

**Ruth Eggherman:** Hello, everybody. Thank you for joining us for Beyond the Stage. My name is Ruth Eggherman. I'm the Director of Marketing here at Livermore Valley Arts. I'm here with our host Executive Director Chris Carter. Say hi, Chris.

**Chris Carter:** Hi.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I was sitting somewhere else and I was like, there's weird shadows on my face because the lighting was bouncing off the frames.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Eggherman:** And so I was like, All right, I'm going to move over here by the by the wine labels, the wine crate label thingies.

**Chris Carter:** I know, I don't have anything cool behind me. It's like a printer.

**Ruth Eggherman:** You have the guitar from The George Bowen Guitar Summit, right? Yeah.

**Chris Carter:** It's from the Guitar Summit.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I think I was noticing that the other day when I was in your office, I'd just, like, noticed it for the first time, which one it was.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Do you still have all the other guitars or those back home?

**Chris Carter:** I have one here, one there. There's four in the room.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Okay.

**Chris Carter:** But they – they're not behind me, just the Bowen one. And I have at home I have five hanging up and then five more on stands.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah. When I was married to Eric and Eric is Filipino, was Filipino, we always wanted to go as John Lennon and Yoko Ono. We never did it, but we always wanted to do a Halloween costume. That was John Lennon and Yoko Ono. And I would be John Lennon and he would be Yoko Ono.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Because I wore the glasses I had.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I used to have like those, you know, those round glasses, you know, back when those were fashionable for women to wear.

**Chris Carter:** A song by Barenaked Ladies called You Can Be My Yoko Ono,. It' actually cool because it's like—I love you so much. I would break up the Beatles for you like that—that's how intense our love is. It breaks up the greatest band of all time. And it's like that's that's as good as it gets. So it's kind of a good way to look at it.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I've never watched even a minute of that song.

**Chris Carter:** He wrote that song for the show. And apparently the story is he was asked to write a song for this show and he kind of brushed it off and his he had like a deadline and his wife was talking to him and said, yeah, they want me to write this song for the show and said, Well, who's the producers?

**Chris Carter:** And he said, the names of the producers. And she goes, I think you should write it like you better do this. And the deadline was like in a few hours. And so he's like in the shower trying to think of what to write. And then he figures it out and his wife yells at his wife, come in here and start recording.

**Chris Carter:** And he sings the whole song while...

**Ruth Eggherman:** While he was in the in the shower?!

**Chris Carter:** he was in the shower. And then they get out and he just records that on his guitar real quick and sends it to the producers and they go, We love it. It's perfect. But then

**Ruth Eggherman:** That's hysterical.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah, those 5 minutes in the shower probably made him millions and millions of dollars with that song.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Well, that's what they always say, like songwriters. And maybe this is something we can ask John about, but songwriters like their best songs are written like that. Well, maybe not, not what they might consider their best song, but like it just comes to them in the shower or wherever.

**Chris Carter:** Like in a wave.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah, in a wave. And it's crazy. Now he's done a lot of music for well, his music appears on a lot of TV shows and movies.

**Chris Carter:** Oh, yeah,

**Ruth Egberman:** Commercials.

**Ruth Egberman:** So I know that that's, you know, that's how I feel, like, that's how I know Five for fighting.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Egberman:** When you were bringing the band, I'm like, I don't know any of their songs. And then I was like, Wait, I know all of their songs. I know all of these songs. It's crazy, you know, because I've heard them so many other times.

**Ruth Egberman:** They were on, I think. I'm not sure which song was on Scrubs, but I know that they've had some music on Scrubs, and Scrubs is one of those interesting shows, and it was on Netflix for a long time. And then at a certain point, the licensing on all of the songs that were in Scrubs, which was had amazing, amazing music to go with it. Did you ever watch the show?

**Chris Carter:** No, not once.

**Ruth Egberman:** Oh, it's a great show. So all of the licensing...

**Chris Carter:** I'll watch Scrubs, if you watch Big Bang Theory.

**Ruth Egberman:** Okay, okay, I'll try that. I know everybody talks about Big Bang Theory is like being a great show. I just have never watched it.

**Chris Carter:** It's cute.

**Ruth Egberman:** Yeah, but Scrubs is great too, and I think so there was a point with all the licensing got lost and for all the music and then they, they, they, I think they recaptured it and were able to rerelease the series with new licensing on the music because the music in Scrubs is really amazing. There's, there's we've talked about Colin Hay doing an acoustic set, an acoustic performance.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Egberman:** Well that's what I would like because I fell in love with an acoustic performance he did during the during one of the episodes of Scrubs, and it was sort of weaved in and out of the episode, and he was actually on camera doing it.

**Chris Carter:** Oh, cool.

**Ruth Egberman:** Yeah. So it was really, it's like, oh, wow. So it's always really cool to hear to hear some of those songs and like in a, an acoustic format.

**Chris Carter:** I'd love to get him.

**Ruth Egberman:** Yeah, like songs that I wouldn't normally gravitate towards because the music is different. It's not music that I respond to, but when then I hear it done acoustically, I'm like, Oh, this is a beautiful song. It's really fabulous. I think. I think Bad Brains. Is that a name of a band?

**Chris Carter:** I have not heard of Bad Brains.

**Ruth Egberman:** Okay, there's.

**Chris Carter:**

**Ruth Egberman:** I'm so bad at this stuff, but they have a song, so somebody of that nature has a song and they're really like a heavy metal kind of super rock band, which is just not my my cup of tea necessarily. But when, then, then I heard an acoustic version that I think they did on, on the Howard Stern Show. I was like, Oh, this is just an amazing song.

**Ruth Egberman:** Chris Cornell

**Chris Carter:** Yeah, well Nirvana.

**Chris Carter:** When they did their MTV Unplugged show, that's when they just exploded.

**Ruth Egberman:** It's an amazing, amazing that version of MTV Unplugged is just out of this world. Like every song is so good. Everything about that particular show to the look-like in our house. I remember when I first met Ed and we were talking on the phone together one night and he he was like, Oh, have you ever seen this?

**Ruth Egberman:** And I said, I have not. And so we both put it like on our computers or our phones or whatever and watched it together over the over the phone and just were amazed by like every detail of that particular episode of MTV Unplugged with Nirvana was like, It's out of control. It's so good, so good if you haven't seen it.

