

Matt Belsante



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listen to with his Grandfather. Or maybe it was the steady diet of Coltrane, Ellington, Basie and Fitzgerald that he was fed at home. Whatever it was, Matt knew it was in his bones, a part of his DNA that would ultimately lead this young artist to pursue a dream of his own.

Just out of grade school, Matt picked up the tenor sax at the age of twelve and became a standard fixture in his middle school and high school jazz bands. But the sax wasn't his only instrument: he soon found he had a talent for using his voice. By his senior year of High School, Matt had won the prestigious Louis Armstrong Jazz Award in both the vocal and instrumental categories, the first student from his school to achieve such a feat.

That affirmation was a turning point for Matt, as he realized that his true passion was for using his voice to interpret a song. He grabbed a guitar, taught himself to play and began composing his own music the summer before he entered Nashville's Vanderbilt University. Before the first day of class commenced, Billy Adair, Director of the Vanderbilt/Blair School of Music Blair Big Band, had already recruited Matt to sing for the Band. Soon, Matt was directing himself, leading the Dodecaphonics, an all-male a cappella group on campus.

The rising star eventually came to the attention of Nashville's well-heeled music industry following a performance of the Nashville Jazz Orchestra. That night, the NJO was performing a Sinatra tribute, and Matt sang many as if he was channelling Sinatra himself. That performance landed him a televised appearance as a featured entertainer for the Miss Tennessee Scholarship Pageant 2006, which eventually led him to Green Hill Music, where he recorded an album of Christmas standards for the independent label. That album quickly became one of the label's best selling holiday releases that season.

Most recently, CBL Properties and KMT Creative Group tapped iV music group to help develop an audio brand for a national campaign that would advertise their mall properties across the country. iV music group suggested that Matt became both the voice and the face of the campaign. As a result, Matt is now featured in a series of spots on television, radio and internet. In a story that is increasingly common in today's new music business model, Matt and CBL are forging a unique relationship that will be mutually beneficial to both brands.

Matt recorded and released his next album with Green Hill in 2008. The "Blame it on My Youth" record is comprised of a series of covers of classic Jazz and Big Band standards, along with one of Matt's original compositions. He very much looks forward to subsequent recordings and is currently working on more original material for a future release.

From his Grandfather's lap to the stage, television and the web, Matt's musical journey is only just beginning. Keep your eyes and ears on this young crooner as he continues his rise to the top.