



VELVET ROPE MAGAZINE

"MICHAEL GABRIEL FINDS HIMSELF WITH STRINGS ATTACHED" **An artist feature by Care Humphries – November 11, 2011**

Songwriter Michael Gabriel brings his orchestra to Forest Hill United, for an additional two shows – November 18th and 25th. For the music released as simple, (and albeit extremely beautiful), singer/songwriter, Gabriel adds an ensemble to his one of a kind showcase now available again in Kitchener.

I've interviewed Gabriel before. He's an unwavering, talented and humble songwriter looking to bring his music to the fans. We talked again about the next stretch of shows – and although he refuses to sing Christmas Carols, he assures fans will not be disappointed when they hear his all-star cast of local talent.

VR: Tell me about the show!

MG: Bigger, better! Epic! Every time we do this concert series we tweak it a bit and I think we raise the bar a bit. New players, new light show – stuff like that. This is so people who have seen the show before get a new experience. I think the biggest change for this show is that we're trying to correlate new lighting. Really trying to get the lighting to correlate the score.

VR: What's the response been like?

MG: There has always been a string presence to what I'm doing. These arrangements are brand new and are bigger than what the recordings are. We've got two or three tracks that I perform just me and the guitar and then we break it up when it's just guitar/cello etc. It's a whole gamut from solo to an octet of ensemble members. It's intimate and cozy.

VR: Tell me about your ensemble.

MG: They are truly solid, exquisite players. They picked up the material almost instantaneously. So when I'm sitting there listening for every little note and micromanaging some points it's because I have had my finger print on everything – I do know where I want the music to go. But I love it! I love what they bring to it. I absolutely love it! It truly is the combination of the last fifteen years of songwriting for me.

VR: Are you utilizing some of the same musicians over again?

MG: Everybody is pretty much local, I do have some core members I've been working with for two or three years. Then there are a few people I sub in from time to time. My goal is to use the same people often.

VR: How did you pick the venue you're performing at?

MG: I've been working with United churches for years through my work with World Vision. Basically I've been in United churches across the country to speak on developing countries. In this church, I had hit it off with the Minister. They wanted to create a concert venue for their church that wasn't necessarily sacred. They recently brought in Royal Wood and asked me what I thought. I am excited that instead of going the difficult route, we are transforming the stage with drapes, lighting crew and bringing in the sound. We're really giving the church an over-haul. It's not just a venue where you plug-in and play.

VR: What are you most looking forward to?

MG: It is really just the performance. When I hit that first note – then I know I don't have to do anything anymore. I just get to play. It's such a relief. I'm looking forward to when it's ready to rock!

VR: Special message to your fans?

MG: If you've seen the solo show and you like what you see, come and see this and just trust me – you will go to a new place. You will not be disappointed. You're going to get the solo and the orchestral. And fans – thank you!

MICHAEL GABRIEL - November 18th & 25th @ Forest Hill United

