

**B4MD review and a conversation with director Andrew Shapter  
by Frank Goodman (12/2006, Puremusic.com)**

One of the most important things I've seen all year is this *B4MD (Before The Music Dies)* documentary by Andrew Shapter and Joel Rasmussen.

What we'd like to drive home about it first and foremost is that we want you to please look at it as the ultimate stocking stuffer for Xmas for the people in your life that really care about music. These indie filmmakers went right to the wall to make this outstanding documentary, and DVD sales are really the only way they're going to make any money back.

The film is about music; the state of music today, and the state of the music business. It's bleak, but far from hopeless. They talk to an amazing array of very thoughtful, profound musicians, many of whom are quite surprising in their outlook and their eloquence on the subject.

Does it turn into a commercial for some people? Sure, to some degree. But it's not offensive in this regard. Because in each case, the story or the interviews involved are compelling. Erykah Badu is incredible; so is Branford Marsalis, and Questlove, of The Roots.

That these guys embarked on this naïve and dedicated undertaking with no connections at all, and got the footage that they did, is completely mindblowing; it just cannot be done. But they did it. They are some tenacious sonsabitches, you can depend on that.

We are very proud to bring you this film, that is, a long review of it and an interview with the director, Andrew Shapter. We URGE you to buy this DVD, to have a video party for your friends that features the film, and to give it away freely this Christmas. It is being screened at the moment at many theaters across the nation, and needs to be seen by all of us who care about where our music came from, and where it is going.

This deeply affecting documentary starts with an absolutely electrifying clip of the late, amazing Billy Preston at the mic (with Ray Charles at the piano behind him, and a big band) in a light lime suit singing "Agent Double O Soul," dancing like his life depended on his kicking ass at that very moment. It is one of the most unbelievable pop music clips I've ever seen.

What follows is a rap about raw talent that sets up where the film is going. And I got the feeling I was in for a deep, soulful experience, and that something was gonna happen to me.

The film's creators introduce themselves. Andrew Shapter, in narrative form, talks about his brother John, a musician who passed away in 2004. In their last conversation, John expressed his concerns to his brother about how the music industry had abandoned both

musicians and the fans. Andrew's friend Joel Rasmussen had also recently lost a sister, a musician. When both men talked about Andrew's brother's concerns, they started to form a plan to travel the country looking for some answers, without any connections of any kind.

They talked with hundreds of people in the music business, especially musicians, many of them with a very high profile. In this film, it is the musicians that are the stars, and who have incredible things to say. The wisdom of Branford Marsalis reached right and grabbed me on the couch and I sat bolt upright and was listening as hard as I could, to every word. ("There was a time in America when it didn't matter how rich you were; you had to have some kind of affiliation with poor people. I think that the greatest music comes from an emotional identification with those that do not have.")

Forrest Whitaker, one of my favorite actors and voices, appears only audibly as the narrator of the story, from time to time. Mostly it's a long line of very interesting people talking about what has happened to music, the actual decline of music. How, since MTV, it has become all about the look, about youth, implants, appearance. How video killed the radio star, and so much more.

One of the unforgettable things that Branford Marsalis says is "Today, Ray Charles would not get a shot. Stevie Wonder would not get a shot. They're *blind*." Erykah Badu is over the top, and is reputed to have been deeply changed herself by going into these topics deeply in what turned out to be a four-hour interview for her. (If we're very lucky, we may land an interview with her for this issue.)

The filmmakers take you into the studio and show the lay listener how a vocal track that's flat as a pancake is "fixed" by software called Autotune. It's as common as a refrigerator in a studio today. They stage an experiment where they take a 17 year old model who can't sing and make a video with her, and show us just how it's done, the manufacturing of a "star." The song they use is composed on the spot, on camera, by Steve Poltz of The Rugburns; he serendipitously co-wrote the Jewell mega-hit "You Were Meant For Me," and thought it was a throw-away song.

