

MATT HOLUBOWSKI

Biographical notes, 2023

Matt Holubowski, hailing from Hudson, QC, Canada, has come a long way since his independently released record *OGEN, OLD MAN*, in 2014.

He completed a BA in Political Science in 2012, with the vague intention of acquiring a Master of Literature, to become a college English professor. For the most part, though, he had no clue what to do with his life. Funded by his side-job as a waiter, he postponed that decision by globetrotting for a while, stopping all around Europe, spending two months in Uganda (where he got the name “Ogen”), and then five more in Southeast Asia.

He lugged a guitar along the way, writing songs, but it wasn't until he ran out of money, on the cusp of signing a two-year teaching contract in Taiwan, that a near mental breakdown-slash-panic attack poured his subconscious out, convincing him to bail on the travels to return home to write and record an album.

Three weeks later he was back in Montreal, and it was then he met Connor Seidel, in a seedy bar where they were both performing. Connor invited Matt to his parent's Baie D'Urfé basement where he had built a studio, and from there, everything changed. And that's when the story truly begins. Over the course of six years, they would make three records together.

At that time, Matt knew nothing about songwriting, the music industry, recording, touring, and had absolutely no idea where to begin. He was fueled by a very abstract and intense desire to weave himself into an unusual and interesting existence.

An unexpected and extremely lucky series of events led to Matt accruing a large following in his home province and signing with Montreal-based record label Audiogram. Their first collaborative release, *SOLITUDES*, ended up selling over 45k copies, racked up 17 million streams, and earned him a Gold record, as well as two nominations at the ADISQ Gala, Quebec's music awards, for anglophone Album and Show of the year.

It was also around 2016 that Matt met his band (Simon Angell, Marc-André Landry, Stéphane Bergeron, Arnaud Belley-Ferris, and Marianne Houle), with whom he's been touring and recording ever since, later recruiting Antoine Goulet and Lisa Iwanicki as well.

His very first tour started with a respectable thirty dates, but it quickly turned into 50, 100, 150, 200 shows, selling over 20,000 tickets. He toured all around Canada, USA, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, and the UK, and supported Ben Folds, Sophie Hunger, and Dan Mangan. Some of his highlights were performing at Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, La Cigale in Paris, Paradiso in Amsterdam, The Barbican in London, Vicar Street in Dublin, L'Ancienne Belgique in Brussels, Osheaga (Main Stage!) in Montreal, and Bonnaroo in Tennessee.

Later reunited in the studio with producer Connor Seidel, Matt Holubowski pushed sonic experimentation to another level with the creation of a new record: *WEIRD ONES*, written over two months in Krakow, two more in Banff, and released in February 2020. The concerts and

promotional efforts that had begun in Canada, Germany, France, and the UK were unfortunately cut short, experiencing a fate akin to all other musicians in the midst of touring that year. Disappointed but undeterred, Matt still managed to play over 60 tour dates upon reopening of venues across his home country in the last months. Quite flexible, he presented WEIRD ONES on stages across Canada as a solo act on an intimate tour, and in full band formation when possible, in festivals and concert halls. He also opened for Martha Wainwright's latest Canadian tour and for a few nights' support with The Paper Kites, all while carefully creating his next album due in 2023.

LIKE FLOWERS ON A MOLTEN LAWN is, in many respects, the most thought-out and precise record Holubowski has made. Those who have listened to his records may have noticed that each new release is infused with more and more experimentation, as those who have seen him perform more than once since 2016 can say the same about his shows. Matt's music has grown along with him, and LFOAML is the culmination of years of learning about music from his close-knit team.

What sets this record apart is the context in which it was made. The Weird Ones tour in limbo and the only certainty being the ample amount of time on his hands, Matt decided he wanted to do things differently. As a bit of a former luddite, and the type of songwriter who philosophized ideas more than he agonized over the technical and musical detail, he had always refrained from getting too acquainted with anything theoretical, fearing it would rob him of the magic of naiveté. Now, he wanted to do the exact opposite, and he managed to recruit the perfect person to help him steer the ship: Pietro Amato.

The pair had only met a handful of times, but everything that Pietro exuded personally and creatively was just what Matt needed to take his music to the next level. Over the course of a year and a half, they met a few times a week to work, rework, imagine and reimagine, with Amato patiently mentoring Holubowski, lending his expertise by way of production, arrangements, piano, horns, keys, and modular synths. This collaboration results in Matt Holubowski's most meticulously cultivated record to date, and crucially sets an inspiring foundation for the work yet to come.

mattholubowski.com