

On the Rainbow Trail

Peter Prince is a longtime Salt Spring songwriter, musician, videographer and filmmaker whose latest CD is called *Chasing Rainbows*.

Q. WHEN AND WHY DID YOU COME TO SALT SPRING ISLAND?

A. I first came to Salt Spring in the autumn of 1976 to pick apples. I worked at the Cunningham farm near Central in exchange for meals and a bed of hay in their barn. Time and time again I felt beckoned to return to the island, drawn by its natural beauty and good-hearted people. A decade later I moved here from Victoria, thinking it'd be a good place to raise kids and build a home. It's been better than good and my four island-born kids flourished.

Q. HOW DID YOU END UP BECOMING A MUSICIAN?

A. When I was nine years old and playing hockey with friends at a schoolyard rink, a bully threw a hard wet snowball that struck my eye and shattered my vision. I lay blind in a hospital bed healing for a few weeks, opaque patches covering both eyes. My school chums pitched in their nickels and gifted me a transistor radio. I listened daily to a hit parade of 1960s rock, folk and R&B. Music became my medicine, a light that lifted my spirit out of the lonely darkness. Soon lyrics and melodies began surfacing in my dreams. I'd taken little interest in music, so it was a revelation to feel this soulful and fun form of expression awakening in me. Thus began my musical journey: with one-eye-blind looking in and one-eye-bright looking out.

Q. LOVE FOR YOUR ISLAND HOME IS SO APPARENT IN THE SONGS YOU WRITE AND THE FILMS YOU MAKE. HOW DOES THAT LOVE CONNECT TO YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS?

A. The art of living is a process of discovering what love is. I've always been interested in west coast culture and history. I've always been drawn to wild places of beauty and power. My creative process thrives on quiet contemplation in nature: listening to the wind in the trees, birds singing and water flowing. As a film and music artist I enjoy sharing personal journeys and remarkable stories with universal resonance. By putting what I love and my idealism into action, I hope my creations make a positive difference in the world.

Q. WHAT IS SOMETHING CRUCIAL YOU HAVE LEARNED BY BEING AN INDEPENDENT ARTIST OVER THE YEARS?

A. Dream big and be grateful for the moments you get to shine. Mentors are crucial. I've had the privilege to work with and learn from many amazing artists. To be confident and believe in their abilities, most artists need honest and constructive feedback that supports

their progress. My mentors in film, music, poetry, art, spirit and life have nudged me along to where I am today. My heart will forever dance with their kind words of wisdom whispering in my ear.

Q. TELL US ABOUT YOUR LATEST PROJECT.

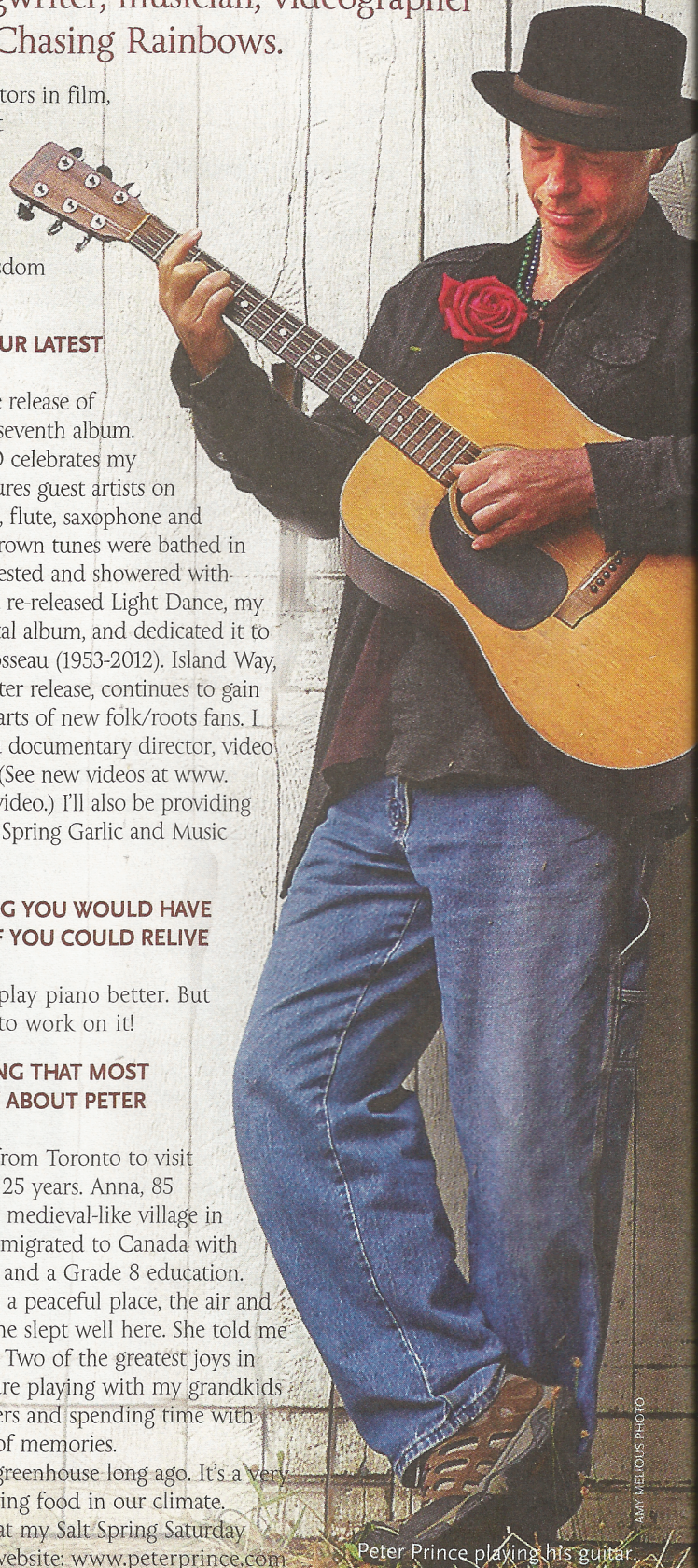
A. I'm excited about the release of *Chasing Rainbows*, my seventh album. The all-instrumental CD celebrates my acoustic guitar and features guest artists on fiddle, dobro, mandolin, flute, saxophone and harmonica. The forest-grown tunes were bathed in sparkling seas, kitchen tested and showered with island love. I've also just re-released *Light Dance*, my popular first instrumental album, and dedicated it to the memory of Paul Brosseau (1953-2012). *Island Way*, my 2014 singer/songwriter release, continues to gain traction and win the hearts of new folk/roots fans. I carry on freelancing as a documentary director, video cameraman and editor. (See new videos at www.youtube.com/saltspringvideo.) I'll also be providing video service at the Salt Spring Garlic and Music Festival in August.

Q. WHAT IS ONE THING YOU WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY IF YOU COULD RELIVE YOUR LIFE?

A. I'd have learned to play piano better. But hey, I've still got time to work on it!

Q. WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT PETER PRINCE?

In June my mom flew from Toronto to visit me for the first time in 25 years. Anna, 85 years old, was born in a medieval-like village in Slovenia. In 1951 she immigrated to Canada with the clothes on her back and a Grade 8 education. She said Salt Spring was a peaceful place, the air and water were good, and she slept well here. She told me I was living my destiny. Two of the greatest joys in this chapter of my life are playing with my grandkids in their world of wonders and spending time with my mom in her world of memories. Lastly, I wish I'd had a greenhouse long ago. It's a very productive way of growing food in our climate. To learn more visit me at my Salt Spring Saturday Market booth and my website: www.peterprince.com



Peter Prince playing his guitar.