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SOUTHCOAST Artists Index

This story was collected through our partnership with the SouthCoast Artist Index, led by Ron Fortier.

These transcripts were produced using the Zoom transcription feature.

Interviewer Name: Ron Fortier Storyteller Name: Quinn Sullivan

Ron Fortier

Hi, this is Ron Fortier with another podcast episode on the Artist Index. And uh, this episode we have a special guest all, I guess a special, but this is a special guest because this is his first podcast ever. And you probably heard of him, and you've probably seen him grow up and I'm going to let him introduce himself to you and. We'll take it from there as. We always do.

Quinn Sullivan

Awesome. Hi, this is Quinn Sullivan. It's great to be here, man.

Ron Fortier

Quinn, I always I never know where this is going to go. I always take a chance, no matter how bad I look doing it but. Could you do you have any stories to tell about your name?

Quinn Sullivan

My name's Quinn. Any stories? Well, I know my parents had a few names in mind that they wanted to name. Me, but I think the story. Goes with my name. I guess there was a they were watching David Letterman. I think one night and. You know, there was like the ending credits and I guess one of the I think one of the producers names was Quinn and I think my dad had looked at my mom and was like Quinn. That's a that's a cool name. So I think and they both have different versions of of why of of why they named me Quinn. So that I think that's like probably the only thing offhand I could think about, right. Now, but yeah, that's pretty funny.

Ron Fortier

Yeah, I mean, I always ask people because even the the most normal, you know, quote UN quote.

Speaker

Yeah. Yes.

Ron Fortier

Things people sometimes have, like stories to tell, not just how they got their name, but how other people react to them like I'm always one. I'm wondering, for example. Well, I had an intern my very first intern and her name



was Anne Margaret, the girl with two first names, and people would say, well, it's your last name. And she say Margaret and I said no, that's your middle name. And she said no. That's my last name. Well, what's your middle name? I don't have a middle name. So my assumption is with Quinn Sullivan. They're like, well, what's your first name? Cause Quinn's the last name. Is also the first name, right? Yeah.

Quinn Sullivan

Funny. Yeah. Yeah, I guess no one's ever asked me that before. That's a good question, though. Yeah, I think that's the only thing I could probably really think of. And, you know, Quinn is a unique name. I mean, I I don't know a lot of people that are named Quinn. So it's.

Ron Fortier

OK.

Quinn Sullivan

It's it feels it feels. Pretty good to to have. To have a name like that, that's kind of not really. Maybe common and and most in you know in most people.

Ron Fortier

Right. And for you, especially being a performer. Yeah. Boy, it was great because you didn't have to alter it or do any of that kind of thing.

Quinn Sullivan

No, no. I mean, yeah, like a lot of people, they, they you know they go by like another name or something like that. But but for me I just always just loved my name Quinn Sullivan. You know, I just think it's it's it's a good name. I'm proud of it. And yeah, great Irish.

Ron Fortier

And you and you. Yeah. You sticking with it, right? Let let's for the people who don't know who didn't see you. Let's let's start now where you are now and then rollback the clock to how? How did a local kid and when I say local, what town are you from originally?

Quinn Sullivan

I'm from New Bedford.

Ron Fortier

OK, you are from New Bedford, OK? Because you know everybody uses South Coast because it covers all The Sims. But how did a local kid from the Bedford end up playing with the likes of B.B. King? And many other people. So if you could just take it from there, this is your, this is your chart.

Quinn Sullivan

Well, I started so I started to play guitar. I picked up a guitar when I was three years old and I didn't know that any of that would happen. When I was three, obviously. But I I began to to, you know, I began to play when I was 3. And my parents. Bought me a little acoustic guitar. It was by the name of a first act that was the company and they bought it for me for Christmas one year and I, you know, there was something about the guitar. I think that I guess just was just an, it's just like an immediate connection with it. I I don't know why I couldn't tell you why it was. It was like that. It just. It really just was because it just was like I I didn't have really anything else that I was doing that was like, you know, I didn't really have any like like obviously when you're a kid you. Your brain is scattered in your in your you know you're all over the place with with stuff. But for me, when I got introduced to the guitar, it just became like like an like an immediate, like obsession for me. Like, I just didn't want to do anything else when I was a kid. I just wanted to play guitar, and I just wanted to be in, in the moment with. With