**Ruth Egberman:** So they're doing it like.

**Chris Carter:** I watched it in college. I remember when when I first came out, when I was like, I saw it live that was pretty amazing.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah, I, I was having kids at the time that Nirvana was getting really popular. And so I just didn't clue in to music like my kids were young. And so, you know, you're listening to crappy kids songs. When you're in the car, listening to the radio, you're like, What do you want to listen to? So, you know, I got to tell you, I've just discovered this new band called Nirvana.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Have you heard of them before?

**Chris Carter:** Yeah. Maybe.

**Ruth Eggherman:** So I sort of missed the whole grunge rock scene.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I was when I was having kids.

**Chris Carter:** That was when I was in high school and college.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Great! Today we are talking to John Ondrasik, also known as Five for Fighting who is performing live at The Bankhead with a string quartet on Friday, September 15th at 8 p.m.. This is selling fast so make sure to get your tickets at [LivermoreArts.org](http://LivermoreArts.org) or by calling the Box Office at 925-373-6800. It was a really fun interview, wasn't it, Chris?

**Chris Carter:** I loved it.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah, really great. He told some great stories and he really gave a taste for what the evening is going to be like. And it's either it's the type of concert that that I gravitate towards, like somebody who's a storyteller and somebody who's, you know, who's going to give us some. He's going to take us even further beyond the stage than this podcast.

**Ruth Eggherman:** So I think that's really kind of cool. Really.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah. And he wants to hear my song.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I know you should send it to him! He wants to hear your song.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah!

**Ruth Eggherman:** Maybe he'll learn it in a month and play it on our Bankhead stage. How cool would that be?

**Chris Carter:** That would be awesome.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I wanted to drop that hint.

**Chris Carter:** Oh, that's okay.

**Ruth Egberman:** So cool.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Egberman:** It's a good song. I like it.

**Chris Carter:** Thank you.

**Ruth Egberman:** Are you going to send it him?

**Chris Carter:** Of course I am. I will definitely send it along.

**Ruth Egberman:** And then you'll have that. How long did it take you to write that song? We talked a little bit with him about how long his songwriting process and how long it takes to write a song. How long did that song take you?

**Chris Carter:** You know, that one actually took about ten years because I started it at one point and didn't like how it was going. I like the lyrics or some of the ideas of the song, but I just couldn't figure out the music for it. And then years later, I came back to the lyrics and rewrote all that music. And so that's kind of been kind of figured out the end of the song.

**Chris Carter:** And so it's just something I was kind of had in my, in my pocket and just was always thinking about every once in a while, but I just couldn't. You know, sometimes songs come to you right away and sometimes, like you said, it's it's kind of a long, winding path to get ready to where you need to go.

**Ruth Egberman:** And what the name of the song that you wrote is called.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah, Best Year of My Life.

**Ruth Egberman:** And it and it is has some inspiration in Five for Fighting's...100 years.

**Chris Carter:** 100 years. Yeah. That's kind of where the idea came from. And so it kind of spawned that and and we talked about that and how, where you get your inspiration from for songs and for him it seemed like everywhere. Right.

**Ruth Egberman:** Right, right. Walking down the street.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah. We won't give too much away. But I love hearing about the creative process. So that's the question I always want to ask these artists.

**Ruth Egberman:** What's your creative process, then? When you sit down and write a song or what do you do?

**Chris Carter:** Well, you know, it's kind of all over the place. You know, oftentimes you get an idea for something. And I don't, you know, have my I don't always record on my phone when I have an idea, so I lose it, which is always awful. But, you know, I like to sit down with my guitar and just kind of play around, like find something I like.

**Chris Carter:** And there are some notion I had had in the past of a written topic to write about. Maybe it fits with that, that melody.

**Ruth Egberman:** So you write the music and then you, you match the lyrics?

**Chris Carter:** Usually....

**Chris Carter:** Usually the music first and then the lyrics. But a lot of times I'll have ideas for what, what the topic of a song would be. So I usually have some kind of a starting point. So I do I do think a lot about, Oh, that's a good song idea, or that might be a good topic for a song.

**Chris Carter:** And you know, it's like this everybody writes love songs all the time, and that's kind of like the first thing you think of when you want to write a song, and so you try and avoid that at all costs, you know? Love songs are fine periodically, but you know, I, I'd like to write about anything, you know, just whatever is on my mind at the time.

**Ruth Egberman:** Are you always paying attention and listening for for those topics or for, you know, like, do you always have like sort of music ideas playing in your head?

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Chris Carter:** I do. And but sometimes it's more about like, what am I feeling today? You know, I, I just finished a song called Empty Nest and it's, you know, because I've got two kids that have gone off to college and and it's just kind of the song is really about pretending that you don't miss them. Right? And so that's that's what we all try to do.

**Chris Carter:** When were kids grow up and so but that's kind of what I was feeling at the time. And I like to write about this, those things that I feel like are somewhat universal, that people can relate to that I'm going through, personally.

**Ruth Egberman:** I can't wait to hear that because I have an empty nest.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Egberman:** Never really thought about it that way. You know, I'm the youngest of five and we're all really close in age. So there's five years and four months between me and the oldest

and I had asked my parents when I went away to college and I was the last to leave, I said, So do you guys have empty nest syndrome?

**Ruth Egberman:** And they're like, No, we couldn't wait for you guys to leave.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah, right.

**Ruth Egberman:** And there's this balancing act between like really kind of truly feeling that way and then feeling like, Oh, I wish my kids were here, and both of my kids live outside. You know, I have one daughter lives in Sacramento and one who lives in Hawaii. So, you know, it's like I just have to take it when they're here.

**Ruth Egberman:** I'm like, okay, I'm just going to soak up as much time as I possibly can with you. And then you're going to off and live your life and do what you do and maybe call me in a week or not call me a week. And then I'm like, Why are you calling me?

**Chris Carter:** Yeah, well, and the main lyric in the song is There's no emptiness in this empty nest. And they're kind of, you know, like the phrasing, you know, the words. Words are really important. What words you pick, especially with songwriting. That's kind of what I ruminate the most on that. And because you want to you want to spend some time with that and make sure you're saying the right things that go together well.

