

**“If you follow your bliss you are going to be happy for sure.”** Those are the words of singer Johnny Favourite who earned himself a Certified Gold Album titled Holiday Romance, a Juno Award for Breakthrough Group of the Year presented by the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, multiple ECMA Awards and nominations, and has performed in over 60 countries (you can check him out on MySpace).

**“Some of the greatest musicians I admire Billie Holiday, Nat King Cole, Etta James, Nina Simone, Dinah Shore, Diana Washington; their phrasing really captivated and changed everything. □ You could take Miley Cyrus and Justin Bieber and thread it all the way back to Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong. □ They are the three people who actually changed the way people sang. □ More phrasing!”**, says Johnny.

Having experienced so much success you would think that he had things all figured out. Not exactly!

He explains, **“I never really cared about the norm. □ What was most important to me was the pursuit of musical perfection which is impossible to achieve. □ Tony Bennett once told me, the more you learn about music the more you learn about nothing. □ He is getting better as he gets older. □ He’s in his 80’s now and his onset, his structure, his phrasing is just absolutely magnificent.”**

Johnny knew he was born to sing. The music industry had its rewards and its downfalls. Eventually he knew he needed to step back and take a long hard look at the direction life was taking him in. He says it boiled down to “**core values**”. Where he came from, who he is as a person, and how he wants his life to be.

When on the road touring he found out his album went Certified Gold. That is 50 thousand albums at \$20.00 each. Cha-ching! Not so fast! His share was \$1.75 from each album. The rest went to the record company who he owed \$800,000.00 to make it.

Once he fulfilled all his obligations he decided it was time for a change. Johnny moved to the South of Portugal to do what he loved most, pursue his love of art and singing. He longed for a warm climate, less travel, and more fun. He had grown tired of the music business. Portugal felt like home. He began auctioning art and continued to perform regularly in wine cellars and quaint European venues. Some may describe his life as glamorous but to him he is simply doing what he was born to do, sing.

Balancing a conventional job that he loved with a successful music career was the ideal scenario. I think a lot of people can relate to that. His record company, on the other hand, had different ideas. Johnny's producer got on an airplane, headed to the South of Portugal, and told him that it was time to get back to Canada to record his next album.

**His producer contacted me to help prepare Johnny for the recording studio and the demands of performance after him being away from the North American spotlight.** For the album to make it, it needed to break into the USA market. This album needed to hit hard and hit fast. A team of people was put together but the pace was a big change from the fun and frolic he had been enjoying in Europe. There was a lot of work to be done. Johnny and I met every day to bring him up to speed until he was scheduled to record in the studio. He put his whole heart and soul into the preparation.

**The album, “Troubadour”, is said to be “the finest jazz interpretative pop album this side of Buble”. ☐ In fact, the album hit #1 in Canada within the first three weeks of being released by Sony Music Entertainment Canada – Curve Music in Toronto.**

Finding the right place for you is not always as obvious as you may think. **As Johnny explains it about friends like Michael Buble, “last time I saw him he invited me on his G5 to go to New York for a steak at his favorite steak restaurant.”**

The diversity between owning a G5 and not having much can be large.

**Johnny does not make the bulk of his money from CD’s. ☐ He makes it from performing and making people happy.**

1% of the people in any line of business are those that have reached the highest level of success. They are the people everybody is supposed to dream of being. The other 99% reach their success at different levels. Some people strive to be Bill Gates while others are more fulfilled working in the same field being a part of something new and exciting. They have neither the desire nor the need to reach any farther than the job that is right for them. Nobody would ever think of the people in the 99% group, as not being successful in their field simply because they did not become part of the 1%. Why then do singers compare themselves to the 1% of singers who reach mega-success and believe you are either part of that 1% in music or you have failed? **Being successful has nothing to do with reaching mega-success. You simply need to find your “place”. ☐ Somewhere that matches your core values for the life you want to live.**

Johnny says, **“I found contentment and an ability to really reflect with myself and really think. ☐ You know sometimes it is tough to be honest with yourself and say to yourself, could I have done that, should I have done that, but I have found an honesty with myself that I could not have done because I was not able to admit my failings and where my life is at now. ☐ I’m singing in a little bar, at weddings, but I am happier now than I have ever been in my life. ☐ Even when I was on TV and I was rubbing elbows with the rich and famous, because the core value for me, and I know I speak for the majority of professional musicians, it’s not accolades, it’s where you are at with your music in terms of integrity with your music and in terms of are you pushing yourself, are you pushing forward musically.”**

While Johnny spends much of his time in Canada he spends a great deal of time in the places he loves most. You will usually find him sitting around a table breaking bread with friends and fans that have followed and stayed in touch with him over the years. These days he is performing at La Noche Piano Bar an intimate cabaret in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. **Singing for him has nothing to do with CD’s or the music business, it is his bliss.**

As I always tell my students, careers come in all shapes and sizes. The only thing that can put limitations on us is ourselves! The combination of singing in venues that feel like home is success to Johnny. His story is exciting and it keeps evolving because he keeps evolving. The vision he created for his life is being lived out. So can yours.

I hope this inspires you to follow your heart knowing that you can build the career and life you

dream of.

**Donna Flynn**

**Vocal Coach**

**416-436-8063**

**[donnaflynn@vocalcoach.ca](mailto:donnaflynn@vocalcoach.ca)**

**Creating the Sound in You**