

GUITAR MIKEY BIO

This Canadian singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist reveals a talent solid as stone, a style that can ignite a fire and a voice that can fuel a smoky affair. It's no wonder why Michael 'Guitar Mikey' McMillan shakes up the house one moment with his rhythm and rootsy sound and soothes listeners the next with his bluesy soulful ballads.

Raised in Hamilton, Ontario Canada, Guitar Mikey developed under the wings of jazz buff parents. "As long as I can remember, I always listened to jazz music," remembers Guitar Mikey. "My parents took me to a plethora of live music events, including artists like Joe Williams and Count Basie and Ray Charles."

When Guitar Mikey was just six years old, he recorded himself singing tunes and just knew that music was going to be it for him. Strumming the guitar for the first time at age 7, Mike got serious about the instrument by the time he hit the double digits of age 10 and followed his destined path of music by sneaking backstage to meet his mentor, 'father of modern Chicago blues' Muddy Waters at Hamilton Place (Hamilton, ON). "I remember my dad picking me up afterwards. He circled around the auditorium several times until he saw me exiting the stage door after being backstage. I remember Muddy Waters asking me questions, but I was so nervous I gave a lot of 'yes sir' and 'no sir' answers. I did manage to muster up the courage to ask for his autograph which still hangs in my office to this day!"

Continuing his love for music, the guitar-slinging prodigy started playing in local bands when he was twelve and at sixteen, began fronting the critically acclaimed/award-winning Steel City Blues Band. His nickname came from one of the songs he covered at his shows. "In the early 80's, I covered the Johnny 'Guitar' Watson classic *Gangster of Love*. There's a line in the song that goes, 'The Sheriff says, is you Guitar Watson...' I changed it to 'Guitar Mikey' to make it fit in the song and it stuck since then."

His clout and recognition with the industry excelled when American blues icon Paul Butterfield said Guitar Mikey was "one of the best slide guitar players I've heard." He released his first independent album in '88, followed by an album on A&M Records called Caught Between the Squeeze in '90 and his third project in 2007.

Throughout his career he has shared the stage with the likes of Honeyboy Edwards, Yank Rachel, Buddy Guy, Otis Rush, Billy Branch, Carl Weathersby, Long John Baldry and Paul Butterfield. Now in his new home of Clarksdale, Mississippi, he continues to influence the music community. "I want to bring roots music to the forefront of main stream radio by not holding back on musical exploration and still maintaining the integrity of the music," states Guitar Mikey.

With this in mind, he released his first studio album in over 20 years. Out Of The Box has been climbing the Roots Music Report since May. It has reached #1 on the Canadian Roots and #12 on the USA Blues chart. With his great supporting cast on the album, this 15 track CD is getting airplay around the globe with adds throughout USA, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy and the UK.

With musical influences that include artists such as Muddy Waters, Otis Rush, The Neville Brothers, Jimi Hendrix, Deep Purple, among others, he describes his musical style as blues rock hybrid. "I've been very lucky to be exposed to a lot of great music in my lifetime. I feel there is magic between a performer and an audience where it feels like we have an equal part in making the performance come alive."

Guitar Mikey has refined the best of his musical influences and has brought out his truest sense of American roots into his current project, Out Of The Box. He's definite proof that roots music is fresh and alive.