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the instrument and so. You know, a few years go by. I'm playing. I'm listening to a lot of music. They're taking me to festivals around the area, you know, I got to go to. I remember early on, I the one of the first, like festivals that I got to go to was the the whaling City Booze Festival, which they used to have. And that was a big part of my. Childhood, because I remember. The first year I went, Dickie Betts was headlining, and so that was really cool and I had already been exposed to The Allman Brothers through my parents. And so I sort of knew Dickie. And he's playing and and the whole entire thing. So it was cool. I remember. I got to go. And I had my little guitar with me and I would just be, like walking around and, like, pretending I was on stage because that was the thing for me, like, at at that early age. I was just envisioning myself one day being able to be on a stage and and being able to like. Way and it was more of sort of like a fantasy for me. It wasn't really something that I would have thought would have ever been a reality for me. But yeah, a few years go by and and now I'm five. And I start to take lessons full time and I start to get a bit more. Are a bit more serious about about learning how to play because I had just been strumming it and and figuring it out on my own but never had any proper guidance or lessons. So when I was five I started to take lessons by a guy by the name of Brian Cass, who's a who's an incredible guitar player. An incredible person overall. And there was a music store. I don't think it's there anymore. It used to be called top, top music and Fairhaven, MA. And we went there every week, once a week, I'd go at around 5:00 or 6:00 PM every week and. You know, I would go in and and he would, you know, early on. It was just learning chords and learning, you know, structure. He never really forced any theory on me which which I'm kind of thankful for because I would really it really he just focused on playing and and the music he didn't really focus too much on on you know what chords were called and stuff like that. And that made me, I think, I guess that made me just probably be more excited about it because when you're a kid, you know a lot of times you don't really want to know theory and and you know, you know when it's like, you know, math gets involved in all that. So it it was just almost just fun and it didn't have, you know, almost like, no, no rules. In in some ways like it was just, it was more of just a fun thing for me to do, which made it more enjoyable. So yeah, I'd go in every week and and you know at that time I was really getting into The Beatles heavily, heavily, heavily into The Beatles. And that was also another obsession for me when I was a kid. And they still are today, and they mean it's funny because they mean they mean to like, they mean, like, something totally different to me now. Than they did when I was a kid. But yeah, I was just super into The Beatles and and and you know, so I would go in and I'd be like, I want to learn how to play Blackbird or I want to learn how to play twist and shout. And he would be. Teaching me that stuff and and you know, this was when I was five or six and. Yeah. And and it was it was just one of those things. I would just go in every week and do it. And eventually I started to to do gigs and and started to play around town because there was these Beatles tribute shows that would happen locally that that people would invite me to because they knew I was playing. And doing my thing and also my my parents had a lot of friends that that were in bands like that that would do George Harrison tributes or John Lennon tributes and. And you know, they they would. They would kind of have me out as a guest or a special guest or or, you know, have me play a couple of tunes. This is when I started to to, you know, really be able to start playing and being able to do it so that so those early memories were like, the first times that I was on stage. I remember, I think the first ever proper. Joe I did was a John Lennon tribute at this club called Smugglers, which was in I think New Bedford or somewhere around here and that was really cool and and and, you know, just a a great first time on stage memory for me. And yeah, it kind of spiraled into me, you know, this is about a year later when I was 6 going on Ellen and and being being that, I mean, so that's like a big, huge moment for me because first time on on TV and and first time doing anything like that. And this is like. Kind of crazy because I've only been playing for two or three years to kind of sort of jump from just playing in my room and playing locally to all of a sudden on TV at six was just kind of like whoa, you know, and we didn't have a lot of time to really take it in much, you know, at that time it was. Just kind of like a whirlwind. Experience. So the way that happened was my dad had emailed a few producers of of TV shows. And this is kind of like pre pre YouTube like kind of like. Probably just when You Tube was starting to become like a thing and social media really wasn't a thing yet either, so had none of that. So he would just we had like a desktop computer. I think it was like a windows or something and he would e-mail different different producers of TV shows that he would research and find because they were starting to do this thing where they'd. Have kids come on that, that could play guitar or sing or dance or, you know, the the child



prodigy thing was so popular at that time. So, you know, we kind of caught on, like, he kind of was was up to date with all that stuff. And he would see kids go on. And he'd be like. You know that would be cool someday, but it never was something that we. Thought would actually come to fruition and happen. So we got an e-mail, the e-mail that he sent, he got an e-mail back from the producer of Ellen and they wanted to have me on the show and and we were. I was obviously a kid, so I was just ecstatic and just super, super excited and and just blew me away that that could actually happen. So we flew out to California and I was on our show and ended up getting a pretty sweet guitar from her. I got a Gibson 335 that was just unbelievable, and I still have it today and. And yeah, and and that happened. And I I was I was in first grade when that happened it was. Kind of crazy, you know. Remember coming. Home and I remember just like going into school that the the the day after I got back and everybody was just like clapping for me and it was it was a big deal. It was. It was a really big deal for me to to do that. And that was like, you know, kind of. When her show, I guess was picking. Up a little bit because she I. Think she? She had only been around for maybe a year or two. That was great, and one of those, another one of those times that you just never forget. And then and then a year later, I met. I met Buddy Guy and and you know that that's really when my whole entire world of of you know, my professional career totally took a turn for the for the for the best and. Yeah, you know, so that's so that's like early childhood. Quinn right there.

Ron Fortier

Wow, what a child. What a childhood.

Quinn Sullivan

Yeah, that's yeah.

Ron Fortier

What? What? What was that?

Quinn Sullivan

That was up until about 8:00, right up until 8 years old, yeah.

Ron Fortier

Yeah, well, you know, you join a a long line of people from this area in performing arts, it's. And that's the purpose, it's, this is the plug in the middle of a in the middle of this podcast. But that's the purpose of the artists. Index is to get these people all noted. The ones that are still, you know, trucking and the ones who were passed on that either went uncelebrated you know. Unnoticed or or just were forgotten. I mean, we have, like Nelson Eddy. I mean this is. Back in the 30s and 40s, he was the guy that used to get dressed up like a Canadian mountain mounted police and and seeing when I'm when I'm calling you, it was it became a stand that it became a kind of a cliché. There was who was the drummer was. That is. It gene creeper that came out of here. I mean, there's there's a bunch of them.