**Ruth Egberman:** Do you do

**Ruth Egberman:** you like writing the music more or the lyrics more? I mean, do you have a preference?

**Chris Carter:** It's the whole the whole package. It's it's fine to like to hear something I like to work with and I also work with my friends who I write songs, we write songs together. And to come up with something and then to record it and then the listen to it and it's like, wow, I you know, I, you know, I help to create this.

**Chris Carter:** And it's it's kind of a cool thing. It's like, you look at art, you look it and or you listen to it or whatever, you know, that it came from your own mind is pretty incredible.

**Ruth Egberman:** Right? I agree. Well, it's a great interview. So stick around. Hear somebody else's songwriting process.

**Chris Carter:** I love I love I love that creative process. That's my favorite thing to ask them about is how do you do it?

**Ruth Egberman:** How do you make it happen? Do you ever get any pointers? Are you like, Oh, that's a good idea? Or is it just you have your creative process? Well, it works for you.

**Chris Carter:** Oh, what John said was actually great advice. And so I hope anybody that's, you know, trying to, you know, working on their creativity or wants to be any kind of an artist like his, what he talked about, I think, was really spot on. And that's that's what you need to do. And, you know, it's just, you know, you can have thousands of ideas.

**Chris Carter:** One of them is going to be good at one at some point, you know, but you just have to keep doing it. And I really like his process, but so yeah, they all have different ways of doing it. Some of them it's like it is a real gift that just kind of comes to you, but the rest of us have to work at it.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah, it sounds like he has to work at it, too.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah, yeah.

**Ruth Eggherman:** All right. Well, stay tuned for the rest of the show. Listen to this. This interview with John Ondrasik from also known as Five for Fighting It's a really great. He was great fun to talk to.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah. Enjoy it.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Chris Carter:** Looks like we have John.

**John Ondrasik:** What's up, guys?

**Chris Carter:** Hey John, how are you?

**John Ondrasik:** How you doing?

**Chris Carter:** We're awesome. Thank you. Thanks for joining us today.

**John Ondrasik:** My pleasure. My pleasure. How are things up in Norcal?

**Chris Carter:** In Norcal? We're doing good, little bit hot lately. But you're in L.A., right? Los Angeles area.

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah. It's actually not too bad today. Actually, it's like the coolest day we've had in, like, two weeks, so we're.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Kind of really. It's been. I just moved down here. My name is Ruth Eggherman, I'm the Director of Marketing. Just so you know. Nice to meet you. Thanks for joining us today. I just moved to Livermore. I had been commuting for about a half hour, 45 minutes each way. And

so I decided to move down here. And last summer was so hot, I was like, oh, I'm so scared of living in Livermore.

**Ruth Egberman:** As I was like, I don't know, it's way too hot for me and it's just been absolutely delightful. We haven't...I think we've had like a couple of days. I've been here about a month and a half.

**John Ondrasik:** Oh nice.

**Ruth Egberman:** We've only had a couple of days that have been in the hundreds most days.

**John Ondrasik:** So were you In San Francisco or by the coast?

**Ruth Egberman:** No, I was in Walnut Creek, which is.

**John Ondrasik:** Okay I know. Yeah, up the road.

**Ruth Egberman:** Yeah. And then previous to that, I had spent about 20 years in the San Jose area, so.

**John Ondrasik:** Oh, nice.

**Ruth Egberman:** Yeah. Yeah. But I grew up in the Midwest.

**John Ondrasik :**Okay.

**Chris Carter:** Go ahead.

**Ruth Egberman:** We were we were talking about your the name Five for Fighting yesterday. Yeah. And I was getting quizzed on my hockey knowledge, which I don't have very much of.

**John Ondrasik:** Well, you should

**John Ondrasik:** be a big Sharks fan if you lived in San Jose for 20 years.

**Ruth Egberman:** I love the Sharks. It's the only hockey I know and going to I don't follow them. But when I but going I like sports and I like going to live sports. So going to a Sharks game is unbelievable. Have you ever been?

**John Ondrasik:** I actually, yes. I've you know, five for fighting does come from hockey. So I'm a big hockey guy. And I kind of went, I went up there, the Kings played. I mean, I 'm an L.A. Kings fan. The Kings played the Sharks their outdoor game where the 49er's play. And I've actually played some of those myself. I played the Kings–Ducks outdoor game here at Dodger Stadium.

**John Ondrasik:** I did the Heritage Classic in Calgary where it was -30 with windchill. So I played those things. But yeah, I, you know, being a Kings fan, we've had a lot of run ins with the Sharks and a lot of my friends are Sharks fans. I know some of the former players, but yeah, there's nothing like a hockey live game.

**John Ondrasik:** Like people that have never been to one or not that care less about hockey. You take them to a hockey game, they see it like it's a terrible sport for TV. You can't see the puck, whatever. Yeah, but there's nothing like a live hockey game, you know, and the Sharks, the Shark Tank, there is a great, great place to see a game.

**John Ondrasik:** But yeah, a Five for Fighting comes from hockey. There's a long, stupid story behind it, but.

**Ruth Egberman:** We want to hear it!

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah.

**Chris Carter:** John, by the way, I'm Chris and I'm the Executive Director here. You know, you've you've performed here at Livemrore before, so we're happy to have you back. And we've had a lot of requests to have you back since you were here.

**John Ondrasik:** Oh, thank you.

**Chris Carter:** You're very beloved, in this area. And we're we're real happy to have you here. So thank you for that.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah. And I was talking I was talking to a friend of mine last night that I was meeting with you. And we were talking about Fight for Fighting. And he was like, why didn't call five minute major? That's just another way to say a five minute penalty for fighting. And I looked it up. There's a band called Five Minute Major, so know there is.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**John Ondrasik:** They really need to open for me or vice versa. Yeah.

**Chris Carter:** I don't know if they're any good. I just I Google that I haven't listened to the music, but.

**John Ondrasik:** Well, that the tour we've always wanted to do is Ben Folds Five for Fighting. I've always thought that would be an epic show because we're both piano guys and, and, and we just got off tour with the Barenaked Ladies, which was an incredible fun tour. That was a blast for summer. And so we're totally switching gears now, right?

**John Ondrasik:** So you go from these big outdoor rock concerts, crazy fun, you know, 10,000 people, and now you do these very intimate quartet shows, which for me, it's so fun because it kind of keeps things fresh and and new. Your whole concert, in a sense, changes. I mean, certainly you play the hit songs, but now you're pulling songs with orchestrations and it's very intimate and it's a storyteller show and you're playing with these world class musicians.

