

Moosecat Studios

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[00:00:24] **Bryan Smith:** Brian Smith here and welcome to the dream path podcast, where I try to get inside the heads of talented creatives from all over the world.

[00:00:32] My goal is to demystify and humanize the creative process and make it accessible to everyone. Now let's jump in. Well, folks, it's our 100th episode. It took us two years, but we did it. I don't know why the number 100 seems like such a milestone, but perhaps it's because it takes so much work to record and produce a single episode, or maybe it's that I've been working with Jason Moore, my producer and editor cranking these episodes out week after week for two years straight with no breaks and no hiatus.

[00:01:06] Whatever the reason it's a big day for me, Jason and the podcast. And we couldn't have reached this milestone without you, the Dream Path listeners. So thank you for listening. Thank you for telling your friends about the show. Thank you for following and engaging with us on social media and sharing our posts.

[00:01:23] Thank you for emailing me with comments and feedback about particular interviews and thank you for leaving reviews on Apple podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you listen to the show. In the next few days, I'll hop on the mic and do a solo cast about surpassing 100 and what that means to me, so I won't ramble on about it here. We have an interview to get to, and it's a fun one today. I talked to Carly Rosenthal and Mike Post. Carly is the lead singer of the band, "Carly in the Universe" and indie soul pop band that I immediately added to my playlist after seeing their music videos on YouTube.

[00:02:07] Mike Post is the lead vocalist, guitarist and keyboard player for the band "Young Creatures". Their music is a bit more cerebral and contemplative, but unique and catchy as well.

[00:02:32] Mike also has a solo album called "The Crunch". Here's a song from that album called in search of you.

[00:02:51]

[00:02:51] Carly and Mike are not only accomplished musicians and recording artists, they also own and operate Moosecat recording studio in Los Angeles. And even though their work in the respect of bands is worthy of an interview on that topic alone. We spent most of our time talking about their approach to recording other artists, what inspired them to get into the recording business, how Moosecat recording studio got started, how they developed expertise in the industry and what advice they would give to others aspiring to

work in this field. At the end of the interview, they invited me down to their studio when the pandemic is over for what sounds like an amazing party that they hold for musicians and industry professionals.

[00:03:30] So when that happens, I'll plan on doing a follow-up interview with these two face-to-face in their studio. In the meantime, let's jump into my chat with Carly Rosenthal and Mike Post. Testing. One, two sibilance.

[00:03:44] **Mike Post:** Sibilance check, check.

[00:03:47] **Bryan Smith:** Right on.

[00:03:48] **Mike Post:** How's it going

[00:03:49] **Bryan Smith:** Hey really, really well this morning. Thank you for joining me.

[00:03:53] Carly Rosenthal. Mike Post. Thanks for being on the podcast. Yeah, this looks fantastic. I love this backdrop. We're in the belly of the beast for my listeners who are not watching YouTube and are listening to this on the normal podcast platform we have in the background, this Moosecat recording studio vibe that is almost like a retro looking studio.

[00:04:19] You have a lot of old school feel to this studio. So, tell us about how this came about, how you put it together and what thought you put into it.

[00:04:34] **Mike Post:** Yeah. We probably put a little bit too much thought into it. Maybe I, if that's possible, but.

[00:04:41] **Carly Rosenthal:** We started off, you know, we're both musicians and first and foremost, we wanted to have a rehearsal space and a place to record and it kind of just turned into something so much bigger and better than what we wanted. Mike's been a producer for over 10 years, and I've been a musician for a long time. And we just, uh, we worked with this guy, Ken Gorez to build the inside of the studio and get it like completely soundproof and acoustically treated.

[00:05:11] And that was a huge process on its own to learn everything that a studio needs to really dial in a good sound.

[00:05:18] **Mike Post:** Yeah. And I mean, I just, I was always working in other studios and always dreamed of having sort of my own place to, to, uh, to work, you know, for both, uh, as an artist and also as producer and engineer.

[00:05:30] Um, so it kinda just came together and sort of the best possible way.

[00:05:34] **Carly Rosenthal:** I know nothing about any of this stuff back here. Just, just buttons to me.

[00:05:40] **Bryan Smith:** So, are you, are you being serious, Carly, you are more on the producing side of things or the business side of the studio or?

[00:05:47] **Carly Rosenthal:** Yeah, more on the business side of things. Uh, this, I had no interest in learning what, like compression does, you know, in regard to my work, I know a little bit more these days, but, you know, nah, I couldn't sit here and do all do what he does all day.

[00:06:04] **Mike Post:** I probably had enough interest for the both of us.

[00:06:06] **Carly Rosenthal:** Yeah.

[00:06:07] **Bryan Smith:** Well, I think that's important in any business relationship that you have roles, and you have lanes that you stay in, otherwise there's no symbiosis. If you're both doing the same thing, then there's redundancies and you step on each other's toes. So, it sounds like you two, both have this musical background and I've, I've listened to your bands by the way. "Carly and the Universe" and the "Young Creatures" band, both of these bands are kind of from my school of music in terms of what I listened to what's in my playlist.

