

IDIOT for November 2011

G.C. DOWNIE

Q.1 What is your real name (optional) or the name you would like to be called?

GC works. Short for Gordon

Q.2 What is your age group? 20 - 30. 30 - 40. 40 - 50. 50 - 60. Over 60.

50-60. Alarmingly close to the last category.

Q.3 How did you get started in music?

My mom catered to musical whims. She felt it was important from a creative & expressive standpoint. I took piano lessons for a few years starting at age 7. Got my first acoustic, nylon string guitar when I was around 10. Basic chords & folksy type stuff of the time. Learned how to play trumpet in Jr. High School band. 1965 was a pivotal year for me. The influx of different styles of music in the mid 60's was incredible. Very exciting time to be around. I remember going to a music store to check out electric guitars. Music stores back then sold pianos, organs, sheet music, band instruments and a few guitars. One of the sales guys was sitting there playing away on a Fender Mustang Bass. That was the hook. Went home with a new, red Mustang Bass & a Bassman head w/2-12's. The whole rig cost like \$600.00 usd (which back then was a fortune). My mom had to finance it...spoiled child/fortunate child. 4-string bass became my primary instrument. Took a few lessons but, like most of the other folks of the time, I learned by listening to & wearing out records & playing along with AM radio. Found other kids that played & joined a few bands in high school.

Instruments & amps changed as I grew. Played semi-professionally in clubs & warm up acts during the 70's. Got married in the mid-70's & found that \$\$\$ was of some import, so I took a job that ended up as a career and music took a back seat. I played in a few very casual bands over the years. Mainly just playing at home, for myself & my family. Mainly 6 string stuff but never letting the bass get too far out of reach.

Back in 2005 I had a 'life event' that sorta knocked me out of the game (of life)...period, & I just quit playing for a few years. Then I met & married a very special lady who encouraged me to play more. So...I did. Which got me interested in PC recording, which got me buying an interface, which got me into Kristal, which got me to TTM, which got me...here.

Q.4 Can you list your top 3 music genres?

'Classic' rock (60's-70's), Blues, funk/R&B. The 60's-70's era was a bass players dream, especially with all of the stuff coming out of Motown. Incredible. And on the rock side there was The Beatles, Stones, Kinks, Cream, Hendrix, Led Zep, Humble Pie, Faces...and...The Who (huge Who fan). Endless list of incredible talent. Formative years and I'm sure that everyone feels the same about the tunes of their generation.

Q.5 Of the three, which do you associate with mostly?

Blues. Most everything I listen to and gravitate towards in playing is blues. Most everything in the 'classic' rock era had a toehold in blues. It covers a pretty broad spectrum of styles. Not flashy or gymnastic...just expressive. Timeless & grabs me at a very visceral level.

Q.6 What is your talent? Don't be modest.

Other than survival & re-invention? As an introvert who has a fairly large inferiority complex, this is a complex question for me to approach. Musically, I am primarily a bass player. I dabble in guitar & have recently been drawn back into the world of keyboards. I'm not a bad mechanic, do OK as far as pc stuff & can do marginal to passable work in most of the construction trades. Jack of all/master of none.

Q.7 Of the talents you have not listed, which would you like to do most?

I wish I were a better plumber. I wouldn't mind being a flashier guitarist or if my vocal range & tone was better...but I'm actually OK with what I have. This is as close to self-actualisation as I'm going to get.

Q.8 .It's interesting that your parents are Celt (I know that because you told me privately) and, when you consider that your first introduction to music must have been along 'folky' lines, that you don't mention in you favourite genres anything about 60s folk like Dylan or Cohen or anything from that era? Would you care to comment?

My dad played a lot of Scottish folk albums (only name I recall is Harry Lauder...from way back). When we had folks over he'd crank up the tunes & get everyone up & dancing to the music. It was fun but I don't recall ever thinking, "gee...I can't wait to play that". Dylan, Leonard Cohen, John Price, Donovan...I played a lot of songs of that genre. The problem was they never grabbed me. These folks are word-smiths and I was geared more to hearing what the instruments were saying rather than the lyrical content. I could play 'Catch the Wind' but I was a lot more interested in how Chuck Berry did what he did.

Q.9.Stop me if you think I am getting too personal but, I take it, from reading between the lines that your marriage after 2005 is your second marriage? If you don't think me too impertinent and you want to say, can you tell us how your first marriage ended?

