



STORY BY DICK HILDEBRAND
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN BROUGH

Pretty Words

Gavin Michael Booth and Crissi Cochrane Team up for Beautiful Music in a New Visual



Clockwise from top left: Director Gavin Michael Booth watches playback during a take; three stills from the Pretty Words video shoot; Crissi reviews a take with Gavin (left) and cinematographer Matt Bendo; Make-Up Artist Carly Nicodemo applying final touches to Crissi in preparation for the video shoot.

GAVIN MICHAEL BOOTH is on a journey to major success...a 15 year journey that has taken him from his native Amherstburg, to Toronto and now to the entertainment capital of the world, Los Angeles.

The award winning producer moved from this area about 3 ½ years ago to advance his film-making and music video career in Toronto, just before he began filming 'Scarehouse', a horror flick which was produced entirely in Windsor-Essex. It premiered at the Lakeshore Cinema with an audience of about a thousand which totally astounded the young filmmaker.

"Scarehouse," says Booth, "is Mean Girls meeting the movie Saw, a revenge thriller that takes place inside a man-made Hallowe'en funhouse in which two



girls have decided to get revenge against some friends that don't know what's about to come to them." Since its world release in October of 2014 and its Canadian premiere the following January, the movie has also been seen in the U.S., the Phillippines, Germany, Australia, New Zealand and the British Isles. It's available on video and can be ordered from most outlets that have an entertainment department. When that production had ended, Gavin and his wife, an actress with some movie credits in her resume, decided that a relocation to Southern California would be the next logical step for career advancement. He still travels between LA, Toronto, Windsor and Detroit to work on various project.

Booth's friendship with singer Crissi Cochrane, the Halifax native who now calls Windsor her home, goes back at least 4 years when he produced her first video for the song, 'Drive All Night'. "We had a great working experience," as Booth recalls, "but it was short since I also had a 2-year commitment as director, editor and producer of my movie, so Crissi and I didn't have a chance to work together again until this past March when we did the video for Pretty Words which is on the album Little Sway." The tune has already attracted nearly 5 million listens on Spotify and according to Booth, "the number is unprecedented for an independent artist – even artists with record labels, managers and financial backing for advertising would be impressed getting that many listens. The fact that it happened to Crissi, being a 100% self-made artist, is beyond impressive!"

Crissi had been sitting on the idea of the video for a couple of years and originally imagined it for another song. A study in 'mood', it opens with the singer in full makeup under professional lighting. As it progresses and the lighting changes, off-camera hands reach in and remove the makeup, bringing the 27 year-old back to her "classic, natural beauty." As Crissi puts it, "it's very much a transformation from a public persona, with makeup being like a mask that can be removed to reveal who I really am in private." Gavin says it was done in the vein of today's "no make-up selfies" which have become popular, especially among celebrities.

At just under 5 minutes in length, the video is a single shot with only one camera angle and no edits. Production was done at a friend's home (which serves as a studio) and took about 8 hours in total. "It was like doing a play," explains Booth, "all the ►



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cues were rehearsed and when everybody was comfortable, shooting began. It was all very simple and we managed it in only two tries.” He had nothing but praise for Crissi’s poise and professionalism: “She potentially had to sit in a chair for 8 hours which would have tested anyone else’s patience. But, she was as sweet at the finish of the day as she was at the beginning. The entire crew just loved her!” The new video along with Crissi’s other videos can be seen on her website, on YouTube, it’s just been picked up by BuzzFeed and could potentially be aired by Much Music in Canada.

It’s difficult to classify her music under a specific genre. While some would call it adult contemporary easy-listening, Crissi says it’s more like pop, with jazz, country and folk overtones....a throwback from her younger days in Halifax.

Fortunately, with grants from the Ontario Arts Council, FACTOR (The Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Recording) and the City of Windsor Arts Culture Heritage Fund, she’s been able to avoid “getting a day job recently” and has been able to concentrate on her music. At the moment, she’s working on a new album which should be ready for release sometime next year. She’s also been writing songs for the red-hot trio, The Walkervilles (she’s married to band member Mike Hargreaves) and for Valentine’s Day, Crissi had a limited offer where she composed and recorded original and personalized songs for people to give to their loved ones. She says, “it was kind of crazy. I wrote about a dozen of those songs in 11 days and for the whole of last year, I think I only wrote one song!”

While she doesn’t have many live appearances lined up for this year, yet, Crissi will be a guest performer at the Jeff Burrows Drum Marathon which starts June 3rd at Good Time Charly’s on Tecumseh Road East. A few other appearances are in the offing, but final details haven’t been worked out yet.

At the same time, Gavin Booth, with at least 80 music videos and a number of films to his credit, is working on a new feature film. He’s not saying much about it until all the contracts are signed but he does say “it is coming together.”

The future looks bright for the two talents, and given the synergistic relationship that the pair has developed, there is little doubt that Crissi Cochrane and Gavin Booth will again be combining their unique talents for more musical collaborations down the road.

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