



Richard Del Connor .com

Record Producer, Founder of Shaolin Records

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What LEVEL Are You On?

June 14, 2010

American Zen has been weaving a tale of spiritual growth since 2005 with the release of **LEVEL 1 = PEACE OF MIND**.



This album depicted Coyote's struggle for "Peace Of Mind" in Salt Lake City, after being badly advised to move there.

This **PEACE OF MIND** struggle is the basic human condition of survival.

Coyote slept in his van, dealt with thieves, and got burned by family members.

Eventually, Coyote was able to settle into Utah life and became a Kung Fu and Tai Chi instructor at six different schools, five churches, and Liberty Park. Raising his daughter as a Mr. Mom, Coyote saw the world clearly from this survival-animalistic-human family viewpoint.

By 1994, Coyote was established and semi-famous in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Governor knew him, the Mayor knew him, the Chief Of Police knew him, and every martial arts school in Utah knew him as a tournament judge and editor of the **UTAH BLACK BELT MAGAZINE**.



Coyote's hustles with the Mormons subsided as many became students and friends. This insight into the Mormon lifestyle is the album, **LEVEL 2 = CHRIST KILLER** by American Zen. Coyote depicts the various lifestyles of conformity, polygamy, and spirituality from an inside viewpoint of the **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**.

LEVEL 2 is about how **RELIGION** affects life for good and bad. The "Christ Killer"s are the people who use religion to hurt other people. Most people don't even make it to LEVEL 2 anymore. Most people don't have a religion anymore. Most people don't believe in God anymore. Most people are still in LEVEL 1, searching for PEACE OF MIND.



When Siddhartha Gautama sat beneath the bodhi tree and began his Buddhist enlightenments, he was rising beyond religions to achieve LEVEL 3. This LEVEL 3, was when Buddha became a Buddha. He rose beyond religion and realized that spirituality was a blend of reality and imagination, life and spirituality, effort and relaxation...the MIDDLE WAY.

This ability to know love and compassion beyond what your religion advises is the beginning of **LEVEL 3 = I WANT YOU TO LOVE ME**. When you can see beyond people's race, religion, and nationality, to see them as equal humans: you have risen to LEVEL 3. Unfortunately, few people can see without prejudice or resentment or vengeance or selfishness. So very few people rise to LEVEL 3 of Zen Buddhism. I think it is premature to call someone a, "Buddha," for reaching LEVEL 3, but they are at least at the beginning of TRUE ENLIGHTENMENT.

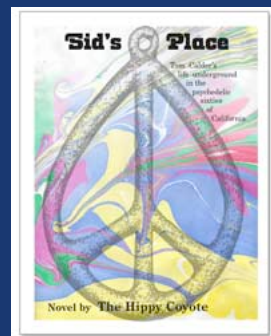
With my family breaking up, all my financial stability was lost. With my kids leaving to follow their mom, I lost my investment in my family business and schools. Being smart doesn't mean you get what you want.



Recent Projects



King Solomon's Temple Part 1 of American Zen's LEVEL 4 = Kung Fu Cowboy 2010



Sid's Place FRESH DRUGS! 2008



Tai Chi Magic 1 Buddha Zhen's Debut Album 2009





This chaos in life has put a different focus on the **LEVEL 4 = KUNG FU COWBOY** level. I had expected to spend this LEVEL with my kids and family developing our family Kung Fu schools.

Instead, I have one foot in **LEVEL 1**, trying to survive and reestablish myself without any financial relationships with anyone else. I have had to step back into **LEVEL 2** and reestablish my Buddhism again. I am moving into the video world with 66 videos at shaolinINTERACTIVE.com This will be the relaunch of my Kung Fu and **Shaolin Zen Buddhism**.

With my YMCA Tai Chi classes, CV Park Combat Tai Chi and Kung Fu Bootcamps, **LEVEL 4** has become my world of reconfiguring my own identity and life again.

That's part of the reason there will be four albums in **LEVEL 4**.

I am going to need more time to reach **LEVEL 5**. In my current reality, **LEVEL 5** is unattainable for me, even though I've attained it before.

So let's dance in **LEVEL 4 = KUNG FU COWBOY** for now.

This LEVEL 4 album has transformed from my autobiography to the story of King Solomon and **Hiram Abif**.



This album has gone from a musical journal of my life to a rock opera about the murder of King Solomon's architect, **Hiram Abif**. I am excited to share this with you.

