

B.A. Johnston to say ‘Hey Dudes!!’ to Lethbridge this week

Written by Richard Amery

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It's hard to believe Hamilton musician/ manic funny man B.A Johnston has been making a living playing music for eight years, but his quirky songs, and sense of humour resonate with a lot of people.

He has recently released his eighth record to positive reviews.



“I like to say if you keep polishing the turd a little bit for 15 years, it keeps getting better,” said Johnston, from a tour stop in Regina. He is on his way to Lethbridge to wind down the Prairie Folk Tournament, March 17 at the Owl Acoustic Lounge.

“It’s St. Patrick’s Day, so I’m going to get really drunk on green beer at the Owl,” he laughed. “I wasn’t sure I was part of it (the Prairie Folk Tournament). I don’t play a lot of folk festivals, but I’ve got an acoustic guitar, so I guess I’ll fit in,” he said.

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He recorded his latest album ‘Hi Dudes!!’ in Toronto with producer Paul Linklater who has worked with the Rheostatics.

He hasn’t changed his songwriting much.

“Most of them are about food and breaking up. I want to be like AC DC and write the same song like ‘Thunderstruck’ over and over again,” he laughed. There are also humorous songs about video games, ’80s cartoons and television and the Goonies in ‘The Truffle Shuffle’ which features CBC personality Laura Barrett.

“She’s covered my songs though she hasn’t recorded them, she plays them in her live show. She’s done my song ‘Hamilton,’ a couple of times,” he continued.

He noted the CD has received superb response since being released on Mammoth Cave records, Feb. 25.

“I usually have one really good album followed by one not so good album. This is really good,” he said.

“When people see me live, without a shirt and rolling around, in the live show, that doesn’t really come across on the record. There’s actually a lot to the songs,” he said adding reviews have been overwhelmingly positive. {youtube}ChDNFkl6rXw{/youtube}

“Except for one review from France. I couldn’t even understand it. I had to put it into Google just to read it. It basically said ‘I can not laugh at this,’” he said.

“It must have been a guy from Quebec who must have seen me play and then moved to France,” he said adding he didn’t know how his record made it over the ocean.

Last year he released a seven inch record with one of his favourite bands , Lethbridge’s beloved defunct punk trio, The Moby Dicks.

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“Even though it is very lo fi, you can tell Paul (Lawton), Evan (Van Reekum) and Joel (Butler) really know what they are doing,” he enthused. He is excited about playing Lethbridge again.

“It will be basically the same old bag of tricks, except with new songs.

I also bought a couple new sweaters and a new pair of pants for it. Playing Lethbridge is always a lot of fun,” he said.

— *By Richard Amery, L.A. Beat Editor*{jcomments on}