Quinn Sullivan

Yeah, thanks. I think so. Yeah, that that sounds. Right, yeah.

Ron Fortier

Yeah, I mean and then and then, you know, the Toon weavers, some of the doors came out of here and the Penguins. I think so. It's a long, long list and how how does it feel? I mean, you know, I don't want to ask you any of the stupid questions you've already been asked 100 times, but how does it feel now at that you've you've your, your career is how old now?

Quinn Sullivan

Well, I guess my. Professional career would probably be about almost going on 11 years now, but I mean as far as my entire, you know, music career, you know, probably. I mean, it started to me when I was five, my first



professional gig was when. I was 5 so. Mm-hmm. About almost, you know, 15. Years, it feels like, yeah.

Ron Fortier

Right, right. Because it even smugglers. That was a historic place. I mean, there was so many groups that played there, you know, the local, the local guys, so to speak. It was one of the biggest Hangouts in the city. And so you you you know, you've been woven into the fabric of this area. Now, once you got what Buddy Guy and and how how did he approach you or is this another one of your dad's outreach? Outreach efforts or?

Quinn Sullivan

Sure. I mean, yeah, so basically what happened with that was buddy was coming to the zeiterion and I think this was the first, first, maybe second time he had. He had come here and and played. But yeah, I remember. So the way it worked was I I remember seeing buddy play on. Eric Clapton's Crossroads guitar festival. My dad had gotten that DVD for me. The first ever crossroads, which was in Dallas, TX, and that was 2004 cross. And I remember watching that and just. Being totally totally. Blown away by everybody because you know, it was kind of my introduction to guitar and and and really seeing people just go for it on stage and that's just the perfect. I recommend that that show to anybody to. If they're, if they want to, you know, watch a really good guitar show. I mean, Crossroads marbles is just probably the best cause. It's it's just the best of every single guitarist. That to me is, is is a lot, you know, that's alive today and yeah. And Buddy was just one of those guys. That just came out. And I just, I don't. Know what it was? It was just his it was the. Way he was so commanding on stage and it just it struck me like even early as an early like early on as a kid just really struck me and and just really blew me away of just how how good he was and and how how much he was able to. Just you know. He was just ripping it up on stage and just doing his thing and it's really just inspiring. And so yeah, so about a year or two after. That I he. Was coming to the Zeiterion and this was 2007. So yeah, my. Dad, he knew one of the one of the owners, I think of the of the venue and. We, you know, we we were like can we just go to the show like, I just wanted to see Buddy and and see him play. You know, I didn't expect to meet him or anything like that, but we found, you know, somehow we found our way backstage and and we were able. I was able to meet him and and right before the show, which was really awesome and and I remember walking into. His dressing room and was just a shy 8 year old kid with I had my I had a polka dot tie because I knew he loved polka dot polka dots is his thing and so I dragged, did the whole thing. I dressed up in a suit. I had the polka dot tie, had the whole the whole. Thing which was really. Funny. And I had my Squire Fender. Me. And so I had him sign it and he talked to me for a little bit. And I probably said 2 words. Because I was a little kid. You know, and then all of a. Sudden? He asked. Me to play a few licks on the guitar and and I did. And and and after I did that he said you'd be ready. When I call you. And that was that moment. And that was it.

Speaker

And he ended.

Quinn Sullivan

Up. Yeah. And he ended up calling me on stage that night. Literally, literally right from the crowd. So I was in the crowd and and he was on stage and and just literally pulled me out and played the last, like, half an hour of the show. And it was a. It was a crazy, crazy moment and and, you know, people seemed to still talk about it today, so. It was it. Was really a moving experience and you know, just just struck me in so many different ways. And and I had no idea what was to come of that all, you know, all I remember was just going home going wow, this was the greatest. In my life and yeah, I mean it was just crazy and, you know, and then some time passed and I just went back to school. Like any 8 year old, would you know? And no one knew who buddy was. That was was going to my elementary school. I mean, no one really had any idea who? Who Buddy Guy was. And so I I sort of felt like, like kind of a misfit in a way, because it was like, no. One, it was kind of. My own little thing that, like my own little secret like. Because like I was the, you know, considered myself. Oh well, I'm. The cool kid because I know who Buddy Guy is and and you know, all these cool people and you know. So a few months go by and then we hit summer of July of 2007 and Buddy was coming back to Lowell, MA to play the Lowell Memorial



Auditorium. And they do. I don't think it was the. Actually, it was wasn't the auditorium. It was like the they do like a summer concert series every summer. So he was playing outside and and at this point we had I think we'd had, we'd we had had his managers contact info from that. From the first. Right. So I think my dad had hit him up to try to make it happen again and same kind of deal. We went to the show and and got to say hi to him again and he was super nice to me and remembered me from the. First time because this was only maybe three or four months, like not much time had passed. And then he called me up again. And I came out and and the second time for me, I felt like really solidified his, his, you know, his genuine love and and appreciation for me, I guess. And being a little kid, I had no idea that a guy like that could ever could ever have, you know, any sort of respect for a kid like like me and. And. Yeah, and it was really awesome. And and it it just it kind of just propelled into the next step, which was, which was the. You know him? Eventually asking me to. Go on tour with them and and open some shows for him with his band. It was really it was really like a quick thing like it just it just began to happen. Like before. I could even really blink my eyes. You know, that sounds corny, but like it's so true. Like he just began to just have me out and. And eventually putting a record out on. Me and all of. This stuff happening in in maybe three or four years, like after that, like it's just it. Was just happening.

