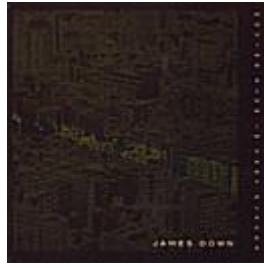


Mp3 James Down - Moving Slow In Fast Places



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Thought, imagination and emotion, put to a groove. Take James Downs smokey honest voice, mixed with his subtle yet unique guitar melodies and you get a bluesy, folk inspired pop, that makes you want to get up and move. 10 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Pop, FOLK: Folk Blues Details: "I've travelled this far/ I'm diving in." Taken from "Can I Wash the Pain Away," this line defines the musical journey of 31-year-old Canadian singer/songwriter James Down. After teaching himself to play the guitar in high school, James carried his instrument literally across the world, visiting locations in North and Central America, Europe and Southeast Asia. Throughout his travels James took time to rock climb, work and simply enjoy life, but he also played his guitar, sang and wrote songs. It wasn't until he was pressured by friends to perform at an open mic in Japan in 2002 that James realized the songwriting he had been doing as a hobby was actually much more of a passion. Then, just as the lyric suggests, James dove right into music. Two years later the Winnipeg, Manitoba-born musician recorded his debut full-length CD, "Moving Slow in Fast Places." A 10-track effort characterized by gentle, bluesy and folk-oriented acoustic arrangements and passionate lyrics and vocals, "Moving Slow" is a compilation of songs that were composed all over the world. Looking back, it was only natural for James to choose such a path. "I'm a songwriter," he says. "Every single day I'm writing a song. It's working out the thoughts of the day, and I found that song is the best sort of way to deal with these things. "I just love the process of playing with other people and the collective process of people taking and adding -- taking acoustic songs and basic ideas and turning it into something more. It really started to motivate me." Even if many of James' songs were born of basic ideas found on the beaches of Cuba or in the bustle of Tokyo streets, there are layers to each layers that reveal a great deal about an honest songwriter who genuinely believes that a single individual has more power than they realize. "Empowerment is a theme in my music," James says. "I grew up with a mother who

said, 'You can be the single person to change the world and you can change the world one person at a time.' It's single people who have led the world in one direction or another. It's these people who believe so strongly in something and then convince others and build on it." This positive attitude and deep belief in the power of connections created through music is something that can be found throughout "Moving Slow in Fast Places." The song "All the Beautiful People" is a perfect example, using a gently swinging acoustic feel and Down's smoky, honest vocals to try and wake up and inspire people who suppress their dreams and beliefs. "The song is about people marginalizing their emotions and imaginations and what they believe they can do, accepting life as it is rather than making it into what they would like it to be," James explains. Sentiments such as these are found throughout the album, and James credits the strong influence of his mother, Shirley Lord, in creating a socially conscious person who is sensitive to the delicate relationships between people and places. James learned more about community and global issues in his studies at the University of Winnipeg, but it was during his travels that he really started to make connections to people he met as well as the environment. James is far more a traveller than a tourist, an important distinction that is evident on "Can't Have Paradise." "We used to frown on the British who came only to colonize/ how come we don't laugh at those who come just to pick other girls and guys," James sings, his lyrics pointing to natural beauty that transcends postcards, souvenir T-shirts and island resorts. And that's really the key to "Moving Slow in Fast Places" -- a sense that there's more to everything and everyone. Recorded in the summer of 2004 at HallBouwens Studio in Port Coquitlam, B.C., James' debut is really a deeper look at people and places as well as an attempt to make connections with listeners around the world. "I want to make music and get it to as many different people as possible, but I never thought about making a demo for anyone else. This summer was a demo for me to see if I could do something with these songs," James says. "Almost every song I've ever written, I've just dreamed of a line, and a song will come from that. Some of the songs on the album were written over a couple of years and some were written in about five minutes. "Since I was a little kid, songwriting has always been something that I've loved and been really in to -- it's just something that's been building with me, and I can't seem to stop doing it." In the fall of 2004 James will be returning to Japan, promoting his CD and putting together a permanent band to play with during the year. After that, well, the only certainty is music. "I want to further myself through education, I want to experience all that life has to offer, and I want to keep travelling and exploring, but music will be the only constant ... it is my home."

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