
Ryan O'Connor talks with P.E.I.'s fiddling sensation **Richard Wood** and finds out what it is like to be **the next big thing**.

One of the best known musicians on the Island, Richard Wood has already racked up an interesting career while still in his early twenties. Having appeared on the David Letterman Show, as well as Good Morning America, Wood recently traveled to Japan as part of a Canadian trade mission. Performing at the Canadian embassy for the likes of the Japanese Emperor, he also showcased in front of a crowd of Asian promoters. The following interview was conducted by phone in late August, a short while before he left for Japan.

Ryan O'Connor: How old were you when you started playing the fiddle?

Richard Wood: I started when I was eleven, before that I was a dancer when I was eight; I was a stepdancer dancing to fiddle music, and my folks just asked if I wanted to try the fiddle.

RO: Who were, and are, your chief influences?

RW: There's a couple of them. One's a fiddler from the '50's and '60's, a player by the name of Winston "Scotty" Fitzgerald, and a player from that time frame named Angus Chisholm. And there's other musicians too, like Elvis and Mozart, that when you listen to you always come away with something. You can always pick something up.

RO: How busy is your schedule these days?

RW: We've been on the road all summer pretty much, and we're home for a couple days, then we're off to Ontario for a week or two.

RO: How much time do you get off, and how do you spend that time?

RW: It doesn't come much, but when I do I just like to take it easy and relax, you know, spend time with my family.

RO: You're going to Japan – where else have you been?

RW: We've done a lot of touring all over Europe in the past year actually. We've been all over Ireland, and we've toured Scotland...Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Wales...

RO: How would you describe your sound to someone that's never heard you before?

RW: It's fiddle music with an edge to it – very powerful. It's also a very visual show, so you have to see me playing because it's pretty powerful stuff.

RO: How was the recording of "Come Dance With Me?"

RW: I'm pretty happy and proud actually, in terms of the quality and writing and the sound.

RO: Where will you be touring in the next twelve months?

RW: After September we're going to be in the Maritimes for a while, then back to Europe in November. We'll get some time

arts & entertainment

edited by ryan o'connor

off in December, and after that another couple tours out in Western Canada, then we'll probably hit the States.

RO: Is there any place you're targeting?

RW: At this point, yeah, this past year we've targeted Europe, things are going really well over there...we're going to go to the States and also Japan, trying to target over there.

RO: You write much of your own material, how often do you write tunes?

RW: Quite a bit. You know, I've just released a book, the album just came out and I got a book out as well of written sheet music for fiddle that are some of my originals. There's

seventeen or so pieces in that, so I've done a fair amount of writing. In my first year of playing I wrote my first tune, so it's kind of neat now to go back and look at the difference in the writing.

RO: Do you know how many you've written?

RW: No, I don't know how many in total, but it's quite a lot. I've got stuff that I wrote and put on tape that I haven't

even gone back and checked out.

RO: Have they ever explained what happened at the ECMA's?

RW: Oh yeah, it's quite simple, it's something that just happened. Obviously when you have twenty different bands on the show with wireless packs and all the frequencies, if somebody else has the same frequency as you then it's going to cancel