[00:06:39] So it was really fun to go through. Yeah. It was fun to go through your catalogs. And see the differences and see with "Carly and the Universe", you know, more of a pop feel to it, but still that indie soul vibe. And then with "Young Creatures", a little more contemplative and cerebral, but to see also the list and the credits of bands that you're recording, my impression is that you are gravitating toward folks that kind of fit into your musical universe and your vibe. And maybe the reverse is happening too. They're gravitating toward you because they see the music that you've been putting out and recording. How do you look at that relationship between the artists that you help record and your own musical tastes?

[00:07:30] **Mike Post:** I think it's kind of just a natural thing, almost, you know, where we, we have all types of music here, but the stuff that, that I gravitate towards, like as a, as a listener and, and also as an artist and producer sort of just, you know, it, obviously it comes out in the work and I think people recognize that, but also the stuff that I get excited about, the artists that I get excited about, you know, have maybe have a certain sort of A certain vibe to them.

[00:07:56] So maybe not something that necessarily you seek out, but, some, maybe just happens kind of naturally, like, you know, I don't try to push into lanes or genres that I don't belong also, you know, try to make a conscious decision where, you know, I feel like I can help certain artists, more than more so than others, maybe as well.

[00:08:15] **Bryan Smith:** That makes sense, for example, if like a hip hop artist came to you or maybe like a death metal band or something like that, I would imagine Carly from a business standpoint, you would want to at least consider that. But Mike, from a recording standpoint, in terms of what you can offer and contribute to the equation, there might be some thought that has to go into that before saying yes.

[00:08:38] **Mike Post:** For sure. Yeah. We want it to be the right fit. And you know, not that we haven't necessarily worked on that type of stuff before, you know, I love hip hop. So I've been getting more into mixing that kind of.

[00:08:49] **Carly Rosenthal:** Honestly, when he does do that kind of stuff, it bridges a gap with like rap music or like even modern pop music to have the hybrid of the analog and the digital, and really brings like a nice soak warmth to those types of projects that come in.

[00:09:04] So. As far as like hip hop projects go, you know, Mike's not producing beats here, but you know, we are doing live tracking type stuff. So, if hip hop artists want to lay down a guitar track on their stuff or a vocal track, first and foremost on their track, bringing it here and warming it up and blending it in the mix in a different light can bring a really nice warmth to what they're doing.

[00:09:30] **Mike Post:** Yeah, that's pretty, pretty right on. I mean, I think a lot of people who are working at home, like producing stuff, like on their computer, you know, are sort of yearning for some sort of real realness, to add to their music, whether that's guitar or just, you know, having some, some sort of air moving around in a room rather than just being confined to your, to your computer.

[00:09:52] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah.

[00:09:52] **Mike Post:** So that I, yeah, that's definitely a way that we, that we, uh, can sort of add, add to somebody's, uh, musical creation.

[00:10:00] **Bryan Smith:** You mentioned the analog digital dichotomy, and my look at your studio online. And I looked at all your pictures and the equipment. It seems to have a very analog vibe. You have the fender amps, these beautiful old school fender amps that I imagined some of them are tube amps. All of them? Okay. And you have these microphones that also have this old school vibe. So can you tell the listeners who don't know the difference between digital and analog, what that means, and also what that means to the listener? Like when you're listening to music and trying to discern, is this digital or is this analog.

[00:10:43] **Mike Post:** Yeah, well, I guess, you know, technically speaking, it goes as far as like digital being recorded on a computer and analog being recorded on tape. So that's like, I guess what we, you know, the true sort of meaning, but, behind analog digital, but that sort of has sort of come to extend, beyond that, you know, when it comes to, like you said, working with an amp.

[00:11:05] An analog amp or two bank or any sort of amp because, there are so many like digital recreation's now of these, of these, of everything of amps, where, you know, somebody is plugging a guitar into a computer and trying to emulate what you get when you have a real analog, you know, old-school sort of amp.

[00:11:23] So the, I mean, the difference to me, sometimes it's sorta hard to put your finger on, but it's, I guess in sound it's just a more natural, organic sort of sound overall that, you know, again, kind of hard to put your finger on it. Exactly, but so, you know, when you hear something that's been recorded on tape, as opposed to digital, and sorta have, has like a breathing sort of real quality to it, where sometimes digital recordings can, can come off, you know, a bit stale and obviously there's all shades in between, but I would just say there, you know, with analytics that there's just sort of a realness to it, you know, putting it simply.

[00:12:00] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah, I liked the way you mentioned air moving through the room, because I think that is missing with the digital experience where you plugged directly into a computer interface and you, you really don't have that room, that space for. Perhaps, I don't know how to describe it, but maybe ambient air sounds and also just fingers moving over the, the guitar strings.

[00:12:25] If you have it too clean and digital to me seems sometimes to clean and perfect, then you lose that humanness of the process for me, that's what it means. I'm probably not describing it that well, but as a lay person from the outside, looking in, that's what it means to me.

[00:12:44] **Mike Post:** I think that's probably what it comes down to in the end, you know, is that human sort of factor.

[00:12:49] **Carly Rosenthal:** But you miss that feeling of connection to the song when you have a song that's so perfect and like digitally made, it could be a top charting song, but how much are people really connecting to it and going back to it after it's kind of had its moment?

