

MUSIC INDUSTRY PROFILE **20 QUESTIONS**
with
LIAM TITCOMB Sony Music
Recording Artist



Although he's just a few months short of his 18th birthday, Liam Titcomb is already a seasoned pro in the music businesses. Titcomb hit the stage when he was just seven years old, singing back up and playing percussion for his seminal Canadian folk father, Brent. Now, with his self-titled SONY Music Canada debut album making waves on the airwaves- the single "Counting Headlights" cracked Top 20 lists across the country - Titcomb is breaking out. Insight Victoria sat him down, to take the lead in our new interview feature, Twenty Questions.

Who are your main musical influences?

i've got so many... but i can list a few of the more known ones... Daniel Lanois, U2, Radiohead, Neil Young, the Beatles, Bob Dylan, etc. not quite as known but not less important to me, Tom Wilson, Willie P. Bennett and Rob Lamothe.

What's the last CD you bought? How come?

funeral by the arcade fire... why? because they're f-ing awesome! it's really a fantastic record from beginning to end...

How did it feel the first time you heard one of your songs on the radio?

it was an amazing feeling, kind of hard to explain. when it first came on it actually took a few seconds for me to recognize it and then i was like "hey! that's my song! that's me!" you feel like rolling down the window and yelling at people on the street to tell them. after that was the realization that right before my song they had been playing U2. unbelievable!

When writing a song, which comes first for you: the words or the music?

usually the music and then i fit words to it. occasionally a song will come with words. although the words are

extremely important to me in my songs they seem to always happen after the structure.

Your vote for greatest Canadian songwriter? Why?

oh this is so difficult. i would have to choose Daniel Lanois though instead of the typical choice of Neil Young or Leonard Cohen... even though i absolutely love their writing, Dan's writing has been more of an influence on me and my music. i also think his solo career has been severely underrated so he deserves it.

Your music is hard to label. There are elements of rock, and pop and folk. How would you describe it?

these days people are afraid of the f-word, the f-word being folk. it's become a negative description almost. so even though i would like to describe my music as folk-rock because it covers it all, i usually say i'm a singer-songwriter who plays acoustic-rock-pop. that way people don't stick me into any one particular box.

What's the first song you ever wrote?
a song called 'Just Breathe' it was about a girl who was dealing with the pressures of life - like looking a particular way and acting a particular way. she felt like a loner who could have done something drastic and the song was saying it was alright, 'Just Breathe'. since then i've heard multiple songs saying 'Just Breathe' in them. i actually wrote it about 4 years ago, i may re-work it a bit and release it some time in the future you never know...

Your vote for worst song ever?
almost every song has a time and a place where it's perfect but maybe "Love Shack"?

What's your favourite line from a song?
one line that i really like is a Neil Young line from his new record Greendale. it goes like this "a little love and affection, in everything you do, could make the world a better place, with or without you."

Rose of Jericho has an interesting story behind it. Can you fill us in?
i wrote that song after seeing a film about young girls and boys that were being stolen from their homes and sold into the sex trade in europe. it was a really heavy piece, and it made me want to do something. the only thing i could do was write a song. i was stuck for the chorus and started to look around, i found rose of Jericho in a book. i didn't know what it was but it fit perfectly and sounded beautiful. i went on the net later to find out and i couldn't believe my eyes, it was the perfect metaphor for the girl in my song. a "rose of Jericho" is a desert plant that can dry up like a tumbleweed and roll around the desert for years if conditions aren't right but if you submerge it in water in a matter of hours it will come back to life and bloom. my hope is that if you could give these girls a little love and some time they could come back. the last time i played in Regina a woman came up to me after the show and she was crying, she was running a home for teenage prostitutes. she asked if she could tell the girls what i had said and play the song for them when they came to the home. now that makes it all worth while.

You've written a lot with Tom Wilson, and play a number of his songs in your shows? What's the connection?
Mike Roth (sony a&r) first put us together, not knowing that when Tom was a kid (14) he used to sneak into clubs to see my dad. he says he stole every lick my dad had. when i was 14 i started to follow him around. he jokes that i've been titcomb-ized through him. i wrote a lot with Tom because we have a simpatico and he has been a major influence. some of the tunes that were written for me have ended up in his repertoire and suit him better. he's a close friend of mine and i'm just a big fan of what he does and besides that i am continuing a tradition. full circle. Daniel Lanois talks about music being born out of a place and a time. i grew up backstage at the Festival of Friends in Hamilton every year of my life, listening to Junkhouse, Dan Lanois, Colin Cripps and Bill Dillon etc. we all have roots in Hammertown but it's what happens to it after that makes it your own. a good song is a good song and can live through a lot of people.

Your dad is well known to Canadian folk music aficionados. How did he influence your career?
if i hadn't grown up immersed in music i wouldn't be half the musician i am, i might not have been a musician at all. the things i've learned through osmosis and my lifestyle as a kid really prepared me to do what i'm doing now.

If you weren't a musician, what do you think you'd be doing?
i think i'd still have my hand in the music biz in some way but because i'm still too young to get a job at a label, i'd probably be working at some cool café and going to university.

Is there another album in the works?
there is, slowly but surely i'm starting to work on it. no idea what a possible release date would be yet, far too early for that.

Is it true that you're obsessed with the Beatles?
no, i'm not obsessed with the Beatles. they're just my favourite band... ever. i own a few too many books on them but i wouldn't call that obsessed, would you?

Outside of the music, what do you do to unwind?
read a good book under a tree? oh i don't know... the things everyone else does... shoot some pool, ride my bike. i like to get out into the country, and just hang with my friends.

You seem very relaxed on stage. Do you ever suffer from stage fright?
i wouldn't say i have stage fright but i definitely get nervous right before i get on stage. it doesn't matter if there's 9 people in the audience or 9000 i still get the same butterfly's right before i go on. i think it's important to feel a little nervous going on stage because a performer uses that vulnerability to fuel their performance and make their songs and ideas come across. if you get on stage with a cocky attitude you're guaranteed to screw up somehow.

You spend a lot of time on the road. How does Victoria rank along side other Canadian cities?
Victoria is one of the most beautiful cities in all of Canada! i'm still waiting to be able to just hang out in town for a few days to really get a feel for it. last time i was in town i got to do a little walking around but not enough.

What about your personal life. Married, dating, looking...?
married!? no, i'm not married (thank god) and i'm not dating so i guess i'm looking...

Last question. Boxers or briefs? Enquiring minds want to know.
boxers... it's a comfort thing. briefs give you that pinchy line from the seam under your bum. i can't stand that!!

EVERYTHING HAPPENS AT



Live music of every genre, DJ based club nights, weeklies, parties, and one-offs, Lucky plays host to the best shows on Vancouver Island. From Pop, Rock, Punk, Metal, Hip Hop, Electronic, and Experimental music.

**Find out at what's happening:
www.luckybar.ca**

(Sign up to the mailing list and win free tickets to the show of your choice.)

**517 Yates Street,
Victoria
382-LUCK**