

CD Reviews

Paul Taylor

- www.paultaylor.ws - email:pauldidj@juno.com
- P.O. Box 1427 Laramie, WY 82073 - 307.721.8853

The Walkabout The Journey of Paul Taylor

by Tim Van Schmidt



Paul Taylor storyteller, musician, traveler

When storyteller, musician, and traveler Paul Taylor was a young man growing up in the south of Australia, he had no intention of becoming an artist. He lived in the suburbs of Adelaide and graduated at the age of 21 with a degree in social work. Taylor got a job working in Darwin, in the tropical northern part of Australia, which became, for him, "a life changing event."

"The job got me into contact with aboriginal people and introduced me to the music of didjeridoo. It also was an introduction to a totally different view of the world and the arts. I was never the same again," Taylor remembered in a recent phone interview from his home in Laramie.

Taylor discovered that the aboriginal philosophy of life looked at painting, singing, and storytelling not as art, but as a part of every day life. While this made a deep impact on Taylor, it wasn't until he traveled to England- on a "classic Australian" journey to retrace his roots- that he realized he no longer wanted to be

a social worker. Instead, he toured England, Scotland, and Wales as a circus clown. He also began training as an actor at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, which served him well when he returned to Australia to work as an actor in regional theaters.

Then, another life-changing event occurred. Taylor was hired to take actor Bobby Bridger- a relative of famed mountain man Jim Bridger- on a tour of the Australian outback. Bridger was performing a one-man mountain man show and in the process of the tour, Bridger and Taylor became friends. Bridger invited Taylor to come back with him to the United States to join his performing troupe and in 1990, that's exactly what Taylor did. To his surprise, he was received with open arms, especially when showcasing the didjeridoo.

That included NPR, who gave Taylor a 45-minute spot to represent his country in stories. That performance became his first recording, titled, *Matilda and the Dream Time*. One half of the album featured stories from the aboriginal tradition of stories called the "dream time." The other half was devoted to "bush ballads," or, as Americans would label them, cowboy poetry. He not only recorded them, but he was also performing them. He went back to Australia and when he came back in 1992, he obtained a work visa and began his long journey of traveling around America, celebrating Australian culture.

Taylor made his home base in Laramie, which he found to be very similar to Australia's outback. In the process of his travel elsewhere, Taylor made plenty of new friends- including the cadre of musicians in Fort Collins that would deeply affect his recorded work. Especially through KIVA recording studio operator Russ Hopkins, Taylor found kindred spirits who understood the true meaning of "playing" music.

The result is Taylor's debut CD release, *Walkabout*. The album features compositions based around the recordings from several Fort Collins performances dubbed the "Neo-Beatnik Happenings." These events, held at various times over the last three years at Avogadro's Number and Bar Bazaar, brought Taylor together with local musicians in a spontaneous combustion of creativity. Taylor and the musicians, including such talents as Pamela Robinson, Steve Amedee, Lloyd Drust, two fingers, Marc Sabatella, and many more- became a make-shift orchestra to back local poets who volunteered to read.

"With the Happenings, we tried to create a genuine play situation and it became a strong basis for the album," Taylor said.

But more, *Walkabout* also features music Taylor and Hopkins recorded on trips to the Navajo reservation, where jamming on didjeridoo, horse trailers, and glass bottles turned into stunning tracks on the album. Hopkins and local guitarist and composer Jerry Palmer took this material and recordings from the Happenings and helped Taylor create an album full of surprising, playful, and even magical sounds. The music strikes a powerful "human chord" while being undeniably danceable.

To celebrate the release of the album, Taylor has scheduled a "Walkabout Happening" for Jan. 15 at Avogadro's. The event will feature a performance by Taylor, spoken words group TVS & two fingers and another free-for-all jam between select musicians and local poets.

Meanwhile, Taylor has already been working on the next artistic step in his amazing personal journey- commissioned pieces for didjeridoo and orchestra.

SCENE 7 MAGAZINE



Paul Taylor

- www.paultaylor.ws - email:pauldidj@juno.com
- P.O. Box 1427 Laramie, WY 82073 - 307.721.8853

CD Reviews

Walkabout

Walkabout is the product of the neo-beatnik "Happenings" in the Fort Collins, Colorado area. You have never heard anything like this CD! It is a brand new listening experience that will totally fascinate you. Be sure to read the inside of the cover for the details on recording dates and how the pieces were composed. There are stories, poetry, sound art, and a diversity of musical instruments that will blow you away! There are also non-musical items, such as beer bottles and a horse trailer, that are transformed into musical accompaniments.

The layering on this CD is absolutely otherworldly! To get the full effect, turn off the lights and quiet yourself in a relaxed position. Then start the CD playing and close your eyes. You will be drawn so deeply into the songs and tunes that you will completely forget the world around you. Each time you listen to this CD, you will discover something new. The louder you play it, the more parts you discover.