Ron Fortier

Well, how did you get into the Blues?

Quinn Sullivan

Well, I got into the Blues. I mean, I got for me it was, it was the the Crossroads festival that really got me into it because I was. I was listening to. You know what they call Blues based music? Which is rock'n'roll and I was listening. To, like clapped in. And I. Was listening to obviously. The The Beatles was the main the main band. That I was really. Into and the stones and and The Allman Brothers Band. And my parents were were both both dead heads and still are. Probably so I was listening to a lot of the Grateful Dead stuff and and, you know, the solo Jerry Garcia stuff. Like they play me everything, I mean, dire straits. They play me. You know, like Santana, all this stuff. So, I mean, I was exposed to all of that, but they weren't necessarily into the Blues. I think it's just seeing buddy. And play on stage at Crossroads. Was was really that moment for me that that got me into that style of music and and just. You know, I don't even. Know if it was the music that that excited me. I think it was just more of seeing him do his thing. That was just like so like, just to me, just ***** and just so super cool. So that that. Yeah, that was the moment for me that I got into that.

Ron Fortier

OK, now let's let's talk about your dad. Well, what do you have to say about your? OK.

Quinn Sullivan

Oh, that's a great no one's ever asked me. That's cool. Well, my dad is a a really awesome person. He's a he's actually, he's a drummer. Which is, which is cool. And he was in a Grateful Dead cover band for about 30 years, called Pearly Baker. And thank God. Yeah. Yeah. So.

Ron Fortier

Ohh my.

Quinn Sullivan

He's a yeah, he's he's, he's definitely uh. He's done his. He's done his homework with the, with the Grateful Dead and all that stuff. So.

Ron Fortier

Yeah, I worked. I worked at UMass and did did a lot with with Mike who was in. Yeah, exactly. Wall world. Small world, yeah.



Quinn Sullivan

Mike Mahoney. You know, so yeah. So he, you know, my dad was really. Really, really instrumental and and showing me. In my opinion, the. Right. The right music. You should show any any kid that that wants to listen to music and you know very, you know you know. You know, just just you. Know both and I say. This about both of my parents. I mean, they both really. Let let me do it in, you know, in a in a parental way, you know, not not. Let me do whatever I want in, in the way of like, you know, they were super awesome parents and and very and you know I guess I mean they were just very supportive of whatever I wanted to do and whatever I was inspired by and what what I felt like I. Wanted to do. And they were, you know, they just let me kind of run free in that. Right. And you know, super very, very lucky and to to have that as a kid because you know, I never felt like there was any pressure that I had to practice for 8 hours a day or do something crazy like that. They were just very like, you know, here, here's what we're listening to. Here's what we love. And if you love it, that's cool. And if you don't, that's cool too. But I just happened to really love it and really get into it. Yeah, I mean. And they they were just, you know. All the way through. Throughout my own entire childhood. They were just always very supportive and and and just really just believed in me and and. And let me let me kind of you know, with their guidance of course you know and their support. But just let me let me kind of discover things on my own and and you know pretty much. Gave me the gave me the basics and then let me do my thing and and get into more music because of the music that they were exposing me to.

Ron Fortier

Now is mom music. All is well.

Quinn Sullivan

UM, she listens. To music that's about as musical as she.

Ron Fortier

OK.

Quinn Sullivan

Gets but, but no, no, not, not not a musician, no.

Ron Fortier

OK. Uh, just just a curiosity, UM. I mean the the thing about Dad, from what I'm gathering, you know, being a professional musician, I mean, he he got paid. So he he was a professional musician.

Quinn Sullivan

He would have changed.

Ron Fortier

Even though it was.

Quinn Sullivan

I, but I know he is. Yeah.

Ron Fortier

Yeah. So it wasn't here. He wasn't just a guy who was, like, ohh, want my kid to have a career. I didn't have kind of thing. It was like he knew what good music was. I mean, probably Baker, like, didn't last 30 years for nothing. I mean, they they had a a following, you know, that's. I I don't think there's anybody else that I can think of in this area that has lasted as long as they have. I mean, there's been solo performers and a couple of duos, but nobody like them. So he. Heard something and saw something in you, and I'm sure he had to sort it out. Like, is this really? Is this really? Is this for real or am I just being a dad and and and you know, making my kid a little bit more



than what he. He's actually out. You know what? What he actually is. And obviously he. He just saw something in you that he thought needed to be. She used that word and.

Quinn Sullivan

Yeah, I think. Yeah, yeah, you're right about that. Because I I think, yeah, I, you know, I I obviously don't know. What it feels. Like to be a dad. But I I I. Can kind of. Guess of what? It feel it felt like for him seeing his kid play guitar and being. I think it was, you know, I think probably he. Probably saw the drive that I had for it. I wasn't one of those kids. That was. Throwing around a. Football and and playing baseball and you know, I would do that when I was a kid with like, friends. But I never. I wasn't a sports person really. So I. I really the. Main drive and and what what was really made me. You know what fulfilled me and what made me. Really, really happy was was music. And it was, I think he probably saw that and and probably went, you know, if he's this into this. Let's, let's go. Let's let's let's just like, you know, see what see what happens with this because you know you never wanna I guess you never wanna push your kid to do anything they don't want to do and I think you know I was so young. But so into it, you know. And it was just like I didn't wanna like. For a long time I didn't wanna do. Anything else but but but play and listen to music, you know. And I had. I had friends. I mean, I had. I I wasn't one of the I wasn't a kid that had a hard time making friends, you know, I wasn't like that or anything. But when I came home from school or if I, you know, if there was a rainy day outside, I would be in my basement or in my room. Or wherever I was in the house I was I'd be playing guitar. I'd be listening to music and getting inspired and and in whatever way I could. So I think yeah, to answer that, I think he probably saw the drive and saw me really focused and and really into this. So I think he probably just assumed like you know let's let's, let's see what let's see what happens.

