

TRAVIS TAYLOR: artist biography

"If it's good music, it is good music." That's Travis Taylor's story and he's sticking to it. The Texas-born, California-based singer/songwriter backs up his declaration with "You Have Loved", his latest full-length rock 'n' roll exploration of the length, breadth and depth of love and life viewed through the eyes of faith. It is one of those rare dichotomous albums that fits comfortably into a box, yet refuses to be contained by one.

"I am a worship leader at heart, so I write songs for the worship arena," Travis says. "But I also write songs about my wife; songs about my kids; songs that are just about everyday life. Of course there is an element of faith that runs throughout these songs, even when I'm not singing specifically about God. I think good music is good music and I don't think people will be confused by hearing a love song next to a worship song on an album, as long as both are great songs."

Travis admits that the concept of his latest album reaches beyond the cookie cutter mentality that occupies the Top-40 airwaves. But that's okay. It's just another box that Travis believes listeners are ready to climb out of.

"I didn't want to write ten worship songs just so I could fit the mold of what would work on the shelf of the local Christian bookstore," he explains. "I wanted this album to reflect me as an artist. And as an artist, I write all kinds of stuff. It makes perfect sense to me and I think it will connect with a world full of people who love great music."

Ironically, it is Travis's day job as a worship leader that formed his artistic philosophy. While it is a philosophy that seems to come out of left field, it makes perfect sense to those who dare to peek outside of their box.

"Our church is right in the middle of the wealthiest zip code in Los Angeles," Travis says. "It is a place that is populated by super successful people - doctors, lawyers, actors, producers who are all very well off. Hollywood is arguably the most extravagant, materialistic machine in the world, so if you are in church there, it is because you want to learn about the Lord; not because it is the cool thing to do. It is refreshing because these people aren't churchy. They don't speak Christian-ese. They just talk normal. That's really what my album is all about - just living a normal life in the real world and sharing my faith by living a life that reflects it."

As an artist who hasn't been molded by the demands of the industry, Travis steadfastly refused to allow the industry to shape the way his music was unveiled to the world. Challenging the status quo, he formed his own production company, maintained complete creative control, and gathered a team of like-minded professionals who were dedicated to blazing new trails without abandoning proven methods.

Re-defining boxes is something that came naturally for the native Texan. The son of Jesus music-era musicians, Travis says his earliest memories were of sound checks and church pews. The proximity of musical instruments and a musically savvy family sparked his interest in learning the musician's craft. However, the lure of sports and desire to fit in

with the popular crowd resulted in his being sidetracked for a time during his high school years.

Travis credits his father, who gave him space to experience life outside the box, and a youth pastor who kept the walls up and the door opened, with reining him in.

"This youth pastor kept encouraging me to play my guitar in the youth worship band," Travis recalls. "He had me sign a contract with him saying I would quit partying and doing all the stuff I shouldn't have been doing in the first place. For some reason, I took it seriously. It haunted me every time I was tempted to go partying. By the time I got ready to go to college, I seriously considered going to a school for ministry."

Travis continued to hone his songwriting chops throughout his college years, and found himself in demand as a worship leader for everything from small student gatherings to regular church services. He formed the successful indie worship band Tenthousand Flying and hit the road for 200+ dates a year, but something inside still gnawed at him.

"I'm a songwriter more than I'm a performer, but more than anything I am worship leader," Travis muses. "I needed to get somewhere that I could lead worship for a consistent group of people."

That inner desire finally became a reality five years ago when Travis received an unexpected call to be the worship leader at Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades.

"It is a special environment because they don't expect being a worship leader to be the only creative outlet that I need," Travis says of his home church. "Not every church will understand that. When I write for the church it can be pretty restrictive, artistically. You have to write with a purpose – to connect with a person on a level that they can understand lyrically - and musically it needs to be easy enough that everyone can sing along. I'm happy to write within those perimeters because I want the congregation to be able to worship with the songs I've written. But I would be deprived as an artist if that was all I wrote. It is important for me to get outside of my box and write other kinds of songs. It is equally important that I get inside the box the world has built."

With the blessings of church leadership and the desire to impact his culture, Travis Taylor writes songs that captivate the heart and lighten the spirit, no matter what your box looks like.