

While the rest of us were worrying about “Y2K” a group of talented friends were worrying about the future of music as we know it.

The year was 1999 and Denver Bierman and his merry band of musicians that would come to be known as the Mile High Orchestra were putting together an act that would take them literally to the ends of the earth. The group of Belmont University students took the music they loved and combined it with a hot, pop style, mixed in a slick tight stage show and took it on the road.

Blending red hot horns with a hip, young rhythm section, Denver and the Mile High Orchestra take the best of classic pop music and combine it with a more modern edge to bring a familiar, yet fresh sound. With Denver Bierman writing and arranging the band’s music, the diverse sounds of legends such as Stevie Wonder and Chicago blend with musical influences like Maroon 5, and Jason Mraz for a refreshing look at contemporary pop.

The rest, as they say, is history.

“The first show we performed was for 28 people,” said Denver Bierman, the creative force behind Denver and the Mile High Orchestra. “It wasn’t the hottest ticket in Nashville that night, but there was free coffee and cheesecake. That’s one thing – in the beginning I told my guys, I may not be able to pay you but there will be dessert.”

The band has come a long way from those humble beginnings to network TV.

Denver and the Mile High Orchestra wowed all of America, as they made the finale of the FOX-TV “American Idol” spin off “The Next Great American Band.” They’ve garnered praise and a devoted fan base from Greece to Hollywood, having played the Summer Olympics in Athens, and the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Seeing the band live has created a lot of believers. While the music is what brings the fans of DMHO to the show, the show itself makes a fan for life.

“It’s inspiring for different reasons,” said Denver. “There’s nothing like being with people in that moment with you, involved with you, inspired by your songs. There’s nothing better than that.”

It can also be a life-changing experience.

“I had a guy come up to me who’d been to several of our shows before so he wasn’t unfamiliar to me,” said Denver. “He told me how he had come to that show that night thinking about how he was going to take his own life that weekend, but the things we had to say had so inspired him that God had spoken to him about survival. It completely changed his life.

“My guys are just down-to-earth every day guys who didn’t give up on the things that we were called to do even though life got hard. If we can inspire people to do the things that they’re supposed to be doing, that’s what it’s all about.”

Massive radio airplay, countless primetime television appearances to an audience of millions, and tour dates all over the world have built a fan base of all ages for the band.

DMHO have been headliners at numerous festivals, national conventions and state fairs, as well as going on tour with chart topping artists like Casting Crowns, Natalie Grant and Avalon. Members of the band have also played for such artists as Donna Summer, Dan Akroyd, Tower of Power, Guy Lombardo, Ralph Carmichael, Chet Atkins, Wes Montgomery and Debby Boone just to name a few.

While DMHO has been compared to many, the music defies a genre. Silky smooth vocals combine with a wall of sound that calls up the images of old school r&b and modern day soul. What can be defined is a contemporary pop sensibility with a nod to the great horn bands of the past.

Over 10 years, seven albums and two live-show DVDs, the band has evolved and explored many different musical avenues, but one thing that has and will remain unchanged is an unswerving devotion to Jesus Christ which is transparent in their music.

“Having a career in the music business comes and goes,” said Denver. “The hope we find in our faith is for an eternity.”