**Joel Saunders Music Bio**

**ORIGINAL VERSION:**

Joel got his first guitar at the age of five. Growing up in Uxbridge he was a member of the Joseph Gould Jazz Band, the Uxbridge Secondary School concert and jazz band (on bass and electric guitar respectively) and was a regular member of the Uxbridge Youth Theatre and Onstage Uxbridge pit bands and crew. Upon graduating high school Joel was the recipient of the Uxbridge Youth Theatre scholarship and the Uxbridge Music Trust scholarship.

Joel studied music and jazz guitar for four years at the University of Guelph. While in Guelph, Joel played with a wide variety of musical groups in genres ranging from jazz, free jazz, rock, choir, pop, folk, and blues. It was here that Joel became interested in fingerstyle guitar and singing and started to develop a name for himself as a solo performer. Joel’s musical journey has allowed him the opportunity to play hundreds of gigs in venues ranging from private parties, cafes, markets, bars, weddings, concert halls, music festivals and more.

In 2016 and 2017 Joel competed in the Canadian Fingerstyle Guitar Competition against competitors from across the globe and placed 4th and 3rd respectively. Joel now resides in Toronto where he teaches guitar, ukulele, piano and singing and performs regularly by himself and with various groups.

**SHORT VERSION:**
Joel started playing guitar at the age of five. Growing up in small town Ontario, Joel became active member of the local music community at a young age as a multi-instrumentalist and sound technician. Joel received two music scholarships and chose to study music and jazz guitar at the University of Guelph. Since then Joel has performed in genres ranging from jazz, free jazz, rock, choir, classical, pop, folk, and blues. Joel’s sound comes from his mix of funky acoustic singer songwriter, jazzy-blues electric guitar, and upbeat instrumental acoustic fingerstyle guitar.

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