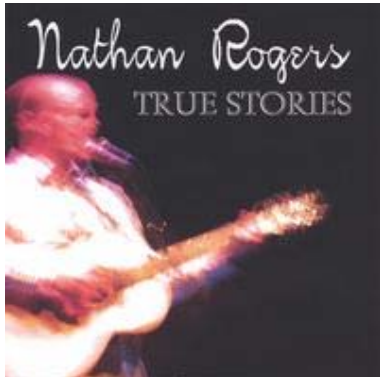


**Nathan Rogers - TRUE STORIES**  
(Halfway Cove Music 0001)



Having quite often been sorely disappointed by the creative endeavours of the progeny of famous musical figures, I was understandably reluctant at first to even approach this debut CD by the son of the iconic Canadian singer-songwriter who so tragically died in a plane accident in 1983.

However, it's a pleasure to report that my misgivings are unjustified. Though only just past his mid-20s, Nathan clearly has the gift for songwriting, although it's a developing gift rather than one emerging fully formed. And although vocally Nathan can definitely be heard to be, if not a dead ringer, surely "quite a chip off the old block" (especially in matters of tonal attack and phrasing), he's equally clearly his own man.

Like his father, he has a keen interest in Canadian life and history, which most powerfully surfaces on *Mary's Child* (which deals with the harrowing impact of French missionaries on the people of Ste. Marie); *Hibbing* (which has something of a James Keelaghan feel) depicts the lives of iron-ore miners, and *Tuesday Morning* concerns New York firefighters.

The cryptic philosophy of *The Rising Tide* is an oddity, but an intriguing one. Nathan's talent for (often quite savage, biting and satirical) social commentary is demonstrated in *Hold The Line* and the eastern-inflected *Kill Your TV*.

Nathan's musical idiom vacillates with the song, and can equally easily encompass deft Americana, bluesy shuffle and tender folk balladry: even the tasty twelve-bar of *Can't Sit Still* isn't the throwaway its lyric might indicate.

And importantly, Nathan's own keen musicianship is not in any doubt whatsoever - he's a pretty impressive guitarist - and he's able to command some high-quality support (from Richard Moody, J.P. Cormier, Christian Dugas, Gilles Fournier and others, with special mention for Nicky Mehta's backing vocals).

I'll admit the CD begins inauspiciously with a rocking-country version of *Ballad Of Duncan And Brady*, a strange choice for a lead-track for a singer-songwriter, but the disc's other cover is a splendid rendition of his uncle Garnet's setting of Charles Kingsley's *Three Fishers* (previously recorded by Stan on his *For The Family* LP).

Sure, even as a debut CD *True Stories* might seem mildly inconsistent in tenor and motive, but it contains enough indicators that Nathan's an impressive talent in his own right, and it will be worth catching one of his infrequent UK appearances, at York's Black Swan folk club on 18th June 2009.

<http://www.myspace.com/canadiannathanrogers>

<http://www.nathanrogers.ca/home.html>