[00:13:07] **Bryan Smith:** Right. You know, there's a couple of documentaries I saw recently over the last year, one of them was John Lennon above us only sky about the recording of the solo album I imagined. And there was another documentary on Ed Sheeran, where he was in a recording studio, and the whole focus of the documentaries was on what was happening in that studio. And that magic that was occurring, the trial and error, the human connections that were being made. The conflicts between the musicians. George Harrison, looking over at John Lennon, struggling to figure out what John wants.

[00:13:46] So one of the reasons I'm so intrigued to talk to you both is that you are in that world still. And despite the fact that people have GarageBand on their laptops, and they have all of this access to record music themselves. You still have this space for musicians to go to. And to have that experience of talking to an engineer and troubleshooting things and creating in this very organic fluid environment.

[00:14:13] So tell me if you could, what that means to you as an artist and as a creative, both of you to still be able to hold on to that special experience in space.

[00:14:26] **Mike Post:** Yeah, I think was super cool about like that. I saw that documentary too. I mean, just any, any time you see, like everybody sorta like crammed into like a space together.

[00:14:35] It's like interesting things can happen. You know, it's like the opposite of a sterile environment. You know, it's stuff flying around the room. People are saying stuff, you know, it, musicians are interacting with each other. Like the band is vibing. It's sort of that unknown factor that could actually really enhance and sort of bring on a new character to the recording.

[00:14:57] So we try to maintain that here, where, you know, I always, when I'm working with a band, I never want to have a band, you know, recording one at a time. We, we very

much actively want to have, you know, mult, you know, if we can have the whole band in here playing together, whether we keep everything or not, you know, it's another question, but I think it's important to sort of maintain that human experience, especially when bands are, you know, so used to playing together. And then all, a lot of times they're going into the studio and just recording one by one and it, you know, editing it to bits, you know, it takes away for me. And, but it is sort of a balance to, you know, trying to find that sort of, that spark where musicians are interacting and playing, and then also finding, you know, a clean performance too.

[00:15:42] But yeah, we're very much, you know, rooted in sort of that interaction, that can happen within, in a room like this.

[00:15:50] **Carly Rosenthal:** You know, I work, I work with, you know, other producers who make beats for me to sing on. And I also work with "Carly in the Universe" and you know, it's just more of a love of like the artistry that it's involved in, like working with other people to make something beautiful.

[00:16:10] And as far as, you know, getting sent a track and then just, you know, I'll write some vocals in one night, track it, sing it. Done and that's it. And the song's done and it's not, it's not like the song is bad, but having "Carly in the Universe" and having the band and writing together and, you know, going through writing a million terrible verses and choruses until you get the one that you actually like is just, that's like the fun of the writing process. So it's definitely something I think just more enjoyable, like in terms of making and writing music, but, you know, that's just my opinion and some people love doing it the other way.

[00:16:55] **Mike Post:** Well lends itself to collaboration too, which is, I think important when, you know, when making music, obviously it's nice, you know, to be trapped by yourself and "Hey, this is my thing, and this is all, these are all my ideas" and whatever, but I think all the best music that I've made, it always, I'm not the only one involved, you know, there's other people's, you know, Striking a balance with you and, and, um,

[00:17:19] **Carly Rosenthal:** you can't think of everything.

[00:17:20] **Mike Post:** You can't think of everything and you, you know, you need somebody to keep you in check too. I, I think, uh, a team is always more powerful, especially when, you know, we've been lucky to work with such amazing musicians and people.

[00:17:33] **Carly Rosenthal:** Do we all sit in a room and tell each other that we suck? Do it again, do something else, go on.

[00:17:38] You know, that's not a good enough starting from scratch, you know, we just pound each other over the head until we get it right.

[00:17:44] **Bryan Smith:** Well, I wholeheartedly agree with those sentiments. I think the real disappointment for me in this pandemic, putting aside all of the human tragedy that has occurred over the last year, but the loss of human connection, the ability to sit in the same room and just have coffee and talk about anything, but when you get to the creative process, there's really something missing when you are trying to create from a distance or

trying to create through zoom or the phone or email. And as you're saying to be able to be in the same room and just pick up on that body language. As you're maybe playing a chord or pitching some lyrics or something that subtle body language that can communicate things in a way that can help you with your creative process without having maybe your feelings hurt, or maybe having your feelings hurt.

[00:18:38] Maybe you need to have your feelings hurt. You know, you need to have that conflict.

[00:18:43] **Carly Rosenthal:** Leave the ego at the door is what we say.

[00:18:46] **Bryan Smith:** And I, I, I know I really miss being in other people's creative spaces when I'm doing these interviews. For example, if we were not in a pandemic, I would be with you right now in your studio. I love seeing where people create. And I think that that-

[00:19:02] **Carly Rosenthal:** When this is over, you're definitely coming by.

[00:19:04] **Bryan Smith:** Oh, I would love to. Yeah. And I would love to play some of those instruments that you feature on the website. There's just, they're gorgeous. But, yeah, I think we're all suffering from that lack of connection.

[00:19:16] **Mike Post:** Yeah. And it extends obviously just beyond like music too. You know, I was saying like in the beginning, everybody was on sort of, you know, more weirdly connected where everybody's so checking in at, you know, every other day and stuff. Like-

[00:19:30] **Carly Rosenthal:** we stopped that so long ago, now I can't sit on the zoom.

