

Boy On Bridge – Alan Doyle

Alan Doyle's hometown of Petty Harbour, Newfoundland, is a small fishing village surrounded by high hills and steep cliffs, and is divided by a fast running river, which flows into the open sea. Near his childhood house a small bridge not only bridged the river, but also the Catholic and Protestant sides of the town. The grandparents remember a time when you'd dare not cross the bridge, but for the community's children in Alan's day, it was a hangout and a place to dream of what the big world must be like over the hills and far away. It was here perched upon its stone wall Alan learned many of his first life lessons; first and foremost that, while Petty Harbour would always be where he belonged, with the ocean for a front yard, there were few limits on where he could go.

Alan left home as a teenager and moved to Newfoundland's capital, St. John's, where he honed his performing skills as a solo artist in the city's pubs, standing on miniscule stages, belting out folk songs and the classic rock for the rowdy patrons. In 1993, he joined forces with fellow pub warriors Sean McCann, Bob Hallett, and Darrell Power; and together they started Great Big Sea, in which they fused traditional Newfoundland music with their own pop sensibilities. 19 years later, the band continues to astonish crowds around the world with their energy, musical skill and an ingrained inability to take themselves too seriously. A national musical treasure for a generation, their nine albums and two DVD releases have been declared Gold or Platinum and have sold a combined 1.2 million copies in Canada.

When not occupied with GBS duties, Alan Doyle is much in demand as a producer, arranger and general musical catalyst, having produced albums for actor Russell Crowe and Juno Award winners The Irish Descendants, among others. He has also furnished soundtracks for the movie *Young Triffie's Been Made Away With*, the television series *Hatching, Matching & Dispatching*, and for a best-selling Nintendo DS video game. With the release of *Boy On Bridge*, Alan adds another dimension to his career: that of solo artist.

The album represents the culmination of the musical journey he has been on since his days playing on the lanes and seashore of Petty Harbour. It has allowed him to explore the furthest reaches of his imagination and creativity, and while much of it began in his own basement studio, he ended up recording all over the world, as new ideas and friends came to the musical party and never left.

Alan has reached both into his past and future in search of new collaborators. Canadian stars like Colin James, Hawksley Workman and Jim Cuddy are joined by Nashville pros Troy Verges and Kelly Archer, while long-time collaborator Gordie Sampson helped write and record some of the album's finest material. Friends from the movie and TV worlds, Russell Crowe and Mike Post, helped out as well, co-writing and recording with Alan.

Boy On Bridge gave Alan a chance to finally delve into his love of country music and more classic rock and roll sounds. Fresh from their success with artists like Faith Hill and Carrie Underwood, Sampson and Verges helped create the modern country of *I've Seen A Little*, while Nashville up-and-comer Ryan Tyndall co-wrote "My Day". The blues shouter "Testify" was co-written with Russell Crowe and subsequently recorded with guitar hero Colin James in Vancouver. "Northern Plains" features two famous collaborators – written and produced by Hawksley Workman, it features the inimitable Jim Cuddy on background vocals. Alan went to Los Angeles to work with his friend Mike Post, the musical wizard behind countless soundtracks, and among other fine moments, these sessions produced the heartfelt "The Rules Will All Be Broken".

Boy On Bridge could be seen as a departure for Alan but it's also very much a continuation of his own musical traditions. The album is both a labour of love and a major artistic statement. While his branches extend around the globe, Alan Doyle's roots remain firmly in their soil.