

A photograph of Chris Paul, a man with dark hair, smiling and sitting on wooden steps. He is wearing a dark zip-up shirt, blue jeans, and tan work boots. He is holding a silver resonator guitar. The background is a red brick wall with a window.

CHRIS PAUL

the music man

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“I would never have dreamt that I would have accomplished what I have since I moved to Beaufort.” So says Christopher Paul, singer, songwriter, musician and Beaufort resident since 2005. After almost thirty years as a professional musician, Chris says he is just hitting his stride, with a full slate of engagements and his third album, *Beyond This Place*, being released in April.

Originally from northeast Ohio, Chris moved to Nashville directly after high school. “It was “real life 101’ but I had work waiting for me when I got there” he says, “I ended up spending a tremendous amount of time in Nashville as a professional musician. I did it all, session

player, road work, producer, songwriter. I did that scene for many years.” In fact Chris had performed in 48 states (he is still working on Alaska and Hawaii), by the time he was in his mid thirties. “I was on the road a lot. We would be in the desert when I would go to sleep, and when I woke up I would look out the window and see trees. We would be in a different zone entirely!” he laughs.

Chris says spending that time honing his craft was beneficial. “I learned the music business, and you can’t replace that. The music business has certainly changed a lot from those days but you can’t replace the experience of actually getting out there and doing it. You acquire a skill set from paying your dues. If

you don’t spend the time travelling the country, playing gigs and working on your music, you won’t have those experiences to draw on later.”

LIFE CHANGES

Chris says, “While I was traveling I always knew one day I would live in the ‘mountain time zone’, and when my wife Renee, who was working in the tech industry, got a job offer in Colorado in 2000, we decided to move out there. I didn’t hesitate for a minute.” Shortly after they relocated, and while in the middle of creating his second CD in Nashville, Chris was in a mountain bicycle accident only minutes from their home. He woke up

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from a coma four days after the accident with a paralyzing spinal cord injury.

“I spent the next three months in the hospital” he says. Among his injuries was extensive damage to his left arm and hand, and he says “Playing the guitar, even as little as I could at the time, was actually a good thing because it helped with the rehab process.” For the book *Crafting a Life of Passion, Purpose and Prosperity*, Chris wrote a chapter entitled, “Overcoming Barriers to Achieve Your Purpose.” In it he describes what motivated him throughout the long years of physical rehabilitation. “My true passion, the love of music, became the energy to keep going in spite of the changes and obstacles” he wrote.

Making the decision to resume his musical career meant moving from Colorado. “Renee’s family lives here and we had visited many times and loved the area. It was an easy decision to move to Beaufort, because it has it all, beauty, charm and the friendliest people I’ve ever met. It has been more than I could have imagined I drive home from my musical jobs and think I am blessed to be playing over 150 dates a year!” says Chris.

Chris’s original instrumental music is subtle, harmonious and totally lovely. It is soft without being dull, quiet without being boring. On the *Journey of the Soul* album he writes, “Life is an odyssey, shaped by the passing of time and the choices we make. The music on this album embraces the inner journey-with its sense of beginning and end-and the courage it takes to receive all that lies along the way” Those words capture the music perfectly. As stated on his website, Chris’s original instrumental music is heard around the world in many outlets and included on various projects with Warner Brothers Austria, Oasis, Soothing Music, Musaz, and C.A.R.E Channel (which is played at Beaufort Memorial Hospital) to name a few.

His new album, *Beyond this Place* answers his fans request for a vocal project. “It’s spiritual in content, drawn from my own reflections about things that have been on my heart and my attempt to express those feelings through song. I added electric guitar on this record where my other projects only had acoustic. There is some crunch guitar as well as other amplified instrumentation to round

out the arrangements giving this album a bit more edge.”

Chris says, “I have some venues where I can focus on my original songs, and some where the patrons expect covers. People like music they can recognize and I enjoy entertaining them and giving people an enjoyable experience. Having said that, my original music is always well received and people applaud that as well.” The artists Chris covers include Van Morrison, James Taylor, Jimmy Buffet, Eagles, Dan Fogelberg, Bob Seger and a song list from Sinatra to Green Day far too lengthy to quote.

The years of entertaining people, at home and on the road, are evident in Chris’s easy style and relaxed manner while performing. Sliding from one song to the next, he has the rare ability to keep a group of people listening intently and even softly singing along, all while appearing utterly at home and relaxed himself. Chris says, “I am happy to offer a relief and a little escape for the time we, the audience and myself, are together. I’m glad that the audience can step away from their day to day cares.”

Chris tells the story, “When I was recovering I had a handicapped bicycle I would ride at the time in Colorado. It was late November and I was out riding on the plains and I saw this flock of geese passing over. It was so beautiful and I heard a soft whisper from within say, ‘Chris this is bonus time’. By all rights I shouldn’t be here and yet I am.” He pauses and continues, “My ‘take away’ since

my accident has been that we are all in bonus time. The static of everyday lives has a tendency to rob us of what’s truly important in life. As best you can it is important to enjoy and be grateful for the time you have because who knows what will happen in any given day. And the chances of it all ending at some point are still 100 percent!”

For further information:
website www.cpaul.com.

The book *Crafting a Life of Passion, Purpose and Prosperity* is available at bookstores and through his website. Chris performs at venues throughout the lowcountry; check his website for updated appearance information. Chris’s albums *Journey of the Soul*, *Higher Ground* and *Beyond This Place* are available on his website as well as through online sources CD Baby, iTunes, and The Orchard.