Ron Fortier

Yeah, I mean to use an old fashioned saying you are like a moth to the flame. You know they're they're there are people, you know artists of of of all of all genres who.

Speaker

Right.

Ron Fortier

No or new. Again, I I've interviewed a lot of people on the show and I hope to keep interviewing, you know, many more. They some of them can tell you the exact moment the light bulb went off in their head, or that TADA or that. Damn, this is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life. I don't care. You know how tough it gets. This is what I want. But then for the Blues, I mean, I think that's one of the things that people are like, he's a kid. What the hell? You got to pitch about, you know, cause that's what what Blues is, right? It's coordinated pitching but.

Quinn Sullivan

No. Yeah, I I I never really think of myself as a Blues person. I mean that I was. I was affiliated with Buddy Guy for a long time and and me and buddy are still really, really good friends today and and but you know it's it was always something that people. Like when I started to play with buddy and I started to do shows, but that really that wasn't necessarily what my real love was. When I when I discovered music, you know, my my musical discovery was was, you know, I guess people my favorite people and still to this day are people that really have don't have a genre, you know, and don't really categorize themselves as. Anything but just a musician. And that's kind of what always has been my goal throughout this, this whole entire. Lifespan. It's just, you know, musically. I've just always wanted to remain genreless, you know, and. And the thing about Blues is that, you know, I think I got thrown. I I sort of got thrown into it because I I was so affiliated with Buddy and I was playing shows with him. And and I was, you know, the early videos of me playing, where were you? I was playing Blues. And I was doing solos and stuff like that. So that's what, that's what people sort of started to call me. You know, they, they, you know, throw around the word booze prodigy here they throw around the word. You know, guitar phenom, whatever it is, you know, whatever the whatever the new, whatever the new term is to this day, I don't know.



You know, I always, I always just brushed that off, you know, because I I I never considered myself to be a real authentic Blues guitarist or Blues person. You know, I love the Blues and I. I respect the Blues and I I think it's all. I think it's the basis of all great music, you know? But yeah, it's just I always thought it was just funny, you know? But but I respected it because, you know it it that, that genre and that and and the word blue is really. Almost was able to to. You know, I had. I have a career because of that, you know, so. I really don't. Take it, take it for granted and definitely have the uttermost respect for it, you know?

Ron Fortier

Yeah, I was your other mother kind of kind of thing. The, the the clue there is also what you saying you like, you know, The Beatles, The Beatles were almost you. You couldn't. You couldn't peg those guys down just when you thought, you know, you had them pegged. I mean, they were off on something else they they invented so many, so many directions. Orchestrations, I mean when every album came out was another jaw drop. Like you know, where do these guys come from? And you know, you know, the history of them. They went all the way back to Skittles. I mean, they were. They were British boys being affected by black music. That somehow went through a process and ended up with Skittles and and and you know, and then what was it? Paul McCartney's was it. Paul McCartney's dad was a straight musician quote, so to speak. You know, I was in an orchestra or band. And so they were, like, rebellious, and they were geniuses.

Quinn Sullivan

Yeah, yeah.

Ron Fortier

All at the same time, and it was a a mixture. I guess that they'll. Will rarely ever be put together again. And then there's groups like like rusted root, which I guess you can't really. You know well, unfortunately, they didn't last too long, but I remember when I first heard the the first track of their first album, I I I just. I just didn't know it was like, Oh my God, this is so different. So refreshing. So new, you know. What are you doing now?

Quinn Sullivan

I'm making a new record, actually I've spent this last year and a half creating this album with a producer by the name of Oliver Lieber, and we've been at this thing for it feels like, feels like a decade. But you know, we, yeah, we, I started writing this record at the beginning of 2018. Actually, no. It was more mid 2018 and. We did the whole thing in LA. We rode it in LA at the same place he, the producer, has a home studio. So we were just in there for five or six months. I'd I'd fly back and forth and and we'd write and it turned into having 131415 songs. Ready to go and record. So that's what we did. And and, you know, like an album came out of it. So I'm. I'm really, really, really excited for that and excited to to put that out. It's at at who knows when now, but yeah. Yeah, it's something that I'm very, very proud of. And I think it's I think it's my. My best, my best album that I've that I've made so far, so I'm I'm really proud and happy about it, yeah.

Ron Fortier

Is it true that the the first album isn't the toughest album? That's the second one?

