Angel, where is your halo?  
Can you save me?  
Where'd you put your wings?  
While we were in Heaven,  
Why did you make me sing... 

Too much of me, already darlin'  
Too much of me, for you to pardon,  
Too much of me,  
Too much of me. 

And when we go through the motions,  
Balancing the waves,  
There are so few emotions  
that I fear,  
But I fear  
You're gettin' too much of me.  
Too much of me. 

I'm just a devil in the mornin'  
with a heart on fire for you.  
Save me with your glory  
And end my devilish story 

Too much of me, already pardner,  
Too much of me, for you to bother,  
Too much of me  
Too much of me. 

And when we go through the motions,  
Balancing the waves,  
There are so few emotions  
that I fear,  
I fear  
I fear  
I fear  

It's time we stop and take a look at what we started  
What we started  
Ooohhhh,  
Ohhhhh  
You're gettin' too much of me.  
Too much of me. 

So angel fly away
"Too Much of Me" is a simple, heartfelt song. This music video will support the intimacy, authenticity, and emotion of the song while introducing an additional layer of visual drama that complements the mood and creates a compelling piece of cinema in its own right. Since this is Michael Todd’s debut video, the focus will be on him and will include lots of dramatic performance footage. Compelling cinematic imagery of Michael singing and playing his guitar are key to launching his image, as are the concept and locations being deeply rooted in his home state of Oklahoma. Although there’s clearly a strong sense of melancholy in the song, we will make sure to capture Michael’s natural sense of humor and resilient attitude.

Overall, the video will be richly visual and highly cinematic. Much like the song, it will be suggestive of a narrative without telling a detailed story. It will take the elements of a standard performance video (a stage, concert lighting, a backup band, a fluid camera) and adapt them into an unexpected, dream-like context anchored by short, realistic bookends.

We start at a house party in rural Oklahoma. It’s nighttime, and summer. Young people—although not as young as they once were—are crowded onto the deck of a lake house and spilling out across a large lawn towards a small dock on the lake, lit by multi-colored Christmas lights. This is a crowd of real, interesting, and authentic locals. Everybody has beer in a red Solo cup in their hand—including Michael Todd, who is making his way alone through the crowd. He pushes through some people, down a grassy hill and to the dock area. He looks up at the stars. Some guys laugh as they pump beer out of keg sitting in a big plastic bucket full of ice.

Michael walks out onto the plank connecting the dock to the shore, looking a little moody. Through the moving crowd and the twinkling lights, he notices a beautiful dark-haired woman. She glances at him, and there’s a flash of emotion...but before it even fully registers she turns back to the group she’s with and laughs. Michael’s face falls. It’s clear these two have a history. As he stands there, not quite on the dock and not quite on land, half-empty plastic cup in hand, the camera dollies back and we hear the opening notes of “Too Much of Me.”

Right at the vocal, we cut to:

Michael sitting on a chair playing his guitar, dramatically lit by amber, blue, and white stage lighting. He is spotlit against darkness, and he sings the first verse in a series of low-angle, gently circling dolly shots that catch interesting fragments of his face. Perhaps his eyes are mostly hidden by the brim of a cap, making the rare flashes of his eyes seem like a small revelation. As he reaches the first chorus (“You’re gettin’ too much of me...”), we suddenly cut back to reveal:
Michael is sitting alone in the center of the dock, facing out towards the lake. But the dock has been transformed: it now glows with concert lights hanging from aluminum trusses, stacks of speakers on either side...the whole setup you'd expect at a big outdoor concert. All the people at the party have disappeared. It is the dead of night, and the stage casts an eerie glow across the glassy surface of the lake.

We cut back onto the stage, looking out from behind Michael's back. The stage lights gleam. The waving reeds at the lake’s edge are his only audience.

Right when the backup vocals come in, we see a small band appear behind him, silhouetted in blue light. Perhaps there’s another guitarist and a stand-up bass player. During the first bridge section, we’re back on the stage, dramatic performance footage that’s slightly more fast-paced than before. We also cut back to the wide here, seeing Michael and his band on the stage a hundred feet away, blades of lake grass waving in the foreground as if they’re a mesmerized crowd.