For filmmakers that were without music connections, the people that Shapter and Rasmussen got next to, and who let them *inside*, is unbelievable. Superstars, as well as many cult icons like Calexico, Doyle Bramhall, Guy Forsyth, Widespread Panic, and North Mississippi Allstars all had compelling things to say. There was *beautiful* concert footage of Calexico, and some great Dave Matthews live film. Bonnie Raitt was a real ambassador of integrity. Guestslove's rap on Sunday as band day was very moving, direct sound advice about how to keep a band together. Justin Goldberg, (curiously absent from the "What Is Indie?" movie) the founder of Indie 911, was very lucid and interesting. Elvis Costello had some good things to say. Journalists like Tom Moon and especially Jon Pareles added some remarkable insights.

The film serves a good showcase for Dave Matthew's ATO records, (and certainly for Doyle Bramhall) but it makes sense, because the company is a genuine alternative to the

fat old guard. Chris Tetzeli and Bruce Flohr from that company sound like Record company guys *used* to. And it's extremely interesting to hear that they only have eleven employees and nine acts. In Nashville, it seems like half the people listening to songs for artists come from the real estate game. (Hell, the Clear Channel gang was just a bunch of car dealers.)

The backstory of Dave Matthews' ATO records startup, with old school A&R guy Bruce Flohr leaving the majors, how they were in love with David Gray's music and ultimately propelled him to unlikely superstardom, that's fascinating, especially in the face of the rest of the movie.

These filmmakers had it so together! Talking to Guestlove, the great drummer of The Roots, about how they're the last black "band" with a major label deal, you cannot get this kind of stuff! But they did. Michael Penn's distinction that the majors are no longer in the music business, but only the popular culture business, Bonnie Raitt's testimony about how Black Sabbath and Deep Purple's sales literally made it possible in a "family" business like the Warners of that era to record her, Ry Cooder, and Little Feat, it's precious and important information.

I love Branford Marsalis and Erykah Badu for all the amazing things they felt and said in this film. Marsalis' rap on how A&R is a joke, the most useless job in the universe, some suit standing in judgement of art they cannot do themselves, amen! And Dave Matthews, he was impressively eloquent as well, and came off as an extremely cool person whose friend you wanted to be.

The elder statesmen of the film, Les Paul and Hubert Sumlin made the exact same point from their respective spheres. Music is a thing from the heart. If you ain't got that, you ain't got nothin. Les Paul made me smile, and Hubert Sumlin made me cry. So did Erykah Badu when she said "Don't let anybody infiltrate your dream...it's important to sound like you, to feel like you. To be like you."

My personal quest concerning this great film is to implore our readers to **give it for Christmas** to all of your friends who care about music. It is a very important and incredibly well done documentary about all that so many of us have held dear our whole life long.

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#### **A Conversation with *B4MD* director Andrew Shapter**

**Puremusic:** Andrew, I'm just such a huge fan of *B4MD*, I barely know where to begin. I really think it's an extraordinary documentary.

**Andrew Shapter:** Oh, man, I'm glad you like it.

**PM:** You must be getting an incredible amount of attention since its inception and recent screenings.

**AS:** I've gotten a lot of e-mails, yes. I've gotten a lot of phone calls and e-mail, and a lot of music being sent that came out of the inspiration of the film. People saw the film, went to the studio and recorded some tracks.

**PM:** So where does the opening statement in the documentary come from, "The audience is never wrong"?

**AS:** Well, that's actually coming from the distributor [B-Side] and that that has a lot to do more with independent filmmaking.

**PM:** Ah.

**AS:** I guess it's a jab at the highbrow critics, the taste-makers, I guess you would call them. But the audience knows what they like and don't like. I think they use that as a philosophy.

**PM:** Absolutely. That makes sense, that it comes from the indie film world, right. So without any connections, Andrew, how did you and Joel Rasmussen get the ball rolling? Where did you go, and whom did you see first, and where did that lead, et cetera?

