Tupelo guitarists vocal about new singing role

**musicreview**

Tupelo Honey
Featured at Week of Welcome Mainstage Show with Thomley, Silkscarf, and Christian Hansen and the Autistics
Saturday, September 11, shows start at 6 p.m.
University Union Building Annex
$20 at main floor of SUB

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Anytime a band member departs from his or her band, questions of the future inevitably come to mind — especially when the departing member is the lead singer, as is the case with Matt Landy's departure from Tupelo Honey this March. However, after selling away the past seven years and managing to release three CDs, St. Albert's Tupelo Honey is now primed to release two albums, likely within the next 12 months. For the band, the apparent weight of Landy has been released from the band's shoulders, and now they're finally ready to get down to work.

"We started recording probably last October," says Dan Davidson, longtime lead guitarist for the band and last to the lead singer role. "We couldn't get [Landry] out to Toronto [to record] and it was just so frustrating because we [were] just kind of stuck. We had this awesome album that we're really excited about and we had started recording an acoustic record as well.

"So we had essentially two finished albums done and we couldn't find anybody to sing on it," he says with a chuckle. "So we did the process of finding for the singer and it ended up being me.

While the band's hunt for a new vocalist ended closer than they initially thought, they did consider other outside options. Ultimately, Davidson was the one to rise to the occasion.

"I think it was weird — nobody ever thought of me as giving it a shot in the beginning because I was "Dan the guitar player." Davidson's experience as a backup singer for the band and his overwhelming commitment to give 100 per cent" made him a front runner within a fortunate conclusion, despite the fact that they auditioned friends for the part as well — sometimes secretly, without them knowing. They even had ex-Gooch of Canadian folk fame record a demo of their songs, just to hear if the Tupelo sound comes through with a new voice. And even though they really liked Gooch's demo, it wasn't meant to be.

"It's a really great fit," says Davidson of the new dynamic, which isn't all that new per se, given that the band remains unchanged other than Landy's departure. "And it's still the same four guys who have done all the writing ever since Tupelo began, so nothing's really changing except for the voice on the recordings."

As for Landy, the breakup between him and Tupelo Honey was a completely mutual arrangement. He's continued to perform acoustic sets across the city, even lumping into members of the band on occasion. Davidson teases that he is "waxing a malicious parting" and that they continue to be on good terms, though it was clear that Landy's more laid-back approach wasn't a fit with his more driven former bandmates.

"[Landry] had his head in a different place from us. He didn't have the same goals, the way he operated in his life wasn't working with the band. [...] We were having a hard time feeling chemistry with each other," Davidson says.

"Matt is doing his acoustic thing, doing what he does and we're back and we have two full records done and we're working at a pace we've never worked at before. We're at 110 per cent right now. It's exciting!"