Quinn Sullivan

Absolutely. Well for a. Lot of artists it. Is, I think for me it. Was weird because. I put out my first record when I was 11, so not many, not many people I guess can say my first record came out when I was 11 years old, so I think. For me, it's more of a journey. Rather than because I didn't, I didn't. Have that that you know that 2223 year old pressure of like, OK, this is your first record and it does really well and now you have to follow it up with the second one to to you know the sophomore record to be just as good and you know you have all this success like I was just everything about what happened to me and why I'm where I am today. I think it was just so gradual and just so you know, very, very baby steps. It wasn't there wasn't this moment of, like, Oh my God, I'm I'm famous now. And I've got all this stuff happening, you know. And it still really isn't like that right now. It's it's kind of been



a very, you know, gradual gradual journey so far. So I've never, never felt that pressure. You know, I will, though I don't know.

Speaker

OK.

Ron Fortier

Uh, yeah. You, you, you. You. You you don't know what tomorrow's gonna bring, that's for sure. Have you ever met Ernie Buck.

Quinn Sullivan

I have actually. You know, it's funny. Me and Ernie met when I was a kid. He actually he had invited me to a I think it was like a party that he was having that that. His earning the automatics were playing and he had me. He had me sit in with. Them actually, that was wicked fun that. Was and he was like 5-6. I was really, really young and I. Think I don't know how I think. He may have. Heard of me from Ellen? Or or what? Maybe. I did. I think I did. He did a local TV thing when I was a little kid, so he might have seen that. But yeah, he invited me and he's super nice. I I love him, man. He's a great guy.

Ron Fortier

He's he's a he's. A person he, I mean you. Know the whole history with his dad and so on and so forth. And yes, he's well off. But the one thing that I here's a story that have you ever met John Methia?

Quinn Sullivan

John, but it's I'm not sure same time.

Ron Fortier

Yeah, he's a he's a TV producer.

Quinn Sullivan

Yeah, I'm not sure. Yeah.

Ron Fortier

I lost track. I think he had. Uh. The last time I knew was like 8 Emmy Awards for for television production. But I used to work with John and I wrote a I wrote a a pilot script for Arnie's a television show that they tried to shop around, called back on and. It's I I've told the story that he opened up a Maserati dealership and he had the the grand opening and the guests were a little miffed at him because he didn't pay any attention to them. He had hired a group from Berkeley School of Music, and he hung around with them because that's all he cared about. He just cares about the music, so he's he's a musician. Uh, that. Was lucky to be born, you know, to who he was born to. And but that's his passion, his music. He's he's quite a character, I mean.

Quinn Sullivan

Yeah. Yeah, Ernie. Yeah.

Ron Fortier

I mean you, you know, you're walking to his his house and you bump into, you know, members of Boston or the Scorpions. If you ever meet John Matthew, I ask, ask him to tell you some stories or the. The wraps they're outlandish. Let me tell you. Let me tell you. So here we are. In in in this area in the South Coast and here you're one of the people who are an emissary. And in in, in a way, because, you know your name is connected to New Bedford. You've been away and you've come back, you know, away on gigs and so on and so forth. Looking at the creative community. What? What's your take on on what's going on are have we, you know, are we even near



the peak as a creative community? You know, we've been named like most creative. It's in some ranking in four different polls over the years. What do you think about the creative community over?

Quinn Sullivan

Well, I think the creative community here in, in, in, just, even just New Bedford is is pretty awesome. I I think I think there's a lot of lot a lot of talent that is in New Bedford and you know I am super thankful that I've had to to you know I've had very, very great opportunities throughout my life that. I'm forever grateful for and thankful for it. But but you know, a lot of my earliest musical. Memories. You know, I I don't think I'd be standing here if I if I hadn't been introduced to some of the local guys that that play, you know, the the play, the New Bedford, you know, the New Bedford venues and, you know, and it's important to me because a lot of a lot of those people, I mean they, they're just they relentlessly. Just have played for years and years and and have just dedicated their whole entire lives to playing music. Whether that meant playing for, you know, 1000 people or playing for, you know, two people at a bar. I mean it, it really is inspiring to. To that that they. They have done that and they've they've. Put their entire. Life, you know, for that. And they've been they've been so, so good at doing that. So yeah, I think I think that the creative community, I mean, especially just around here and and this area has always been really good, you know, and and it's and it's sad because of of kind of what we're going through right now with the. The coronavirus and you know places obviously not being able to be. Open for to. Have live music and and it's and it's, you know, it's doing damage to those those people and and you know I feel for them and I you know I I definitely. Can can relate to it and and so it's it's it's crazy time but but it's. Yeah, I mean I think the I think the I think New Bedford in General I think as long as there's as long as those people stick around here and as long as they're the the the restaurants still in the clubs stay open I think I think they'll it'll always be. A really great community to, you know, to go see to go see music because you know the the, the, the you know the people are just you can't you can't beat this area for for, you know seeing music I think I mean.

Ron Fortier

No, no.

Quinn Sullivan

I've been, but yeah, I mean, I've been to Nashville. I've been to LA, and I've been all over the world. And yeah, the music scenes are great. But there is. I think there's something special and and maybe that I feel that way because I'm from here and I'm sure people that are from Nashville or from LA feel the way that they feel about their communities too. But there's a there's a special and I think you can ask anybody that lives around here the same question I I think they probably feel a similar to how I feel about it. There's just this. This really this, this family, this family thing, that, that, that bond feeling that you have when you when you go out to these places to see people. You know, like we were talking about Pearly Baker. And, you know, they have this cult following that have that have been there since, you know, 1980, whatever they whenever they became a band, that's just so moving like, to to still they must, they must just go crazy. I mean to, you know, to see the same, you know, some of the same people that. Were seeing them in the 80s. Are still going out and seeing them now, and that that is just incredible to to that that's still happening and and you know and other artists too, you know I'm I'm good friends with another really great singer-songwriter. Her name is Rebecca Correa and and she.