**AS:** Well, I tend to have a real sort of aggressive nature. I think when I first started the project, I was naive enough to think that people would just automatically want to be in this film because of the nature of the project. It didn't take long to realize that it just wasn't that easy. So I adopted a new strategy, and it was around that time that Joel joined in. And that strategy was just to get out and see these people's shows, and find a way somehow or another to get backstage, and to meet these people in person. In the case of Elvis Costello, I literally walked up to him and asked him to do it.

**PM:** Wow.

**AS:** He gave me a commitment, and then he said, "Call my manager." And I think I bugged that manager for six months before I got Elvis to do it. And some of the managers themselves had their own sort of beef or frustration with the state of the industry, the landscape of the industry. And I think a lot of them said, "You know what? We would love to get involved in a project like this, and speak our mind..."

**PM:** Wow, so sometimes it was the management's passion that was the road in.

**AS:** A lot of these managers are just like many of us, they're just music fans.

**PM:** Yeah.

**AS:** And they're diehard music fans. And they get behind these artists, not for the money, but to support the artist because they care about the music. And so Erykah Badu's manager, Smitty, he was passionate about the project, and got his client, Erykah, excited about the project. That happened a lot. Musicians, when they find out that there's a project going around where they can actually talk about things other than their latest CD or their latest tour, where you can perhaps vent about what you think is wrong, they get interested, because a lot of them never get that opportunity. And we came with that opportunity. And I think they were all surprised to see that there were many musicians just like them.

**PM:** And in fact, we were hoping like hell that we were going to get a short phoner with Erykah Badu, but she seems to be studio occupied. But I'm led to believe that her interview actually went for a long time, and ended up putting her through a couple of changes?

**AS:** What I understand, from her directly, is that the movie changed the course of these last three years for her. At the time she saw the film, she was in that mode where she was thinking about her next look, thinking about trends, the hottest producer. And her label and people around her were kind of egging her on to make some wise marketing decisions.

**PM:** Wow.

**AS:** And that's just something she got caught up in. And I think that that kind of atmosphere is not healthy for her. I think she feels terribly uncomfortable with that kind of atmosphere. When she saw the film, she cried for quite a long time. It was kind of a first cut. I think she just kind of had an emotional breakthrough, and decided that starting with the moment she saw that film on, she would go back to where she was when she started, and put the music first. And I think it kind of contributed to one of the reasons why her music is not out right now, because she also decided she wanted to take her time.

**PM:** Right.

**AS:** And I think we're about to get the best album ever from her, and I'm proud that the movie seems to have had an impact.

**PM:** You could see, certainly, that she got really choked up at the end when she was saying, "Don't let anybody infiltrate your dream." Hell, so do I, every time. That was unbelievable.

**AS:** Well, because she's talking from personal experience. There are people out there that come to her and say, "Look what Beyonce is doing, and look that this artist is doing. We need you to do a little bit more of this, and a little less of that, a little bit..." And I think it really interfered with her creative process. And so it's very indicative of the atmosphere today in the big label world. So I think she was speaking from the heart there. And I think the audience picks up on it.

**PM:** She was also super funny at points, I mean, when she was getting into the, "You got to be butt naked with glitter on you and a beeper" ...and "2006 is butt naked Wednesdays" [laughs] and all that. I mean, she's an unbelievably funny chick.

**AS:** She laughed at me pretty hard when I said, "Okay, so I'm a seventeen year-old little girl. And my dad wants to put me out there and make me a star." I just set the question up just to get her to be silly. I said, "What are we going to need to get there?"

**PM:** [laughs]

**AS:** "--to get out there and do it, to make it in this business?" And then she just went on to this monologue right off the top of her head.

**PM:** Yeah, an incredible artist, man. And, speaking of incredible artists, I watched that opening clip with Billy Preston over and over and over. It's just mind blowing. Where did you unearth that?