**John Ondrasik:** You know, my my music director, Katie just won a Tony Award. So you have these incredible kind of string player musicians coming off these amazing rock musicians. And so it's just really fun. And as you mentioned, we've come to Livermore before and and we love these kind of smaller venues where you could interact with the audience and and and really kind of show people behind the curtain, kind of how it works and tell stories.

**John Ondrasik:** So it's great. We're excited. I love Norcal. You know, it's beautiful this time of year and you know, you know, it's just coming back to these places. We always kind of create something new as well. So even if you've come to the show, there's always a few new surprises, you know, the Barenaked Ladies. So somebody had seen their show 115 times and I was talking to the guys.

**John Ondrasik:** I'm like, Are you the Grateful Dead? You know, it's like, Yeah, but you know, so I think it's an obligation when you come back to to markets, you know, many times to bring something new. So we'll have some new songs. We'll play the Ukraine song with with the with the orchestra, audio and the quartet. So we got a lot of new things for for folks that have seen us before.

**Chris Carter:** That's awesome.

**Ruth Eggherman:** That's amazing. I feel like you must have been eavesdropping on our conversation. We were just having a long conversation about about the Barenaked Ladies. And then Ben Folds played our Gala last year, almost a year ago.

**Ruth Eggherman:** And so now,

**Ruth Eggherman:** It's like, Wait, have you been eavesdropping?

**John Ondrasik:** That's great. Well, they're both Bens very talented, and Barenaked Ladies are just wonderful humans. It was really like, you know, the best way I could describe our experience with them was like rock star dad, summer camp. It was just like, you know, it was just fun, you know, swimming in the lakes, doing yoga jokes, practical jokes. Half my band's Canadian, so of course they got along very well.

**John Ondrasik:** But yeah, you know, and the singer Barenaked Ladies flies himself on a plane to every gigs. Flies solo. So there's such interesting dudes and but we just had such such a good time and, you know, singing Jetliner at the end of every, you know, every show together and singing Steve Miller, you know, it was crazy.

**Chris Carter:** I would pay a lot of money for that summer camp to go there. Just.

**John Ondrasik:** You know, I would have to I told some of them I like, man, you know, next time I'll just, you know, just sign me up and tell me, you know, what I need to pay for rock star summer camp because it was so much fun.

**Chris Carter:** That's awesome.

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, it's great to be still doing it. You know, we're all very grateful. You know, 20 years after we've had kind of hit songs to still be doing this and have people kind of still coming and singing our songs back to us.

**Chris Carter:** Well, something we talked about in reference to the Barenaked Ladies was the story of how he wrote the The Big Bang Theory song. And it was kind of came out very quickly and he was in the shower and all the stuff. And it was just he probably wrote in like 10 minutes and I was just thinking about like the songwriting process and like for you as a songwriter, is that how it happens for you too?

**Chris Carter:** Does it just kind of come to you or what? What do you do? Do you have to go on a long walk or do you sit down at the piano? Or what's your process of coming up with some of this music?

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, it's there's really no rhyme or reason to it. You know, for me, you know, I'm not Paul McCartney or Elton John who can just prolifically, you know, just bust out a classic song after classic song. A lot of it is just grinding and writing hundreds of songs. And some start with the melody, some start with the lyrics, and then start with a concept.

**John Ondrasik:** 100 years was a concept, you know, appreciate the moment and and and yeah, for me, I have to write, you know, I wrote thousands of songs before I wrote Superman, but similar to Ed and The Big Bang Theory, you know, that song came very quickly. You know, I basically had the song within an hour. I didn't know what it was.

**John Ondrasik:** I didn't know it was going to be like a song like that. But every once in a while, you get this gift, you know, kind of like he did. And also sometimes, you know, when you're kind of forced with a deadline. I've had a few television things where, okay, you have two days and you're like, okay, here it is.

**John Ondrasik:** And sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. But yeah, I think like anything, a lot of it has nothing to do with talent. It's just work ethic, going back to the drawing board and then having success too. It's so much about relationships and being humble and if you do have some success, how to handle that, that I think applies to everything beyond music and me and Ed had actually had a lot of talks about everything beyond the songs, you know, that's the fun part.

**John Ondrasik:** The other stuff is kind of the work and, and part of the job. But, but yeah, when you get those gifts like, like he got with that song and I was Superman, you recognize them because they don't come off. And you know The Riddle, a song of mine that was was popular took about a year to write to get it right.

**John Ondrasik:** I kept struggling with 100 years, took probably three or four months. You write 200 lines to get the 30 people here. And again, for every, you know, I'll say record, because I think our audience knows what records are. You know, my kids have no idea what a record is, but when it comes to records that have 10, 11 songs, you know, I'd write 100 songs, you know, or at least start 100 songs, have ideas.

**John Ondrasik:** So we pick the 10 or 11 that people end up hearing. So there's a really long process to it to get what sounds very simple, but yeah, it's I heard that story too, about, about when he wrote that and I certainly related to that.

**Chris Carter:** Wow. Do you do you like carry your phone around and just record in to it all the time when you have ideas or how do you do that?

**John Ondrasik:** 100 Percent! I mean, back in the day, I had my Walkman, right? I had my Walkman by my bed and I'd wake up with an idea, I'd sing it into the Walkman. And now these days I've found it's interesting. I do keynotes and I talk about the creative process and are there tools that you can use to give you kind of better odds of these epiphanies creatively?

**John Ondrasik:** And I found one is, you know, instead of just sitting at my piano back there, just sitting at my computer typing words, I'll go for like a hike with my backpack and I'll have my work tapes on and and or I'll go for a run. And I truly believe that there's a song in every room, if I could hear it wherever I am.

**John Ondrasik:** So you always have to be on the lookout. And a lot of times it comes when you're not just sitting at your instrument. You walk by, you hear somebody say a phrase, some of your friends or your family member says a phrase, or you see a movie and a sentiment inspired or you're reading a book. So I really think the key is you always be on the lookout and and take yourself kind of out of your your workspace sometimes, you know, travel, you know, when you go around the world or go to places.

