

Glendale City Councilman Storm Gloor Co-Organizes Amplify Music Conference

by Laura Lief

Although Storm Gloor is known around Glendale as a city councilman who enjoys running and spending time with his family, he is also an Associate Professor for the University of Colorado, Denver's College of Arts & Media and a devoted music fan. He was involved in the music industry for 14 years and, more recently, has been conducting research and developing courses based on *Music Cities* topics. Unbeknownst to Gloor, Dr. Gigi Johnson, from UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music, was conducting similar research of her own.

"Five years ago I developed the first (from what I've been told) Music Cities course offered in higher education and Gigi developed Music Cities curricula more recently," Gloor explains. "I led a Music Cities research project with my students for the city of Arvada and with Cheyenne, Wyoming. She led at least one with Los Angeles and has done some amazing things."

Gloor and Johnson initially met at a *Music Biz* conference, became friends, and then realized that they were both doing related research at their respective schools.

"Our collaboration began with this project starting late last year," says Gloor. "Gigi is awesome and when she suggested that we work together I jumped at the opportunity."

When the two professors combined their efforts, they investigated 71 cities that had commissioned studies and analyzed each city's music ecosystem. Their extensive research was accepted for presentation at this year's *South By Southwest* — an annual gathering of film, interactive media, and music festivals and conferences in Austin — where they were slated to discuss connecting ideas between groups of organizations. As Gloor and Johnson planned their conference and strategized topics to cover, they realized that people and organizations all over the world were doing similar work. So they introduced those people to one another and put them on panels together. And then COVID-19 changed the world and everything was canceled.

Amplify Music Emerges

In an effort to ensure that their message was still heard, Gloor and Johnson organized a virtual gathering of stakeholders in the music economy who would focus on how communities and their ecosystems would endure the world shifting and discuss the short- and long-term effects on the music industry. The virtual gathering — now known as *Amplify Music 2020* — became a 25-hour session that took place on April 23 and 24 with a new mission: bring together diverse music leaders and creators to learn and share from local artists, venues, creative communities, and support networks to address the challenges of COVID-19.

Featuring over 100 speakers and 11 central themes, the virtual event centered on the immediate future of music and how to prepare for the industry's "new normal."



"I think the most significant outcome is that we brought so many folks together so quickly to collaborate, share, and put the information out there to educate and provide a resource for anyone in need," Gloor explains. "Hopefully we've contributed to getting through this as best we can."

Major themes Gloor and Johnson highlighted were resilience, community, and recovery. Because the music business has historically been forced to repeatedly adapt due to disruptions caused by ever-changing technology, Gloor feels that the industry will survive the current disruption as well.

"Commercial radio did not stop people from going to see live music, home taping did not kill music, and post-Napster music consumers pay for music despite the prediction that they never would again," he says. "In every case the industry was resilient, albeit with forced changes to the economic models. And it will be again. Music is too important to so many of us."

Gloor continues, "That being said, all of those previous disruptions have generally been due to changing technology. We're messing with a human virus now. Science,

health and medicine, psychology, sociology, and even politics are now involved. The business will recover, though it will be painful. And the solutions, over at least the next 18 months, will now have to be sought through those lenses as well."

What's Next

While this unprecedented crisis is affecting most industries across the world, Gloor is confident in the resilience of the music business but acknowledges that the landscape will be different. That insight is why the conference's format transformed from various sessions over the course of a month to 25 consecutive hours of discussion.

"There's no doubt this has been catastrophic for the industry, particularly the live music industry," Gloor says. "It's tragic irony because that's the sector that was perhaps thriving the most. For many artists it had become their main source of revenue, since sales of recordings had diminished so much and streaming has generated only a fraction of what recordings did. By the same token, live music venues were thriving. Attendance records were broken, shows were selling out more often, jobs were being created, and new venues were opening or upgrading. And then COVID."

Though looking ahead is difficult, as the music business has already experienced significant blows with live music cancellations and venues closing indefinitely, Gloor is already seeing industry people coming up with ways to make do.

He adds, "Many folks, on both the business side and the artist side, are quickly getting creative just to stay afloat and are definitely working together. That was clear from the conversations during the conference."

For more information on Amplify Music, and to see video recordings of all the sessions, visit www.amplifymusic.org.



Glendale City Councilman Storm Gloor is also an Associate Professor at UCD's College of Arts & Media.

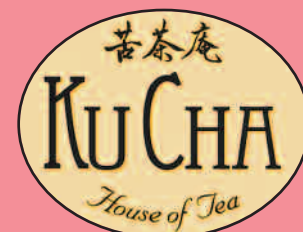
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Where To Go, What To Do Near You

Jodi's Virtual Race, June 1-30 — Register for ovarian cancer fundraiser gone virtual, then run-walk neighborhood, parks or your treadmill. Information: 720-971-9436.

Virtual Petri Dash, June 6-7 — Walk, jog or run 5K, 10k or 1 mile when-where you want to support Morgan Adams kids-teens with cancer. Information: petridash.org.

Denver Urban Market, June 6, 13-14 & 18 — A cornucopia of arts-craft, more at *Skyline Park* on 16th St. Mall at Arapahoe, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Information: 720-272-7467.

Lowry Speaker Series, June 16 — Foundation hosts virtual talk by Dr. Susan McClanahan of the *Eating Recovery Center*, 7 p.m. Information: lowryfoundation.org.

Denver Dance Festival, June 20-21 — See festival artists premier new work in *Newman Center's Byron Theatre* 8 p.m. 20th, 3 p.m. 21st. Information: 303-871-7720.

Jon Cleary, June 26 — Solo piano concert by New Orleans multi-instrumentalist is at *Swallow Hill's Daniels Hall*, 8 p.m. Check for possible date change. Information: 303-777-1003.

16th Street Fair, June 26-27 — Stroll downtown's *16th St. Mall* to see showcase of HDartists-designers producing unique handmade goods. Information: 720-272-7467.

Denver Fringe Festival, June 26-28 — *Colorado Theatre Guild* performing arts fest is at *Blake St. Tavern* and *Walnut Room* plus other venues. Information: 720-739-0073.

Colorcon, June 28 — A one-night alleyway painting overhaul with live music by Sarah Slaton behind the *11th Ave. Hostel*, 6-9 p.m. Information: coloradocolorcon.com.

Monday Movie Madness, June 29-Aug. 10 — See hits, classics on the big screen at Glendale's *Infinity Park*, gates open 6:30 p.m. Information: infinityparkglendale.com.

The Great American Beer Festival® (GABF) — the country's preeminent beer festival and competition, will pivot its 2020 event, originally scheduled for September 24-26 at the *Colorado Convention Center* in Denver, to an immersive online experience October 16-17.

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