**AS:** It's funny you say that. I was on a radio show this morning, and the guy was talking about how he and his wife played it over and over again last night. I called up a film archive house, a bunch of them, and got stacks and stacks of VHS tapes from TV shows from the '60s and the '70s and the '80s. And I thought, okay, this is going to be fun. And then my buddy and I, a production assistant, who was a roommate at the time, we sat through hours and hours of great footage. I still have this stuff, too, which is great. And I was just looking through some of the Ray Charles footage. Up pops this amazing clip of Billy Preston that my five-year-old daughter and I just got a kick out of. And I thought, this is a very universal clip that speaks to everyone. And the talent that it takes to dance and so sing, and the energy, the lyrics, his smile and everything. It came from watching piles and piles of vintage VHS tape.

**PM:** I mean, that was as good as any James Brown clip I've ever seen.

**AS:** Who knew that he could dance so well? I don't think a lot of people even realized that Billy Preston was such a dancer.

**PM:** In all the clips I'd ever seen of him he was sitting down.

**AS:** Exactly, at the keyboard. I'm glad the movie comes out the year he died, so a lot of people can gain an appreciation for him again.

**PM:** Yeah. What a sad event, I mean, he was just a remarkable ambassador.

And speaking of ambassadors, I mean, Bonnie Raitt was an unbelievable one for music in this film. How did you find working with her, and how did you get next to her?

**AS:** That was something for which Joel and I put out some feelers, and put out an invitation a long, long time before she came in, and we pretty much forgot about it. And then one day, Joel calls me and says, "Hey, Bonnie Raitt's manager called back and said they think this project is good. They've been hearing a lot of buzz about it in L.A. They want to do it." And she was a delight. I mean, there's a woman that is so humble that you would never know that she's been a multi-Grammy winning international selling star.

**PM:** Right.

**AS:** And she just had that sort of like neighborly, best friend, talk about anything else but herself type of person.

**PM:** Yeah, she's so grown up and so right-sized. It's just always really refreshing when people are.

Now, Forest Whitaker, he's one of my favorite actors of all time. How did he come to be involved?

**AS:** We wanted a voice that was distinct, and we wanted somebody to help deliver some powerful words, and a good actor. And we were trying to think of all the actor/musicians out there. We were thinking about maybe we'd get an actor/musician, or get a real good musician. Then the middle of the night, *Bird* came on. And I thought, well, now, there's the guy. That's the guy that has to do it.

**PM:** Yeah. [*Bird* is the 1988 Clint Eastwood film in which Forest Whitaker plays Charlie Parker.]

**AS:** And so we called up agents and the managers and made it happen.

**PM:** Wow.

**AS:** And because he liked the project so much, he seems to be for real, really behind it, that he did it without sending us to the poorhouse.

**PM:** Right. So did you have some significant budget to work with, or were you operating on a shoestring, or how was that?

**AS:** Let me put it this way. I left a pretty lucrative job as a photographer to do this. And I wound up nearly losing my house. I put everything I had into it. And Joel put his money into it as well. And then we had to constantly go out there and sell, sell, sell pieces of the film, to keep it moving. And so it was an incredibly taxing process that nearly cost me my home.

**PM:** Wow.

**AS:** And I continued to work on it and promote it without a paycheck. So you have to love what you do to take on something like this, and to go through with what I just went through.

**PM:** But by all appearances, it's going to pan out for you. It's going to actually get quite a run, and get into a lot of theaters. Is that right?

**AS:** Yeah, it's an amazing distribution idea these guys had.

**PM:** Who are these guys?

**AS:** B-Side. You know, "The audience is never wrong." [<http://www.bside.com>]

**PM:** Right, B-Side.

**AS:** Yeah, their whole idea is that, look, people in this day and age are buying more DVDs than they're going to see movies in the theater. Why don't we just make sure that we get the word out about the DVD, because this is more of a collector type of movie than just your average movie, because it's got so many performances in it. So they said, "Maybe we'll put a feeler out there around the country and see who wants to screen it, just as a test." And we did that this summer, and we had an overwhelming response. So by the time the film was ready to be put out, we had hundreds of screenings, people screening it at places like Martin Luther King Chapel, Morehouse College--

**PM:** Wow.

**AS:** --NYU, Circus Theatricals in L.A., and the Independent Theater in downtown San Francisco, the Paramount Theater here in Austin. And I was just like, wow, these are great historic music venues.

