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# Murphey performs concert views himself as storyteller

By JOHN TYNES  
Battalion Staff

Michael Murphey says he doesn't consider himself a country singer or a part of the progressive country music.

Murphey, who is best known for his smooth, nature-oriented songs like "Wildfire" and "Carolina in the Pines", performed at Texas A&M last Tuesday night.

"I think I'm more of a storyteller," he said in an interview after his show. "I fit more into the wandering minstrel category. I like a good story. I like a good tale. I'm more oriented to that."

Murphey said the prevalence of the Indians and the outdoors in his music might be the cause of his association with country music, but he said the image is wrong.

"Music in the last few years has become very much like politics. It has little parties and camps," Murphey said. "That's really sad to me. Music is one of the last forms of real magic that we have. Who can explain why music works the way it does? It's a trick. It's slight of hand."

Murphey likened himself to an Indian medicine man. "That's the way I see myself, not as a leader, or somebody to lead people along like sheep, but as a medicine man in the sense of trying to bring good medicine to people," he said.

He also tries to project in his songs the feelings of the people he meets. "That's what a performer ultimately is. He's plugged into the circuits of the world, and energy's coming through him, and something's coming out: what is coming out is either negative or positive or whatever he's collected or felt. That's what an artist is all about."

His interest in the Indians has been primarily artistic, philosophical and spiritual instead of anthropological, historical or sociological, he said.

"It's the Indian's relationship to the planet and to the life of the tribe and the way he expresses himself that interests me most," Murphey said.

"I think that what has been missed a lot about the Indian people is the incredibly powerful message that their culture has to teach us, which is primarily reverence for life and respect for nature."

"What I've tried to do in my career, especially in the last few years, is to do what politicians do... for things that can't speak."

Murphey said that it might be true that man's aggressiveness elevated him to superiority in the animal kingdom, but he said that things can only be carried so far before they will revolt.

"Our imaginations are the important things we possess," he said. "The Indians recognized that. Imagination was the most important thing in the Indian culture."

Explaining his recent move from Texas to Colorado, Murphey said he likes the wilderness, and there's wilderness in Colorado at the other place in the United States that's preserved and protected by the government.

"There are more people in Colorado who seem to care about the environment than almost anywhere else. I like to congregate with people who feel the same way I do about it."

"I think through being around people you identify with, you get your energy up to say the things you want to say, do the things you want to do. You're generally happier."

Murphey has just completed a two-month concert tour and is planning to take a vacation and work on some projects in Colorado.

"I'm going to be doing quite a bit of backpacking and spending a lot of time in the mountains," he said.

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"I couldn't believe it," she said. "It would have been nice to work in Rome. I even had to pay a fee for the job I won 22 years ago."

Instead, she worked as a pharmacist in another part of Italy. She retired five years ago to this town to devote her time to painting.

Mrs. Rossi said the lateness was due to bureaucratic delay rather than postal tardiness.

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