[00:19:34] **Mike Post:** Right? Well, we're at a point where it's like, we're, I feel even more isolated than.

[00:19:38] You know, when everything first hit. Cause you know, we're not, you know, still in touch, but it's like now you're missing that human connection. And you know, we were trying to fill that human connection with zooms and checking in all the time. But now it feels even more, more isolating than it was to me.

[00:19:56] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah. Zoom fatigue is real.

[00:19:58] **Mike Post:** Yeah.

[00:19:59] **Bryan Smith:** I mean, I, I love this, what we're doing now, but the usual like, Oh, let's instead of a phone call, let's do zoom. I'm like, no, let's not. Let's just do a regular phone call.

[00:20:09] **Carly Rosenthal:** "let's play games online, together". Torture.

[00:20:13] **Bryan Smith:** What are you doing from a business standpoint to deal with the restrictions of the pandemic and continue operating?

[00:20:20] **Carly Rosenthal:** It's been, I mean, the entertainment industry has just been hit so hard. I worked as a music supervisor for a music library, and I ended up losing my job. And

then fortunately enough was able to make Moosecat a full-time thing for me, which I never would have considered. And it was kind of a really awesome jump for us.

[00:20:42] But we're, we're being pretty careful. I personally have asthma, so we required two negative COVID tests the week of, for people to come in. And, we have been able to record like full bands, come in and spend a week in here, like busting out their albums and it's been fine. And you know, these people are also like very worried and, you know, want to be as cautious as possible.

[00:21:07] So. Having the two sounds like incredibly annoying to some people, but to some people that sounds like a huge safety net for them to kind of come and be able to be comfortable in this environment and not feel like they're going to get COVID, you know? but, uh, we, uh, we're hoping to get vaccinated here pretty soon and get all this behind us, you know?

[00:21:29] **Bryan Smith:** No kidding. As you may have noticed. There are great resources and advice mentioned in all our episodes. And for many of them, we actually collect all of these resources for you in one easy place. Our newsletter, you can go to dreampathpod.com/newsletter to join. It's not fancy, just an email about each week's episode, featured artists and resources to help you on your journey.

[00:21:54] Now back to the interview. I can just imagine the feeling of musicians going there for a week to record and having this safe space that feels normal for the first time in so long.

[00:22:08] **Carly Rosenthal:** And we get to have like interaction with people, you know?

[00:22:11] **Mike Post:** It's kind of interaction because I'm in this room, like the entire time, like, you know, in the control room, you know, usually the band comes in and we listed on the couch and it's, you know, somebody is in here and blah, blah, blah.

[00:22:23] But now it's like, everybody's in the other room. I may, we may, you know, move the couch in there and they're just in there, the other room I'm in here with the door open. So, I mean, it's definitely nice to be making music, but there still, I'm still missing a little bit of like the way it was, but we're getting it done, you know, and, and that, we're happy for that.

[00:22:45] Definitely grateful to be doing it.

[00:22:47] **Carly Rosenthal:** He recorded this past weekend. He was like, Oh, I'm kind of nervous. Like COVID blah, blah. And then he like finished the whole weekend and he was like, Oh, that was so much fun, and I miss that.

[00:22:55] So yeah, it's been it's, you know, we had, I guess when the lockdown sorta first lifted, we were really, really busy for like a number of months.

[00:23:06] **Mike Post:** And now, you know, kind of with the cases going back up here in LA to astronomical heights, kind of everybody is like, kind of pulled back a little bit, even though we're still operating. So, it's, you know, more, more remote stuff, more just mixing.

[00:23:20] **Carly Rosenthal:** We've done so much for our business this past year to kind of set us up for when things do open back up that we're going to be kind of ready to take the plunge and push things forward.

[00:23:32] We opened up a virtual recording studio online, and it lets artists from anywhere in the world, you know, you're, you're tracking at home and you have a guitar that you directly plug in or a microphone that you directly plug in. And you can send the stems to us. And Mike can sit with you during the session and edit everything on the fly and also run it through our outward gear here, so you kind of have a bit of the studio access while you're anywhere in the world. And it's really nice for people to run it through tape or for through plate reverb and. And that type of thing. And we've also just honestly, like most of the projects coming in are like mixing and mastering from artists everywhere in the world, that are kind of just recording at home.

[00:24:18] **Bryan Smith:** So, did that happen in response directly to the pandemic or was that something you were working on already?

[00:24:24] **Carly Rosenthal:** We thought about it.

[00:24:26] **Mike Post:** We had the idea of having like, sort of this online platform that could sort of open up, you know, more people to, to moose cat. So then yeah, like when the pandemic hit, I was like, "well", not, not doing a lot right now. Let's uh, you know, maybe put some time into this. So yeah, we were, we kind of built it, had a new website put together, and sorta started pushing that.

[00:24:49] **Carly Rosenthal:** It's a real pain to like to make a whole, do like a whole backend for a website in store for all that stuff. It took us a long time.

