

mark berube

"Mark is foremost a singer and a songwriter. His combination of skill, clarity, and ambition is impressive." - **Alexander Varty, Georgia Straight, Vancouver**

At 9 years old, he was among a dancing crowd of 10,000 watching the late South African pop star Brenda Fassie at Somhlolo Soccer Stadium, Swaziland, Africa. With apartheid still strong next door in South Africa, this concert reverberated on many levels: musically, socially, and politically. Mix this life-defining experience with Manitoban-Québécois roots, a stylistically diverse musical repertoire, the piano, accordion, guitar, and a voice that disarms his audiences, and you have the multi-faceted sound of Mark Berube.

Mark was a Peacedriven Songwriting Award Honourable Mention winner for 2006. His second album "Sketches from the sidewalk" has received coast to coast radio play on the CBC (Richardson's Roundup and North by Northwest), Canadian College radio stations, as well as college radio in Bergen, Norway and public radio in Fribourg, Switzerland.

He has toured Canada five times, and Western Europe four times (England, Scotland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland) as a musician and spoken word artist.

Mark has just recently finished his fourth album "**what the river gave the boat**".

He has recently received a Canada Council Grant for the Fugitives, a spoken/word music project of which he is a part. He also composes music for dance and theater. Most recently, he worked with Leaky Heaven Circus, Vancouver. He received a Jessie Richardson Reward Nomination for the music he composed and performed in this project.

Performance highlights: headlining the Montreal Festival Des Voix Ameriques (February 2006), Showcase performances at the ROXY and VIPER Room, Los Angeles, CA, a packed inn in Hempstead, England with an old acoustic piano (May 2007), The Great Escape Festival, Brighton, UK with Dan Mangan (May 2007).



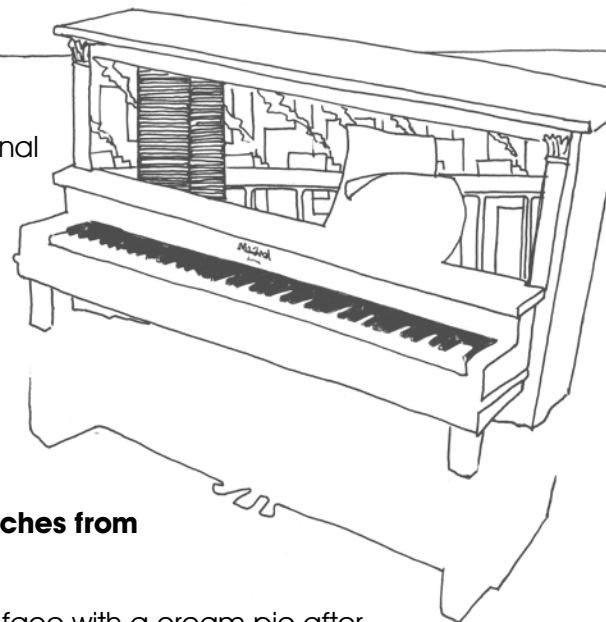
"A songwriting stunner" - **Grant Laurence, CBC Radio 3**

"Vancouver based Berube is...a total original in the tradition of exceptional Canadian singer songwriters" - **Vancouver Province, 2004**

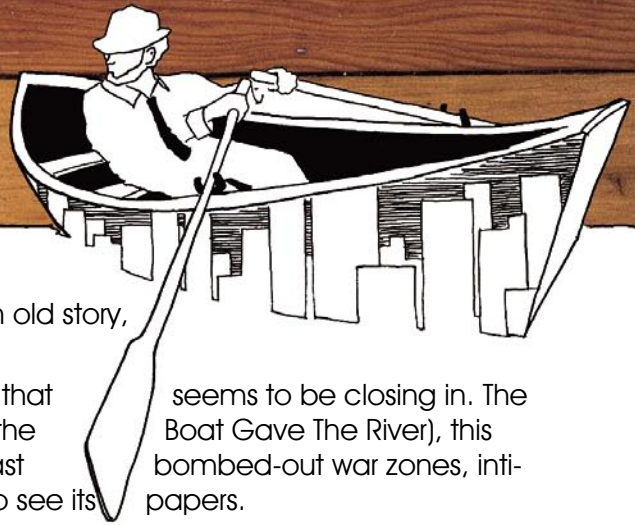
"He can put together a good pop and jazz combination, has got some excellent throaty projection and is one of the only artists I know that can throw chaotic improvisation into the middle of a catchy tune." - **Geordi Dent, Jazzonen, 104.1FM, Bergen, Norway**

