

Geoff Gibbons



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Geoff Gibbons

Sepia-tinted panoramas and meticulous song craft: Across the breadth of the 12 songs that comprise his latest release *Buffalo Hotel*, Canadian singer-songwriter Geoff Gibbons breathes life into lyrics with metaphoric ease and an ear for conversational proximity.

As verses turn the pages of the stories, Gibbons drops the listener directly into the dramas as he silhouettes a vibrant cast of characters in sheer authenticity. Backed by players from a tight community of first call studio musicians, Geoff's soul deep vocals are imbued with experience and empathy. Against the intimate grain of his voice, the players reflect his themes with subtle flourishes and stellar musicianship.

Among the highlights: We encounter a traveler "worn out and weary," seeking the light of true love against a backdrop of Memphis grooves and tight harmonies in "Back To You." A daring couple in love head drive a Cadillac Eldorado toward the desert in "Blinded by Tumbleweeds"; an elegy in "Lonesome Angel," for an elusive singer with "songs like velvet arrows falling somber rain." The wounded but reconciled protagonist framed by vocal harmonies and banjo reaching his truths on "The Other Side," the resolute drifter departing down a well-traveled road, far from the romantic wreckage on "Ain't Goin' Back."

From Vancouver, BC, Canada, Geoff is a full time working musician and a producer-engineer who has lived his life immersed in music. Captivated in his teen years by classic singer-songwriters like Cat Stevens, Joni Mitchell and Neil Young, he played in a steady succession of bands; then at 20, thanks to earnings from a local talent show, he headed off for Australia's Gold Coast to perform for tourists in the evening and luxuriate seaside during the day. Teaming up with a visiting Canadian friend, he formed the duo Silverlode, returned to Vancouver and performed on bills with Emmylou Harris, the McGarrigle Sisters, David Crosby, and Levon Helm and Rick Danko of The Band.

As a solo artist, Geoff advanced his songcraft with a string of well regarded, ever more ambitious albums. As a songwriter for visual projects, he created songs for television shows including *Higher Ground*, *Just Cause* and *Robson Arms* plus animation: *Mook* and the adult comedy series *The Mr. Dink Show* - winner of the jury prize for Best Animation at the New York International Film Festival. He also composed the score and songs for *Wolf Moon* (aka *Dark Moon Rising* .)

While Geoff enjoys the challenge of orchestrating others' visions, the time was right for a new solo project . "It began with me compiling,"he says. "I combed the material until it started taking shape."To bring the project to fruition, he reached out to John McArthur Ellis (Ferron, Bruce Cockburn), to co-produce. "We'd been trying to work together for years. We started going to the next level with it. I had probably 20 songs demoed. We focused in on 12."

Seventies country-rock of Southern California is a prime influence on Geoff. "I couldn't get enough of long-haired guys playing country-influenced music,"he recalls of the bands like the Byrds, Eagles and the Flying Burrito Brothers. Co-producer John McArthur Ellis, a multi-instrumentalist, imparts this influence, adding the essential guitar and pedal steel to *Buffalo Hotel*.

A trip to the cradle of North American music was a signpost of the journey to the *Buffalo Hotel* . Geoff and two friends flew South to the cities of sound: Muscle Shoals, Nashville and Memphis. "When I got back home I wasn't just inspired, I was altered,"Geoff remembers. "It was like traveling to a musical Mecca."Echoes of this experience permeate the musical tapestry, most pointedly with the harmonies of The Sojourners, a soulful trio of male backing vocalists who impart an ecclesiastical aura of Southern gospel.

Geoff avows that the tales he tells from the *Buffalo Hotel* are mostly real or derived from real stories that he wanted to turn into songs. "We all have worlds inside our heads ...As a writer I want to share that world and hopefully have it resonate somewhere in the listeners world...create a journey, a mood, something that hasn't been experienced or brings back a lost one." There's ample opportunity to experience that in *Buffalo Hotel* - like a lush dream that permeates the consciousness.

experience that in Dunbar Hotel... like a rush dream that permeates the consciousness.

“I’d like to have this music come out and affect peoples’ lives for a time; to haunt them in the best possible way.”

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