

Melissa Etheridge

Our Q&A with Brett Simons - Melissa's awesome bassist!



Photos: F. Cverna

How did you earn a spot in Melissa's band?

I originally auditioned in late winter '10 and was one of two call-backs. Ended up not jumping on board at that time, but when the position became available earlier in '11, I was invited to join.

When you first met Melissa, what was your impression of her?

Open. Warm. Ready to know you.

How long did it take you to learn Melissa's songs?

I was called about three weeks before the beginning of the recent Canadian tour and had a list of some 50 tunes. When learning music for an artist, I often procrastinate from actually sitting down to pen the music by just listening. I've found over time that this is the best way for me to learn - just listening to and living with the music for as long as I can until I finally sit down and sketch it out.

Do you have a favorite Melissa song to play live?

Oh man, tough one. There's something about "I Want To Come Over" that I really enjoy playing live. Love the song, but there is a really enjoyable thing about how Blair and I feel this song together.

How does playing with Melissa differ from playing with other performers?

Well, one thing for sure is that Melissa is interested in you and what you bring to the music and to the stage. This is very welcoming to me.

You've been touring with Melissa Etheridge and Serena Ryder around Canada. What's been one of your most memorable moments this tour?

Hmmm...that I can divulge and still have a sense of integrity? ;-)...Hmmm, let's see. Probably the long haul from St. John's Newfoundland Canada to Port aux Basques, Newfoundland Canada. It was a 12hr post show overdrive with just the band - Peter, Blair and I. Got kinda crazy...the bus was OURS!!!

What do you do on the long bus rides to stay entertained?

The most entertaining thing on long bus rides is that there is no one thing. With so many personalities in a relatively small space, beautiful and spontaneous things are always bound to happen.

Who are some of your musical influences?

I hate to sound pretentious, but my influences are really too numerous to list. I really feel that I am influenced in some way by every note I hear.

If you were to choose one word to describe Melissa, what would that one word be, and why did you choose that word?

Unyielding. This word could have negative connotation, so I should expound. I mean, I'm quite sure Melissa yields to the right-of-way in traffic and the like, but I feel she is unyielding in her sense of direction and purpose here on earth.

What are your hobbies when you are not playing music?

Living in Southern Cal, I'm pretty socially and physically active, taking advantage of the sights, sounds and geography of this part of the world. I run a studio in Downtown L.A. called The Tin Room. I'm an avid motorbike rider and builder.

To learn more about Brett, visit BrettSimons.com.

Special thanks to the [Eco-Friendly Street Team](#) for putting the questions together.