BEATS Magazine
Allen Kepler Publisher and Founder, Smooth Jazz Network

Belton Mouras Jr. released several smooth jazz tunes in 2024 and a short film, with big plans on the horizon.

MUSIC AND MOVIES

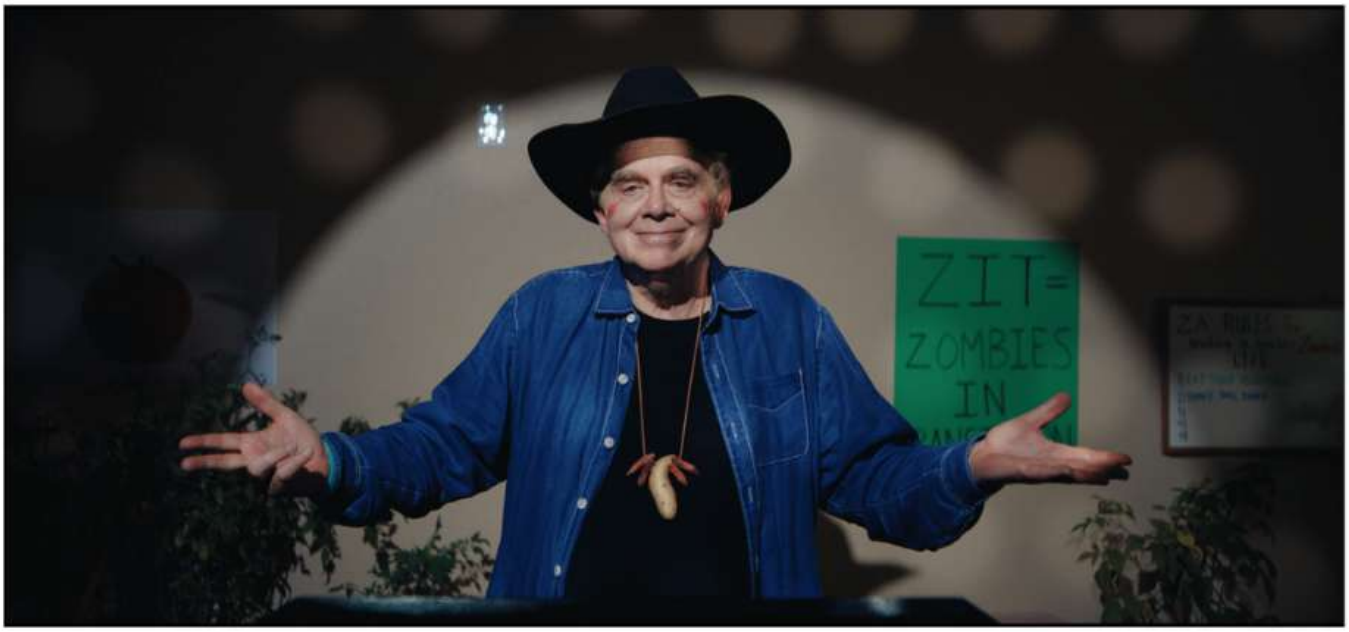
Allen Kepler: The title sounds hilarious: "Fingers: The World's First Vegan Zombie." Tell us, how did that come about, and how has the release been going? Belton Mouras Jr: The idea for Fingers came about a few years ago when I was co-writing a feature film script with a good friend. At the time, I was vegetarian, and I jokingly asked, "What would a world look like if a zombie or zombies became vegetarian?" We laughed so hard at the concept that we decided to take a detour and write a short treatment for it.

A couple of years went by and last year, I picked it up again, reread it, and laughed all over again. I knew I'd kick myself if I didn't take the opportunity to produce this and share those laughs with the world. It premiered at the Sacramento IMAX in October and is now available on our YouTube channel, Belton Mouras Entertainment. AK: It looks like you spun off a really cool music video from the movie—a zombie dancing video?

BM: Yes, Step Step Step is a wildly fun music video featuring 22 zombies dancing up a storm. When I first wrote the song—a pop-hop genre with a dynamic dance beat—I thought it might close the movie during the credits as a fun, blooper-style ending with some of the cast and crew.

But the song took on a life of its own, generating excitement everywhere. I brought in a choreographer, who assembled an amazing group of talented dancers. We rehearsed a full routine, and soon, it became clear the dance and song deserved their own music video.





We released the video six weeks before the film to generate buzz, and it worked out exceptionally well. By early November, the video had surpassed a million views—and it's still going strong!

AK: I see you wrote and directed the film, but you also played the lead zombie, Fingers. What was that like, balancing both roles? Any big takeaways?

BM: It was an absolute blast! Initially, I was auditioning actors for the role of Fingers, but my wife encouraged me to audition myself, saying, "You created Fingers, and you're a great actor!" (No bias, of course!)

My crew loved the idea and my audition-tapes, and the decision was finalized. Playing the lead while directing had its challenges—I have a new appreciation for what Clint Eastwood goes through—but I had an excellent team to help with directing duties when I was focused on acting.

AK: What's next in the film world?

BM: Big news—Fingers is officially headed for a full feature film! And here's the exciting twist: with the growing enthusiasm around the project, we're actively considering transforming it into a full-scale musical. It's a perfect reflection of what Belton Mouras Entertainment stands for: passionate storytelling through the harmonious blend of film and music.

AK: How about new music outside of the movie for 2025?

BM: I'm thrilled to announce a new Smooth Jazz single titled Get It! It is set for release in mid-January. It features the incredible Tony Saunders (appears courtesy of Baja/TSR Records) on bass and Steve Roach on trumpet, with some vibrant keys from me. The track is sassy, energetic, and has a touch of Latin flair.

I also have another exciting jazz single nearly finished, set to release in early spring. Staying connected to my jazz roots is so important to me, and I feel blessed to create music both independently and for films.

I'm always creating—whether it's music or story ideas. One project I'm particularly excited about is a beautiful adventure story partially set in Costa Rica. I just finished the feature film script for it, and I can't wait to put it into development after Fingers. Of course, it will include lots of fun music!

The future is all about storytelling and music for me—no matter what. I'm incredibly grateful for these opportunities and look forward to what's ahead.