[00:24:57] **Bryan Smith:** Well, that's brilliant. The businesses that are surviving and thriving are the businesses that are able to pivot and recognize that need and how to continue going, despite those limitations. I love the concept of having multiple tests in a week to require that type of safety measure before they go into the studio, then you have this safe space, but you also have this alternate business plan of doing things online and helping people throughout the world.

[00:25:26] Do you envision over the next, let's say in 2022 things open up and there is no more pandemic. Do you envision that people are probably going to continue on this online way to connect? You're in LA and just the commute time and all of the logistics. I think people are realizing that there isn't so much of a need to be there in person anymore, and putting aside whether that's good or bad, do you envision that things are actually going to go back to where they were after this pandemic?

[00:26:00] **Carly Rosenthal:** Absolutely. People need to get out of their houses. You know, people need to go out and do things. People are going absolutely crazy inside. I am going absolutely crazy inside.

[00:26:10] I want to go out and go and do things and pay to go in and do things for myself. And this is. This is definitely, you know, so many people are writing at home right now.

They're not doing anything else, but writing, you know, and, and they're gonna come to us with their projects when they're ready and we're going to record them, you know, but we also have like a publishing arm for our studio, and we've been signing a lot of artists and working with like commercials and TV shows and movie trailers and kind of having like a whole.

[00:26:44] For us, like for the music industry and to be successful in the music industry is staying in one lane. Isn't, isn't how you're going to be successful in the music industry? You need to have your Hinton's dipped in multiple pots and. At the end of the day, all that collectively is going to give you the paycheck that you're looking for.

[00:27:05] So, you know, the virtual studio, the recording studio, the publishing company, we're both in bands. Like all that collectively is like helping us, you know, move the needle. Yeah.

[00:27:15] **Mike Post:** Especially without touring, you know, and, and without shows, I, but I think definitely that will come back hard with a vengeance.

[00:27:23] You know, when it shows.

[00:27:25] **Carly Rosenthal:** I mean, you know, people are still going to be wearing masks at shows, but there'll be, I think people are going to forget how. Forget how to do social distancing when they're at a concert and have a couple of tequilas in them.

[00:27:36] **Mike Post:** I don't think that's going to be possible.

[00:27:39] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah.

[00:27:39] **Carly Rosenthal:** As long as this new strain leg, isn't a big deal.

[00:27:43] You know, like them, the vaccinations people are going to get vaccinated. Hopefully soon here,

[00:27:49] **Mike Post:** It's going to end at some point. That's the main point.

[00:27:52] If

[00:27:52] **Carly Rosenthal:** you don't want to get vaccinated. You can stay home still.

[00:27:55] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah, well, that's true. Yeah. Yeah. Well, I agree with Mike. I think we; we are going to see an end to this thing, but I don't know that the end is going to look like the beginning.

[00:28:07] In other words, we're going to be changed dramatically. And I think people will be taking precautions for years in terms of wearing masks. And we may look like, okay, Asian countries have looked for the last two decades in terms of wearing masks, just as a precaution, but in terms of bringing people back together for live performances, I just don't see America shying away from that. They're going to come back to live performances because it's just part of our ethos, it's part of our DNA. We have to be able to come together in crowds like that and experience art and creativity happening right before us. And I don't

think that can be taken away from us even in a pandemic temporarily, yes. But we're going to get to a point where we're back doing those things and we're just going to have to figure out therapeutics and ways to deal with that safely.

[00:28:59] **Mike Post:** There, there will be ways. I think we can rest assured there's going to be, it's going to come back. It just might, maybe, you know, is already taken longer than we hoped.

[00:29:07] And it'll probably be longer than we think. And things will be different. Like probably a lot less people may, you know, in the cities or whatever are the residual effects. But I don't, I think that, yeah, there's no way we can't move. We're not going to be watching live streams instead of, you know, going to Coachella or whatever.

[00:29:25] Like there's. It's not far to human nature to adapt to that. I don't think.

[00:29:32] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah. So, I normally start with a more biographical arc, but both of you are musicians and Mike, I've seen your work on YouTube and I've listened to your "Young Creatures" band and it looks like you do keyboards, guitar and vocals, and Carly, I've seen your YouTube videos and listened to your music with Carly and the universe. And I've seen you mainly as a vocalist, your stage presence is incredible by the way. So keep up the great work. Can you tell me, starting with Carly, how did you find music and what called you to becoming a singer in a band like "Carly and the Universe"?

[00:30:09] **Carly Rosenthal:** Funny enough. I, nobody in my family really are musicians, so I didn't get the bug that way. I just loved singing so much now singing around the house all the time. So my parents decided to throw me into singing lessons. And my singing teacher now is 98 years old.

[00:30:27] **Bryan Smith:** Wow.

[00:30:28] **Carly Rosenthal:** She's incredible. She, her husband played for Ella Fitzgerald and Lena Horne and she was the voice of like Ava Gardner in "Showboat".

[00:30:37] **Bryan Smith:** Wow. can you give her a shoutout by name?

[00:30:40] **Carly Rosenthal:** Her name's Annette Smith. she still does lessons, you know, but she's very old 98, 98, but she's like the most spiritual, like awesome, loving, happy person. So it's been really great to work with her. And, I guess like through her is kind of how I developed my sound and, you know, Motown's always been my jam jazz music, so it has been my jam.

