



That Dan Thing

Finding peace and sanity in a crazy world

Thirteen-year-old Parker Daniel Coté

can now add co-producer of a music album to his resumé. Parker and his dad, San Diego native Dan Coté, make up the band That Dan Thing. This Imperial Beach duo recently released their new album, *The Spotless Mind*. It's a refreshing mix of genres with a fearless take on the realities of life, blended with upbeat and positive melodies.

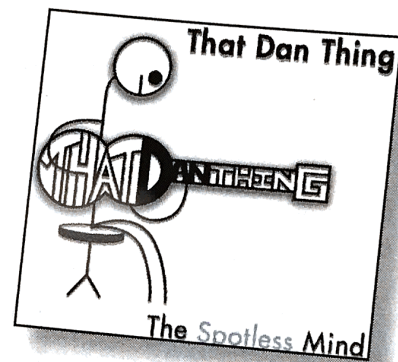
Parker sings solo on one of my favorite songs on the album, "The Hamster on the Wheel." The song speaks to the hectic pace of today's lifestyle and reminds us to pay attention to the moments of our lives. It's a serious message but with Parker's innocent voice and optimistic tone, it feels more like a gentle reminder to wake up to the world around us.

"It's sort of about those people who get stuck in the moment. They have to do everything for their work, but not things they enjoy. It's all about work, work, work. No smelling the roses," explains Parker.

The Coté family is familiar with making positive changes in life even after experiencing great difficulties. Bouncing back from a car accident that left him with a closed brain injury, Dan Coté rejoined the music scene, fortuitously meeting his wife Julie online while promoting his band at the time.

Dan ended up going back to school to become a credentialed teacher like Julie, and their family grew with children Parker and Natalie. But, when Natalie was just 6 months old, Dan had a relapse of symptoms from his brain injury that included a series of breakdowns.

Dan's song "I'm Over You" hints at the treatment that he endured during this rough period. Fallout from a series of experimental brain treatments left Dan with auditory hallucinations, depression and high anxiety. To top it all off, he severed the tip of his finger fixing a garage door, making it hard to play his guitar, but he continued to write music.



"So tell all the world. The summer of love has returned. Don't you know it's on you and me?" "The Summer of Love" from The Spotless Mind.

"Music was always helpful. To play, to listen to and to write in his head," says Julie.

Dan is quick to credit Julie for being where he is today. He reflects that if it weren't for his accident he would never have met her. His song, "First Time That I Saw Your Face," was written for Julie. "It is an open book love song to her and the power that love can have to transform one's life," says Dan.

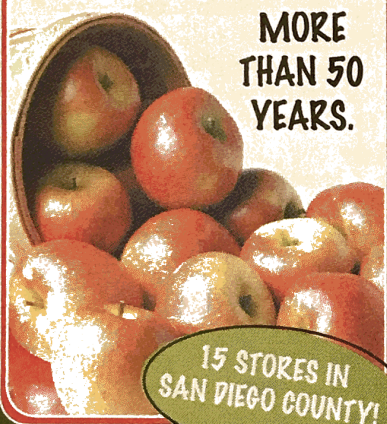
That Dan Thing

The actual beginning of their family band, That Dan Thing, began in 2008 when their children's school principal asked Dan to write and record a theme song for the school. This led to Dan journeying back into the studio and eventually laying the basic tracks of more than 50 songs with his longtime friend, recording engineer and musician, Jeff Forrest, owner

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of Doubletime Recording Studio in El Cajon. Forrest also produced the band's first video for their high-energy song "I Feel Fine."

Learning piano, drums, bass and then guitar, Parker was quickly turning into a talented musician, too, and the partnership that followed between father and son was natural. Parker had already recorded "The Hamster on the Wheel" for a sixth grade school project. Dan loved his son's new fresh arrangements and kept them for the album, which finally came to life after a special birthday request from Parker.

"If there's one thing I want for my birthday, it would be to put an album out," Parker had said to his dad. And what a wonderful birthday present it turned out to be.

Listening to the album you will quickly come to appreciate the sincerity of the lyrics and the talent of the



Coté Family top music picks

The Beatles
Jack White
The Shins
Nick Drake
Elliott Smith
Death Cab for Cutie
U2

musicians. The music truly appeals to all ages, which is a rare thing.

"There are dark undercurrents, but I try to have a ray of hope. Sunny and upbeat melodies kind of help," says Dan. Purging his emotions into the lyrics was cathartic for Dan during some difficult times, and the audience benefits from his honesty.

He is definitely not afraid to tackle real human issues, but his ability to leave you feeling cheerful at the same time is unique. Dan and Julie most appreciate the bonding aspect of music in their family. It's extra special to Dan that Julie and daughter Natalie, 10, sing back-up vocals on the album, too. Dan says the project was really a family collaboration.

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www.thatdanthing.com.

"They would chime in with all kinds of opinions," says Dan. "The whole family had an input and opinions when Parker and I would go for the final mixes."

Natalie's strength is songwriting, and her dad is looking forward to future album collaborations with his daughter. Natalie is currently working on a book of poetry that she'd like to have published. She is also learning to play the piano, ukulele, and guitar, with future plans to take on the cello.

As a mother, Julie has some advice to offer parents whose children are interested in musical endeavors. "Try it out. Open the doors and see what happens. And make it fun! Keep it fun and they'll want to keep doing it," she says.

"Remember it's the therapeutic and bonding aspect that is the most important thing," Dan adds. He reiterates how the support of his family during very challenging times was essential to the creation of *The Spotless Mind*.

He sums it all up: "It's about the journey to find peace and sanity in this crazy world through the power of love, hope, perseverance, and a little help from your friends." ♦

Laura Pardo appreciates The Spotless Mind album for helping her get through a few really tough months. Thanks That Dan Thing!