

Changing your tune may be your ‘Stairway to Heaven’

BY DAYNA STEELE

April 06, 2009

With all the doom and gloom in the news, economic crisis, foreclosures and layoffs – is this a good time to think about changing careers? It is if you aren’t following your passion in the first place.

As a former rock and roll radio air personality in Texas, I had the opportunity to be around a lot of musicians. Many of them had great music but not all of them became rock stars. The ones that did, I found, applied the same principles to everything they did, day in, day out, with the most important one being they followed their passion. They weren’t the manufactured stars by the record companies or the acts created by the big conglomerates like the Disney machine. The ones who became true rock stars and have remained rock stars to this day were the ones who played the music they were most passionate about.



A good recent example is Led Zeppelin’s Robert Plant. Now granted he probably doesn’t have trouble paying his mortgage these days, but the point here is he chose to follow his passion without a lot of support from fans.

After an extremely successful Led Zeppelin reunion show in November 2007, the rock world waited for what they thought was the inevitable announcement – that the world’s greatest rock band of all time was getting back together and would tour the universe and beyond. Fans were ready for that show and willing to pay any ticket price in any city just to see Robert Plant front Zed Zeppelin again live on a stage.

Instead, Robert Plant announced to that world of fans that he just wasn’t interested in singing “Stairway to Heaven” across the globe again. He’d

already done it, several times, and had no desire to do it again. Instead, he announced he was going to go into the studio and record with bluegrass super star Alison Krauss. As Plant said in an interview with CNN a few weeks ago, “We didn’t know if it would work at all, but we had to give it a try.”

The recording, Raising Sand, was produced by Fort Worth’s T Bone Burnett. It did work and it turned into a successful tour followed by five Grammys in February.

Plant chose to follow his passion, not knowing if it would work, but knowing that he needed to find something he truly enjoyed, to get the creative juices flowing and that yes, he might fall on his face and fail, but he had to try it anyway. That’s what passion does.

Passion makes you work harder, smarter and longer. Passion doesn’t ‘fall on its face’ but rather learns from what doesn’t work and keeps going. Passion gives you the energy and drive to keep trying until you succeed. Passion gets you out of bed early to take on another day.

Passion also turns on the other rock star principles I observed those many years ago – knowledge, networking and appreciation. Those four principles hold up the corners of a strong stage from which to perform each and every day whether in your professional or personal life.

Following your passion also makes you a happier, more satisfied person to be around. And let’s face it; we could use some happy, satisfied, successful people around us right now.

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