

Mishka

BIO: Mishka's biography has an almost cinematic sweep. He spent most of his early life on a boat in the Caribbean, sailing from island to island with his seafaring parents and older sisters. A child of the islands, it was almost inevitable that he'd be drawn to reggae, Rastafari, and the natural mystic that inhabits his music and his soul. Talk About is his fourth album and the second release for Matthew McConaughey's j. k. livin label.

"The music I heard growing up from my parents, sisters and the places we visited gave me a lot of musical and cultural flexibility." "Everything I've ever heard blends together in what I do." "I'm a huge reggae fan but there's folk, soul, rock and other elements in the music." Mishka's international outlook is a product of his unique upbringing. "My parents met in Bermuda" Mishka explains. "They always had dreams of living at sea and my father built a boat for the family to live on. I moved onto the boat when I was three."

"We sailed all over the Atlantic and Caribbean" Mishka recalls. "We visited Brazil, all the Caribbean islands, even made a cross-Atlantic trip to Portugal and England." Mishka and his sisters were home schooled until they went to boarding school for their higher education. "Learning how to read maps and chart a course was my math and geography class, going ashore in different countries and talking to people about their culture was my history class, reading books on board was my literary education, picking up French and Portuguese in the ports we visited was my language school."

The boat had a small battery-run cassette player and Mishka heard the music his parents loved: The Beatles, Jimmy Cliff, Dylan and Jimmy Buffett who was sailing the same waters as his family in those days. "My sisters turned me on to the Police, Cars and Roxy Music, but when I heard Burning Spear, Culture, and Bob Marley, I got addicted to roots reggae."

Mishka moved to London and his debut, the self-titled Mishka, became a Top 40 hit in England. "Give You All the Love" cracked the charts in Britain and Japan where it went Top 10. While he was making Mishka, Swedish producer Martin Terefe (KT Tunstall, James Morrison) was working in the studio next door. Terefe produced Mishka's second album, 2005's One Tree, a blend of electronica, folk and reggae. While on tour, Mishka met Darryl Thompson a long time guitarist for Sly & Robbie. They were working on Above the Bones when Matthew McConaughey showed up and signed Mishka to his newly formed j. k. livin label.

The album started as an independent project produced by Mishka and Guitarist Darryl Thompson but was finished with McConaughey's creative assistance. It was essentially tracked live with minimal overdubs. "Darryl has played for many years with Peter Tosh and Black Uhuru, but he has a background mainly in rock and blues" Mishka says of Darryl. "He could hear the folk, soul and reggae in the music and really helped bring the songs to life". "Matthew (McConaughey) has a good ear for picking out the best elements of a song and really brought his positive energy and enthusiasm to the studio."

In February of 2009, Above the Bones debuted at #1 on the Billboard Reggae Charts and was followed by an exhaustive world tour. Mishka then provided the soundtrack for summer with two features of his soulful island melodies: a music video for the title track, featuring the iconic Venice Beach Boardwalk, that premiered across the Yahoo! Entertainment network that June, and a selection by Starbucks Entertainment and iTunes for their music discovery program, "Pick of the

Week," that was available at Starbucks locations nationwide. By year's end, Mishka was named 2009's Best New Artist in the singer/songwriter category by digital music leader iTunes.

Building off the previous year's momentum, Mishka released *Talk About* on March 30th, 2010. Setting the tone for the self-described "album of movement," the lead single "Bittersweet" began as a studio experiment before evolving into a musical space that surprised even its creator.

"When I brought the song to the band it was extremely raw just a few chords and a couple lyrics played at a modest tempo," says Mishka. "But as we started jamming on it, it started to move into an up-tempo track like I've never recorded before a place, musically, that is brand new to me."

Two of the tracks on *Talk About*, "Stars Will Be Shining" and album opener "Give Them Love," are the product of collaboration with super producer Butch Walker (Pete Dinklage, Pink, Fall Out Boy). The pair was introduced by label owner, album co-producer, and Hollywood icon Matthew McConaughey.

"This is an album of movement of stepping outside the box of traditional folk-reggae and adding a real mainstream rock influence," says Mishka. "Butch works fast he works efficiently and he knows how to cultivate those rock tones in the artists he works with."

The album's 13 tracks span a distinct ebb-and-flow, from the fast paced and up-beat first half to a more mellow and introspective second half. "In the days of the LP, this would definitely be an A-side/B-side type record," Mishka commented.

The title track, "Talk About," explores the imbalance of words versus action a lyrical theme that runs through much of Mishka's work. "People make statements about love, equality, and peace and then try to measure their quantity in instant gratification," he explains. "Whereas those things are really about a long-term way of life where all your actions not words add up."

An album release showcase at the Roxy Theatre in Los Angeles also celebrated a new partnership with surf-culture clothing giant, O'Neill, who made Mishka the face of their new eco-friendly apparel line, ECO'Neill. The ECO'Neill Men's Collection, which will be available next spring, includes basic T-shirts, tank-tops and beanies developed with 100 percent organic cotton and board short fabrics made from recycled plastic bottles, among other items.

Mishka will be previewing the line during his 2010 tour in support of *Talk About*. He will also be a part of the creative design of upcoming styles for ECO'Neill and will be featured in advertising and marketing materials before the line hits stores.

"Working with O'Neill is giving me a chance to spread my music to more people -- and specifically those who are into water sports," said Mishka. "I have found such musical and spiritual inspiration out on the waves, so this partnership is a good way to connect with people who probably feel the same inspiration. It's also cool if I can help O'Neill become a more ecologically friendly company along the way. It's a win win situation."

O'Neill Clothing CEO, Toby Bost, elaborated, "Mishka adds a whole new dynamic and direction to O'Neill. Growing up a waterman and having an appreciation for the ocean and earth are attributes that make him a natural fit for us. We're looking forward to incorporating his music, unique spirit and creativity into the ECO'Neill line."

After a momentous 2009 which included an iTunes award, Starbucks feature, and #1 charting debut, it appears 2010 will push the bar even higher, as *Talk About* debuted at #1 on the iTunes Reggae chart, Mishka gears up for an expansive new tour, and his partnership with one of the leading surf-clothing manufacturers begins to blossom.

MEDIA CONTACT: Transfer Media Group // 818-253-1183 // ben@transfermediagroup.com