"Berube's soaring, warm vocals add an extra element to the vintage tones of his music, and when all the pomp is stripped away, his voice can obviously carry the album on its own if need be." - **Jaclyn Arndt, Soulshine - Canada's essential guide to new music (Review of Sketches from the sidewalk)**

[Sketches from the sidewalk] "makes you feel like you've been hit in the face with a cream pie after finding out that your wife of 17 years has been cheating on you." - **Jason Richards, NOW - Toronto's Entertainment Weekly, Rating: NNN**



what the river gave the boat



Press Release

Have you heard the story of what the river gave the boat? It's an old story, maybe one of the oldest. It's a folktale no one knows.

Mark Berube's stirring fourth album arrives just in time for a world that first half of a double album (its companion record will be *What the Eclectic Songbook* courses with rebellious sincerity as it floats past mate heartbreaks and the border police who would demand to see its

seems to be closing in. The *Boat Gave The River*, this bombed-out war zones, inti-papers.

Backed by a string quartet, upright bass, percussion, dobro, trumpet, accordion and acoustic guitar, *What The River Gave The Boat* is anchored in Berube's folk-inspired piano and striking vocals. Perched on this raft of ivory and strings, his tales of urban saints and rural rubble drift through the places where we've already paid (New York City, London, Berlin) to the places where we still owe (Swaziland, Croatia). They remind us that we are all linked by an endless stream of stories, even when the distances between us seem unfathomable.

Berube is the perfect guide for these sometimes harrowing, always beautiful journeys. Born in Brandon, Manitoba and raised in southern Africa, Berube is a vagabond in the worldwide musical circus who draws little spiritual distinction between the developing and the developed world. His haunting voice has a universal vitality that is both unique and strong; a member of the music press once dubbed him "Nina Simone's baritone brother." He started young, honing his voice with gospel songs every day before school in Swaziland, while the South African police tapped his family's phones and sifted through their mail.

This record vaults Mark Berube into a high class of musical maturity and lyrical precision. He asks us to remember one of the last reigning monarchs in the world (**Yebo Mama**), to learn the wisdom and complexity of a man from Northern India singing the praises of Bob Dylan while dining in a Korean restaurant (**Barber Shop**), to imagine ourselves on the train at the last minute in a doomed subway tunnel (**Tomorrow**), to paint a Japanese woman in a white satin dress thrashing behind Toronto drums (**Cowboys**), to dream ourselves digging graves in a farmer's field (**War without an end**), to understand that all our families are wanted by the police (**Alarms**), to picture a place where the fear needs a haircut but the barber shop is closed. Most wisely of all, Berube allows us our playfulness. He asks us to sit back and watch as a pretty little bird makes love to a dove without the glove (**Pretty Little Bird**).

This album is a rowboat on a steadfast river flowing through tomorrow's troubled headlines. It is a human heart pulling its oars through the modern world and setting it aglow. If you haven't heard the story of *What The River Gave The Boat*, I suggest you listen closely. Looking at the newspaper this morning, all alone in my tiny kitchen, I have a feeling it has arrived just in time.

Andrew Westoll, Toronto, Fall 2006

PREVIOUS ALBUMS

A night with sara (2005)
Shadowbox Choir (2005)
Sketches from the sidewalk (2004)
Fire In the Blue (2000)

BOOKING AND GENERAL CONTACT

markberube@gmail.com
604 626 9452

For more information and past tour dates, please visit:
www.markberube.com
www.myspace.com/markberubemusic
(EPK) at www.sonicbids.com/markberube2

PRESS

Ken Beattie
kb@killbeatmusic.com