[00:31:04] And, uh, with "Carly and the Universe", we've sold, you know, the stuff that we're actually going to be releasing stuff this in April, finally, can't wait. We've been sitting on it for a little over a year, I guess, because with the pandemic and everything, we kind of delayed the release and we were about to release it right during like Black Lives Matter movement.

[00:31:24] And I was like, nobody wants to hear a white girl releasing music during Black Lives Matter. I know my place. I'm going to go sit in the back and wait a little bit. So, I think,

you know, 2021 is a better, better time. I think, people do are a little bit more hopeful now. So, I'm excited.

[00:31:42] **Bryan Smith:** How about you, Mike, what was your trajectory as a musician and how did you find the "Young Creatures" to, put out music?

[00:31:49] **Mike Post:** Sure. Yeah. So I mean, just from, I was always like a big fan of music growing up and started playing guitar when I was like 12 or 13. And basically from there, I was just trying to write songs and playing in bands and pretty early on, like in high school and the, in that process, I figured that, I really liked the idea of like recording and that seemed like a more sort of realistic path to be, you know, involved in music, rather than just trying to be just an artist, it seems like maybe, you know, maybe I could make a living doing it. So, yeah, I was just always very, very passionate about it, into it, you know.

[00:32:26] **Carly Rosenthal:** Absolutely obsessed with recording.

[00:32:29] **Mike Post:** Yeah. So, yeah. And then just started trying to, you know, move out to LA and, right out like three weeks after college.

[00:32:37] And then just from there, just spiraled out of control, just trying to work with people and, intern and assist and just try to get into as many studios as I could. And then, you know, all along the way, always writing songs and always, trying to do the more, you know, be on the artist side of things, as well.

[00:32:54] So, yeah, and "Young Creatures", we've been at it for a minute now and, just started as sort of like a collaborative project, you know, sort of as a sound that I couldn't have come up with on my own. Then I also asked her, right. Like kind of have like a solo project as well. So.

[00:33:10] **Carly Rosenthal:** You gotta check it out, it's pretty great.

[00:33:12] **Bryan Smith:** Well, I will, definitely put all of those links up on my show notes when this episode launches to make sure the listeners have access to all of your solo projects and your band as well.

[00:33:23] **Carly Rosenthal:** And anybody out there listening, if you've worked with terrible producers in the past, people that are too cocky to, you know, listen to your needs for your project or just skimped out on, really making sure that your music sounds the best that it can, definitely check out. Mike, he's an awesome producer.

[00:33:42] He listens to what you want. I've worked with, I've worked with all the terrible people that are out there. I get it. I'm sure you're nervous to try somebody new, but this is the guy he really cares about your project.

[00:33:55] **Mike Post:** So, is that always selling?

[00:33:57] **Bryan Smith:** I would be remiss if I did not ask about Alice Cooper and the "Welcome to my Nightmare" album. You know, I saw your credits and I saw the Alice Cooper

credit, and I started looking at the Alice Cooper discography basically. And, this guy is one prolific musician, but you worked on the follow-up to the '76 album from 2011, right?

[00:34:22] **Mike Post:** I was not alive for the first all that amazing album. Yeah. So that was actually at a, another studio that I was assisting and engineering at. And yeah, it was just kind of thrown in the fire a couple of days, with Alice and producer, Bob Ezrin you now just sort of helping out on, on those sessions. It's all super, super nice guys. Alice was very kind to me, even though I was. You know, sorta, just making my way in the industry. Definitely an experience. I won't forget. That's for sure.

[00:34:54] **Bryan Smith:** When you look at engineers and producers, both of you who have achieved upper echelon success in the industry, who do you look to as inspirations?

[00:35:05] **Mike Post:** Hmm. Yeah, I guess for me, it's probably a pretty long list, you know, ranging from producers and engineers, but also, artists as well, I guess just off the top of my head, a guy like Shawn Everett, who's an amazing producer and engineer, who's very, very technical, but also has. Amazing, musical taste and prowess, somebody like somebody like that who who's, you know, maybe started more on the technical side of things, but very creative in that, in that process. So, I really, I really like that sort of a melding of, of both worlds of technicality, but making it a creative art more so than just, you know, hitting record and, you know, try trying to, I guess, put, push the envelope on that. Um, so somebody like him.

[00:35:52] **Bryan Smith:** Can you explain to my listeners the difference between engineering and producing.

[00:35:58] **Mike Post:** Sure. Yeah. So, I guess, traditionally, you know, two different jobs back in the day, you know, you have the engineer, who's more of a technical, you know, getting, getting the levels and hitting record on the tape machine and editing a tape. If you know, setting up microphones, getting the sounds, choosing the microphones. Sort of that more technical side of things. And then a producer, you know, traditionally is somebody who sort of oversees the process of the recording. It can be creatively, or which is kind of turned into a very creative job, but even traditionally, you know, looking over the budget, And choosing the studio, choosing the musicians. If it's a, let's say it's a singer- songwriter, they may choose who the cast of characters around them and just sort of making sure that the whole process is streamlined and smooth and just. But now, you know, that that job has sort of become a bit more elusive, as I would say, in terms of, you know, the, the role that it plays, it can play a variety of roles. Now, people who make the actual whole instrumental beat or a song, you know, is considered a producer now. So. It can definitely have like a wide array, but somebody who just sort of oversees the whole process, whether it's just literally being like a fly on the wall and like there for support or somebody who's heavily involved in making the music and writing the music as well.

