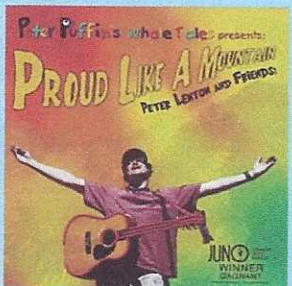


Music moves mountains for Ottawa singer/songwriter

Peter Lenton uses award-winning children's music as teaching tool

By OPT Staff



Photos: Peter Lenton

*I am proud like a mountain
Big as the sea
I will stand up
For all that I believe
And if I don't succeed
On the first or even 10th try
I will pick myself up
And try, try again*

These lyrics, from the title track of Peter Lenton (also known as Peter Puffin)'s Juno award-winning children's album, *Proud Like a Mountain*, are as inspiring as the uplifting grassroots music behind them.

Lenton, a singer/songwriter and educator from Ottawa, offers a lighthearted musical message about perseverance and other themes such as environmental responsibility, peace-making and boosting self-esteem. His concerts and teacher workshops have inspired and entertained thousands of families across Canada.

"In concert I strive to convey a high-energy mischievousness, and connect with youngsters and parents by initiating multiple dialogues, both with conversation and musically," said Lenton, who is now based in a small town outside of Edmonton, Alberta but has deep roots in Ottawa.

"I have always steered clear of talking down to kids. Their innocent smartnesses are akin to a pure wisdom that they sense me respecting, so the hearts open and a mutual trust grows. It is a precious zone that I encourage in concert and on recordings."

Proud like a Mountain, which also won the Billboard Magazine World Song Contest, mixes elements of roots, folk, blues and is filled with infectious melodies and knee-slapping delights. Just try to get the chorus out of your head.

His other recordings include Peter Puffin's *Whale Tales* and *Passengers*, featuring songs that are musically and lyrically multi-layered for adults and children to enjoy.

Lenton performs more than 200 *Peter Puffin & the Whale Tales* concerts per year, in parks, schools and communities across Canada as well as on the international stage, including Hong Kong, the U.S., New Zealand, Australia and Morocco.

Lenton, who has degrees in biology and teaching, uses his music as a teaching tool.


"I discovered early on as a teacher that learning is more efficient and impactful if students invest their own body and physical energy in the learning experience, hence the term 'experiential learning,'" he said.

"I also discovered that if I could get students to care about what they were learning, they were more likely to be able to recall and apply the concepts I was sharing."

He has worked in Calgary classrooms, spent two years as a curriculum specialist and lived as an environmental and outdoor education teacher in a rustic cabin near Banff, before turning to workshops and cross-Canada Peter Puffin Concerts full-time.

As well as performing more than 2,500 concerts over the last 14 years, Lenton also facilitates musical keynotes, professional development workshops for teachers and designs curriculum-tied learning activity booklets that use music to teach all subjects.

In 2011, Lenton achieved a personal milestone when *Proud Like a Mountain* won a Juno award for Children's Album of the Year.

"I feel very fortunate to be gifted the award. The even more pleasing phenomenon is how the award gets so many family members, friends and fans even more excited about the community-building music we are sharing. "Sparking joy in other people's lives is quite an amazing side effect." 

www.puffin.ca

