

DYLAN MURRAY

Armed with only his guitar, his voice and the feelings in his heart this Toronto native spreads love through his music on a daily basis.

“If you’re not true to yourself you’re doing everyone else a disservice,” he says.

Coming from a musical family, Dylan spent most of his childhood singing. He remembers at a very early age his whole family singing together. Growing up he listened to classic rock like The Beatles, and he remembers his childhood home as a “musical and conscious place to develop” and to this day he often collaborates musically with his brothers and parents.

In middle school Dylan heard reggae music for the first time on the radio and instantly connected to it. Around the same time his brother gave him a Bob Marley tape. He knew then for sure this genre of music was something “on a whole other level”, that he wanted to explore more deeply.

After this, reggae became an essential part of Dylan's musical journey and some of his influences include Shaka Demus, Matt Cobra, and Shaggy.

Dylan spent the majority of his teens playing in Toronto-based rock band LRT, graduated high school, and explored different genres of folk-rock and reggae music. An incredibly prolific and self-sufficient songwriter, he wrote almost continuously throughout his teens.

In 1998 Dylan heard about the non-profit human and community development organization, the St. Patrick’s Foundation in Kingston Jamaica. The foundation seeks to bring aid like medical supplies, food, clothing, housing and electrical installation to poor communities in an effort to re- build and empower them.

Dylan connected with the foundation and took a number of trips to Jamaica with a group of students who spent their time helping bring relief to those living in the ghetto. Inspired by reggae music he also wanted to see “how the culture affected their music and vice versa.”

Dylan’s group brought support including medical supplies and food to places where there was no structure at all. It was a promise that he would be involved with local children, along with his love of reggae that convinced him to go.

Dylan fondly recalls bringing tennis balls and playing with locals. It struck him how the children seemed to him to have a “world of abundance.” For three weeks Dylan stayed sometimes playing, sometimes teaching in the library and he noticed the positive and welcoming energy of the Jamaican people.

Dylan made many friends over repeated visits to Jamaica over the last ten years, and maintains many of these personal and professional relationships today.

After feeling the power and the passion of the Jamaican culture, his perspective of music changed. Throughout his travels, he felt connected to the people and the culture both physically and ideologically.





Dylan's writing process is an honest, organic one . He often starts his songs with a melody, and carefully chooses lyrics to go with the feeling the melody inspires. Dylan relishes in connecting with his audience and relating with them on an emotional level. For him musical expression is a superfluous part of his life, essential to his happiness.

During the beginning of his career Dylan played almost every venue in Toronto. He felt when he wasn't playing cover tunes he wouldn't be able to survive as a songwriter. But over time and with a lot of hard work he kept packing and playing shows. Dylan managed to stay true to himself and kept the music real, and free from frills.

Dabbling in reggae, folk-rock, and pop-rock, he's developed his own sound.

After playing in both big and small venues Dylan said he enjoys a more intimate setting. His favorite thing to do is play by the campfire with friends or to be somewhere "where I brought my guitar, where you can really connect with the audience."

"I love playing by myself, acoustically, 'cause you can do it anytime or anywhere, but there's something special about playing with other people in a band setting," Dylan said "it's like having a relationship with five different people that can be very difficult or it can be extremely rewarding because there's so much energy there."

Looking forward to playing in bigger venues for larger audiences Dylan said he aspires to keep a sense of intimacy. It's important to him to be able to look at a person and feel like the music is right there between them.

In the process of recording a new album, Dylan's just trying to absorb it all, take it in and turn it over into beautiful music. His forthcoming album, Inspiration, is a collection of 12 amazing songs chosen from a staggering list of almost 100 songs. At the end of the the day Dylan hopes his music inspires the masses.

"With age I find I value in a different way. Now I'm realizing how much a part of my life music has been and how much joy it brings me," Dylan said.

"After going to Jamaica and seeing how much love there is there, and how welcoming those people were and what they gave to me, I just want to give back," he said.

By participating in a collective consciousness through his songwriting, Dylan can give back in his own unique way.