

Bill Bottrell- Biography

Bill Bottrell came up through the recording studio culture in his home town of Los Angeles, stepping through every job description starting with repair tech, then engineer, mixer, producer, musician, songwriter and finally performer.

Early engineering work in the 80's included both the L.A. R&B scene and English rock.

Going independent in 1982, he worked in Europe with Jeff Lynne's ELO, then flying back to L.A. for work with The Jacksons and doing re-mixes for R&B artists.

Starting in 1985, Bottrell began working alongside Michael Jackson at his home studio, creating the sonics and arrangements that would become Michael's "Bad" album, while also engineering and mixing for Madonna's "Like A Prayer", and producing albums like "Toy Matinee" and Thomas Dolby's "Aliens Ate My Buick". These would become "studio shelf" landmarks and bring Grammy nominations for producing and engineering.

He co-wrote, co-produced, engineered, mixed and performed 4 songs on Michael Jackson's "Dangerous" album, including the only U.S. number one single, "Black or White" which became one of Michael's biggest single releases ever, successfully completing Michael's transition from the Quincy Jones era. Bottrell's production "Earth Song" was later released on the "History" album to world-wide acclaim.

In 1990, Bottrell built his own studio, called Toad Hall, intending to work with new artists or undiscovered artists. He formed a musical "Think Tank" called Tuesday Night Music Club with a group of carefully-cast musicians and writers. Sheryl Crow's debut album sold 10 million and received 4 Grammys, including Record of the Year and Best New Artist. Linda Perry, Rusted Root, David Baerwald, Wire Train, and others learned Bottrell's process and made successful, critically acclaimed records at Toad Hall.

In 1996, Bottrell moved to a small town in Northern California and built a new studio. "I Am Shelby Lynne" which he co-wrote, played and produced, resulted in a another Best New Artist Grammy and a second Producer of the Year nomination. Dozens of artists like Kim Richey, Five For Fighting, and Seal traveled to his town to make albums.

During this time, Bottrell claimed that "Songwriting, not recording, will motivate me through the rest of my useful years." He played his songs live either solo or with a band throughout Northern California, raising money and awareness for causes and communities.

The 2000's brought Bottrell back to LA to produce acts on contract to Capitol Records, including Roseanne Cash and Van Hunt.

Education and seminar work at recording schools in Europe and the U.S. became a focus since 2013.

Recent work includes a documentary film score and solo debut album with Nahara, a rare audiophile analog recording project with Judy Mayhan, and work on the last two Leonard Cohen albums, "Popular Problems" and "You Want It Darker".