



DIGNUS frontman **DIGGY** B I O G R A P H Y

Born and raised in Portsmouth, Ohio, DIGNUS frontman and solo artist **DIGGY** has performed music for fun and profit since the age of eleven. He began as a drummer, but after three years, changed to bass and then guitar. With his soulful 3½ octave voice, Diggy was always designated lead vocalist. A Nashville, Tennessee DJ once introduced Diggy to his SRO NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL audience as *"the white Jackie Wilson"*.

From Ohio, Diggy headed out for the eastern USA and Canada eventually taking up residence in Richmond, VA where he quickly built a musical name for himself. Diggy's songwriting and performing skills attracted many of the area's top, and then unknown, musicians. Tim Reynolds (Dave Matthews), Keith Horne (Trisha Yearwood), and Keith Howland (Chicago) performed in Diggy's highly acclaimed "Project". After viewing the more direct and less cumbersome concerts of Bob Dylan in his "Don't Look Back" video, Dig set the band aside and began performing solo, singing covers and originals three hours a night/four nights a week. He became a favorite college circuit performer and frequently requested solo opener for shows such as The Wallflowers, Tori Amos, and Chris Whitley.

At the urging of his ex-bandmate Keith Horne, who was now in Nashville playing bass for Tanya Tucker, Diggy traveled to Nashville to investigate the town's burgeoning Folk/Rock - Pop scene. After only 9 months of constant performing in "Music City", Diggy caught the ear of Tim Coats who was forming a new record label with 30-year Bruce Springsteen bassist Garry Tallent and songwriter Ron LaSalle. Garry, Tim, and Ron signed Diggy to a multi-record deal with their D'Ville Record Group. Diggy named his band DIGNUS (hence his nickname . . . hey, it just stuck) and IN YOUR WORLD, 12 Diggy songs produced by Garry and featuring George Marinelli (Bruce Hornsby and the Range/Bonnie Raitt) on additional guitars, was released in the Spring of 1996 to positive national reviews. The soulful and tight "Folk-Funk" trio burned up the eastern United States performing for The MacFEST in New York City and touring with The Screamin' Cheetah Wheelies. DIGNUS would open shows for headliners such as GOV'T Mule, Duncan Sheik, Jars of Clay, and headline medium-sized venues throughout the East. Just as things were looking up, D'Ville was "going down", unable to survive a devastating financial setback. The promising Indie label closed, leaving Diggy without the muscle needed to continue promoting his recording.

Since the D'Ville demise, Diggy has continued to build his name by writing and performing his own brand of soulful, "thought-provoking" music and releasing it through the DIGNUS website. Though the majority of Diggy's performances are solo/acoustic, he has followed his tradition of forming DIGNUS variations with musical luminaries like John Jackson (Bob Dylan/Lucinda Williams/Shelby Lynn), George Marinelli, Terry Thomas (The Cheetah Wheelies), and Mark W. Winchester (Emmylou Harris/ Brian Setzer) when the notion arises. His November 1999 release LOOKING FOR A NEW WAY, featuring an appearance by Bela Fleck sax man Jeff Coffin, also earned great reviews and airplay. As host and performer for 2001 and 2002 TIN PAN SOUTH (Nashville's

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premiere annual songwriter showcase) and a featured BMI performer at the 2002 Folk Alliance, the Nashville music community continues to hold Diggy and his music in high regard.

An all-acoustic DIGNUS CD, *Mudhouse Serenade*, was released in March of 2002. It features 12 new Diggy songs performed with all the soul and passion that he is known to deliver. Diggy's relentless one-man "Mudhouse Tour" started in November of 2001, earning him repeat invitations to Chicago, New York City, Atlanta, Charlotte, Annapolis, Philadelphia, and many other great towns and cities east of the Mississippi. The tour successfully created a devout grassroots following, as designed, and delivered opening slots for Keb Mo, Alejandro Escovedo, Chris Whitley, legendary folk singer Eric Andersen, The Maryjanes, and Those Darn Accordions.

Diggy Bio (continued)

In the May 2002 issue, Music Row Magazine's record reviewer John Hood said Diggy *"is in fine voice throughout (Mudhouse Serenade), cementing his status as one of Nashville's most compelling vocalists."*

More Notable Quotes

"DIGNUS was a particularly pleasant surprise in a rare New York appearance. Diggy is an unusually literate writer . . . Diggy evokes the image of a no-nonsense street poet musing about the nature of human spirituality in between blistering guitar runs." - *John Swenson, UPI Pop Music Columnist/NYC*

"The benefit of (the all-acoustic production of **Mudhouse Serenade**) is that you get to really hear how cool Diggy's lyrics really are." - *Freelance writer Robert K. Oermann, Music Row Magazine - April 2002*

"'Head-to-Toe' is a lovely romantic ballad, but the track gives Diggy a chance to strut his stuff musically. He's simply a terrific guitar player" and "What keeps this collection (**Mudhouse Serenade**) jumpin' is that Diggy never quite lets the ear rest. There's always some little hairpin turn musically to catch the breath or a fine lyric to stick in the mind." - *Anise Cerra, ESP Magazine, Greensboro/Winston-Salem*

"DIGGY . . . has a knack for placing a sense of positivity inside music with dark, dangerous musical structures. The contrast is a winning one that makes the music reflective of the real world." - *Tom Roland, The Tennessean*

"Combining well-written songs with crisp, upbeat arrangements, DIGNUS' music is guaranteed to get your attention!" - *John Schoenberger - Album Network*

". . . The Nashville based DIGNUS' debut effort **In Your World** combines literary and artistic lyrical interpretations with an intelligent folk-funk sound. In Your World provides 12 solid tracks each worthy of repetitious play." - *Erik Crawford, All Music Guide*

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