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Voisine has plenty to be happy about, a December wedding and a new CD

Friday October 25, 2002

JULIE-MARIE INNES

FOR THE RECORD

Forgive me for swooning, but Roch Voisine is just too darned romantic for one woman to imagine.

He has paid the ultimate compliment to his betrothed, writing her a love song, declaring his devotion and then proposing marriage and a life of love and music-making. Too saccharine for you ?

Not for Roch. He is genuine in his intentions and has even included the proposal song on his coming English album, entitled Higher.

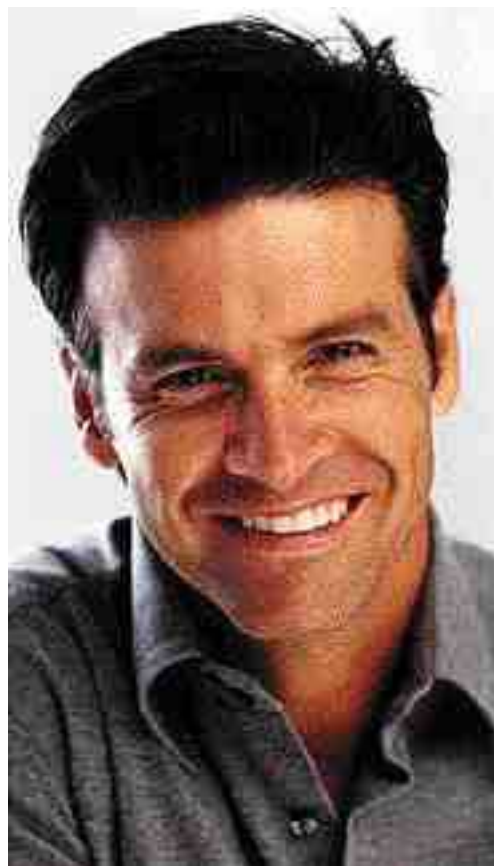
"It's probably the strongest song on the record," he says. "I wrote it as a very simple little song. I thought what I do best besides loving her, is writing music and singing, so I write this song and ask her. And when people heard it everybody started crying and saying, 'You should put that on the record.' So it is. It's called Miriam's Song and it's the last cut on the record."

Despite his hectic touring schedule, which includes a stop at Centre in the Square on Tuesday, Voisine says the December wedding plans are going smoothly.

"Thank God for wedding planners," he jokes.

This is the award-winning singer's first tour in two years and Higher, which will be released Nov. 19, represents his first original English album since 1997's Kissing Rain.

It's been a successful 17-year career for the Saint-Basile, N. B., native.



Roch Voisine is back on the road after a two-year break. His new album, Higher, is his first English release since 1997.

Among the highlights so far: he's sold over eight million records world-wide; won several Junos; was made an Officer of the Order of Canada; performed for the Queen; met the Pope; and his 1994 hit song I'll Always Be There gave him the opportunity to work with renowned songwriter David Foster.

Voisine's looking for another hit with Higher and his current tour is introducing fans to some of his new songs as well as some offerings from his greatest hits.

Talking from his hotel suite in Saint John, N.B., he is clearly buoyed by the first leg of the concert.

"It's a pleasure to be back on the road with this acoustic sort of unplugged concert. It's really like being in a big living room, it's very intimate chatting with people," Voisine said. "It's my way to say, 'I've missed you guys and it's really fun to be back.'"

Fun is the key word here because Higher has been a passionate and positive creative experience for the artist.

He jokingly says "I felt high when I did the record. It's very close to my heart. We worked very hard to put out an uplifting record. You know, enough crying; let's be happy !"

The new single from the album, entitled By Myself, has been getting a lot of airplay recently. Its message for the loners or the lovelorn is simple but reassuring.

"You can be alone. Everyone is by him or herself and the song says this is where I am in my life now," Voisine said. "I know somehow I'll get by and we always do. We find other people, we make new friends, we find new love, we move on but in between those high moments we are alone."

Those musings are perhaps a bit reflective but then again, who isn't reflective as they embark on major life steps such as marriage? His life, and his music, are obviously evolving. And for his fans who may be heart-broken over his impending nuptials, time for a reality check, says Voisine.

"Hey I'm 40 years old. I won't be able to marry them all anyway! My life is important and there will be more music and more inspiration ahead."

CONCERT

Who: Roch Voisine

Where: Centre in the Square

Day: Tuesday, Oct. 29

Time: 8 p.m.