IMHO...relationships require a true partnership where you are not on equal footing, but rather need to give a lot more than you receive. You face the challenges and gifts together and support each other. You live & grow together. If you find that not to be possible...time to go. We only get one shot at this. It's pointless to be miserable & bitter. But you have to try to make it work.

I've been extremely fortunate. My first marriage was to my high school sweetheart. We grew up together, had two beautiful children and an amazing life together...good times & bad. And we lived it together...right up to where she succumbed to a terminal illness. It's life, and some parts of it suck a bit more than others.

Wife #2 (man...that sounds just awful) was my gift. We both feel quite fortunate that we found and have each other. She's an incredible woman & we have a very loving, caring, nurturing relationship. We balance each other out. It's a good gig.

Thanks for sharing that with us Gordon. Can't have been easy to answer but I'm sure I speak for all our members who feel it for you but we are happy for you now in your second marriage

Q.10. It never ceases to surprise me how modest our members are. I'm not sure if that is a good or bad thing but I am sure that our readers will agree that for someone who is as multi - talented as you, including vocals, you should definitely not be modest.

I'm flattered. I've played with - and still interact with - some extremely talented people... and I don't sound anything like them. I'm very self-effacing, for good or bad. I don't have the arrogance necessary to be an artist. I tried arrogant once. It doesn't look good on me. Music is a very personal experience to me. I like sharing it, and I always hope that listeners find it entertaining...but I'm not an entertainer. For right now, I do a better GC than anyone I've heard. And I'm OK with that. I'll cop to being an above average bass player. Now...back to modesty.

Q.11. I'd like you to comment on digital audio workshops as you obviously do your own recording and mixing. What do you use? What else would you like to use? Do you find it easy? Is it interesting or a chore? Sorry! That's like four questions in one. (I believe in value)

Great value! Kristal was my first DAW and I still use it, albeit sparingly. My go-to DAW for everything is Reaper. Don't want to use anything else. It's a bargain as far as \$\$\$, has more features than I'll ever use; it has an intuitive layout that is very user friendly & there is no end to the features that it has. Learn something new ever day. Kristal is a great app but Reaper is just incredibly flexible.

Q.12 From the list of members you know, who interests you most and why? (doesn't have to be because you think they own the best talent)

Everyone here fascinates me. Tons of talent, intelligence, grace & humour. So many creative

interests.

Q.13 Have you ever collaborated with another member or members on a recording.

Yes, I've been fortunate to have been in quite a few. JOOM & PapaG probably the most. Done a few good ones with AG, tagged along on a couple with TM, Smurf & Jimbo, Schrock...and you as well, Dave.

Q.14 Which of your collabs did you enjoy most and why?

That's a relative thing. I'm not a gifted lyricist. JOOM is & I really enjoy working with him on songs. We think somewhat alike (no offense Mr. J) on certain styles & I've really enjoyed what we've done. But all of the collabs I've been in on I've enjoyed ('don't play it if you don't feel it'). Everybody brings something special to a project.

Q.15 Have you a favourite mix from our band room? (Could be one of your own.)

I'm not big on favorites. Again, that's a relative thing that will change moment to moment. If I limit it to songs that I was in on, 'Keeping it Real' and 'Music Box Dancer' mean the most.

Q.16 What is your ambition both musically and personally?

To keep playing as long as I'm around. I want to do more work with keys. I'd like to learn a bit about mandolin. It keeps age at bay. That's the musical side. Family is the rest. I've got two incredible, talented, grown-up daughters and a wonderful, incredible wife. They are my world (and my target audience). If I have one more re-invention as far as career i have yet to find it. But if it surfaces I'll take it. Preferably something that doesn't involve an M-16, high voltage or sharp objects.

Q.17 Do you belong to any other indie websites and will you name them?

Just a casual appearance at KAE. TTM is my social network.

Q.18 Where do you see TTM in 5 years time? What role can you play in it's development?

I don't know. I can't connect the dots aside from in retrospect. I would like to see more players join & become active participants. And I believe that'll happen. Passion attracts interest. I hope to be able to stay involved and play a more active role in the process.

Q.19 Who is your next choice for the IDIOT?

PapaG...long overdue;)

Thanks again Gordon for a great interview and may I agree with you on your choice of next IDIOT. I hope he agrees to be interviewed.