

Somebody Like You

(Aka: The dance I nearly didn't write)

It was in the early years of my 'dancing life' and at a time when the 'cowboy' image was still seen regularly on the dance floor in classes and at socials, I'd subscribed to the Country Music Association and as such received their promo cd's called CDX. I can't recall the CDX number, but it was on one of those first discs that I encountered 'Somebody Like You' a single version of around 4 minutes.

In those days, as now, I would 'sample' a portion of the track, roughly around 45 seconds or so. Reading the track list before listening I thought "mmm Keith Urban this could be worth a listen". After playing the intro section I wasn't impressed and thought it could be better, after all we hadn't had anything new from Keith Urban for a couple of years! The following night after not having found anything else of interest on the CD I decided to listen again and for longer this time, but still it wasn't quite what I was expecting so I turned it off and had a 'brew'! Later that night I decided to give it one more chance and listen for longer... it was about halfway through the track when all of a sudden I heard something that just stood out making it 'interesting' which was followed by the guitar riff and I was hooked!!

So I now had a point in the music that I wanted to 'hit', I also knew what I wanted it to portray, but I had no idea what those steps would turn out to be... In essence I started writing the dance from the middle of the track, and was aware that it would have a couple of restarts. As always when writing dances I let the music and lyrics dictate the steps, and the feel of the dance. There were some lyrics that suggested certain moves and had to be fitted alongside what I'd already jotted down. At this point my imagination was running riot as the guitar riffs were going round and round in my head, all this time I had a point I wanted to hit - which was a big cymbal crash. I'd imagined this would be like breaking through a 'plate glass' window, and I now had the steps that realised that goal. I still had no idea where or when the dance would start leading to that point! All that was left to do now was to find the beginning and end of the dance working from the sequence of steps that would hit the cymbal crash. I set about this task only to find that the steps that lead up to the 'breaking glass' would be the first steps of the dance! Once completed I had a few months to wait before I could release the dance as the music would not be available, I also had no idea how the dance would 'fair' on the circuit.

When attending the 2002 Linedancer Awards I was 'gobsmacked' when 'Somebody Like You' won a Crystal Boot... all I knew at that point was that the dance seemed to be doing well. I was, as now when anything I write gets noticed, Speechless!! During the following year 'Somebody Like You' seemed to go from strength to strength, and at the 2003 Awards it won a second Crystal Boot... for a dance to win the same category for two consecutive years was unprecedented at that point. No words can really describe what I felt... astonished! confused! but naturally pleased... I'd always thought line dancing should be continually evolving and moving forward, it seemed to me that things had stood still for a year, however, now with the passage of time I can fully understand why. I am humbled to think that something I created continues to bring such pleasure on the dance floor appealing to both pop and country dancers alike.

It goes without saying that 'Somebody Like You' has, and always will have, a special place in my heart, I have both loved and hated the dance over the years! It also has the unique ability of taking me from the lowest points to the highest by either dancing or simply listening to the music! There is a lot of emotion tied up in this dance and I hope that dancers share those feelings... If a dancer comes off the dance floor feeling the way I do after dancing 'Somebody Like You' then I achieved my goal!

I cannot believe that after what is now 14 years 'Somebody Like You' remains a constant favourite not only in the UK but around the world... it has never left the dance floor, the live band circuit or the advanced charts in all that time... that is in itself quite unique, and if anyone should question why after all this time it is classed as advanced?? I would simply say "any dance that starts with a 1½ triple turn which effectively becomes 1¾... is virtually syncopated all the way through... has a backwards syncopated weave and 2 restarts couldn't be anything else!!" But then what do I know? I'm only the choreographer LOL

I'd like to thank everyone that has enjoyed, danced, taught and played 'Somebody Like You' over the years and continues to do so. But I would especially like to thank Keith Urban for co-writing what is one of the 'best songs ever' in country music therefore allowing me the opportunity to open his music up to the linedance world.

Fact: In December 2009, *Billboard* named it the number one country song of the first decade of the 21st century.

Thank you everyone
Alan B