

Chris Trapper

The Buffalo native, whose stutter made him turn to music, has emerged as a solo star

STORY BY JINELLE SHENGULETTE
Special to Metromix

When Boston-based singer-songwriter Chris Trapper was younger and wanted to ask out a girl, he would record his voice on a cassette, dial the girl's number and play the recording. He took this precaution to avoid embarrassment from stuttering.

The Buffalo native later found an outlet for his frustration with stuttering — music — which also enabled him to get his message across in a different way.

"I realized if I was going to communicate who I was to people, I would need some alternate medium because speaking wasn't going well," says Trapper, now 42.

Gradually, he says, he became more comfortable talking onstage, and his stutter improved. "It became a really powerful thing for me."

The Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter, who specializes in indie power pop, will perform at Abilene Bar and Lounge on Friday, Oct. 2, as part of a national tour to support *Til the Last Leaf Falls*, his sixth solo effort.

Trapper is approaching this tour in short bursts, setting out on the road for a few days and a few shows, heading back home to rest and then repeating the sequence.

"I toured with (The Push Stars) for a bunch of years, and we'd do eight months on tour without any home life," he explains. "I kind of want to have some semblance of a normal life, with the touring, fast-food lifestyle."

As the lead singer of The Push Stars, Trapper watched his band go from being "a great bar band" to opening for acts like Matchbox 20, "eating lobster in catering rooms and playing for 50,000 people."

Still, there came a point when Trapper says the band "ran its course." (He says it's now on hiatus "indefinitely.") He channeled his energy into solo work, which led to a string of successes, including contributing a song to the film *August Rush*.

He had heard that the film's producers were looking for a song for lead actor Jonathan Rhys Meyers to sing in the movie. After Trapper was given a script, he sat in his back yard, read the whole thing and "literally walked inside, grabbed my guitar and



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WHEN: 8 and 11:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2

WHERE: Abilene Bar and Lounge, 153 Liberty Pole Way

COST: \$20; tickets are available at Abilene and Record Archive, 33 1/3 Rockwood Place.

MORE INFO: 232-3230 or www.abilenebarandlounge.com

Provided by Habit Artist Services

wrote the song in less than an hour," he says.

After the song, titled "This Time," was chosen for the film, Trapper was asked to act in a scene with Rhys Meyers, although it ended up on the cutting-room floor.

"I spent the day in a Town Car (with Rhys Meyers), driving through San Francisco; we were shooting at all different spots," Trapper recalls. "It was amazing for me to see how the city shuts down for the film industry ... it was amazing to see him act, too. I got a new respect for the talent in acting."

"This Time" went on to be the most downloaded song off of the soundtrack, which was nominated for a Grammy last year. Trapper says attending the Grammys was a "pinnacle moment" in his career.

Today, the singer-songwriter is working on a follow-up to *Til the Last Leaf Falls*. With 10 demos recorded, he's trying to gauge the vibe of his next record.

"The nice thing about being a songwriter versus (being) in a band is you can really do anything sound-wise," he says, "The boundaries are widened." ♦