
Music: Jabbour man and band brings new flavours to local scene

By Nancy Snipper

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Guillaume Jabbour is a talented singer/songwriter and a guitarist who loves to create music with others. He formed his current band recently, but has been playing in a band format for 15 years.

He was a top feature at NDG's Porchfest in its first year and played this year. The crowd went crazy listening to the lively totally appealing sounds of Jabbour – the name of his band.

He's a modest guy with a pleasing manner; most importantly, there is no ego in this artist. In fact, the band's violinist, Bernadette Fortin, insisted his last name be the band's name.

"I've always surrounded myself with people better than me. Playing with Bernadette is not only a joy but a way for me to evolve as a musician. I'll often bring new ideas to her, Bill and Carl – the band members. We'll jam songs together in a pub or at someone's home, and then really refine them with everyone's personal touches. The members of the band astound me."

He and Carl go back a long way. "Carl Boodman and I have known each other since his elementary school days when I was his lunch monitor. Little did we know that we would become tight band members ten years later."

The rekindling of their friendship happened in an NDG alley with his wife, Tanis. "I was looking for a stand-up bass player and discussing the subject with my wife when suddenly a man wheeling his bass along appeared. It was Carl! Voilà, I found my bass player."



Barry also plays with them from time to time. Guillaume is so honoured to have him on board when he wants to come along. “He encourages me to keep on pursuing my music and I’ve learned a lot from him. I’ve learned the importance of not being afraid to keep things clear and simple – that complexity has its own life in simplicity.”

The band’s music is so rhythmic, delightful in harmony and lyric; you can’t help clapping along or tapping your feet. A honky-tonk flavour weaves an innocent sound, and there’s humour in many of the songs. For example, “Twenty Bucks” written by Guillaume is a tongue-in-cheek ditty about musicians playing for peanuts, and giving their blood to do so. The payoff is \$20, but the gratification is priceless.

“Don’t get me wrong; we just came back from a mini-tour, and thankfully, we brought in more than \$20,” Guillaume joked. He notes that discipline and openness is most important.

“Being a musician is a lot of hard work, and one certainly deserves more than a few bucks for performing – like any other profession – but it’s really great to create and find truths in songs you make as you age. I love the idea of writing serious texts within a happy melody or vice versa, and sharing it with my band friends who then really take off with it.” He comes from a rock background and is bilingual in his song lyric.

The band is launching its first album, ‘Round the Clock, at the Griffintown Café (1378 Notre Dame West) on June 30 from 6 to 9 pm. The band’s website is jabbour-band.com.

Vocabulary

to jam (verb)

to play music together informally

to astound (verb)

to surprise

to go back a long way (expression)

to know someone for a long time

to rekindle (verb)

to restart

tongue-in-cheek (adjective)

sarcastic

to take off with something (expression)

to evolve from something

playing for peanuts

working for little or no money

Questions

Question 1

Where was Guillaume Jabbour a featured performer recently?

Question 2

Who decided on the name of the band?

Question 3

Why does Guillaume think that Bernadette is a better musician than himself? Explain.

Question 4

Name five members of Jabbour.

Question 5

Name two places where the band rehearses.

Question 6

Where did Guillaume hire Carl Boodman as his bass player?

Question 7

Why did Guillaume name one of his songs “Twenty Bucks”?

Question 8

Why does Guillaume write songs with texts and melodies that don’t express similar emotions?

Question 9

What is the name of the band’s first album?



Answers

Answer 1

NDG's Porchfest is where he was featured.

Answer 2

Bernadette Fortin insisted his last name (Jabbour) be the band's name.

Answer 3

Bernadette helps him evolve as a musician.

Answer 4

1. Guillaume Jabbour
2. Bernadette
3. Bill
4. Carl
5. Barry (occasional member)

Answer 5

1. in a pub
2. at someone's home

Answer 6

He hired Carl in an NDG alley.

Answer 7

Musicians do not earn a lot of money for their work.

Answer 8

He loves the idea of writing serious texts within a happy melody or vice versa.

Answer 9

The name of the first album was Round the Clock.