Musicians of the Midnight Sun

Thank you for visiting the Musicians of the Midnight Sun website. Even though these blogs are being posted many weeks after the launch of the Musicians of the Midnight Sun website, my hope is that they will remain as a document along with the website itself with the intention to give a little bit more of a personal story of my relationships with these featured artists.

Johnny Landry

Back in 1985 or so, I got to listen to a 45 release by Johnny Landry with 3 songs, "We Are Standing", "Hınana Hoho Hıne" and "Ụndaa Gogha". My ears were drawn to the production of these songs in that they were the first from a northern artist that I had heard that used a synthesizer which was fairly new technology at the time. These songs played like northern anthems. The conviction and defiance in Johnny's voice was something else I had not heard in a northern artist before. That release definitely motivated me and probably many others to step up our songwriting craft and production value of our own music in a big way. Since then, "Hınana Hoho Hıne" has become a northern anthem, crossing generational and cultural barriers.

Johnny Landry,'We Are Standing' 45 cover front 1986, (photo © 2019, Johnny Landry)

His was another interview I had to re-do because the first one had so much noise from the ice machine in the "Snowshoe Inn" in Fort Providence. As a result, the second interview was much more concise but at the same time he went into more depth in regards to the spirituality of his song writing and where his inspiration comes from. Johnny also talked of his time playing music with Metis fiddle prodigy, the late Kole Crook through Kole's formative years.

Johnny Landry w the late Kole Crook. Fort Providence, NT, 1998 (photo © 2018 Johnny Landry)

Johnny has been and continues to be a champion for the Dehghaot'ine and the Dene Zhatie language. He is passionate about incorporating the traditional tea dance songs and the teachings of the Dene laws into the songs he writes. I am inspired by the honest intention, conviction and tenacity Johnny brings to his music, his willingness to share his insights and to be a part of the Musicians of the Midnight Sun project.

Roger Yatseli, Johnny Landry, Rupert and Wilbert Chambeou. Fort Providence, 1995. (photo © 2018 Johnny Landry)

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