**John Ondrasik:** You know, when I went to Ukraine, a million songs came to me because I was in this incredible experience I never could have imagined. And so doing all these things I think spurs the creative kind of spirit. And I don't know if I answered your question, but I'm always kind of like trying new things. And anybody says like X, Y, Z, here's your hit song, you know, unless you're A.I., it doesn't work for me.

**Ruth Egberman:** But I don't think it really works for I don't think it really works for either.

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, I haven't, I haven't really been too impressed but.

**Chris Carter:** I know well, you know.

**Chris Carter:** I, I read about a study once and it was some research on people who are considered lucky and what are some traits they have. And the most dominant one is they just pay attention and they're always kind of looking outward and, and looking for opportunities and paying attention to the world around them. And so it's not really luck.

**Chris Carter:** It's it's proactively seeking those things which, which, well, you know, are creative or will make your life better. So I think that's kind of what you're saying. It's just your you're always like outwardly paying attention to the world around you and picking up the clues. It seems like.

**John Ondrasik:** That's interesting, yeah, I haven't heard that, but it makes sense to me. You're curious, right? You're kind of curious. And you also realize that you don't know at all. And and I think if you have that attitude, you know, whether you like Elon Musk or not, I think he has that. He's curious and he's also a dreamer. And sometimes a little crazy.

**John Ondrasik:** I think anybody who wants to do this for a living, you got to be a little crazy because the odds are so long. So you have to be a little crazy. You have to be a dreamer. And I think those people can be kind of these, you know, creative savants I do talk about. And when I talk about creativity, just listening, you know, listening can be hard, especially if you're in a position of leadership where you're talking all the time and it's easy to listen to yourself.

**John Ondrasik:** But but for me, you know, listening, I probably got more songs from just listening. Funny story. I was—my grandmother had passed away. She lived a great life. She lived like 93 years old and my kids were very young. They were four or five years old. And we were going to hear her funeral. And of course, my children, you know, were traumatized.

**John Ondrasik:** They're dealing with, you know, the first kind of death of a family member, you know, religion, you know, all this stuff. And and my five year old, we're driving to the service and my five year old Johnny, kind of, you know, from the backseat in his car seat, said, Daddy, you know what? If there was a road to heaven and that was pretty heavy for me, you know, my grandmother passed away.

**John Ondrasik:** What if there was a road to heaven? I'm like, wow, five year old saying that. And I didn't know how to respond. And after a few minutes, I finally turned to him and where the tears in my eye. And I said, You know, Johnny, I don't know. But that's a darn good song title. And and Road to Heaven, is song 13 on the Two Lights record.

**John Ondrasik:** So so it's like and he always takes credit for that, by the way.

**Chris Carter:** And he should.

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, he should. And so, you know, if you're listening and you're living life, there's always things that come at you that that can be inspirations, you know, and some you don't want to use they're too private but you know some I think you know turn into songs. My song, I Just Love You came from my daughter, you know.

**John Ondrasik:** She said that to me on the phone. So, you know, if you're listening, you're aware of kind of kind of the world around you. They can, you know, certainly, I think, produce great content. And also they're honest. You know, they're very honest because they're true. They're real.

**Ruth Eggherman:** So John, I kinda feel, you brought up the idea of inspiration and obviously your music has has been inspirational to to a lot of filmmakers and, you know, TV studios and shows and all that kind of stuff. Is there any any particular one in the way that some of your music's been used that's been especially inspirational back or that you were surprised by or anything like that, where it's come your own music is coming back at you in this different lens?

**John Ondrasik:** It's a good question. You know, I have been really blessed to have a lot of kind of my songs used in in kind of film and television. But I learned one life lesson from The Blind Side experience. So I'd written this song called Chances. And, you know, as a songwriter, record companies are always trying to get your songs in in big movies because, you know, it helps impressions helps with radio you can you know, license it.

**John Ondrasik:** So they my songs tended to be licensed pretty well and so they'd found a big kind of blockbuster movie. And would they be summer blockbusters that does a half million dollars and everybody sees it doesn't matter if it's good or not. They don't care. People are going to hear your song when they walk out of the theater, whether they know it or not.

**John Ondrasik:** And so we were excited about that. But then this little production company came and said, Hey, you know, we'd like to use Chances and is our end title. And I had to tell them that it's already in this this other kind of slot. But they said, we know, but we know you're a sports guy. We know your family guy.

**John Ondrasik:** And they sent me the script of The Blind Side and I'm like, Oh my God. You know, it seems like the song was written for this film. So I called him back and I said, You guys okay, I hear what you're saying. So tell me your marketing plan. I got to go to my record company. I got to go to my manager, I got to pitch it.

**John Ondrasik:** And they're like, you know, well, to be honest with you, it's a small budget. You know, there is a star in it, but we don't have of a, you know, expectation for the film. And I said I said, you guys, you're Hollywood. Lie to me.

**Chris Carter:** Tell me something I want to hear.

**John Ondrasik:** You know? And so I want to hear, yeah, it's a lie to me, you know, tell me something. I want to hear whatever. And so anyways, long story short, I pulled it from this big blockbuster and I put it in The Blind Side because something in my gut said, this movie, you know, is really meaningful to me and the songs seem to really fit it.

**John Ondrasik:** And and then lo and behold, it became, you know, bigger than Rocky. Now, does that always happen? No. But I found in my career, like, if you trust your gut and things go bad, you live with that, you're like, okay, you know, failure is part of the process. It doesn't always work out. But if you don't trust your gut and then you know something like this happens, then that's what keeps you up at night.

**John Ondrasik:** So it it really kind of taught me to trust my instincts and understand that, you know, sometimes things go off the rails, but but there was something in me that said, wow, this song really belongs in this film. And, you know, and, you know, today it's still, you know and in this in the middle of the country you know Chances gets the same reaction as 100 Years or Superman just because it's so impactful to some people so just more of a life lesson of kind of trust your instincts and whether it works out or not, you can kind of sleep well at night.

**Chris Carter:** Well, it sounds like you were listening, like you said, listening.

**John Ondrasik:** I was listening to myself.

**Chris Carter:** Yeah.

**Ruth Eggherman:** The Blind Side, is such a huge movie. Like, you know, I feel like everybody who's seen it knows the story. What was the other blockbuster?

