the whole issue of singles is not as big a deal here just because financially it’s basically incredibly difficult to compete on any level beyond Triple A. And even that is quite difficult to get.

**PM:** And I think I’m talking about a AAA single, really.

**DM:** Yeah. So I think it’s probably a case of let’s see how “Beauty” does. But Nettwerk, they’re great. I think where they’re really, really good, and where I would fault RCA for at least an artist like myself, is that they’re very committed to working a record in a lot of different ways for a long time. With RCA I got the big single pushes a couple times, and it was educational. I mean, I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity, but at the same time, for the kind of music I was doing in the face of what was all over modern rock radio both times, it just seemed like an extraordinary waste of money. But in this situation, I feel I have a lot more control over how that process goes.

So we’ll see how “Beauty” does, and if it goes it goes, and if not, then it’s back to the drawing board. Like you said, I mean, I think there are some other single opportunities on the record. But it wasn’t really a record that was recorded with that in mind, to be honest. I think it is what it is because I didn’t have anybody looking over my shoulder saying, “Where’s the single?” Instead it was like, “Well, I’m going to make the best record I can make, and what I think is the most honest and valid piece of work I can come up with. And that may or may not involve a song that works as a single.”

**PM:** Right. Yeah, I think you’re with a really smoking company now. We really like what Nettwerk is doing, the artists they’ve got and how they’re doing it. That’s just a superb outfit.

**DM:** Great.

**PM:** And I think your being with them is a really good fit.

**DM:** Yeah, I'm really, really happy. Very lucky, too.

**PM:** And so it begins again, new record, new tour. But this time, a new wife and a new day, it would seem. What do you see up ahead?

**DM:** Well, as to what I can actually see and what I can predict, it's fairly limited, because at this point in the game, all I can really see is that the record is done. It's my job to go out and tour as much as I can or as effectively as I can, I should say, and turn in really good shows, and try to keep a tab on what's happening business-wise.

But at this point, I've sort of been everywhere from a label's next huge thing to not having a record label to not having a lot of luck getting a deal. So it's incredibly subjective and incredibly difficult to predict. Like you say, my focus is a lot more on my home life than it's ever been, keeping my house in order on many different levels.

And this is a real lark at this point. I mean, I was thinking about some alternative career options there for a while. [laughs] So when all this came together, it's all so--I just feel so fortunate, because I got such a good shot my first couple times around, and that's more than many people far more talented than me will ever see. I was all right with that. And then this has come along. So it's--I think I said lark, but it's more like a laugh.

[laughter]

**DM:** More of a gas, and I'm just really enjoying myself. I recently read an interview with Trent Sumner, I think it was for the Scene or something. But he said, "This is a business where there are almost no musicians that have a mid-level career." And I have that, and I'm very thankful. And I would just completely agree with him on that sentiment. It's like, cool. I mean, there's almost no middle class in America, period. But I'm somehow kind of in the middle class of the music industry, and that's fine.

**PM:** It's great. Yeah, I think *Indiana* is going to do really well, and I think it should. I think it's going to do well because you're going to do good shows. And I wish you the best with it. I thank you for your time today. It was a pleasure to speak with you. And I hope we get to hang down the road.

**DM:** Yeah, absolutely. And thank you, Frank. It was a really nice chat. You make it very easy.

**PM:** Thanks, David. Take care.

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