

Alex Lacasse of Ottawa releases an international debut single

By Sheryl Bennett-Wilson

Take a Billy Joel sense of piano, add the feel-good rhythm & blues of Hall and Oates, toss in a slice of Michael Bublé smoothness and a dash of Justin Bieber pop cuteness and you have Alex Lacasse. Alex Lacasse just released his international debut single *Like This Like That* through Universal Music Canada – coming soon a music video and a CD.

Five years ago, at age 12, Alex won the first *Capital Parent & Kids' Show* Capital Kid Idol contest. What a ride it's been since then! This smart, articulate 17-year-old is on his way to certain national stardom, if not international fame.

For Alex, getting a record deal and his songs recorded has been his dream. He says he didn't think it was possible, but now he's achieved what thousands of young singers try to do.

Don't think for a moment that this is an 'overnight' success story. It's not. Malcolm Gladwell in 'The Outliers' suggests that a performer or athlete who rises to the top of their profession has probably put in 10,000 hours of practice' before they get close to reaching the top. Alex is getting close to that mark. He started playing piano at age six and began singing at age 8. He started performing locally soon after that. Alex performed at fairs, festivals, retirement homes, telethons and sporting events – many of them just for the chance to get up and perform. But he also believes that through his performances he was giving back to the community that has been so supportive of his singing.

Friends and family have been relentlessly proud and supportive of their own 'Singer Boy'. Alex's friends' motto is "if you succeed, we all succeed." He has friends that he writes songs with, like his good buddy Keegan. But for the most part, Alex writes his own songs, both the music and lyrics. He also says that is the number one way to get noticed. Sure cover-versions of other artists are good to do, but Alex says the only way to express yourself is to write your own words. He also says practice. Practice a lot. And ask people for feedback. Alex runs his songs by friends and family and takes their comments, and sometimes criticism, seriously. He says sure criticism can hurt and be ruthless (think Simon Cowell of *American Idol*) but you have to

develop a thicker skin in this business. Alex likes to get other people's perspective and he says that he use the criticism to make something positive. "Of five songs I write, I might like one," says Alex, "So I'm pretty good at being self-critical too."

This is Alex's last year at Sir Wilfrid Laurier High School. He's a good student and his grades would get him into any university. For now though, with his parents' support, he wants to pursue his singing career. He also knows how tough it's going to be. He knows he has to continue to write music. Right now he's writing a lot of pop songs and he's really enjoying it. Alex knows that pop is great for a 17-year-old but not a 27-year-old. He knows his music will have to grow and change and he hopes his fans will come along for the ride. He says that in the last year his music has become like a full-time job. Along with all the writing, performing and going to school he has to fit in some choreography lessons. Like one of his idols, Michael Bublé, Alex wants to make sure that his fans are treated to a full experience when they come to a show – not only the music, but the moves and the mood as well. "I want to have a long career and perform for the rest of my life," says Alex. Take a listen to *Like This Like That* on iTunes – I think his over 18,000 fans on My Space are onto something.

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