**John Ondrasik:** I can't tell you because I kind of insulted it. But.

**John Ondrasik:** But yeah, yeah.

**John Ondrasik:** I mean.

**Ruth Eggherman:** We won't put it out there.

**Ruth Eggherman:** We'll edit it out.

**John Ondrasik:** Whenever I tell that story, in L.A., shows like I Can't Tell You because maybe one of you produced it.

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, but that movie did fine, they didn't, they didn't need my song. But but yeah, you know, and sometimes, you know, there's also songs that that like that have an impact that aren't hit songs like like I wrote this song about Afghanistan, that Afghanistan withdrawal

called Blood on My Hands. Never got to spin on the radio, but it became a song that was very important to Afghan veterans.

**John Ondrasik:** So songs like that that don't have, you know, kind of commercial success, you know, songs like Two Lights, that again, kind of our Gold Star families have embraced. So sometimes we get caught up in these, you know, hit songs and look, there's nothing better than having a hit song. Trust me, it's great. And allows you to have a career.

**John Ondrasik:** But sometimes there's other songs that are meaningful in their own ways as well. And for me, you know, I try to to keep that in the back of my mind, especially now at this point in my career where, you know, we're not going to have, you know, big radio hit songs. And and so, you know, these experiences with television and and and songs, I think you find you find moments that are incredibly meaningful for songs nobody really knows.

**John Ondrasik:** And there's a song we're adding to this this tour called The Best. It's about a first catch with with a parent and her child. The first catch for baseball. And I've always thought it was in a in a little movie called Everyone's Hero that I said nobody's really known unless you had four year olds 15 years ago. But we're we're kind of bringing that back because I think it's a song that that some folks will really enjoy and relate to.

**John Ondrasik:** It's kinda, we're coming up to the baseball playoffs. And so, you know, I try to keep keep the perspective of of, you know, just because a song is not a hit song, that really doesn't matter if it impacts one person in a certain way, then, you know, there's value to it. And I think as a songwriter, we have to keep that in the back of our head.

**Chris Carter:** Well and you—it seems like you have a strong support of the military and the families and our production manager knows you and he told me this story. His name is Gary and he went with you to Guantanamo Bay.

**John Ondrasik:** Oh, my goodness!

**Chris Carter:** Perform for the troops in Guantanamo years ago.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Well and then you went into to the prison area, I think is what he said, that you were the only civilian.

**Chris Carter**

You were the first. Yeah. Performer to do that. So what do you remember that?

**John Ondrasik:** Oh, yeah, I'll never forget it. It was incredibly moving. And, you know, it was kind of a time where the many artists didn't want to go down there. There was kind of a stigma. And and and I thought, you know, our troops got to be down there. So I'm going down there. And as you said, we played three shows, but one was literally in the spotlights of the prison and they had this kind of concrete slab right on the shore there.

**John Ondrasik:** The waves were kind of lapping up to the shore. And they put my little piano there and there was a little bar called I think it was called Club Survivor. It was outside of the and it's where the National Guardsmen would kind of come and, you know, have a beer on their time off. And and it was very interesting because because technically, Guantanamo is a temporary facility.

**John Ondrasik:** So it's been there decades and decades. But their lodgings were like tents and really kind of not great. And I'm like and then they were 18, 19, 20 year old National Guardsmen down there and, you know, kind of subject to a lot of kind of stuff. That was not great, you know, from some of the prisoners, you know, spitting on them and worse.

**John Ondrasik:** And and to sit there and play, I have a song called Freedom Never Cries, which is kind of about taking our freedoms for granted. And so I sat there and I played that song and here was these young I call them kids, you know, guardsmen by these terrorists that committed this atrocity on 9/11 in this prison and under the spotlights that were flying around and silhouetted by the American flag and a full moon.

**John Ondrasik:** And in the distance, there is a Cuban guard, a guard tower with a Cuban soldier with a AK 47 standing there. And and I remember after I did that, I walked to the fence and I was just like, okay, on that side of the fence, they don't have the freedoms we have on this side of the fence we do.

**John Ondrasik:** And in our country we do because of these kids and these people. And it was I think it was one of the experiences that really kind of, you know, continued my kind of love for the troops and performing with them and working with Gary Sinise and the USO and and frankly, you know, the Afghanistan song and Ukraine. Yeah, those things, all that stuff was with veterans because I just appreciate everything they do in the military family so much.

**John Ondrasik:** So it's a long answer, but that that Guantanamo experience really was surreal and inspiring.

**Chris Carter:** Well, Gary remembers it really fondly, too. And yeah, when he told us that story, it was pretty remarkable.

**John Ondrasik:** Please give him my love and

**Chris Carter:** I will...well you'll see him.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Well, you'll see him

**John Ondrasik:** Beautiful! Great! Awesome!

**Chris Carter:** He's our production guy.

**John Ondrasik:** Wonderful.

**Chris Carter:** So he's looking forward to it. Speaking of the concert, can you let us give us a couple hints about what to expect? Can you give us a little idea of what we're going to get it when you arrive for the show?

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, you know, as I said, the nice thing, it's kind of very intimate. I can talk about stories. It's very free flowing sometimes audience members ask me questions and we get on these conversations. And the quartet, as I said, some of the greatest world class string players. Katie just won a Tony, as I mentioned, and and just watching them every night is incredible.

**John Ondrasik:** They always do a piece on their own that I don't even know what they're doing. That blows my mind. And, you know, it allows me to take the hits and Superman, 100 Years and Chances and add a new dynamic to those we play a song that recognizes our troops. We're going to play the song I wrote for Ukraine with a video of my experience there performing with the Ukrainian orchestra outside of Kiev in this bombed out airport.

**John Ondrasik:** And tell that story of how how did that happen? How did we get there? What was that like? You know, playing in a war zone with these people every, member of that orchestra who either had a family member killed, was on the front line or missing. So you can imagine that kind of experience. It was very moving for me and audiences seem to really appreciate kind of hearing that story, whatever their views are on Ukraine or not.

**John Ondrasik:** And and then we always have some fun. There's always a cover or two. It's a surprise, and you never know what's going to happen. It's a total fan family show. I tell people, you know, sometimes I know you're worried about bringing your kids to the rock shows or concerts. And as a dad, you know, with with children, I understand that.

**John Ondrasik:** So it's totally family show. So bring the kids and bring the grandparents and it's a great venue you guys have up there. It's so fun. Everybody's like so close together. So, you know, we're really excited. And if if folks want to, you know, send me a suggestion for a setlist, now's the time because we're putting it together.