**PM:** Did anybody in Nashville, where I live, pick it up? Do you know?

**AS:** From what I understand, there are a few screenings coming up in Nashville at the beginning of '07, like in January or February. So it's coming there. It played to a packed house and an overflowing crowd in Memphis in October.

**PM:** Amazing.

**AS:** So it's finally getting its way to Nashville. And we shot some of it in Nashville, of course.

**PM:** I was talking with Vicki Lucero of Propaganda Media Group in Austin. She was working on a screening, either at Grimey's or at the Belcourt Theater here. [Don't know about the former, but it did screen at The Belcourt just last night.]



**AS:** I think so. I don't think the record executives would go crazy for it, because that is really where the formula lives.

**PM:** Oh, yeah.

**AS:** But the people in the streets that are playing those clubs there, that are living there and taking their shot every day, I would love to find out their reaction. Because all of a sudden we have this whole new internet world where people--and the film spells this out--where people can literally record an album in their living room, and then sell it directly to the audience on the internet, and become an internet darling. I think, especially in rural areas, where people have computers and they don't have record stores, this is a great opportunity for real good, genuine country music to get out there. So I hope the film serves as an inspiration for those musicians in Nashville.

**PM:** Yeah, there's no doubt about it that it will. Most of my friends are songwriters. And I'm sure they'd have a universally strong response to this film. Will we will able to say, Andrew, that the film is available for purchase for Christmas?

**AS:** Absolutely, right now. There's sort of a sneak preview commemorative addition that XM asked us--pressured us, I guess we can say--to put out in time for Christmas for their listeners, because they are doing so many interviews and so many features on it. So now we have this special edition to commemorate the national tour that it just went on. So people can go to [beforethemusicdies.com](http://beforethemusicdies.com), and buy the DVD right now.

**PM:** You know what I find really upsetting about XM--and I'm an XM subscriber--is that their new device called the Inno allows you when you're listening to a song to press a button and download it, and nobody gets paid.

**AS:** Really.

**PM:** It sounds like piracy, if I understand it correctly. And people I know who are going to Washington, like NSAI [the Nashville Songwriters Association] to protest the release of this product, tell me that XM is calling songwriters who are trying to get paid for their work "terrorists who are standing in the way of technology." What a load.

**AS:** Right.

**PM:** Otherwise, I'm a big XM supporter, but it's a really alarming dichotomy. It's to keep up with the iPod, basically. It's a radio with recording capabilities. Yeah, it'll be interesting to see where that all ends up, for sure.

I thought Branford Marsalis was unbelievably intelligent in this film. He had to be a lot of fun to work with.

**AS:** He was a lot of fun, and surprising. I thought I was throwing him a soft question. The guy is a professor, down in North Carolina. I asked him, "Branford, tell me, what have you learned from your students?"

**PM:** [laughs] And he just belted it out of the park.

**AS:** Yeah. And he gets applause in the audience every time, because it's so true today, this self-appreciation has gone a little too far.

**PM:** [laughs]

**AS:** It was on the cutting floor at first, and it was Erykah Badu that said, "Oh, got to put that in there."

**PM:** I was also very moved to see that the essence of the message of Les Paul and Hubert Sumlin was identical!

**AS:** It was. And the *L.A. Times* criticized that, and called him a wizened old Negro, which I thought was really distasteful.

