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Music teacher wins award for album of children's music

Coconut Grove resident Nicholas John Deysher, who performs under the name Nick of Time, has been awarded the 2010 Parent's Choice Gold Award for his album, *People, Places & Things* and is set to release a new album in September.

Soon after graduating with a jazz composition degree from Bates College in Maine, Coconut Grove resident Nicholas John Deysher pondered how he would make a living. Deysher, who performs under the name In the Nick of Time, played in bar bands and struggled to get people interested in his music. He found work teaching music to children, and would perform songs he had written in his classroom, where the response was positive.

The children were the inspiration in releasing his music. "The rest is history," Deysher said. "Eleven years, and five albums later, I have found what I was meant to do." His work as an independent children's musician has paid off: The Parent's Choice Foundation, a nonprofit group that rates children's media and products, gave Deysher its Gold Award for his album, *People, Places & Things*. He is also putting the finishing touches on his upcoming album, *Making Silly Faces*, which is set to be released in September. Nick also currently teaches at Plymouth Preschool. He also teaches music privately.

"I work really hard to produce my albums; I am a one man industry, and when people who have that type of prestige stop and take notice it feels great," he said. "It is a validation of all the hard work, all the sleepless nights."

Deysher, 33, and his high school sweetheart Tracy Deysher grew up in Massachusetts and moved to Coconut Grove in 2005, while he worked on his master's degree in media writing and studio music production at the University of Miami. He had already released two albums before entering UM.

The director of Plymouth Preschool, Annie Booker, said Nick is more than just a teacher. "He has a gift with young children, his patience and experience of early childhood encourages them to participate, move around, learn and sing songs but most of all, have fun," she said.

Music wasn't a surprise career for Nick. "I started to play and perform music at a very early age," he said. "Before I could read I was singing in the church choir." Nick writes, produces, mixes, masters and designs the liner notes for his music. He says his music is eclectic.

"For me, I like to expose kids to all types of music," he said. "I have such broad influences and I like to let them shine through me. I don't think there should be music just for kids. I think good music can be appreciated by everyone big and small." During live performances, Nick performs with Tracey, but he does perform alone at times. He will be performing live on the east coast and will return for a concert in South Florida in the fall.

He also writes music for adults, websites and indie film projects. His upcoming album will feature a feeling of modern day music, but focusing on children.

"I am a sucker for classic rock and funk, but I also tried to keep it current on this album and draw from influences like Coldplay, The Strokes, and Lady GaGa even," he said. He said his music is the alternative to the likes of Hannah Montana and Jonas Brothers. "My music is funky, fun, ageless and educational," he said. "Kids, parents and teachers alike agree, and that's a hard balance to set."

Booker said Nick has a strong following in his school. "Children of all ages love learning through music and for many preschoolers music is a child's first learning experience in the form of nursery rhymes, finger-plays, stories and songs," she said. "Mr. Nick is like the Pied Piper: you just have to hear his music and you can't help but stop and listen and want to hear more."

Nick doesn't have any children. But he feels that working with youngsters will prepare him for fatherhood. "I feel like the last few years have been the best on-the-job training one could ask for in being a great dad," he said.