

Mp3 Justin Hines - Sides



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Through his overall mantra of looking for hope to shine through in all things, Hines helps people see the beauty in the light, in the remarkable everyday realities of their existence, whatever their individual journey might be. 14 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Pop, EASY LISTENING: Adult contemporary Show all album songs: Sides Songs Details: JUSTIN HINES In talking about his music, singer-songwriter Justin Hines says, Honestly, I dont remember wanting to do anything else, period. That sense of it being something as essential as breathing emanates from every track on his soul-searching debut album, Sides. Listening to it is an experience akin to that mystical phenomenon of everyday life when you meet someone new but, somehow, feel as if youve known them forever. And, while theres a familiarity, a timelessness to Justins music, its also marked by a lean, contemporary sound and distinctly postmodern sensibility as direct and authentic as the ideas and emotions the Toronto native expresses with his literate song craft. Justin absorbed his musical gifts from his family My dad plays a mean folk guitar, he says, and my mom has a great voice. She and her mom would sing old school Irish folk songs. Justins been told that as a baby, he was carrying a tune before he was talking, and remembers that, My grandmother Margaret always had this thing that I was going to be a singer. She had me singing in church and for relatives, so any stage fright left me early. There was also the influence of an inanimate but equally musical fixture of the household, a jukebox of his dads, loaded with old 45s. Hed sit in front of it for hours, listening to every song, note for note. Its still in his basement, and it still inspires Hines with classic recordings by artists including James Taylor, Willie Nelson, Cat Stevens, Jim Croce and Harry Chapin. Echoes of these and other legendary artists and consummate singer-songwriters resonate throughout Sides. Sometimes, says Justin, I feel like I was born in the wrong era. At the same time, though, shades of contemporaries including Damien Rice and Ron Sexsmith are also heard, and for all of the albums

grace and maturity which it has in spades its clearly a young mans missive. Ardent, searching and eloquent, it spotlights the prodigious talents that caused Justin, at age 14, to win a radio contest to sing the Canadian national anthem at a Toronto Raptors game (which led to national recognition and performances at many major telethons and events). Chosen out of hundreds of entrants, Justin recalls, I was the first person to try out, and later they told me they never thought about picking anybody else. My first gig was in front of 17,000 people. Showcasing the more intimate elements of Hines artistry, Sides fourteen tracks were culled from more than thirty he composed over the past several years, when he feels he came into his own as a songwriter Ive done a lot of living, learning and growing in that time, Justin says. Stripped-down but wrapped with warm melodies, the albums unadorned, all-acoustic instrumentation offers an elegantly sparse backdrop for Justins soulful vocals. Hines had a very clear idea of where he wanted to go with the record I made a conscious effort to abandon any trends, I just wanted to do something that was very honest. I wanted to just be Justin, whatever that was. It was, and is, a classic sounding confessional that reaches out to listeners with songs drawn from life, both highs and lows, that resonate with the bond of shared experience by virtue of his gentle but powerful truth telling. The album evolved through Hines collaboration with Justin Abedin, one of Torontos most respected musicians and producers (Jacksoul). Proving himself a master of understated but persuasive production, Abedin also helped assemble an elite group of Toronto-based musicians Mark Mariash, Drew Birston, Ron Lopata, Kevin Fox, Denis Keldie and Roger Travassos for tracking sessions at Torontos Canterbury Sound. They mixed at the citys famed Phase One Studios and mastered in NYC with Scott Hull (John Mayer, Steely Dan), capturing the ensemble with pristine clarity. Our idea, says Hines, was for every player to have their part and for each part to be important. We kept it very individual, nothing too over the top or sonically overwhelming. The title track Sides, is a poetic summation of the glass is half full worldview thats a keystone of Justins life and art, something embodied consistently in his music. He conveys it here with lines including, here on my side, its not the dirt on your soles but the diamonds in your eyes and its not the sun goin down its just the moons time to shine. This song came out of the fact that Im often told my perspective is a tad unique, says Justin, I see a different side of things. Possessed of an unflagging spirit thats remarkable under any circumstances, Justin is also in part referring to the rare genetic joint condition, Larsen Syndrome, that keeps him wheelchair bound, Sometimes people find it hard to understand why I would be so positive, he explains. I was born into my situation, I dont know

any different, and I feel very fortunate for my family and all the support that I have. Im hopeful, I dont dwell on it, and Ive always looked at it as a tool. I know my physical situation is a bit of an attention grabber, but as an artist and performer, it is my job to hold the audiences attention, and let the music speak for itself. He does just that throughout Sides. Other stand-outs include the album opener, Theres Always Next Time, a song Hines says, was written after coming to the conclusion that a particular relationship wasnt happening. Im a believer in amicable partings. I hope I captured the beauty in endings, not the drama. April On The Ground, the joyful, moving first single for which theres an equally affecting video companion is also about reaching a turning point and moving on. It uses the metaphor of spring being just around the corner, he says, and getting past winter to a brighter season. For Its You, which Justin calls, a simple song about my faith, stirs heart and mind with poetry and devotion. Sides only cover, Jim Croces Ive Got A Name, is my dads all time favorite, says Hines. He introduced me to it when I was little, and it was an inspiration. Hines manages to both channel Croce and make the song his own through his heartfelt connection to it. Justin cites as one of his own favorites the song Never After, which he says took him an uncharacteristically long time to write. I met someone that really had an impact on me, he says, adding, it was never a Romeo and Juliet thing, but we had a bond, and still do, thats really close and I cant quite explain it. I wanted to try and capture the essence of that. He also singles out the final track, Another Way To Cry, a minimalist gem featuring Justins vocals backed by only a piano for a song that explores, how were all kind of hurting, and we all show it in very different ways. I want to encourage people to find the beauty in the darkest situations. Through his overall mantra of looking for hope to shine through in all things, he also helps people see the beauty in the light, in the remarkable everyday realities of their existence, whatever their individual journey might be. My theory, says Justin, is that if you truly analyze your life, there is never a shortage of inspiration. The trick is to get to the heart of that and write about it honestly. I think you can really capture peoples emotions with the most simple song. With Sides, longing for truth and having the wisdom to find it all around him, Justin Hines proves the strength of that disarmingly straightforward and most essentially human of theories.

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