

JOHNNY BROADWAY



"As the sun sets behind the aging, crooked grin of the Detroit skyline, a poet contemplates the coming stars from a bench on the other shore. In the distance, he can hear a band sing 'I'm crossing you in style someday...' and the poet knows it's true."

Johnny Broadway is a Canadian singer-songwriter originally from Windsor, Ontario who finds his home these days in the heart of the prairies, Winnipeg, Manitoba. His upcoming album *Room 213* explores the lives of people on the road, coming or going, searching for and finding their way home.

Room 213 includes eleven stories that all happen in or around one motel room in Grand Forks, North Dakota, including a cleaning maid, an affair, a runaway, a Christmas visit, a special phone call, a road trip, car troubles, a criminal running from the law, and the law catching up with him.

Johnny has been described as everything from "Bob Dylan meets Leonard Cohen", "Paul McCartney meets Andy Kaufman", to "a young Robert Smith" but comparisons aside, Johnny is one songwriter and performer who is "impossible to dislike and impossible to ignore."

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20 words or less

There's a whole world out there to explore, where Johnny's songs chase hopes and dreams down highways and open seas.

30 words or less

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Quotes/Reviews/Press:

"Johnny Broadway has the unique ability to inject heart-touching meaning into eccentric melodies. Truly creative... truly an artist."

– Jaylene Johnson

"Johnny Broadway has a compelling, unique stage presence. Whether he's regaling the crowd with his quirky stories or grabbing their attention with his expressive songwriting, Johnny is impossible to dislike and impossible to ignore."

– Stephen Johns

"Johnny Broadway may have been raised in the shadows of Motown, but don't expect any Berry Gordy antics on the former Windsorite's debut *Discoverers*. This is strictly singer-songwriter stuff, although Broadway shows plenty of pluck and charisma. Armed with an uber-earnest voice and an arsenal of heart-on-sleeve, indie-pop confessionals, he bounces between wistful melancholy and sunny optimism so deftly he even manages to pull off wince-worthy lyrics like 'I'm such a puppy for your loveliness.' No easy feat."

– David Schmeichel, *The Winnipeg Sun*

"On *Discoverers*, his first proper full-length release, Winnipeg by way of Ontario native Johnny Broadway puts forth a collection of

heartfelt songs that ask listeners to explore the ebbs and flows of interpersonal relationships. The album's themes are centered around the desire to leave, the forces that keep us where we are and the internal struggle we face when we're holding on while simultaneously trying to let go. There's also a pretty solid boat theme running like an undercurrent throughout the album. This might all turn real cheesy real fast if Mr. Broadway wasn't so melodically competent, and capable of turning phrases and hooks like he's working overtime in the crank factory. Where Broadway really shines though is on *Discoverer's* standout track, *The Last Town in Ontario*, where he intones: "We've many miles yet to go, through every inch of falling snow, to the last town in Ontario." It's moments like these that make listeners realize that Johnny might really be on to something. Though the tracks may not appeal to those who like their rocking a tad less precious, it'd be hard for any music fan to not appreciate the breadth and scope of Broadway's songwriting, not to mention his relentless penchant for romance and the romantic. It doesn't hurt that Johnny's packing his metaphorical boats with boatloads of hummable melodies, either. *Discoverers* is a definite must hear out for fans of likewise lovelorn softies like Hawksley Workman and Danny Michel. Try it; It'll probably float your boat."

– Jarrett Storey, *Stylus Magazine*

Johnny Broadway Does It For The Ladies
by Jen Zoratti (CHARTattack)

I've been on all sorts of interviews, but this was the first one that involved flowers, a limousine and a dinner. If that's not enough to prove that singer/songwriter Johnny Broadway is bringing the romance back to Winnipeg, then perhaps his collection of equally romantic songs will be enough to convince you.

Discoverers, his endearing debut, is much more than meets the ear. The album listens like a loose narrative about a relationship, but it's not quite what you have in mind.

"It's actually more about how to detach myself from a place I'd been for 18 years and reattach myself to a new place," Broadway says. "That's more the undercurrent. It's still a relationship, but it's a different kind of relationship."

Broadway is referring to his long-term relationship with the 'Peg. The Windsor, Ont. native packed up his guitar, quit his scrappy punk outfit and made the move to Winnipeg as a starry-eyed 18-year-old. Why Winnipeg you ask? For a girl, of course.

"Yes, I moved here for a girl," Broadway laughs. "I was the lead guitarist in our concert band in high school. It was terrible. We had about 16 drummers because kids just like to hit shit. So we thought we'd organize a trip to show this off to the world."

The band, complete with a healthy triangle section, headed off to Minneapolis. It was there where Broadway met his dream girl — a private school rebel with a punk rock haircut from Winnipeg. Perhaps taking The Beatles' advice a little too close to heart, "love is all you need" was definitely a mantra for the singer, now 25. With no money and in a new city, Broadway was determined to make it work even as the relationship ended after two years.

"I would have quit making music if I hadn't moved here," Broadway says. "I would have

been in Windsor, still writing 'I still hate you, mom' songs."

For a date, we spend a lot of time talking about ex-girlfriends. But relationships have long provided themselves as a perfect muse for those who have a romantic's way with words. Sometimes, however, it's a bit less calculated than that.

"Sometimes I just wake up with a song," Broadway says. "I don't know where they come from, and I have a hard time taking credit for something that's just sort of there. I just try to sound appreciative."

Lyrics like "I'm a puppy for your loveliness" are in sharp contrast to his angst-fuelled punk days in Windsor. Going solo allowed Broadway's lyrical ability to come to the fore. *Discoverers* is certainly pared-down and lo-fi, but it's all his.

"When I was in a band, I wasn't a songwriter," Broadway says. "It was never mine. I never felt that ownership you feel when it's your own. The album is definitely on the raw side of things. It's not very James Blunt-y."

But the dude is still, well, a dude. There was a time when the motive for picking up a guitar was far less poetic.

"Eventually it was about the girls," Broadway laughs. "No kid can deny that. Girls are screaming because you're on stage. That's awesome. We had a few brassieres flung at us in the punk days."

Johnny Broadway's CD release party is Sunday at the Academy Bar & Eatery.