

longhouse's posterous

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Anyone Can Sing

(Sorry for the long gap ... busy, busy, busy ...)

Let me begin by saying that this is an unabashed plug for Mitch McVicker.

He is an artist people need to know, and to hear, and to meet.

He inspires me.

On so many levels.

Every time I attend one of his concerts, I leave with the burning need to go home and work on my own craft.

Mitch McVicker is a musician I've now seen in concert four times.

In my opinion, he's that good.

What makes him that good?

I can't answer for others, because there would be a different response from each person in the audience. *(If you've seen Mitch McVicker in concert, post a comment. Share your thoughts.)*

I can, however, tell you what gets me jazzed up.

For One, his commitment to his message: If you absolutely had to pigeon-hole the man, he would loosely fall into the "Contemporary Christian" genre. He was the protege of the late Rich Mullins ("Awesome God," "Sing Your Praise To The Lord," etc.). You can see Mullins's influence, but in latter years McVicker has found his own path and his own voice. He uses that voice to gently spread a message of peace and love, of dignity and worth, of hope and common understanding. The basic tenant of his message is a simple one -- love God, let Him love you. Once you do that, he says, it is so easy to love who you are.

Lack of self-worth is epidemic, and it is the root cause of a debilitating apathy that pervades all aspects of society. We see and hear and experience all

manner of atrocities, and we roll over. How much stronger would we be as a people if we loved ourselves enough to focus our attention on the person standing next to us?

For Two, how McVicker conveys his message: This is where he breaks from the Contemporary Christian pack. Mitch performs 100-200 shows a year, playing for a hot meal and whatever gets dropped into free will offerings. He does good with CD sales after the shows, but even that doesn't hedge much against the rising cost of gasoline. He drives from gig to gig in a nondescript van. He is his own roadie, sound man, and stage crew. He is the classic definition of a working musician. He writes songs and plays them for anyone who will listen because that is his calling. His mission. His reason. He recognizes the gifts bestowed upon him and makes full use of them.

Let's again pause for a moment and revisit the subject of apathy. We all have gifts. We all have talents or skills or aptitudes. Call them what you wish. Every individual on this planet can do something very well. And yet, how many people understand how gifted they truly are? Worse still, how many people **do** recognize their talents and do nothing with them? Staggering. Disappointing. Sad.

For Three, his art: Mitch McVicker is a great songwriter. Let's cast aside the shackles of genres and look at the music. His songs are well-crafted folk/pop gems that stick in your brain long after the show is over and you've fumbled with the car keys in the parking lot. They are the kinds of songs that sneak into your morning commute or evening dishwashing. There is a Dylanesque quality about them when played live. He is a man and a guitar. His band is a looping machine and all manner of common items arrayed on a long table (from empty plastic containers to a toy that makes poopy noises). His voice is a rough, soft baritone that you never once doubt is sincere. No overdubbed tracks, no pyrotechnics. Nothing to get in the way of the music and its message.

That is what gets me jazzed up about Mitch McVicker.

The man is an artist. He is a working artist. He works every day to bring his art to the people.

Learn more at www.mitchmcvicker.com.