

Biography

Steve Bell "Turn It Around"



www.stevebell.com

Steve Bell is a songwriter, storyteller, and troubadour for our time. Over the course of a 25-year solo career, he has been sharing a message of love, hope and faith through songs, stories, and writings. He is a purveyor of truth and beauty and champion of kindness, on a focused mission to “encourage Christian faith and thoughtful living through artful word and song.” He is a mentor to many, and an advocate of numerous meaningful causes.

Steve’s vocation as a singer-songwriter, borne of a deep sense of calling, has led him down avenues entirely unforeseen. Born in Calgary in 1960, he has been performing since childhood. His father was a Baptist minister, and his mother a gifted pianist and songwriter. Steve taught himself to play guitar, and honed his skills in a medium-security penitentiary where his father was a chaplain; he learned from inmates permitted to have jam sessions in the chapel on Saturday afternoons. Steve often reminisces at concerts that part of his success is thanks to several of Canada’s most unwanted men who invested in him when he was eight years old.

Steve’s recording career began at age 13 when his family’s gospel band, The Alf Bell Family Singers, recorded an LP, which contains some of his earliest songwriting. After graduating from high school, he was a member of a succession of bands playing musical genres ranging from folk to jazz-rock, novelty and country. For three years he played with Manitoba folk trio Elias, Schritt & Bell, which found regional success and released one commercial studio album in 1982. Bell eventually left the band and played with other artists until 1988 when he withdrew from performing.

It was during this period that Bell’s childhood Christian faith became reanimated, and over a six-month period he wrote most of the material for his first three solo projects. Faced with a lack of interest from established labels, Steve formed the Winnipeg-based independent record label Signpost Music with friend Dave Zeglinski in 1989 and released his first album, *Comfort My People*, which comprised 300 cassettes.

Over the next 25 years, Steve would go on to release a total of 18 albums (including his newest project *Pilgrimage*), sell over 300,000 units, and earn numerous awards and accolades including two JUNO Awards, three Western Canadian Music Awards, three Prairie Music Awards, and three Gospel Music Association Covenant Awards. In 2011, Steve fulfilled a life-long dream of performing to a capacity-crowd at Massey Hall with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. For his “skill, his musicality, for his connection with the symphony, and for his openness,” Steve was awarded the Winnipeg Symphony Golden Baton Award.

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Amidst his intensive touring schedule, Steve has consistently found time to live out his kindness in a tangible way. Working on behalf of aid organizations such as World Vision, Compassion Canada, and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, his advocacy efforts have helped raise awareness and significant financial support. A close association with the National Roundtable on Homelessness and Poverty has helped draw attention to the plight of Canada's marginalized.

Steve's career has been marked by achievements and disappointments, triumphs and letdowns. He continues to persevere in his vision of truth, beauty, and goodness, ever expanding his artistic boundaries and challenging the definition of success. Underlying it all is the simple fact that his music, words, and concerts resonate deeply within the hearts and souls of his fans, providing both solace and inspiration. It is this connection, rather than platinum plaques to hang on the wall, that is Bell's true goal and his most real accomplishment.

It's been an extraordinary journey for Steve Bell so far – one that holds much promise for the future.