Richard Del Connor, The Hippy Coyote, became a 3rd Degree Master Mason, February 2009. Several months later I discovered my "**Masonic Kung Fu**."

The symbols and philosophies of Freemasonry appeal to me and harmonize with my Kung Fu and Confucian ideals. The charitable and humanistic aspects of Masonry harmonize with my Zen Buddhism.

Download the album now and check out SONG SAMPLES at:

www.LEVEL4kungfucowboy.com

To learn more about life and the spiritual world of American Zen,

visit www.americanZEN.org

KUNG FU COWBOY

ALL SONGS WRITTEN BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ALL POETRY WRITTEN BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ALL MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ALL LYRICS, DIALOGUE AND VOICEDOVERS BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 EXCEPT, "BOTTOM LINE" GIBL GIGGLES BY CAITLIN O'CONNOR.
 ALL FLETCHES AND PINKY WHISTLE PERFORMED BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ALL DRUMS PERFORMED BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 EXCEPT, "ELAINE" DRUMS BY BRUCE CAMELARIA.
 THE ONLY KEYBOARD INSTRUMENT ON THIS ALBUM IS THE, "ELAINE" SYNTHESIZER BY SCOTT HITCHINGS.
 ALL BASS GUITARS PERFORMED BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ON HIS RICKENBACKER 4000 USING FLATWOOD STRINGS.
 ALL ACOUSTIC GUITARS PERFORMED BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ON HIS 1972 ALVAREZ.
 ALL ELECTRIC GUITARS PERFORMED BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ON HIS 1964 FENDER STRATOCASTER.
 ALL SLIDE GUITARS PERFORMED BY THE HIPPI COYOTE.
 ON HIS 1967 PLEASANT, USING METAL PINKY SLIDE.
 ALL PERCUSSION PERFORMED BY THE HIPPI COYOTE ON HIS BONGOS, TAMBOURINES, CASABA, VIBRASLAP, AND COWBELL (NO GUHO).

Produced by Richard Del Connor for Shaolin Records.
 Engineered by Richard Del Connor.
 Mixed and mastered by Richard Del Connor, The Hippy Coyote.
 Graphics, calligraphy, and album artwork by The Hippy Coyote.

Richard's Record Producer Story

i first became interested in record producing when I learned of **George Martin's** contributions to The Beatles' records. The album **REVOLVER** became my first project as an apprentice Record Producer to study and understand. When I mixed and mastered the American Zen album, **LEVEL 2 = CHRIST KILLER**, I put the **HIGH TIDES AND GREEN GRASS** album by the Rolling Stones on top of my stereo, so that every time I listened to **CHRIST KILLER** I would have a benchmark to exceed in more ways than just recording quality--I wanted to exceed it in storytelling, creativity, and representing a period in time.

Some other people who inspired me were **Felix Pappalardi**, who produced **The Cream** and **Mountain** albums, and the other inspirational producer was **Mick Ronson** of **David Bowie's** early albums. **Vicente** gets credit too, but Mick Ronson grew into something more diverse.

"Mixed loud to be played loud," used to be a motto for many of the concert bands of the early 70s. I appreciated that as i had a really nice Kenwood stereo and later even hooked it up to my Cerwin Vega PA monitors with 18" woofers that could blow my sliding glass windows off their tracks.



Then **Supertramp's** *BREAKFAST IN AMERICA* threw me for loop. What an awesomely recorded album!

I'd been a fan of headphones, listening to **Robin Trower**, **Jimi Hendrix**, *Revolver* and **Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band** by **The Beatles**.... and many other producers who impressed me over the years.



Then, in 1979, I got hired to work at the Village Recorder while **Supertramp** recorded their next album. **Fleetwood Mac** were recording *TUSK* and **Frank Zappa** was recording *SHEIK YOUR BOOTEE*.

I'd already worked a few years as a recording engineer, and I had already produced dozens of commercials and a couple albums -- so I wanted to see what these guys like **Joe Chicarelli** were doing and what I could learn from them.

I tried to learn from them, but I kept seeing how I could do better and I could get the talent to play better, I could get the bass player and drummer

to lock together better, I could get a better drum performance by...

But they didn't want to hear what I had to say, so it was kind of like watching children argue and wander around aimlessly. There are many artists whose albums would have come out a lot better if they would have had me as their record producer.



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