



# PAVEK MUSEUM

OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Mitch Thompson, a Minnesota native from Albert Lea, has spent more than three decades immersed in the creative and technical side of storytelling. Throughout the first phase of his career, he supplied lighting, studio support, and camera equipment for films, television commercials, documentaries, and a wide range of visual media. Often considered the “nuts and bolts” of the creative process, Mitch understood that when his work was done well, it allowed directors, producers, musicians, and artists to elevate theirs.

Today, in his role with the Diverse Emerging Music Organization (DEMO) and its signature initiative, the Minnesota Music Archive, Mitch’s mission remains rooted in that same principle: enabling creativity to thrive. His focus is ensuring that Minnesota’s musical legacy is preserved, uplifted, and accessible to future generations. This commitment is shaped in part by a sentiment shared by musician Nick Cave—words that Mitch has taken to heart:

“I feel that music isn’t just entertainment. It’s possibly the last authentic opportunity for transcendent experience we have left to us in the secular world... It can make things better, so I take that really seriously.” —Nick Cave

Alongside his creative and nonprofit work, Mitch has also contributed to Minnesota’s music culture for decades as the drummer for Umbrella Bed, a Minneapolis 2-Tone ska band formed in 1995. Umbrella Bed quickly built a strong Twin Cities following and was named one of City Pages’ “Best New Bands” of 1997. Their sound draws from the early-80s English 2-Tone movement—a sharp, ska-driven blend of Jamaican rhythms, punk energy, and new-wave influences characteristic of the UK ska revival. Over the years, the band has released multiple full-length albums and performed internationally, remaining a fixture of Minnesota’s alternative and ska scenes. Mitch has been a core member since the beginning, helping define the group’s distinctive, high-energy style.

Now in 2026, Umbrella Bed remains an active and evolving presence in Minnesota’s music scene as it moves beyond its 30th anniversary—continuing to perform and record for audiences locally and abroad.

Mitch shares entry into the Minnesota Music Archive with his father, Lowell Thompson, who is represented through his work with the southern Minnesota polka band, the Blue Banners—a connection that ties Mitch’s lifelong dedication to Minnesota music back to his family roots.

Mitch lives in Minneapolis with his wife, Lisa Goddard, and their little black cat, Zwicky.