

Ask Jack Ingram

Singer-songwriter answers questions about new album

INTERVIEW BY STEPHEN WELLS

When Jack Ingram sings about rolling with the punches, take his advice. After five years of playing small gigs and selling three independently produced albums, Jack Ingram was signed by Rising Tide records, only to be cut loose during the Universal-PolyGram merger.

Instead of going back to his roadhouse past, Ingram was signed to a new label, Lucky Dog, and produced a new album, *Hey You*.

Ingram talked to *The Battalion* about his new album.

Q. What were the circumstances you made this record under?

There's this label called Lucky Dog Records. They had signed me to a record deal, I guess, sometime around September last year, and we cut the record during December and January. I took my band up to Nashville, and I used my band [that I toured with] on the record and took all the songs that I'd made over the last year and a half and made a record.

Q. You wrote or co-wrote 11 out of the 12 songs on the album. How do you write a song?

Something comes, you know. Something comes up, a line, or a title or something, and I just sit down with a guitar and hack it out.

Q. What about collaborations?

Usually, those are just friends of mine. We're talking and we come up with an idea for a song. It's the same thing, you know. You hang out with somebody long enough and you get to talking about a lot of things.

Q. How does someone go from getting a degree in psychology to being a professional musician?

I was just in school, biding my time. I didn't know what I wanted to do. I just started playing guitar a whole bunch, you know? I ended up going out to the clubs and playing

open mic nights, playing little gigs. As time went by, I figured out I could do it for a living. I was so close to finishing my degree by that time, I just stuck it out and did it. You know, the hell with it.

Q. How hard is it to put out a record on your own, like you did?

It's a lot of work, but it's a labor of love. I would work all day, but I would wonder where the hours went.

Q. How does College Station compare to a bigger market, like Nashville or other places in Texas like Austin?

Man, College Station has always been real cool. As far as I'm concerned, people always come out and people always seem to have a good time. Whether it's a big city or a small town, I don't really care because we're usually playing clubs that can only fit so many people, anyway. As long as people come out, it doesn't matter where we are.

Q. Just for fun?

Well, it wasn't too much fun. But, I did feel like I started it, and I should finish it.

Q. How many shows are you guys playing this year? I know you've said 100 shows isn't enough — how many dates are planned?

Well, I don't know. The record comes out [Tuesday], so the year kind of starts now. But this year, we'll probably play about 150 shows, maybe 200.

Q. Do you think you'll ever get tired of touring so much?

Maybe, but maybe not, you know? It just depends. I love playing music, and I love that



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACK INGRAM

Ingram will be playing at Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheater Friday

I can make money at it. Right now, the way it is, I could probably play forever.

Q. There's a track called "Inna from Mexico," about a poor immigrant...

I wrote that song about a real girl I met in Chicago, and it's a true story.

Q. Is there a real "Juanita"?

I know she's there somewhere. By God, we're going to find her.

Q. There's lots of "lost love" songs on the "A" side of the CD — coincidence?

There's no reason for it. There's really no "sides" with CDs. I tend to think of it as a final sequence of one through 12, instead of one through six and seven through 12.

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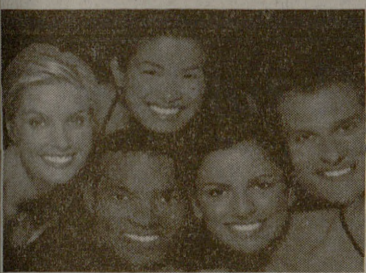
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