Ron Fortier

Which I hope to get to to speak with. So if you put in a good word for me.

Speaker

Ohh yeah yeah.

Quinn Sullivan

Yeah, she actually, we wrote a, wrote a really cool song together. That's gonna be. On my new album. But yeah, she she really. Talented and and super, you know, just the one of the sweetest people I know. And you know and



and you know she she's from around here and and so there's so many so many people that I think. Are very special and and very great that that that have come out. Of this area.

Ron Fortier

Look, look at Tavares. I mean, I don't know how I almost forgot about them. I lived next door to their aunt, so they were always in and out of the house. And, I mean, they were phenomenal. When you, when you think of and and again, you know, I think maybe in New Bedford, we still have this thing now you're much younger. I don't know if the attitude has changed, but I I. Don't know if at one time in this in this area we had this this ability to just put ourselves down, we didn't need anybody to do it for us. We just did it on our own, you know. And it's crazy because so much has come out of this area and there's so much more that can possibly come out of here. And I I think it it. You know, you are probably a hero to some little boy or little girl who they want to follow in your footsteps. So that's that's an awesome responsibility to have as a performer.

Quinn Sullivan

I agree. I agree. I think it's very. It's. Yeah, it's important to me, you know, because I I've had people not even just from around here, but just when you see these kids come out to the shows it it's. Just that's my. Favorite thing is, is and that and that really it puts a lot of things into perspective. It it it gets here. You know, not that I don't. I don't consider myself to have an ego, you know, other than maybe a musical ego, but not nothing. Nothing personal. But it definitely puts if you're having, like, a bad week or you're having a bad. If you thought you had a bad show or you know when when that little kid comes up to you and and just, you know, you see their innocent face and they're just. So they they you know, because I was that kid meeting Buddy Guy or meeting meeting whoever I was meeting and I can totally relate to how they're they may be feeling towards me seeing me just play a show and and wanting to to do what I'm I'm doing so it really is it's a it's a really moving thing to me to see that that. You know that kid, whoever that is, come along and and and, you know, have a picture with me. Or if I sign their guitar because that puts things that that into, into perspective and really and and and makes you go OK. This is and it's like almost it's like just a healthy reminder. And and it, you know, they don't have to spell it out for you, but it's like just. A healthier reminder of just, you know, This is why you do what you do. It's not for anything else but but for this. Reason it's it's to you know. Make people feel good and and and and have. A have a really positive. Effect on people and and. Not do it for your own. Your own ego, your own. You know, that's. And that's really the lessons that I've learned from the people that I've been. Around for years is to just. Don't don't have don't have, don't have the big head. You know the big head doesn't get you. Anywhere, because that's what, buddy? Used to call it and we would. We would talk, he'd be like. Yeah, they got the thing called the big head. You know, that was always. His quote and and you can easily get that and you can easily become somebody that you weren't before. And I've seen that happen to a lot of people. I've seen that happen to. Friends you know, or people that were friends once, you know, see see them, do that and and it it never it never really works out. It never really if you're like that it never it's always gonna it's it's gonna it's gonna bite you in the accidentally you know so you really have to become. Just of that. And as you move along, because really, really important to me to always have in the back of my head. This could all be over tomorrow. You know, you could all this could all go away, you know, at at some point. So you really just have to take every day for what it is and and just be grateful that you're able to. I'm able to to. Do what I love. Being 21 years old and and you know, just continue just to grow and get better.

Ron Fortier

Yeah, I mean because I mean, you know, as another old saying, your whole life is ahead of you, you know. And yeah, there are people that you know as they started to rise all of a sudden, you know, the big head just just started going stupid. And the the ego was. Is is the question I was going to ask you about because you know, when I first met you, you know, you get the vibes right away from somebody. You know, and I remember. I had a wine show that we had done a pilot my my neighbor Mike Daigle and I we had a a local wine show called the Wine Guys and we made it to, you know, we we were on channel 6 as a segment and then we had our own show there and we shot a pilot for public television. And you know, always in the back of my head is like, well, if you



know, we ever get to be celebrities or whatever, I just hope I don't turn into a moron. And I said, I always want to be like Julia. Child is like, not just a celebrity, she is a God, you know, she, you know, she's like in the pantheon of the PBS gods. I mean, she's she's one of the people holding up the building. And there she is. And so I think a lot of it, and I'm going to compliment your parents. I've only met your dad.

Quinn Sullivan

Right.

Ron Fortier

But I'm gonna compliment your parents because you know the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree, and that's for sure. And it really shows on you. You're welcome. One more. Two more questions. One more question is, do you see more happening in this area? I mean now that you know what you know and you've done what you've done. And you've you've done, you know. Can you bring any of that stuff back here to, you know, to to uplift people? I mean, we've got so many musicians here, can you create a is, is there a possibility for someone to create a venue that will just nurture? These up and coming people.

