

'We All Have A Dream,' says Drennan



By Nate Smelle

The Arlington in Maynooth was alive with music again over the weekend as Abe Drennan returned to town to perform with his band ONE and other musical friends on Friday, July 25 for a CD release party. Before Drennan took the stage with his four bandmates Kevin Taylor, Dave Gaebel, Jesse Hannah and Doug Barnett to perform their recently released debut album *We All Have A Dream* he first played a few songs on his own, and then with his sister Ruth and father Dave. Watching the three perform together, and listening to them harmonize it was clear that the family shares a passion and love for creating music. The musical roots run deep for the Drennans. His late grandmother was a professional whistler, and his father has been a children's entertainer, playwright and songwriter for more than 35 years.

Drennan describes himself as 'an imperfect explorer finding meaning in song' and his music as 'a soulful expression of his experiments with life.' On his own the sound he produces is reminiscent of James Taylor, Gordon Lightfoot and Cat Stevens.

ONE began creating the vision for the album back in 2003. Since this time the members of the band have seen many changes and periods of creativity. Drennan said that over the years he had a large community of supporters who helped to make his dream a reality. The project would not have happened, he said, without the assistance from his friend and recording engineer Kevin Taylor, and Juno award winning producer, Howard Baer who handled the lead vocal processing and mastering on the album. Local artist Dianne Eastman also collaborated on the project, providing the art and design of the album.

Producing 11 songs in 11 years he labeled the project a labour of love. He said that growing up during the 'back to the land' movement of the early 1970s, helped to shape his appreciation for creating dreams and manifesting an idea into reality through hard work and perseverance. Drennan considers the message in his music a form of activism. Through the songs he writes he said he attempts to express the commonality shared by all people.

'In my music I try to articulate the common ground we all walk on, and those common threads that bind us together,' said Drennan.

'It brings to light a perspective on personal freedom, and the way we are interdependent of each other. We need each other, but we also have this great desire to be free and we can't do it alone. We need to be there to support each other. The greatest resource we have as humans is each other.'

The show was also a reunion for Drennan and many of his friends and family from the area who haven't seen him since he moved to

Inuvik in the Northwest Territories with his wife Lisa. Drennan said he is looking forward to tapping into the inspiration he draws from his new northern home on his next album.

?It's an amazing place, and the birthplace of a lot of creativity,? said Drennan.

?The Aboriginal perspective and their connection to the land is so damn important. It's so important that we create systems in our society that are based on valuing the earth, because we have to take care of it. There is something about the north and the cultural connection to the indigenous people that I think is very inspiring. I am so grateful to be there and witness some of this.?

Now that Drennan's dream has come to fruition he plans to continue allowing his songwriting and music to evolve.

?I feel like I am at the beginning of all this,? he said.

?It has taken a lot of courage, and sometimes I have felt unsure about how all of it is going to look, but there is a part of me that just knows that this is the way I have to go. It's totally exciting. I don't know where it is going to take me so I am just going to keep on rolling.?

The soul-inspired Canadian rock debut CD, *We All Have A Dream* is now available at Guitar Nuts and Harvest Moon in Bancroft. It can also be downloaded on iTunes, or at www.abedrennan.com.