



# Is This Live?: Inside the Wild Early Years of MuchMusic: The Nation's Music Station

*Christopher Ward*

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**From former VJ Christopher Ward, *Is This Live?* captures the pure fun and rock 'n' roll rebellion of the early years of MuchMusic.**

On August 31, 1984, the Nation's Music Station launched, breaking ground as the Wild (Canadian) West of television—live, gloriously unpredictable, seat-of-the-pants TV, delivered fresh daily.


The dream child of TV visionary Moses Znaimer, and John Martin, the maverick creator of *The New Music*, Much was live and largely improvised, and an entire generation of Canadians grew up watching the VJs and embraced the new music that became the video soundtrack of our lives.

The careers of Canadian legends like Blue Rodeo, Corey Hart, Jane Siberry, Bryan Adams, Platinum Blonde, Glass Tiger, Colin James, the Parachute Club, Honeymoon Suite, Barenaked Ladies, Maestro Fresh Wes and Sloan were launched when Much brought them closer to their fans. Much also gave us international acts (Duran, Duran, Tina Turner, Iggy Pop, David Bowie, Madonna, Motorhead, Guns N' Roses, Nirvana, Red Hot Chili Peppers), and covered the second wave of music activism with events like Live Aid and the Amnesty International Human Rights Now! tour. Ranging from Toronto's iconic studio at 299 Queen Street West, to Vancouver's MuchWest, MuchMusic's programming travelled across Canada and connected the Canadian music scenes in an unprecedented way.

With stories of the bands, the music, the videos, the specialty shows, the style and the improvisational approach to daily broadcast life at Much, *Is This Live?* is told by the people who were there—the colourful cast of on-air VJs, the artists who found their way into our living rooms of the nation as never before, and the people behind the cameras.

As our tour guide to the first decade at MuchMusic Christopher Ward delivers a full-on dose of pop culture nostalgia from the 1980s and '90s, when the music scene in Canada changed forever.

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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