**Chris Carter:** Whoa.

**Chris Carter:** We'll get the word out.

**Ruth Egberman:** Now, you're asking for trouble.

**Chris Carter:** I mean.

**John Ondrasik:** Be careful what you wish for.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah, but I. I got to tell you, seeing music in our venue at The Bankhead, one of the things that always that I always am so excited about is are those conversations between the artist on stage and the audience members. And sometimes they are like true conversations.

**John Ondrasik:** Oh, yeah.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Talking back and forth and having, you know, almost what feels like a one on one conversation with, you know, 500 people watching and and so it's really cool.

**Ruth Eggherman:** And sometimes it's just that conversation that the music lends itself and the intimate environment of The Bankhead, really. It's just it's just an extraordinary environment for that, you know. And so I'm glad you recognize that and want to bring that to us, because that's what I look for when I go to a show, is that feeling.

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, that's what keeps us fresh for us. You know, the rock shows are great, but they're pretty structured, right?

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah.

**John Ondrasik:** You can, you know, you can have interactions with the audience, but as you said, you can't have a long conversation.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Right.

**John Ondrasik:** Barenaked Ladies will, because they are them. But, you know, for us, you know, this really allows me to really have that, you know, kind of experience.

**John Ondrasik:** And that's how I like to see my favorite artists. You know, I like to see James Taylor with a guitar. You know, that's all I need, you know, just to sit there for 2 hours, play me some songs, tell me how you wrote them, who you wrote them with. Tell me a crazy story Make me cry, make me laugh And I'm good, you know?

**Ruth Eggherman:** All in.

**John Ondrasik:** And that's what we'll try to do up with you guys there.

**Chris Carter:** Well, we we all like that. Oh, go ahead.

**Ruth Eggherman:** We have one more question. How long have you been touring with the string quartet?

**John Ondrasik:** You know, it's almost ten years now, you know, and I have kind of six or seven of them because some of them are on show. Some of them are, you know, around the world

doing stuff. But we got the 18 coming this year and Katie will be there and and it's so great. And the nice thing, too, is not only the great musicians, they're like my best friends.

**John Ondrasik:** They're like my second family. So whenever you kind of do this a couple times a year, it's kind of a family reunion. And we just have so much fun. And I think that the audiences can see that too, you know, they get that. And so, yeah, they're amazing, they're great. I can't wait to everybody to experience them. And, you know, they're they're so funny.

**John Ondrasik:** You know, they're they're so different than the rock band.

**Chris Carter:** That's awesome.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Yeah, I do. I do. I do have one question you asked on our social media yesterday if there are any questions for you. And one of our fans wrote back, Brittany wrote back and said, What's your favorite song or song you're most proud of?

**John Ondrasik:** Of mine?

**Ruth Eggherman:** I mean...

**Chris Carter:** I think so.

**Ruth Eggherman:** It doesn't say of yours, so you can answer that however you want to.

**John Ondrasik:** Well, Brittany, it's always hard. It's like, who's your favorite child? You know? I mean, obviously, Superman, 100 years. I'm not I'm not talking to you without those two songs. But the thing I really like about 100 Years is that I can grow with it. You know, when I wrote it, I was in the second verse and now I'm in the bridge and soon I'll be in the vamp.

**John Ondrasik:** So there's something about playing that song every night. You know where I am in my life, you know, I wrote the song over 20 years ago and a lot of things have changed and a lot of things are the same. So for me, that song kind of has that kind of life with me. It's always fresh for me.

**John Ondrasik:** And so if I had to pick one, it would probably be that one.

**Chris Carter:** Wow.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Great to know.

**Chris Carter:** I'll tell you, John, I am kind of an amateur musician and I perform around here and we write songs and we did one that we wrote that I think was inspired by that song quite a bit. It's called Best Year of My Life. Oh, it's kind of like every year make it the best year of your life, no matter what year it is.

**Chris Carter:** And I think that song that you had about kind of thinking of, you know, being in the moment, no matter what time it is in your life, is this really it's a universal theme. And I think everybody can really respond to it and connect to it. So thank you for that song. It's a wonderful song.

**John Ondrasik:** Well, you're welcome.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Best year of my life. His his version of it. I've seen him perform once is I remember that song is really good.

**John Ondrasik:** Well, it's a wonderful title. Please send me the song. I'd love to hear it. Sure. And and yeah. Isn't it kind of neat how kind of songs inspire other songs? It certainly help me and I'm not sure there is anything is an amateur songwriter. I think we're all amateur songwriters. Sometimes fate leads one or the other, but you know, there's nothing better than kind of writing a song and you're creating something out of nothing, right?

**John Ondrasik:** And then playing it and seeing how people react to it. It's just it's I think it's so good for our wellness and our health. Right. So I can't wait to hear your song.

**Chris Carter:** All right. I will send it to you. Thank you. I do like to ask everybody when they're here, what are you listening to right now? Is there any kind of music you're really into that you would recommend to us?

**John Ondrasik:** Oh, well, that's interesting. You know, it's it's kind of sad, but being my kind of like generation, I still am like that classic rock guy, you know, if my running playlist is still all like, you know, ACDC, Led Zeppelin, Journey, Queen, you know, Steve Miller. But I've been kind of going back and listening to some Ray Lamontagne records, you know, such a wonderful voice there.

**John Ondrasik:** Certainly, I am a big Adele fan, you know, of hers. My kids are always sending me new music. Actually, my latest project I did work with some pretty cool songwriters. They were inner city Chicago high school students, none of them musicians. But we wrote a song about music in the schools. We're raising money for music teacher for their school, so I had a really fun time working with them and we'll be releasing that song and some videos and doing a a campaign for music in the schools in March, which is the music in the schools motto.

**John Ondrasik:** So, so I've been listening a lot to a lot too, you know, Chicago inner city high school students lately and they're pretty, pretty, super

**Chris Carter:** Awesome.

**Ruth Eggherman:** You have a nonprofit organization? Is that correct?

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, it's kind of.

**Ruth Eggherman:** You want to talk about that?

**John Ondrasik:** Yeah, it's called What Kind of World Do You Want? And we kind of we had this kind of contest years ago. People would make their videos and we'd raise money and donate to some troop charities and ALS charity. Augie's Quest and and with the Afghanistan song we started moving stuff to Afghanistan and supporting many of these NGOs who were rescuing people there, one called Project Exodus Relief, another called Save Our Allies.

