

Can't Bring Me Down
Justin Fox Band
Independent

Between taking on his first-born son's spinal meningitis and missing out on what seemed like the deal of a lifetime with a major label, Justin Fox has not let life bring him down. Through it all his spirit has not been broken and his personal relationship with the Lord has not faltered. In the end, God was (as He always is) faithful and Justin's son is now a healthy rambunctious 4 year old and The Justin Fox Band is in full demand.

"Can't Bring Me Down" is more of a pop-rock album, however it has been referred to as a modern worship album. Justin explained that many of the songs were written as prayers to God, but not in a way that goes with congregational worship. Either way the album is on a level that helps people connect to God.

Can you give me a little background on the Justin Fox Band?

I started in 1993 after graduating from Christian college. Starting out with an internship with Bob Kirkpatrick, who recorded our first two CD's in his garage. Pastors and youth Pastors who knew me, or knew about me continued to bring me in and it snowballed from there. [Band membership] has rotated a little bit over the years and sometimes I'll just play solo-acoustic. I probably play about 50% of concerts that way.

How easy is it to play just acoustic when the CD is more guitar rock?

It's different. I wrote all the songs on just an acoustic guitar, so that's what I try to capture when I go out that way. Maybe just a little bit of the roots of where the song came from and the audience really digs it. The audience hears the words real well and they can kind of get an idea of the beginnings of those songs. God seems to use it in some cool ways to speak to people, especially the older [adult] crowd who don't get the whole loud rock band thing.

What is your view between independent versus industry?

I love being independent, it's been almost ten years now and more people that I meet along the way, who are signed or who are bigger more popular bands that I admire and respect; as I get to talk with them I kind of find out that its not all its cracked up to be. I find out from them all of the hardships and struggles that their going through, and nearly 100% of the time these guys are telling me, "man Justin stay independent as long as you can". I've always been encouraged by these guys and God has definitely been at the steering wheel this whole time guiding and directing us, and I really feel He knew what He was doing all the way. Even in the times that I thought I wanted to get signed or be on the cover of magazines. As I look back over the years I just see so many ways how cool its been being independent and having our ministry be first; not a cool sound or hot new single. We shoot for art as best as it can be, but Pastors and church leaders bring us in because of the value of our ministry.

There is a lot of strength and comfort in your lyrics. What's your secret to balancing ministry, music, and family?

I know it sounds simple and maybe even cliché, but for me it really is

this connection with God, a relationship with Jesus Christ. It's not based on a really good church service or a great speaker, or a really cool Bible study; it's based on my own personal time with Him. Really just spending time [with God] like you would with a friend or wife, just really hanging out with Him.

How would you describe the Justin Fox Band sound?

I would call it pop rock, but I've never made a record that is so commercial sounding before. Most of the albums I've made are done here at home and very independent, rootsy, garage, almost lo-fi recordings that are rough and raw. This one we just wanted to do something different. My artistic bend is a little rougher around the edges kind of thing, a little more raw, but they [producers] really gave it a fun polished pop-sensibility that I wouldn't have been able to bring to it. It's a record that I can roll the window down in the car, drive along, and bob my head to. It has a real fun groove and a real upbeat feel.

What do you want people to know about the Justin Fox Band?

I'd love for people to take away from us an authenticity that would be genuine. That I, as a leader of this thing, genuinely love God with everything that I got, and that I do this for Him and because of Him and for no other reason. That we wouldn't stand in the way [of God] coming off as rock stars or anything hung up on ourselves. That we would have this real selfless ministry attitude that's for God and about God. My greatest goal is to draw people towards God.

A few songs from Justin's perspective.

Stay

This was a song that was a big fuel behind spending time with God. As He was speaking to me and challenging me to spend time with Him.

The Truth Is Out There

That song has a funny connection, as I don't know where the first line really came from. All of a sudden I thought, "that's kind of a cool analogy for salvation." It's about committing our lives to God and connecting ourselves to that higher power.

Holy Water (Ballad)

This song was inspired by God's creation as I was at a High School retreat in the mountains. I always try to get away for a nature walk and spend time with God, to get connected with God through nature.

We recorded this one in the last few hours after pulling everything out of the studio except for a few candles, and the drummer played on a Tupperware plastic box. We just sang it out all in one take.