

## Toronto

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## News

## Getting people on their feet

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By: rafael brusilow Metro Canada Published on Mon May 11 2009

Melleny Melody has the voice of a Care Bear, the stage presence of a star and the business know-how it takes to run one of Canada's premier electronic and dance music labels.

Melody is the multi-talented performer, songwriter and founder of Play Records who is perhaps most identifiable as the person who discovered world-renowned DJ-producer Deadmau5 (pronounced "dead mouse").

She's also had a fascinatingly varied career performing as her alter-ego, Mellefresh, creating her own music and even working as a voice actor on the hit children's show The Care Bears "listen closely to Cheer Bear or Baby Tugs and you'll hear Melody's trademark bubbly timbre.

Most importantly though, Melody has successfully helmed her own music label to the top of an industry frequently led by men.

"There's very few women label owners in the music business. It's good for you if you can establish yourself and keep a presence," Melody said.

Melody launched Play Records in 1996 and has since expanded the label into a digital-only division (Play Digital) as well as the more mainstream-friendly sub-label YALP Records, with close to 30 individual artists and more than 250 wholly owned tracks in the entire Play roster. The label has also licensed music to hit television shows Queer as Folk and The L Word as well as commercial spots for Aveda, Kellogg's and 7-Up.

Running the label has had its challenges but Melody says her love for music has made pushing through all the difficult times worth it, especially with Play's growing success.

"I've always put my own money into this " I probably owe myself a million dollars. You have to do this for the love. Longevity is going to tell the tale of whether you're worth it in the end," she said.

Melody first discovered Deadmau5 (real name Joel Zimmerman) in 2004 and

Melody first discovered Deadmau5 (real name Joel Zimmerman) in 2007 and convinced him to move from Niagara Falls, Ont., to Toronto where the pair started collaborating on tracks. Since then, Deadmau5's career has skyrocketed with the 28-year-old phenom having won a 2008 Juno for Best Dance Recording for "All U Ever Want" with Billie Newton-Davis while being nominated in the same year on the track "After Hours" with vocals performed and written by Melody.

Collaborating with artists is one of the best parts of her job, Melody says, and in the end all she wants to do is find great artists and create music that is worth listening to.

"I just want to do good dance music â€" I want to do music that gets you up off your ass and is playful, happy music. I want to keep on finding exciting new talent more than anything. My door is always open," Melody said.