On the final, tender lines of the bridge, we’re back close-up on Michael. As he reaches the second verse, light begins to fill the sky in front of him. It’s dawn. As the grayish light dimly reaches his face, we see that Michael looks a little rough...it’s nearing the end of a long, lonely night.

At the second chorus, the sun just begins to peek over the horizon. We slowly circle behind Michael as he reaches the last “too much of me” in that chorus. He is now silhouetted against an amazing Oklahoma sunrise. As he looks across the lake, we suddenly see a close-up image of the dark-haired woman. Her hair blows in the breeze, and she turns and looks over her shoulder in the pre-dawn light. We can’t tell if she’s in a boat, on the opposite shore, or somehow hovering above the water. As soon as she’s appeared she’s suddenly gone again.

At the second bridge (“And when we go through the motions...”) Michael stands and looks out across the lake. Suddenly, he’s on the lake, in a small boat with the lit stage receding behind him. As the music reaches a crescendo (“I fear/I fear/I fear...”), Michael floats across the lake. The sky in front of him is on fire with orange, red, and yellow.

As the dramatic coda hits (“It’s time we stop and take a look at what we started...”), Michael is suddenly somewhere else again: Out in a giant field of tall grass, as if he’s transported in an instant across the lake and to the land on the other side. As he sings, he marches through the field toward the light, his hands trailing through the grass. We cut high above and see the path he’s made, heading toward the crest of a hill. At the top of the hill, we see the girl again...her back is to us, her hair blowing in the breeze, her body ringed in golden light.

As Michael hits the final “Too much of me” lyrics, he reaches the top of the hill and stops. The girl is not there. The warm morning sunlight hits him full-on. As he sings the penultimate line (“So angel fly away”), we’re very close, sunlight dancing in his eyes...then we’re behind him, moving away, leaving him alone and staring across the vast, misty prairie at dawn.
With the music over, we cut back to the party for a brief moment. Michael is still on the gangway to the dock with his beer...he has been this whole time. He’s watching the beautiful dark-haired girl, and then she gives just the slightest look back his direction. But...she turns and walks away with another guy, laughing, and disappears into the crowd up the hill.

Michael downs the rest of his beer, stands up, and walks out of frame. Cut to black.

TECHNIQUE AND SPECS

Charred Oak Films proposes to shoot this video on a Canon 5D MKII or a digital camera with similar cinematic depth and light sensitivity. Although we intend to work with a lean crew and the least expensive equipment possible, we feel that in order to achieve the expressive camera work expected in a music video, it’s important to have a kit that includes a GlideCam/Steadicam rig OR a dolly with FlexTrak, as well as a small crane or remote-head jib for the open field location. With a camera and lenses sensitive enough, and shooting at a high ISO, we intend to work with only natural light, existing practical light, and the stage lighting included in the dock setup.

We would require on-set playback control, but would hope to do so with an inexpensive desktop-based system running from a laptop. We would need to slate shots for later audio sync. Wild sound would be recorded at the party scene.

Location is key, of course. We would hope to scout and secure a remote field that we could shoot from three sides without seeing much in the way of skylines, highways, or buildings in the distance. Rolling hills or ridges would be ideal, so super-flat central Oklahoma might not be appropriate.

Charred Oak Films would travel a director/DP, 1st camera, and wardrobe; these three people would also be co-producers. We intend to secure the rest of the crew as volunteers, drawing from Michael’s local contacts and colleagues for a small number of riggers, gaffers, and electricians, and filling out the numbers with interns or college students as PAs.

In addition to Michael Todd and the backup band of 2 or 3, casting needs would include the dark-haired woman and approximately 20 extras for the party scene.

We propose shooting for three short days; one early-morning-into-dawn shoot at the field location, and two afternoon-into-night shoots at the Okemah lake house location.

Editorial would be done by Charred Oak, and post-production would be completed in New York, where we can draw upon our local resources to get borrowed color-correction and video finishing services.
THANK YOU AGAIN.