Quinn Sullivan

I would love to do that one day. You know, when I am in the position. Eventually if I, if I ever am to do that. I mean, you know, for me the, the venues that stick out around here are are places like the narrow center and places and even the zeiterion because of of you know, because of obviously the history that I. Have with the Z. But the Narrows just sticks out. I mean, I do a residency. It's been about six years in a row now, and we sell out every, every, every year we play. We always sell two or three nights out, and it's always so much fun. And always my favorite time of the year. We normally do it in December and it's become, I say residency because it feels like it has become. Sort of an annual thing for me, and the Narrows has always seemed to bend that to bend that venue around in this area to really nurture up and coming artist because I remember like talking to to one of the people that that run the Narrows and he was saying how. They used to have like, you know, Susan Tedesky, come in and play and. They have all these people that are. Now really, really well respected artists that are that are playing, you know, obviously internationally, now that I mean, they're incredible artists that come out and and playing and you know. It it's cool to to kind of hear that. They they they once were playing. For 250 people at the Narrows, you know. So yeah, that's really the venue to me that that I think about that, that just, you know, has definitely helped me a lot and is just. You know, it seems like a lot of good artists come out of the out of the Narrows and places, places like that. I mean, I've played a lot of venues around around the world and you know, in different, in different, you know, different scenarios and different lineups and you know, obviously when I would play with buddy, we'd play, you know, for thousands of people. But it's a different experience when you're just playing on your own and headlining. So I think that's just a great. I just that's the thing that I think about just being just such a great, great venue for, for me and a lot of other up and coming people.

Ron Fortier

Great. One last question. So and we're going to wrap it up is. What? What do you what do you say to parents that are that are? Trying to encourage their their child, the children, like your parents did. And what do you say to? The kids themselves.

Quinn Sullivan

Well, the parents, I would say because it's funny because a lot of parents have come up to me. I love. I love getting that question from them because they they ask me all the time because they they, they're they're with their sometimes they're with their kids and sometimes they're not with their kids, but they'll come up to. Me and go man, how you know?

Speaker

How how did you?



Quinn Sullivan

Know they first they ask me about everything and and how I've gotten to where I'm at. And and all that stuff and then. And they. Go. I have a son. Or I have a daughter that that loves playing piano or loves playing guitar or singer, dancer, whatever. Whatever it is and they go. How do I, you know, how do they get to you? Like, how do they, how do they get to your level and what do they? And there's really no, there's really no scientific answer and there's really no, you know it's all it's all personal. And it's all based on timing and and it's based on a lot of things but but mostly timing and and luck. And you know also, you know, if what what I would tell parents would just be like don't don't ever push something on some on your son or daughter if if they don't if they don't wanna do it. Because I think as a parent. And I'm I'm talking based on opinion because I'm not a parent, but. But you know, like, like when you when you, you know, you saw her daughter. I feel like when you when you know that you know they really when you know because you know them best and obviously and and like you know when they're when they're into something and when they're not into something. And I think my parents knew like we were talking about before they knew that I had. A drive for it and I had a passion for it very, very early on. So I think if you can see that right away and your and your son and daughter, you know, appreciate it and and then nurture it. But don't ever say, well, you did that alright then now you gotta get serious about it. Now you got to do this and you got to do that because I don't think that that'll make that will make that. That really because I think it's all about, especially as a kid, it's it's very important to know that it's like it's all about innocence of it. It's the innocence. Of of just watching somebody play on stage that that you connected with, that you were like, wow, that's so cool. You know, I'd love to do that because when you start throwing in, I mean that that and cause it's like when you were saying you have your whole life ahead of you like that, that all the all the serious work and all that stuff that you worry about that when when you're older, you know, I think the, the, the, the beginning of it. Is all about the innocence of it and and that's what I loved about it. And. And so that's what I say to people and parents of of kids that and just don't don't force anything, you know. And for the. And for the kids, it's the same kind of the same thing. You know, practicing is important. You know, I've talked to, I've gotten to, I've gotten to spend some time with Carlos Santana and and he hates the word practice. And I I feel the same way he does. I mean, it's like practicing that word. That word. And that's the other thing. It becomes like a. Now it's like a A. You know a job or something and it is a job. I mean, cause there's a difference between, you know, doing this as a hobby and then and then realizing like, there's like, there's almost a switch that happens when you realize, OK, this is this is a career and this is a 24/7 thing. But, but you know, young kids and and they just want to play and whatever, you know, I just basically say, you know, if you love, if you love it then then then do it. And if the minute you don't love it, stop doing it because it's it's music to me is not something that can be forced and and. You know can be like. You know. It's a very unique job or unique thing to to be doing because it's based on inspiration and it's based on what you know it's based on what makes you know it's based on a feeling that you have so you know. So it's really something that you. Have to always be wanting to do and and wanting to be be a part of. Because I think, yeah, the minute you don't want to do it, I think you should try to probably go. Do something else and. I haven't felt that way yet about it, so I'm I'm I'm still. I'm still in a good spot musically to to, you know, just keep doing it and keep keep trucking through. But yeah, I mean that's that's probably what I would. I would tell a kid.

Ron Fortier

Great. Great. That sounds great. Thank you so much, Quinn. I want to wrap it up. Thank you again, Quinn Sullivan, and this wraps up another episode of the. In Focus Podcast brought to you by the South Coast Artists Index. With that, we'll see you next time. Thanks so much.