



Jon Toogood.

Height 180 cm

MC / Entertainer Biography

Johnson&Laird

After 20-odd years of life in a rock band, Shihad's lead singer, songwriter and guitarist Jon Toogood has chalked up a wealth of experience in the music business. Always keen to share his wisdom and skills, he enjoys mentoring budding songwriters and musicians. When he's not performing with Shihad or his "other" band, The Adults, he can be found indulging in a wide range of interests including immersing himself in the latest technology, travelling the world, enjoying most forms of creative art, discovering new favourite eateries and watching the Warriors.

After over two decades of belting out hits with Kiwi rock band Shihad, Jon Toogood knows a thing or two about surviving in the music business.

Keen to pass on his extensive knowledge, the band's lead singer, songwriter and guitarist gets a buzz from mentoring budding songwriters and musicians and sharing his candid views on the realities of being a full-time touring musician. The self-titled show pony loves performing, but he's also a workhorse behind the scenes. He manages his other band, The Adults and was involved in a stage show called The Beatles Back2Back which toured Australia.

Jon is also the musical direction go-to guy for the annual Kiwi music award shows at which he has also been a presenter. An art-lover and former graphic design student, Jon has recently spoken at the Wellington City Art Gallery.

Among his latest projects are orchestral versions of The Adults' songs with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra and the Nelson String Quartet, and with Shihad he plans to shake things up by recording the band's next album in Cairo. Most recently Jon received rave reviews for his role in Brel, a theatre production featuring the words and music by acclaimed poet and musician Jacques Brel.

In 2012 Beautiful Machine; a candid and raw documentary about Shihad and the lives of its 4 members was released to rave reviews.

Happily hyperactive and renowned for frenetic onstage antics, Jon channels his boundless energy working out at the gym and by kickboxing (which provides some handy moves for Shihad shows). Although he hates heights, with a beat behind him, he'll happily stage dive into the arms of adoring fans.

He chills out by writing music and does occasionally sit still. If there's a Warriors game on you'll find him glued to the TV or a live internet stream - he hasn't missed a game in years. And like most Mac geeks, he keeps up to date with all the latest gadgets and reads all books on his iPad. While Jon wouldn't dream of leaving home without his iPhone, in a nod to days gone by, he says his most prized possession is a D28 Martin acoustic guitar which he (carefully) takes on every tour.

Touring with Shihad has taken Jon around Europe and America but his bucket list includes travelling to Asia, the Middle East and

South America. Touring extensively has given Jon an appreciation for different cultures, especially when it comes to their local cuisine. On the road he has been known to judge a destination purely on the food alone and when home he will go to great lengths to pursue the perfect meal. He hopes that one day all this experience will result in him refining his own cooking skills maybe even see him improving his own current 'best'dish - a great bacon sandwich.

Jon took up guitar aged seven, but back then soccer and cricket were his still first love. A talented batsman, he captained the Wellington Representative cricket team, but at 15 he traded his bat and cricket whites for a guitar and black jeans and never looked back. Since coming together in 1988, Shihad have performed more than 1500 live shows and released nine albums, two of which went gold in Australia plus three double platinum and four gold albums in NZ.

Jon 's career highlights include playing in front of 60, 000-strong crowds and Shihad's gold albums, but says nothing beats the rush of knowing when he 's written a song that works.

Testimonials.

"The audience loved him because it was JON TOOGOOD so really bought the wow and star factor. We used him to open the conference, singing (with dancers and pyro), and to close—so left everyone in a hyped up state. The audience totally loved him, and he was such a huge asset throughout the day –we would definitely use him again—as well as the fact that he was super easy to deal with, eager to please, and no ego or drama (which is fab). He is a great guy, and it really made the day (and dealing with him)a pleasure. He did a great job! "

- Madant