

JLM Bio

Jason Lee McKinney is a two time nationally signed recording artist, powerhouse vocalist, and songwriter. McKinney blends a snarling musical underbelly full of equal parts trained prowess and an almost out of control piss and vinegar attitude; soaring sing along hook melodies, with lyrics that are raw and raucous, reflective and radiant; simultaneously weaving a narrative that is both uniquely his and everyman's story.

He is an intellectual troubadour who writes and sings from the depths of an earthy soul; all with a business resume that would match most C level executives. McKinney holds a Doctorate, an MBA, and BA in Management. McKinney's dissertation is a comparative study of downscoped specialization versus centralized diversification as organizational strategies in the transforming recording business.

McKinney's live shows are fast paced, dynamic events that leave audiences exhausted, yet longing for more. His smooth and charming stage presence aligns himself as one of the guys, without losing the distant aloof rock star vibe. McKinney commands the stage, every night a night to remember for everyone, in every town, on every stage he plays. McKinney says, "I perform all out, every night, because all we ever have is tonight. That one night, on that one stage may be the only shared experience I get with a particular audience member, and I will give everything I have to make sure they remember that night for as long as they live."

Jason Lee McKinney has been through his share of strains and struggles, from a difficult childhood filled with abuse and neglect, to bad records deals, and a lost marriage. Now McKinney is writing about that life, and it is more real and powerful than ever. There is a found a new musical freedom in the newest release, the double album *Play Something You Believe*. During back-to-back recording sessions in Memphis, Tennessee and Murray, Kentucky, McKinney asserted a freedom he had never before. Beckoning back to the classic music of the 70's (complete with saxophone that would make Springsteen proud), the first volume features a throwback style before people started sitting down to write for radio, back to when they just wrote great songs. "Back when it was about connecting with people, not fitting a format." The biting, devilish humor McKinney is known for is still ever-present, but it is more raw and honest than ever. In the opening track "Name in a Song", McKinney remarks, "When you travel in the circus, you put on a show." Volume 1 of *Play Something You believe* is drenched in blues, classic rock, and red dirt, while Volume 2 is a stripped back acoustic approach that focuses on McKinney's raw talent and the talent of long time band members Barry Strauser (keys, BGV's) and Billy Wright (bass). Volume 2 also features 13-time IBMA Dobro Player of the Year, Rob Ickes.

Play Something You Believe was a massive undertaking, but one McKinney couldn't be more proud of. Tired of writing for radio, McKinney finally said, "Screw it" and wrote for himself. The result is what McKinney firmly believes is his best work to date. As McKinney's story continues to evolve, so does his songwriting. The double album expands to the far corners of Americana Roots music and includes an amalgam of genres, such as rock, pop, blues, and soul, reminiscent of artists such as Led Zeppelin or Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, two artists whose writing style has had a big impact on McKinney. Set against a positive, upbeat backdrop, "Midnight in Memphis" tells his story of accepting a position at Visible Music College, and shows his respect for the city's rich history. On the other side of the spectrum, one would be hard pressed to find lyrics more vulnerable and humbling than "Leaving Kind", an introspective look at McKinney's gratefulness for second chances in his own life.

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Jason Lee McKinney is the type of musician who is quickly becoming the face of the new music business: a vocalist, guitarist, songwriter, and a business entrepreneur with the skills, knowledge and vision to blaze the trail to profitability in the new music business. He has worked with music legends such as Tommy Sims (Garth Brooks, Bruce Springsteen, and Eric Clapton), and has played over 2,000 shows, released seven full-length albums and three EPs, and has had four hits on three different charts (“Take Me There” and “Boy Meets Girl” on the Christian Rock charts and “Hey DJ” and “Find Me” on the CMJ charts.)

McKinney isn't afraid to take chances with his career, and he is constantly looking for ways to branch out with his music. His most recent accomplishments include a song on Visible Music College's new Rock 'N Roll Christmas EP; and a live DVD, a first for McKinney, which captures one of his best performances in front of 20,000 people. McKinney's charisma and dynamic songwriting has also landed him prominent sponsorships with Vietti Chili and Norfolk Southern Railroads, along with a slot at MerleFest alongside world-class artists such as The Avett Brothers, Lee Ann Womack, Johnny Swim, and North Mississippi All Stars.

All of his hard work, passion, and creativity have not gone unnoticed. Perhaps the accomplishment McKinney is most proud of is his dominating performance at the 2014 ICoMA Awards, held by the Independent Country Music Association in his home state of Tennessee. McKinney snagged four awards including Overall Country Artist of the Year, Best Americana/Folk Artist, Song of the Year, and Album of the Year.

McKinney is eager to continue this impressive momentum as he heads into his future endeavors. Surrounded by people who believe in his vision, he is renewed, refreshed, focused, and forcefully leaving his permanent mark on the music industry not only as an artist but also by changing the way the business works.