



Matt Hughes-Guitarist/Lead Vocals (L), Steve Greffe (R), and DezMagill-(drummer background)

MATT HUGHES

Talented and Humble, Looking to Reach his Dreams!

By Tanya Shukalova

“Test two, one, two.” Steve Greffe, Matt Hughes’ band mate tests the mic while Dez Magill plays a few beats on the drum for sound check. The band arrived at Sam’s Brass Racks around 7:40 on a rainy Friday evening. Coming from Marmora, where Matt performed an acoustic show the previous night, they are ready to play their Brockville show as a 3 piece group. A few patrons chat at the bar about the Furious 7 movie with the owner, Sam, as Matt and I walk to a more quiet area to speak. He has a modest demeanor about him as he sits across from me while his band continues to set up.

Born in Scarborough and raised in Belleville by a father with a passion for rock and roll,

Matt grew up with the influence of the genre. “I grew up around music and bands. From early on, age three or four, I wanted to play the drums. My dad finally got me a set of drums at age 11 and I started taking lessons.” By the time he was 12 years old, Matt was in a group called *RedWood* with other music lesson students in Belleville. This was also the age of his first experience performing for audiences as *RedWood* toured local public and high schools. In addition to that, Matt was also part of a band with friends in high school.

After a few years, Matt joined another band in Belleville called *Prisoner*. “That was my first real touring band. I was 16 years-old playing the heavy metal club circuit in Ontario. We played a lot of prestigious clubs and opened up for some artists.” A few of those artists include Lee Aaron and Goddo. It was around this time that Matt started learning to play guitar as well as drums.

Our interview went after 8, by which time the sky outside grew darker and the lights inside brightened. Matt shook my hand and came back to give me his current CD before he took to the stage with his guitar and mic.

With each song the band played, more and more people gathered around the stage and nearby bar. They started with a cover of “*I Can’t*

Get No Satisfaction” by *The Rolling Stones*.

Listening to Matt sing and the band play, you can feel the impact that rock has had on them.

“I like a lot of song writers from the 70’s, like Elton John, or Sting. People like that. Also pretty much people from every era of music. I listen to everything from soft AM rock to heavy metal, so everybody from Metallica to the Beatles.” It was thanks to artists like these (and many others) that led Matt to eventually (2005-2006) to dabble with song writing. “And I’ve been writing ever since.” He mentioned in our interview.

Just this past year, Matt released his first official CD which was written, performed, and recorded all by himself. He is currently working on new material, and possibly even a Christmas album, with a rock twist, for next year.

As the band executes a modern yet classic cover of “*Brown Eyed Girl*” by *Van Morrison*, an older couple dances in the spinning colorful lights as if they were 15 years old again. One of the owners of the bar, Art, tells me that, “Once it gets busy, people start dancing. They play good music for our age group. We’re happy with Matt’s performance. He looks in the crowd and plays what they like to hear. We consider Matt local and we like to give the bands a place to play. They treat us well, we treat them well. It’s like a relationship. We like to work with the bands as if we’re a team. (Matt) can do music in a band or as a solo artist. He’s one of the best guitar players I’ve seen.”

You can tell that Matt has been playing for over 25 years because of the natural yet humble presence he has when he performs. He’s learned a lot from all of the talented people he has played with and aspires to keep writing and recording. “It’s every artists dream to have a record deal or publishing deal. I’d like to get into a higher kind of level - playing for bigger acts. Maybe playing at the K-Rock Centre or the Air Canada Centre one day.” An artist that’s been through so much in his music career, he definitely deserves to reach his dreams. **LH**

You can find more on Matt Hughes at his website: <http://moregoth.wix.com/matthughesrocks>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/matthughesproject>
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/Matlike1/featured>
iTunes: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/album/discovery-ep/id933218090>