

APOSTLE OF HUSTLE BIO. FOLKLORIC FEEL. ARTS&CRAFTS.

I started Apostle of Hustle after I got back from two months living in El Barrio Santo Suarez en L'habana. I stayed with my godmother's family and learned to play the tres (a Cuban guitar... well, kinda learned. I always felt the Spanish vibe in music and being a music nerd, like all of us, I had to know the exact times, dates and styles of the music – though probably not as much as, say, David Byrne (ps – his essay on world music re: appropriation and what purpose does that category even serve?, is excellent – see luaka bop website if interested). I came back from Cuba and started a residency at a local Toronto dive as Apostle of Hustle, a quartet – upright bass (Julian Brown – a major part of this Thing, plays a lot of weird stuff on the record, too much to mention here – organ bass, electric mandolin, basses, guitar, beats etc.), drums (Dean Stone the Root Chakra of this Thang – I'm working on stealing him back from Sarah Harmer...), tres/guitar and trumpet. We played Brazilian & Cuban songs, Tom Waits, PJ Harvey and Marc Ribot. This was all going on during the formation of Broken Social Scene. Kevin & Brendan used to come to these Tuesday nights and be drunk and sing from the front of this cavernous reverb-y room while we chanted at the back.

So where I'm personally coming from with the Apostle record is essentially an inward, nocturnal zone – physically it's swaying, reddening and occasionally shattering. I want to make the aural equivalent of Lorca's words... (although I contradict myself a good deal i.e. / there is a polypentatonic and potentially ruinous guitar solo on the record – a teenage moustache to Frank Zappa).

I'll take inspiration where ever I can get it – obviously it's usually not a wondrous, gleaming light or brilliant bubbling idea, but more likely a persistent nagging that no matter how “uncool” won't go away.

Hmm... I realize that perhaps I'm not being much help here. A bit abstract thus far, huh? I apologize – watching Manu Chao's tour video. He was an inspiration for this record. It's odd how Feist ended up making her own record with his producer. One of the musicians describes Chao's touring life as “floating in abstraction”.

So also John Zorn... my old students (I was an ESL teacher), and aha!!! Here's an angle... need an angle, right? – the Ancestors & the Mentors. I thank them both on the album & I'll tell you why: I want to cultivate a stronger more dedicated attention span, a more responsible attitude toward life and the inter-generational life I've noticed in other parts of the world – the ancient ones are the most useful!

My mentors are writers and book people from the Canadian literary phenom of the 70's known as Coach House Press, where I worked in the 80's and 90's... check for bp nichol. Plus I have certain “guides” that help me stay connected to other truths besides the most obvious.

Maybe I'll try to get a little more focused.

The album is a glean – the concept of everything getting used, true recycling (wow, they got that one figured out in Cuba – though I'm sure they're fucking sick of it). It was recorded in four different places: from the Rocsac (Jim Guthrie's old pad in Guelph, ON), to a huge Italian church in Hamilton, ON, to my bedroom, singing into a little PZM

microphone, total indie four-track style, to of course the Broken Social Scene home of Stars & Sons studio in Toronto. A digital/analog Frankenstein, unclassifiable as to genre; more useful to classify it as Minor Key Mood Music perhaps. Or doo wop distortions. Or the spectres of Spector. Each place imposed its own rules and character on the songs, some of which have elements of all three studios in one tune, but at least it's accurate.

The Apostle of Hustle – hmm... not like a disco throwdown, it's true, but the honouring of the dailies... when I grew up in the 70's there was the beginning of a global consciousness, especially in Toronto. We live our lives on the backs of a hundred hundred. I'm an "unconscious" worker I guess. The album is also like Walt Whitman's drop: "I contain multitudes".

If I'm making up music, and it sounds like it is weepy, damn near obscure, languorous, hips centered, percussion layered, or Way Too Private, then it's got an Apostle vibe. I wish I were a poet, they've got the truly hard job. (actually, the flower guy has the hardest job...) Each song definitely has its own story – I could go on & on, but really, why? I'm trying to be less & less precious these days... my first child, going out for real and she is a dark horse with a mean temper and sweet lather.

Andrew Whiteman, July 2004