

Manitoba Hal Bio

Canadian blues artist Manitoba Hal is a guitarist, ukulele master and singer-songwriter. He is known for his expressive voice and mastery of his instrument – whether it be on guitar or his trusty ukulele - Manitoba Hal takes his audience from the deep south to the islands with songs that are mournful, hopeful, silly, romantic and introspective. His original songs have become modern classics and his take on standards and popular blues songs of the past have brought him to the forefront of the blues scene. Manitoba Hal has been influenced equally by artists such as Gordon Lightfoot and Stephen Fearing as much as blues forefathers Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters. These influences offer a uniquely Canadian sound to Hal's blues and work to tie together the exceptional prose in his lyrics with grit and spirit of blues music.

Beginning his career as a guitarist, Manitoba Hal began to play the ukulele when he inherited a 1955 Martin uke from his beloved grandfather who told him “you can have it if you learn to play it”. And so, he did, continuing to master the tiny instrument, thus proving that the ukulele can be small but mighty as he pulls out powerful riffs and melodies adding background beats with looping technology showcasing the blues in all its passion and groove. His approach to playing is simple – there's not a lot of flash, just a brilliant understanding of the music, the mood and his audience. In an average year Hal performs over 150 shows throughout Canada, Europe and Australia. Be it a crowd of one or 1000, Manitoba Hal gives 100% of his energy and ability at each performance to ensure a night to remember.

Manitoba Hal isn't just an amazing musician and songwriter - the former bus driver for the city of Winnipeg is a craftsman, educator, DYIer and loving, dedicated son. When not on the road, Manitoba Hal can be found renovating his 120-year old home in his adopted hometown of Shelburne, Nova Scotia where he relocated to in 2010.

Whether on four strings or six, Manitoba Hal is one of Canada's most versatile, engaging, expressive and down-to-earth blues artists.

Press Quotes

“A charming pro that holds his own against time and tide in fine style, it's easy to say this is as good as white boy blues gets...” - Midwest Record.com Jan 12, 2017

“If you like singer songwriters you're going to enjoy Manitoba Hal, if you love, country, blues, folk, gospel, cajun, and celtic, music then you're going to love Manitoba Hal!” - Brian Mcghee (Keep Ukulele Playing Live)

“Winnipeg raised bluesman ... Manitoba Hal gave the blues a new twist at the Tongue N Groove, July 21... As promised, he cracked jokes and told stories, but when he picked out classic blues licks on his ukulele, jaws dropped.” - Richard Amery - L.A. Beat