

Coming together for the music

NORTHCOTE, DAVE HAUSE AND MIKE BOCHOFF DISCUSS THEIR INSPIRATION

SIMA SAHAR ZEREHI

sima@zerehi.com
@SimaSaharZerehi

They're three singer-songwriters with a nostalgic Americana sound and folksy inspired lyrics.

They tell coming-of-age stories and sing of the feeling of disconnectedness in a world of hyper-connectivity.

Matt Goud, a.k.a Northcote, Dave Hause and Mike Bochhoff are storytellers; they talk of their hometowns and sketch portraits of familiar people and places.

This week the trio shared the stage at Halifax's Carleton, and the *Commoner* spoke to Northcote and Bochhoff to get a look behind the scenes at their music.

The show is part of a North American tour featuring Hause and Northcote that started in New Jersey last week.

The Halifax-based Bochhoff, who just released "Start 'Em Young"

the new single on his upcoming album, joined them for the night.

Although, Philadelphia's Dave Hause has risen in popularity in the U.S. and U.K., Saskatchewan's Northcote is better known to Haligonians.

Recently, Hause joined the Revival Tour, an acoustic, singer-songwriter show, for its Montreal and Toronto performances.

He says playing with this community of professionals has had an influence on his work.

"When I play with artists who are invested in the music and have a desire to be excellent, I'm inspired – it's contagious."

Goud is hyped about the tour, "The record just came out in the U.S. and everything just feels kind of like a first. I'm excited to have this new territory."

Hause and Goud met four years ago when Goud was touring Ontario, Quebec and Western Canada in a two-door car. A mutu-

al friend, who thought the two shared a similar musical style, introduced them.

"I was living in Regina and Dave was in Philly – he didn't have his first record out and I was working on my first EP," says Goud.

Over the 20-show tour, Hause and Goud became good friends. Goud says the collaboration with Hause is part of what makes this tour special for him.

Goud and Hause both share roots in the punk scene. Goud was part of Means, a post-hardcore band from Regina.

Similarly, Hause played in a number of Philadelphia-area punk and hardcore bands including The Loved Ones.

Post-hardcore bands went beyond the strict loud and fast rules of hardcore, incorporating influences from soul, funk and jazz while maintaining the punk do-it-yourself ethic.

Goud says his music is now

influenced by broader musical genres – particularly soul – but the punk influence is still there.

"It's more in my attitude toward the music in what I know and what I learned – in my work ethic and touring – in the way I connect with my audience,"

says Goud.

"I've looked for that ground-level soul connection; that's how punk first grabbed me. The human element – anybody can pick up a guitar – if your heart was in it and you had something to say."

MEET MIKE BOCHOFF

For Halifax's Mike Bochhoff, the Dave Hause—Northcote concert was a chance to share the stage with two musicians he admires.

"For me to be performing with them is a huge honour," says Bochhoff, who lists artists like Frank Turner and the Weakerthans' John K. Samson among his influences.

"A band like Northcote and Dave Hause – these are the guys that don't come here very often," says Bochhoff.

While Northcote and Hause are reaching a peak in their careers, Bochhoff, who has a day job shipping and receiving medical supplies at a warehouse, is just at the start.

But Bochhoff feels an affinity to Hause and Northcote as all three come from a punk background.

"I was part of a band called The Hockey Fight," says Bochhoff. "We played these 45-second-long songs and wore makeup and fake blood – it was a super fun experience."

Bochhoff, who formed his current, self-titled band in 2013, will release his second album, *Start 'Em Young*, in March.

On Tuesday he put out the single, named after the album, on Dalhousie University's radio station, CKDU.

Speaking of his folk-inspired pieces, Bochhoff says, "I always start with music and write to that. I'm a really big fan of trying to squeeze in as many words as I can into a bar."

"I like writing. What I lack in guitar abilities I make up for in writing."

Bochhoff says his first album, *Horror Culture*, was about teen angst.

He says this album explores the experiences of people like him, in their mid-twenties.

"I just feel like it's what you'd experience in your mid-20s; work doesn't necessarily work out and there's a lot of frustration and confusion."

He says his songs are nostalgic.

"There's a bit of a desire to go back to youth a little, everybody that's my age is getting married and having kids – I feel that I'm a lot younger than I am."



Halifax musician Mike Bochhoff's band will release its second album in March. (Photo by Sima Sahar Zerehi)