**John Ondrasik:** So we kind of used that for whatever projects I'm working on and and we'll probably use that for this Chicago music in the schools thing too. I think we may do a contest where people can cover the song and and we can, you know, have a winner and raise some money for a music teacher in their school. So, yeah, it's just a way to kind of help shine the light on the folks doing the good work.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Nice.

**Chris Carter:** Great. Well, we'll keep a lookout for that song when it comes out in March. We one last thing that we like to do with our guests is a little bit of a game, John, and get to know you better. I hope that's okay.

**John Ondrasik:** Sure.

**Chris Carter:** And we call it either or.

**John Ondrasik:** Okay.

**Chris Carter:** I'm just going to give you two options, two items, and you have to pick which one you prefer.

**John Ondrasik:** All right. Let's do.

**Chris Carter:** Easy peasy.

**Chris Carter:** So if I say something like dogs or cats, what would you say?

**John Ondrasik:** Dogs. But we love cats.

**Chris Carter:** iPhone or Android?

**John Ondrasik:** iPhone.

**Chris Carter:** Coke or Pepsi.

**John Ondrasik:** Pepsi.

**Chris Carter:** Mountains or coast.

**John Ondrasik:** Oh,

**Ruth Eggherman:** That's a tough one.

**John Ondrasik:** It depends on the time of year, but probably mountains.

**Chris Carter:** All right.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Really? I'd go coast.

**John Ondrasik:** You know. I'm going to Mammoth in two days. So I'm a mountain, man.

**Chris Carter:** Mountain. All right.

**Ruth Eggherman:** There you go.

**Chris Carter:** M&M's or Reese's Pieces?

**John Ondrasik:** Reese's Pieces.

**Chris Carter:** Elvis or The Beatles?

**John Ondrasik:** I have to say, The Beatles. We're actually we're working on a documentary about the Memphis Mafia. So I have a lot of Elvis in my brain, but McCartney I'm sorry, just so prolific, Long and Winding Road.

**Chris Carter:** All right.

**Ruth Eggherman:** It's a great song.

**Chris Carter:** Star Wars or Star Trek?

**John Ondrasik:** Star Trek

**Chris Carter:** Trekkie, alright.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Our marketing manager. Our marketing manager is a Trekkie , Andrew.

**Chris Carter:** He's going to love it.

**Ruth Eggherman:** I'm going to tell him he's going to be so excited.

**Chris Carter:** The color red or the color blue?

**John Ondrasik:** Oh. Well, my '65 Mustang is blue, so I'll say blue.

**Chris Carter:** All right. Major key or minor key?

**John Ondrasik:** Hmm. I'll say minor key, though. If you listen, my music you'll find more major than minor.

**Ruth Eggherman:** Okay. Can we go back to this question? Because everybody says minor key that we've talked to so far. Yeah, I'm not a musician. I don't want to read music. I don't play music. I could write a lyric maybe. But why Minor key?

**John Ondrasik:** It's kind of darker. It's moodier. You play on the black keys, it's cooler, you know? You know, all the major keys sound a little happy, you know, people like to be darker, dark moods, you know. But yeah, as a musician, you kind of like, you know, if you want to write, you know, popular song, probably stick to the major keys.

**John Ondrasik:** If you want to write a moody, you know, track eight, that's 12 minutes long, you know, go to the or you know very ah, you're a great jazz player, you know stick to the stick to the Black Keys. But, but, yeah, you know, I'm not a good enough piano player...

**Ruth Eggherman:** OKay, that's helpful for somebody like me!

**John Ondrasik:** I don't even know what key I'm in. I didn't even know what day it is. Whatever works, works.

**Chris Carter:** Just keep playing. Piano or guitar?

**John Ondrasik:** Piano.

**Chris Carter:** All right. Okay. Hockey or baseball?

**John Ondrasik:** Hockey.

**Chris Carter:** Hockey. These are too

**Chris Carter:** Easy because I was. I know you're an L.A. fan, so I was going to say Wayne Gretzky or Fernando Valenzuela.

**John Ondrasik:** This is so weird because I was actually at an event with Fernando two days ago. And of course, and he's he's he's a god here in L.A. and a wonderful human as well. So I was with all these baseball players, but we are Five for Fighting. So if I don't say hockey, I will get sued by the L.A. Kings.

**Chris Carter:** So.

**Chris Carter:** Okay.

**Chris Carter:** Okay, last one, Iron Man or Superman?

**John Ondrasik:** I've always wanted to run an Iron Man. I don't think it's ever going to happen. And if I don't say Superman, I will be a hypocrite. So I'm more than a bird, I'm more than a plane. It's not easy. It's pretty easy to be me.

**Chris Carter:** Alright. That's awesome. Thank you, John, so much. We really appreciate your time and looking forward to having you out on a here on September 15th at 8:00.

**John Ondrasik:** And thank you, Chris, send me your song. Ruth pleasure to meet you. I'll see you guys in a few weeks.

**Ruth Egberman:** Yeah, it's a pleasure to meet you too.

**John Ondrasik:** Say hi to my pal, Gary, look forward to seeing him after 20 years.

**Chris Carter:** All right. Thanks. Will do. You're off the hook. Thank you. Have a.

**Chris Carter:** Great day.

**John Ondrasik:** See you guys. Take care. Bye bye.

**Chris Carter:** Bye bye.

**Ruth Egberman:** That was so much fun. He's. He was really interesting.

**Chris Carter:** He was great.

**Ruth Egberman:** Yeah, really great. Just came in on fire. It was really nice to talk to him. Yeah. Thank you for joining us for Beyond the Stage today we feature John Ondrasik, who is Five for Fighting. It's not a band, it's a guy. And you know, we are he'll be performing live with a string quartet super exciting and he'll be performing at The Bankhead on Friday September 15th at 8 p.m..

**Ruth Egherman:** Get your tickets now at [LivermoreArts.org](http://LivermoreArts.org) or by calling the Box Office at 925-373-6800. Again that's [LivermoreArts.org](http://LivermoreArts.org) or 925-373-6800. I'm Ruth Egherman.

**Chris Carter:** And I'm Chris we'll see you at the show.