



# JD MALONE AND THE EXPERTS

JD Malone is no stranger to the New Jersey and Philadelphia music scenes. He's just wearing a new set of clothes, one that fits him comfortably and in which he feels like he finally found his voice. As the charismatic frontman of Steamroller Picnic, he graced hundreds of stages spewing out alternative rock and pop. Now, he's a purveyor of Americana roots rock and is gaining acclaim for his new release, *Avalon*, just out via the It's About Music label, and which has already been tapped as a "Download of the Week" by *Goldmine Magazine*.

"Steamroller Picnic was more like pop rock music," JD comments. "And of course I'm older now. What it boiled down to is I struggled with writing pop music, and you have to find your voice, and find the medium to express yourself. I kind of like some of the quotes people have said, that it's a muscular hybrid of indie rock and Americana. Americana is tough, because everything gets lumped into it. We tend to be more along the lines of Tom Petty and Creedence Clearwater Revival. I also do solo acoustic shows, so I think there's a lot of different aspects to the music."

The Experts are a top notch, crack band of established musicians who have played with many top artists themselves. They include Tom Hampton on 12-string electric guitar, baritone guitar, lap and pedal steel guitar, dobro, and mandolin; Avery Coffee on electric guitar, Jim Miades on bass and Tommy Geddes on drums. "You know, most of the guys I met from doing other gigs," explains JD. "You play with another band, and you like the way that person plays, so you strike up a conversation and the next thing you know you have different guys you play with."

The album was recorded at the renowned Studio 4 outside of Philadelphia, with Grammy winning engineer Phil Nicolo, who has worked with Bob Dylan, Billy Joel, and Lauryn Hill, among others. It's already started to receive radio play on Triple A stations in a number of markets around the U.S., although it's been a challenge to get local stations on board. "Radio play, it's not really something I think about," muses JD. "Sometimes it's the hardest to get the local stations where you're from on your side. It's been easier

to get some radio behind us in Tennessee, Denver and Texas, where there's kind of a different vibe when you're from somewhere else. The record company has us on some Triple A and Americana compilation CDs that go out to radio stations every month. There are some call-in times to radio, and there are three PR firms. It's a many-pronged attack that's happening, but the first week it came out it was on the Americana chart under the category that said 'Impacting Radio.'"

Musically, JD draws from a wide variety of artists, ranging from older acts through the latest groups to hit the roots rock landscape. "Probably my biggest subconscious influence would be classic rock bands," he states. "There are so many different things, as far as my modern influences. Maybe Lucinda Williams, The Avett Brothers, David Gray, classic Tom Petty, Bad Company, The Guess Who, all this pop music, '70s pop music, which ended up being classic rock. If you think about music, like Crosby, Stills and Nash, those guys were young and still writing insightful lyrics. I don't listen to a lot of younger songwriters because I don't relate to the lyrics. There are some, like The Avett Brothers and Bobby Bare Jr. I've been doing this for a lot of years, so I'm sure you hear lots of different influences. Different songs are influenced by different things. One song, for instance, is a combination of Hank Williams Jr. and Radiohead, as strange as that sounds."

JD's personal favorites lean toward his newer tracks, especially an album track called "Do What You Can Do," which he

feels sums up his philosophy about life in general. In fact, many of his songs are very personal in nature.

Performing the tracks live has been very rewarding for JD, and people are relating to a number of the songs. "I'm really at a good point," he says. "I get a great reaction. People tell me just about every one is their favorite one. A song called 'She Likes' has been singled out at radio, and the label just made a DVD and single of a live performance of it they are sending out."

Some of the tracks from *Avalon* lend themselves to country radio, and one particular song, "Silver From," is about to get serviced to country stations. In fact, JD had to re-cut the vocal on the track, in order to leave out the word "ass," which apparently isn't acceptable at many country stations.

Along the same lines, JD and the group have some touring plans that include Nashville, as well as Knoxville, Florida and anywhere else that the group are getting some attention. There will also be some showcasing at the Americana Music Conference in October, and some charity shows as well.

And just how did the group come by the name, the Experts? "You know, our music is by no means punk rock, but it's a punk rock name," laughs JD. "It's a bit of sarcasm in there. There's much truth spoken in jest. It's kind of tongue in cheek, but we have kind of a punk rock attitude."

You can get more information about JD and the band at [itsaboutmusic.com](http://itsaboutmusic.com) and [jdmalone.com](http://jdmalone.com).