[00:37:23] So I tend to play both roles. So. There's yeah. Again, a variety of ways to all sorts of, all sorts of different ways and successfully in all sorts of different ways. But yeah, I guess I've adopted sort of a two-prong approach where, you know, I'm also, I'm setting up, getting the sounds. I know what sounds I want.

[00:37:42] I'm choosing the mix, I'm doing all the technical stuff, but then also overseeing the whole process of recording.

[00:37:47] **Bryan Smith:** The way I look at producing and I'm not in the industry at all, but just as a novice, I think of a producer as someone like Rick Rubin who comes in and has this reputation that precedes him and this mystique around him. And then it just seems like whatever room he's in. Whatever's going to be produced and recorded, will have some of his magic dust sprinkled on it. And I really don't know what that is though, because I've listened to interviews with Rick Rubin. And I just don't know, is there anything concrete that someone like Rick or some of the people that you look up to do as a producer to turn an album into something distinct and unique and something with their fingerprint on it?

[00:38:35] **Mike Post:** Yeah, Rick is definitely unique in that he is just such a, you know, he doesn't come from a super musical background. He comes from like a fan perspective. So he, he has a very unique perspective on it. You know, most producers are musicians or. Or engineers. So, and he doesn't come from that. So he sees sort of an artist in a different light and he, to me, he's more like big picture and he can see that sort of big picture for the artist, you know, and their trajectory of their career.

[00:39:07] And you know, where he's, where this record will fit in with that. And all the other works.

[00:39:13] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah.

[00:39:13] **Mike Post:** Obviously a very special person. But yeah, I would say he's even more of leans towards that sort of traditional sense of a producer. Whose just sort of the guiding the guiding light or something like that. But yeah, it is kind of hard to put your finger on.

[00:39:28] **Carly Rosenthal:** Working with super talented musicians makes a big difference.

[00:39:32] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah. Oh, that's yeah, that makes sense.

[00:39:36] **Carly Rosenthal:** But you know, it's not everybody, is that savant.

[00:39:40] **Bryan Smith:** Right? And I would imagine too, that in going back to moose cat and how producing works and how you interact as a producer with musicians at moose cat, those musicians come in with a certain level of willingness to listen and collaborate. Yeah, I shouldn't have gone there anyway. But it's probably just a function of how much they're willing to listen and how much feedback they want. And then how much of a, I guess, a symbiosis there is between what you can contribute and what they're willing to incorporate into their music.

[00:40:16] And a lot of it like is trust. You know, you kind of have to build that trust with, with the, with the artists, you know, you, you don't go in guns ablaze and say, "Hey, you better change this, this, this, and this, and do this". And blah, you know, it's, it's, it's a collaborative effort. And, you know, definitely is built on trust, you know? So the first time you're working with somebody, you know, I started maybe tiptoe around a little bit more, see what's comfortable as far as, you know, what input is needed and what feels right.

[00:40:45] And what doesn't feel. Right. So. Every, every sort of every project is a little bit different in that way.

[00:40:51] **Carly Rosenthal:** Right. As far as my projects go and when he's producing my projects, I'm doing like 20 vocal takes of the same song and the same chorus over and over and over and over again. That was good. Let's get another take.

[00:41:05] **Mike Post:** We tend to be more picky with our own projects sometimes.

[00:41:10] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah, well, that makes sense. You've been working together for so long that you have that inherent trust. And, if he says another take, you really should do another take, just torture. Come on. So, follow the roles and lanes that you guys are in. What is your favorite place to be? What would you prefer to be doing most of the day in terms of being in the studio, working with other bands, working online? Helping with tracks that people send you working in television and film and commercials and that type of.

[00:41:44] **Mike Post:** I know what she's going to say. Which is writing and creating, being in that sort of yeah. That like zone of like creativity.

[00:41:55] **Carly Rosenthal:** I like being an artist first and foremost. Yeah.

[00:41:58] **Bryan Smith:** That makes sense.

[00:42:00] **Carly Rosenthal:** And, you know, I love to like for "Carly in the Universe", we shot like eight music videos over the pandemic that we're going to release and, I think that stuff is so fun. You know, Ken dressed up to doing the shoots, writing the songs, recording the songs. That's the fun part for me. And hopefully that's, you know, can be the, the biggest pot.

[00:42:23] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah. I urge my listeners to subscribe to your channel. Those videos are gorgeous. Very well done. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:42:29] **Carly Rosenthal:** Thanks.

[00:42:30] **Mike Post:** We've got a bunch more coming out. Yeah, I'd say it's just like being, for me, it's like being in that zone, you know, sorta like the head rush that you get, like when you're like performing live.

[00:42:39] But for me, it comes like in other forms too. Like sometimes I'm working on a mix and I sorta get that like zone in that zone thing where you're not thinking a whole lot, but you're just creating. And I know it happens with writing too. And, you know, I guess yeah, the easiest way to say it is just like when you're performing live and you're like, just in another, you're not thinking about it and you're just doing it and it's just coming out and it's coming out great.

