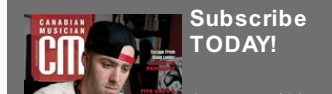

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## NOISE ORGANIZER

*Jeff Salem*

« [Drummer Kurt Dahl "ONE BAD SON"](#) »

### DRUMMER / LAWYER : KURT DAHL



Greetings fellow drummers, in my last blog I introduced you to Kurt Dahl the drummer from the band "One Bad Son".

[www.onebadson.com](http://www.onebadson.com)

Not only is Kurt a professional drummer but he is an entertainment lawyer. He is equally passionate about both careers. Lets take a look at what fueled his passion.



Photo credit: Alexandria Rachelle

#### Q&A with Kurt

#### *How did you get into drumming and who were your early influences and musical education?*

It's not your typical 'drummer inspiration' story. It wasn't Keith Moon, it wasn't John Bonham. It wasn't Neil Peart. At least not at first. It was an Aboriginal drum circle that first blew me away. I went to a pow wow in high school, and the hypnotic rhythm, the primal beat of the drummers, the chanting, the attire, just hit me in a major way. It was as close as I'd come to a religious experience. And then I saw Keith Moon play on the Who live @ Isle of Wight video,

and that same sort of primal, savage playing was happening, and it was all over for me. I wanted to be Keith. All off this happened in grade 12, so I was a late bloomer on the drums, and a long way from playing like Keith. I started teaching myself drums (poorly) by putting on headphones and playing along to my favorite vinyl (well, the ones that were at my skill level). So the progression was something like Ziggy Stardust, then The White Album, then Blood Sugar Sex Magik, then Deep Purple Machine Head, and after years of work and growth and

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mistakes and too many hours in my room, stuff like Zeppelin III and Who's Next. Who are some current drummers that inspire you today? Most of the music I listen to is from the 60s and 70s. So most of my idols are dead. But for living drummers, my favorite would be Matt Cameron. I love his drumming on songs like 'Hunger Strike', where it seems like his fills are on the verge of falling apart completely and he's gonna fall off beat, and then he pulls it all together and blows your mind. Humility is endless when you're watching Cameron play. So I would say my teachers were the legends in my vinyl collection...and my motivator the desire to emulate them. Lets see how law came into Kurt's life.



Photo credit: Scott McGregor

**How did you become interested in law and when did you decide you wanted to be a lawyer?**

That's a good question. I know that ever since I heard 'House of the Rising Sun' when I was like 7, music has been my life. And growing up, I always read rock n roll biographies, where most of my idols from the 50s and 60s were screwed over by someone in a suit handing them a contract. So somewhere along the way, the thought occurred to me that if I was a lawyer, then maybe that wouldn't happen to me or my band. Now, that's not to say it

was all part of some master plan and I knew 15 years ago that I'd be a music lawyer in a band that's on the verge of some pretty cool things or whatever, but it's worked out that way, so I'd be a fool to complain. So the music really led me to the law, which may seem weird to some but not to me. I just kept going to school until the band made it, and in today's music biz, that happened to take three degrees and an articling year.

**With a passion for law and music, do you find it's a challenge to balance both careers?**

Well, it starts with an amazing and supportive wife, who inspires me more than any one person should be inspired. From there, in all honesty, it depends on the day. I used to think the two careers were totally at odds, and I had to keep each of them a secret from the other. And at the early stages of a legal career, when you're trying to get hired by a firm for your articles, let me tell you — the long hair and bushy sideburns and ripped jeans weren't going to fly. But it's funny...if you chase something long enough, eventually it starts to chase you. And that's happened with the dual career thing...I've done the lawyer thing long enough that I'm starting to be known across the country as the musician/lawyer guy, and that's something special...something I always hoped for but never knew if I'd achieve. And after a decade of working our asses off, the same thing is happening with the band. I'm still learning how to balance the two, and sometimes I stumble. But it really does depend on the day. If we're driving 15 hours to the next gig, playing all night, talking with fans after the show, getting up early for a radio interview, then driving another 8 hours to the next show...then it's tough to flick the switch and be an attentive and responsive entertainment lawyer. But as any touring musician knows, there can be a ton of down time on the road. So instead of getting into trouble like some musicians might, I'm on my laptop and phone, helping other musicians with their careers and making sure they sign the right contracts etc. That's the most rewarding thing: helping other musicians make the most of their careers. Giving them advice that I wish I'd had 15 years ago. Making a difference. Those are the days where the balancing act is all worthwhile, and I feel nothing but gratitude for ending up where I've ended up.



Photo credit: Alexandria Rachelle

Kurt – "I'm a few months away from launching my own



website, *LawyerDrummer.com*, which will combine my two passions. My goal is for it to be the go-to site for all musicians in Canada who have legal questions. I'm going to pack the site with resources and advice from my years as a touring musician and entertainment lawyer. I'm really excited to share my experiences with everyone."

Kurt has shared with us in the link below one of the articles from his "Resource" section from his website. Enjoy and take notes.

### How Your Music Makes Money

See you next time.  
Jeff Salem A.K.A. Noise Organizer

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Tags: Canadian Musician, Drumming tips, Jeff Salem, Kurt Dahl, One Bad Son

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