



Interview by Lacey Scott Walker
Photography by Jack Potts

Ruth McCartney

EVERY TIME SHE CHECKS INTO A HOTEL OR PUSHES HER CREDIT CARD ACROSS A COUNTER, SHE IS ASKED: ARE YOU RELATED TO PAUL MCCARTNEY? IN SO MANY WORDS, YES. RUTH MCCARTNEY IS THE FORMER BEATLES' YOUNGER STEPSISTER. IT DOESN'T DEFINE HER, BUT IT DID HELP TO SHAPE HER VIEW OF THE WORLD—A VIEW ON WHICH SHE HAS EXPANDED HER ENTIRE LIFE WITH A SINGING CAREER, SONGWRITING CAREER AND NOW THE OVERSIGHT OF HER OWN MULTIMEDIA FIRM IN LOS ANGELES, WHICH OVERSEES THE INTERNET PRESENCE OF MANY A MAJOR STAR.

BEING BASED IN THE U.S. NOW, DO YOU PERFORM HERE?

Oh gosh, no. You know, I enjoyed it, but I'm pushing 49, so I'm past my 'sell-by' date when it comes to putting fishnets on.

YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD A SHARP BUSINESS MIND IN RESPECT TO THE WAY YOU'VE CARRIED YOUR CAREER. WAS THAT SHAPED BY GROWING UP WITH YOUR STEPBROTHER BEING IN THE BEATLES?

Undoubtedly. Every... well, John Lennon didn't come home to stay with us every weekend, but he did not have a house in Liverpool, so when John Lennon came home, he would stay with us. And so, of course, they would sit around and Sunday mornings we'd have bacon and eggs—in the days before everyone was a vegetarian—which I am not. And they would say, 'Oh, can you believe what the suits did this weekend with our publishing catalog? What about the rights to this?' Or... 'What about that?' So I would be helping my mother in the kitchen washing dishes or fetching orange juice and all that, listening to these business discussions when I was 5, 6, 7 years old and so you know, it really kind of begins to shape your world and sink in. It was sort of the 'University of the Kitchen Table,' if you will.

SO WHAT DID IT MAKE YOU WANT TO DO? BECOME AN ARTIST, A BUSINESS PERSON?

Primarily an artist. My mother, who lives with us and works with us—she just started an organic tea company at the age of 78—she was qualified as a piano teacher from the Royal Victoria College of Music when she was 13 years old.... In 19... what would that be... 42? And so, you know she was a concert pianist when she was young. She was a child prodigy. My grandma was an opera singer, my aunt was a royal ballet mistress, and so from my mother's side of the family we always had this crazy artistic bent and then of course my mum married into the whole McCartney thing so it was just kind of like 'Oh well. This is what I'll be.' And even before anybody knew there was a Madonna, that's what I wanted to be, and I was gonna go off and conquer the world and so... I gave it a shot, you know?

WHEN YOU CAME TO WORK WITH A NEW ARTIST—AND MANY OF THEM ARE ALREADY ESTABLISHED—DO YOU TRY AND BUILD ON HOW THEY'RE ALREADY REPRESENTED IN THE MEDIA, OR REFLECT HOW THEY HAVEN'T BEEN REPRESENTED?

Well, as a company that primarily builds websites, emerging artists don't have us build their websites because they don't have a budget. But in creating iFanz, what we've done is given them a tool that they can just plug in that's free to join, and when you get success it's cheap to run—like a hosting fee. So when it comes to artists like Kenny G or Corbin Bleu, who are at opposite ends of their career—Kenny's in his 50s and Corbin is 19—a certain amount is dictated to us by the label, management and PR, but we really like to bring to them technological opportunities and ways to connect and create with their fans that the establishment

and Hollywood haven't really figured out yet but we've been doing for 15 years. So we really connect with our artists on the level of 'Well, that's great if Disney Records says X, Y and Z,' but here's the indie guerrilla way that iFanz would do it. Like Roseanne Barr, for example; she's been huge into the internet from day one and she's always been far ahead of the curve with technology and so we're trying to bring her back into what's real and what's realistic and what's cost-effective. That's the other thing we have issues with—everybody thinks the internet's free. It's free to dial up Google, but it's not free to build... I mean, you can drive by the White House for free, but it's not like it cost nothing to build.

WELL, YOU'RE STILL INVOLVED IN SONGWRITING, THOUGH, AREN'T YOU?

Oh, absolutely. I still write for movies and work with those guys at Music Supervisor. Commercials and music library stuff.

HOW DO YOU STRIKE THE BALANCE BETWEEN THAT AND MCCARTNEY CREATIVE?

I sleep about 5 hours a night and work about 7 days a week. It's the American way, I believe.

SO YOU'RE COMPILING A CELEBRITY COOKBOOK NOW. WHAT'S THE GROSSEST RECIPE IN THERE?

"Hank Williams Jr.'s Deep-Fried Pie." You take two Sara Lee or Marie Callender's frozen piecrusts—which you know are all made of butter. You fry up bacon, and then you make mashed potatoes, you put the bacon in the mashed potatoes and then you put fried onion in there, and then you put chopped egg in there. And then you put sour cream in there until it's a nice goopy, gloopy consistency. And then you put the two pie crusts in and bake them at 250 degrees, and then you take the pie crusts out and you glue them together with a little egg wash and then you dip 'em in a deep fryer. Deep-fried pie. That was pretty scary. Oh! I forgot the cheese. I forgot the grated American. Bacon, egg, mashed potato, cheese, onion, piecrust, hot fry.

EVERY TIME I SEE THAT GUY, I'M AMAZED THAT HE'S STILL ALIVE. THAT IS WHY.

And no doubt washed down with Jack Daniels and root beer. That was the scariest recipe. But you remember the old English actor Dudley Moore? His recipe was the sweetest: "My dearest friends, I'm afraid I don't actually have a recipe. Occasionally, I do some steamed trout. One bottle of wine, one trout, one pan. Put half a bottle of wine on the trout and half a bottle of wine in the cook. Wait until trout looks done. Love, Dudley."

But I think I could probably microwave the trout and drink all the wine.