This CD is impossible to classify as anything except world music. "Humma" features the Indonesian Gamelan Orchestra, "Tunas Makar" of Denver with flute by Pak Made Lasmawan and poetry by Gina Lalli. "Baba Ghanouj" and "Grand Pageant" were composed for the production of "Midsummer Night's Dream" by OpenStage Theatre & Company. The story, "Trevor the Tulip," was written by five-year-old Cassius Rorke-Wickins. "The Good, The Bad, & The Daffy" features what the CD cover refers to as "Appalachian breathing technique." We Southerners refer to it as "hambone." "Straight Native" has fourteen-year-old Navajo JR Bia rapping out a message that all should hear.

The talent on Walkabout is amazing. In addition to the ones already mentioned, it includes: the Red Mesa Ramblers from Tsakurshovi on the Hopi Reservation, Mangala Tiwari on vocals, Andrew and JR Bia on vocals, Ron Close on didgeridoo, Pamela Robinson on baritone sax, Peter Knudson on percussion, Rod Garnett on flute, Marty Rein on bass guitar, Mark Rosoff on a bunt pan, and Paul Taylor, Russ Hopkins, and Jerry Palmer being multi-talented from beginning to end. They jointly produced this piece. It includes the following groups and bands: TVS & Two Fingers, Happening I Band, Happening II Band, and Happening III Band. There is a special excerpt of the story, "Clancy of the Overflow," by A.B. "Banjo" Paterson.

You will not be able to pick just one of these pieces as a favorite. I am so torn between "Frogs" and "Bottles," although the massive layering just thrills me throughout this CD. "Frogs" combines water sounds, whistling, Native American chanting, singing, and turtle shell dancing in the background, with didgeridoo frog sounds. I distinctly hear the frog say: "Checking on the food." "Bottles" is the one with the beer bottle tune, of course. It fascinates and thrills me to no end. But so does "Horse Trailer," where they banged out the percussion sounds on Andrew Bia's horse trailer and then added the didgeridoo later. If you like the "Stomp" productions, you will go bonkers over this collection of killer sound art! If you are not familiar with

"Stomp," get this CD and enlighten yourself about true sound art! It is a top-of-the-line production and will make your life much brighter! Order your copy today.

Written by Alicia Karen Elkins
Rambles

CD snapshot

Paul Taylor, 'Walkabout'

The Front Range and the Australian Outback may seem worlds apart, if your perspective is based on a map. But Paul "Walking Stick" Taylor, an Australian storyteller and didgeridoo player, is making a case that the American West and Australian Outback aren't that far removed.

His CD "Walkabout" is a tribute to Taylor's recent travels in the United States and how they have influenced his music.

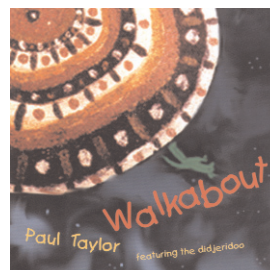
Taylor came to the United States in 1990 to perform with Bobby Bridger in "Ballad of the West," which Bridger performed throughout Wyoming in recent years. Having enjoyed the trip, Taylor returned to the states in 1992 to start an extensive exploration of the country. He's settled in Laramie, which

Taylor considers the heart of the American outback, but has grown musical roots in Fort Collins.

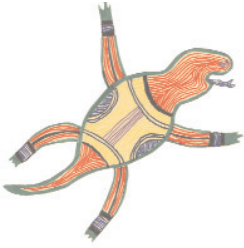
Russ Hopkins recorded "Walkabout" at his Fort Collins studio, Kiva Records; it also features performances recorded at Avogadro's Number. Local artists such as Hopkins, Jerry Palmer, Pamela Robinson and TVS and two fingers appear on the CD.

Taylor's didgeridoo - an ancient Aboriginal musical instrument, generally a tree branch hollowed by termites - is at the heart of the recording. But Taylor and his guest musicians seamlessly blend their different styles into a unique mix of world music.

Taylor will appear at the "Fifth Neo Beatnik Happening" at 8p.m. Saturday at Avogadro's Number, 605 S. Mason. Appearing with Taylor will be Hopkins, Palmer, Robinson, Lloyd Drust and TVS & two fingers. Admission is free. "Walkabout" is available by calling (307)721-8853.



The Coloradoan, Friday January 14, 2000



Paul Taylor

- www.paultaylor.ws - email:pauldidj@juno.com
- P.O. Box 1427 Laramie, WY 82073 - 307.721.8853

CD Reviews

Friday Reporter-Herald Valley Window January 14, 2000

Arts and Entertainment



Special to the Reporter-Herald

Paul Taylor will celebrate the release of his first CD "Walkabout" at the Fifth Neo-Beatnik Happening at Avogadro's Number, 605 S. Mason, in Fort Collins at 8p.m. Saturday. Admission is free for all ages. Musical guests are Pamela Robinson, Jerry Palmer, Lloyd Drust, Russ Hopkins, TVS and Two Fingers and others. Poets are invited to sign up and read. Call Kiva Records at 484-7179 or Avogadro's at 493-7179 for more information.