**PM:** What!?

**AS:** Yeah, yeah, the L.A. Weekly magazine--

**PM:** You have got to be kidding me!

**AS:** No, no, they criticized that part. But you know what? Music critics out there--a handful of them are resentful that the film got made without them, or something. But anyway, you're right, they're in parallel with each other, which it's just, "It's got to come from the heart."

**PM:** Yeah, that's all they were saying. What's wizened about that?

**AS:** Yeah, I thought that was really interesting language, especially in the Michael Richards climate today, why he would write that.

**PM:** Exactly.

**AS:** But music critics, generally they remind me of a Jack Black character in *High Fidelity*.

**PM:** [laughs] I love that jazz band from Austin, Blaze, they were like the jazz quartets of the '60s.

**AS:** They are. And they live in that realm, too. And I, as a photographer, got to know them, because it reminded me of these old photography books that are out there in the

bookstores that feature like these old beautiful vintage classy photos of Miles Davis and Coltrane. And those guys always wore those classic suits. Well, Blaze is the same way. They're always just dressing the part. They keep that tradition alive. There are only a few groups like Blaze, but they're out there.

**PM:** Right. I thought that there was a noticeable dearth of musicians in their twenties in this film. Don't you agree?

**AS:** I agree. And again, some other critics didn't notice that. There were a lot of younger musicians we wanted to feature that believe in good--they represent great American music. So yeah, my particular favorite in the movie is the sort of biracial gem with North Mississippi Allstars.

**PM:** That was totally cool. I love those guys.

**AS:** Yeah, yeah.

**PM:** Yeah, not only were they jammin', I mean, but these are the people they grew up with, and like their best friends and stuff.

**AS:** They still live in Coldwater, Mississippi. They didn't move to Hollywood. They are what they are. You see what you get. Or you get what you see.

**PM:** On the other hand, I also just watched a musical documentary recently, called *What is Indie?* I don't know if you've seen it.

**AS:** No.

**PM:** In that, there were a lot of musicians in their twenties, but what they had to say was not particularly interesting to me, which I was dismayed by; and for that reason, I was glad that most of the musicians speaking in your film were largely a little older, and they were speaking more profoundly.

**AS:** Well, I mean, it's their life, and they're talking about the most important thing in their life, which is their music and their audience. And so of course they're going to be well thought out in their answers. And for them to understand the dynamics, and how the dynamics have changed, and how lucky they are to even have a label in this day and age was great, because there's a humble nature to North Mississippi Allstars and My Morning Jacket, and Calexico--

**PM:** Absolutely.

**AS:** --because they know the climate has changed.

**PM:** Absolutely. I thought it was really good the way for the average listener, you kind of spelled out the story of, "Here's what happened with Clear Channel." [The conglomerate

that swallowed up well over a thousand radio stations, and singlehandedly changed radio in ways that many people call disastrous.]

**AS:** Right. Well, a lot of people don't know.

**PM:** Right.

**AS:** And going back to music critics again, this is old news to them, they've heard it before, blah, blah, blah. But a lot of people said, "I never knew why so many stations play the exact same songs, and the songs have gotten narrowed down to ten or twenty, tops."

**PM:** Of course not, how were they supposed to know that?

**AS:** Well, no, they don't, because nobody has ever taken on Clear Channel.

**PM:** Yeah.

**AS:** I know Clear Channel is not very happy with me for doing it, but--

**PM:** I'm going to have lunch with a buddy this week who works for Clear Channel, and I'm going to loan him this DVD and say, "Check this out, my man."

[laughter]

**AS:** I think it's interesting that the same time the film came out, like almost to the day-- they released that press release that said they were selling off 400 or 500 stations. Right when the film came out.

[<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/16/AR2006111600537.html>] They're cutting off some dead weight and fat, and they're not too happy about their recent publicity. I don't know how much the film is contributing, I hope it's contributing a lot. But who knows?

