

Can-do attitude

Anthea Skinner reports on a website for "musicians with challenges".

Can Do Musos is a new website aimed at bringing together musicians with disabilities from around the world. It's an online hub where individual musicians and bands can list their details and post photographs and videos of their performances. It not only gives musicians with disabilities a place where they can discover each others' work, but also a place where prospective producers can find new and innovative performers.

As well as having pages dedicated to various performers from around the world, Can Do Musos also features a product review page, where readers can discover the latest equipment and adaptive aides, reviewed by other musicians with disability. There is also a news section where you can keep up-to-date with everything that's happening on the disability music scene from all around the world.

Throughout the website, Can Do Musos refer to their featured artists facing "challenges" instead of using the word, "disability". They state that this is because "quite often disability gets misinterpreted as inability". Given the obvious talent of the musicians featured on this website, I would have liked to have seen it embracing the word, disability, however, its creators obviously felt that the term would be seen as negative by some members of the community.

The website was founded in March 2013 in New York by four drummers, three of whom have a disability. Dom Famularo, David Segal, Mike Mignogna (all from the US) and Australia's very own Andrew Hewitt. Andrew is a well-known musician in the Australian disability music scene, running regular drum clinics and workshops as well as working with the Australian arm of the international drumming movement TRAP (The Rhythmic Arts Project). TRAP is a program designed to use drumming to teach young people with disabilities life and learning skills as well as basic reading, writing and arithmetic. You may also recognise Mike Mignogna from last issue's column where I reviewed his book, *Look Ma, No Feet*.

"Register yourself or your band with the page."

Andrew Hewitt explains why they decided to create the website, "We discussed the frustrations of musicians with challenges getting a fair go within the real world of the music biz. We decided we wanted to work toward changing attitudes toward differently abled musicians, and at the same time, give musicians with challenges a stronger voice all over the world."

The real strength of Can Do Musos is in its database of musicians. It currently features artists from Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, and



Venezuela, and the list is growing all the time. Anyone can register themselves on the site, and there is a simple online form to fill in on their homepage, so if you're a singer or musician with a disability, I strongly recommend that you register yourself or your band with the page. You can also write your own product reviews or publicise individual events in their news page or suggest your favourite musician or band for inclusion on the site. If you look very carefully, you might even find an entry in there for my band, the Bearbrass Asylum Orchestra. candomusos.com