[00:43:06] **Bryan Smith:** Yeah. So, finding that flow state.

[00:43:09] **Mike Post:** Yeah, where you want to be, it gets harder and harder to find

[00:43:12] **Bryan Smith:** it. Yeah, it is, I think with social media and the, our attention spans being shortened and we're so scattered and, and also in a fight or flight response with the political environment and everything that's been happening over the last four years, it's hard to find that flow state and to do deep work, you know, deep focused, prolonged focus on, on important projects.

[00:43:36] Definitely. So, what advice would you both give to young people that are looking to get into the recording industry and, and take the starving out of starving artists? Because sounds like this is a great way to make a living, but still, we'll be around and through osmosis, be part of the creative process and also be able to fund your own creative projects.

[00:44:00] What advice would you give to them? If you were in a room full of high school, seniors looking for this type of work.

[00:44:07] **Mike Post:** Yeah, I would say it's, totally viable and possible, but you got to be like 150% obsessed with it. You know, it can't be a side thing. You had to be literally living, drinking, breathing, music, and recording, and just every ounce of your energy needs to go towards learning about it, doing it and just, you know, trial and error basically.

[00:44:33] I'm still like learning stuff all the time and trying to get better and better. So it's not a process that ever, that ever stops for me. And I would say for young people, like just, you got to fully immerse yourself, you got to fully be committed to it. And like, kind of act as if like, this is the only thing that you can do or that you want to do or that you will do.

[00:44:55] For me, it was sort of that way. Whereas like, you know, this is it. I don't know why one way or another I'm going to make it work. So you got to sort of have that attitude. I think otherwise if you're like one foot in one foot out, yeah. This seems kind of cool. You know, I could, you.

[00:45:10] **Carly Rosenthal:** You'll get burnt out and you'll get disappointed, and every door will be slammed in your face.

[00:45:16] And you'll be told that you suck, and you'll be interning for no money. And you can't pay rent and those are welcome to the club. You know, like you can't, he can't complain that it's hard because it's hard for everybody. That's wanting to be successful in this industry because it's so cutthroat, you know, everybody wants to be doing this, you know, but you actually have to, you know, put everything into it to make it happen.

[00:45:48] **Bryan Smith:** And luck too, then there's a

[00:45:50] **Carly Rosenthal:** And have connections too sorry.

[00:45:52] **Mike Post:** Well, make connections. I would say both.

[00:45:55] **Bryan Smith:** So, immerse yourself, be ready for pain and suffering network and find a community. It sounds like, and hopefully get lucky. That's not too complicated. Okay.

[00:46:08] **Mike Post:** But if you keep trying for a long time,

[00:46:11] **Carly Rosenthal:** The luck comes a lot more easily.

[00:46:13] **Mike Post:** Yes.

[00:46:14] **Bryan Smith:** Right? Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. So you both have been so gracious to share your journey with me and to tell us about your studio and how you got into that space. Is there anything that you would like to share with the audience in terms of future projects that you're excited about, that you want to get them to pay attention to over the next few months or through the end of 2021.

[00:46:38] **Carly Rosenthal:** Hit us up, we're excited to hop on calls with other artists, meet up, you know, where. We're both pretty down to earth, people and love to meet new people. Love to build community here. We usually with the pandemic, it didn't happen. But we put on these like very extremely large events with, like this year we were going to have like Cork Vox Blue Microphones, the sponsor, the event we work with, like a water company called Liquid Death.

[00:47:07] We were with Earthquaker devices, THC Design, a weed company, and they all come together. And we're all jamming, smoking, drinking, and just partying and eating too much food and having a good time. And it's always been great to build community here and get artists to really meet managers and ANR and other producers and that type of thing, and labels and we're.

[00:47:32] Yeah, and in each other, and we just really want to, like, we want anybody who comes in this studio to be successful with their work. You know, it sucks to spend all that time on your album and then you put it out and nobody listens to it. We know we get that and we've been through it. And, you know, we're, we're happy to help people on their artistic journey in any advice that they need. We're happy to help.

[00:47:54] **Mike Post:** No, hopefully we can get back to that sort of human connection again soon.

[00:47:59] **Bryan Smith:** Well, when that happens, I'm coming down. I'm coming down for the food and.

[00:48:03] **Mike Post:** You're in man, hopefully 2022. But now this year I was probably out,

[00:48:12] **Carly Rosenthal:** I make all the food and I do like the huge, like buffet type style.

[00:48:14] Like nobody's going to want to eat buffet ever again.

[00:48:18] **Mike Post:** Buffets are going to come back right next to concerts, right? Yeah.

[00:48:23] **Bryan Smith:** Well, it was a pleasure talking to both of you.

[00:48:26] **Carly Rosenthal:** You as well.

[00:48:27] **Mike Post:** All right. Thanks so much for having us.

[00:48:30] **Bryan Smith:** Hey, thank you for listening and I hope you enjoy today's episode. If so, I have a favorite ask.

[00:48:36] Can you go to wherever you listen to podcasts and leave me a review? Your feedback is what keeps this podcast going. You can also check us out on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook with the handle @dreampathpod, and as always go find your dream path.