



ATTORNEY SPOTLIGHT SERIES:

Stress Relief with Four Strings: Attorney Jill Singer Talks Tiki

It's common for lawyers to seek some sort of mental escape from the daily grind of the legal profession. For some, it's golf. For others, it's a motorcycle.

For attorney **Jill Singer**, it's a ukulele.

"It gives me great joy to play that little instrument," she says with a smile. That's because, when she's not handling workers' compensation cases for California-based firm [Ghitteman, Ghitteman & Feld](#), Singer moonlights as [Jill Martini](#)—a popular ukulelist and vocalist on the Tiki music scene.

"It's sort of a fusion between jazz, Hawaiian and surf music," Singer explains.

But as relaxed as the music sounds, the role it plays in her life is serious. "It's an incredibly great stress reliever for my attorney job, definitely," she reveals. "And they both kind of feed into each other."

FINDING TIME FOR A LIFE OUTSIDE OF LAWYERING

Early on, Singer aspired to be a full-time musician, yet even as she studied to become an attorney, she knew how important it was to keep that music component in her life, "I'm an artist, I have to be creative."

She continued singing and playing music throughout law school, as she worked during the day as a legal secretary and a paralegal. "I've always had two jobs. Always." Singer quips. Even upon graduation, she made it clear that music would still be there. "There's no reason for me to stop playing," she explains.

Even now, as a Certified Specialist in Workers' Compensation Law, an active member of several professional organizations and board member of Grey Law of Ventura County, she's able to balance her dual identities.

And that's important. It's no secret that the legal profession often places extraordinary mental demands on a lawyer, so being able to step out of that role, even if just for an occasional evening, can have a profound effect on one's mental health.

THE ARTS AS A STRESS RELIEVER

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced quarantine measures across the United States, many (if not all) people looked to the arts as an escape—books, art, dance, movies and, perhaps most importantly, music.

“It’s the arts. That’s what makes us human,” Singer reveals. “And that’s what keeps us sane in tough times.”

In fact, despite not being able to play live shows, Singer says the quarantine may have actually broadened her audience. Video chats and online meetings have resulted in virtual gigs and worldwide exposure for Jill Martini and her band, The Shrunken Heads. “We’re selling CDs in France,” she says. “Who knew?”

As Singer explains, her music is closely associated with the Tiki lifestyle, which is often seen as a practice in escapism. So, it’s perhaps no surprise that quarantined folks sought mental refuge in the soothing tones of ukuleles and slack-key guitars.

A COMMUNITY BENEFIT

While it’s nice to have friends within the legal profession, Singer notes that music allows her to tap into a much broader community of performers and artists. And that’s true for practically any hobby—from cosplay to yoga, car clubs to softball leagues, there can be immense mental benefits to occasionally unplugging entirely from the legal profession.

As for Jill Singer (and her alias Jill Martini), with the need for stress relief seemingly on the rise, she’s likely to find her community continue to grow.

Kick off your shoes, [hear some of her stuff](#) and you’ll probably agree.

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