**PM:** I mean, the big question cannot be of course, "What the hell has happened to the music business," but "Where is this thing going? And will creative musicians who don't look like the most attractive one percent of the world be able to survive, and how?" And I think a lot of those--all of those things I think were well addressed in the movie. And I think it's going to really stimulate a lot of thought on the part of not just the musician part of the world, but the listener part of the world, about, well, how am I going to interact with this problem?

**AS:** Exactly. And for me, as a filmmaker and a father, I just didn't want my daughter growing up and idolizing musicians and their beauty. I wanted her to idolize the music, like I did. Because at her age I was listening to everything from Bay City Rollers to Count Basie. So I had a wide range of taste. And I credit my family, my brother and my

dad, for all that. I just don't want her to grow up not being familiar with what a saxophone looks like, because you never see those anymore.

**PM:** [laughs]

**AS:** And then I would rather her idolize somebody that's playing an instrument, like Bonnie Raitt, than somebody shaking her ass in the shortest shorts possible. I mean, pop music has always existed, that whole teen thing has always existed, but it's never been the main part of the industry. It's always been the money making part of the record label. But now labels completely surround their entire business model around them.

**PM:** Yeah, I mean, it's one of the money making parts. But it was very interesting for Bonnie Raitt, for instance, to say that, "hey, people like me and Little Feat and Randy Newman, we only got to record because of the sales of Deep Purple and Black Sabbath." [laughs]

**AS:** Everybody points that out as being really interesting, nobody ever really thought about that. I think another thing that's interesting is that the labels will say, "Well, that's what teenagers want. They want their singers to be cute, that's what people expect now, and that's just the way of America." Well, I would say, if that's true, then why do all the *American Idol* winners look so completely different, and not like pop stars?

**PM:** Ah.

**AS:** They've got Ruben Studdard; and the fellow that won most recently, he had a full head of gray hair, just a common regular Joe. So you got to wonder if they're right or not.

**PM:** Well, that's a very interesting observation. I like that. I thought Questlove talking about being the last black band with a major record deal was shocking!

**AS:** Well, he's right. And I would challenge anybody to try to prove him wrong. And what he's saying is that they're the last black band to play instruments on stage.

**PM:** Right.

**AS:** And he was not kidding. I went back and researched it, and he was dead right.

**PM:** I'll bet money that when the black community sees that in that movie that black bands will sprout out as a result going, "Well, hell with that."

**AS:** Well, that's interesting you say that, because it's probably our core audience. I get more letters from the black community than any other group. It seems like they've known it for a long time, and they've noticed it for a long time. There are no more bands like Earth Wind & Fire, The Commodores, and The Roots.

**PM:** Right.

**AS:** And they've noticed it. Their attitude has been like, "Thank you for making this movie, for telling this story."

**PM:** God, that's also interesting that you got so many letters from the black community. That surprises me. Well, if the progressively failing music business model will drive consumers to buy CDs or downloads online from artists and small labels, maybe the music business really is going to reinvent itself.

**AS:** We hope so.

**PM:** But I know it's never going to happen if the younger generation and people like XM don't realize that downloading without paying is stealing. It's so lame I don't know how to put it into words!

**AS:** Well, I think the guy that put it into words best was the guy from Widespread Panic, it's like it's the same thing as shoplifting, but because it's bits and ones and zeros doesn't mean that it's not shoplifting.

**PM:** Yeah. It's called intellectual property, folks.

**AS:** Yep.

**PM:** Well, Andrew, I just think what you guys have done here is extremely important, and I'm very, very happy that you and I could have a conversation about it today. And we will urge our readers to buy this DVD instead of a sweater for the music minded friends and family on their list.

**AS:** I'll tell you, we could use all the help we can get, because we don't have the money to buy television advertising for instance. The only way we can survive and get the word out is guys like you. So it's much appreciated.

**PM:** Yeah, and I couldn't be more interested in helping with that. And like I say, I hope to meet you soon.

**AS:** Well, thank you, Frank. Maybe I'll see you in Nashville pretty soon.

