

Relative Recital

Gordon the great, episode one

"Gordon Lightfoot is one of the greatest songwriters in Canada.

In this episode of Relative recital the Host (Kaia) and her family members explore Gordon's significance on their family and argue why he is the Greatest Canadian."

Music begins: 5 sec

Music volume lowers. Then ends

Warm

Isn't it crazy how different the two sides of your family can be?

One side are dog people

Dog barking

the other side, cat people.

Cat meowing

One side thinks Gordon lightfoot is the greatest Canadian. The other side knows secrets that make him appear to be not so amazing. Hi my name is Kaia and welcome to Relative Recital. This episode Im talking about greatness specifically the greatest Canadian GORDON LIGHTFOOT.

Hit hot

Reporters and hosts saying Gordon Lightfoot's name.

Fades into piano instrumental from the song "The wreck of Edmund Fitzgerald"

Fade out..

Chill music begins (low-medium volume)

Gordon lightfoot was born in Orillia Ontario in 1938. He was a talented singer from a very young age winning awards for his voice. As a teenager he started mastering multiple instruments, focusing mostly on guitar.

Guitar chord plays

Gordon worked writing jingles for commercials until he gained popularity in Canada during the 60s. After his album "Lightfoot" came out he rose to fame pretty fast, becoming the singer/songwriter that is often referred to as the best in Canada.

Gordon's songs covered topics like , love, history, current events and Canada. For people living in the 70s he was an inspiration specifically to young individuals interested in music like my dad was..

Warm- interview audio begins

" Hi Its Mark Rasmussen, I've been playing music since I was eight years old. I used to watch my dad play the organ all the time. I first started by playing the accordion

Accordion music plays

Then I moved on to the organ

Organ music plays

And eventually I bought myself a piano, when I was about nineteen/twenty years old, when I moved out of the house and had my own money. Yeah and I taught myself how to play piano."

Piano music

Kaia: Gordon Lightfoot's way of kinda telling a story or conveying a different issue or topic is a big part of his music, and kinda like what he creates. What are some story's that you've told in your music, that were similar or inspired by his songs.

Dad: well I mean more often then not I tend to talk about relationships, when I think about Gordon's songs I would relate that to a "sundown" which is a song talking about a girl "you better take care if I find you been creeping round my back stair". Dedinetly I can sort of relate to that. Or Carefree Highway, where you're on the road and there's nothing but green lights ahead and you never know what's going to come your way. That was really a sort of a metaphor for me, like Carefree highway you never know what's going to come your way and it always puts a smile on my face. Yeah that's a great song.

Kaia: one of the biggest reasons you became a fan of Gordon lightfoot was because of your parents ,right? They were really big fans, when you hear a Gordon lightfoot song what comes to mind what do you think of?

Dad: I honestly think my were big fans by accident. I think that we had this A frame, on garden bay lake in Pender harbour. By accident more than anything else we had one cassette tape for our time up there, for summers upon summers. Why nobody bothered to buy another tape, I don't know. We had this one cassette of Gordon lightfoot's "Sundown" and we just listened to it over and over. We all became fans, what's happened I think, is that that has become a soundtrack to our life and when we all think of that time in our life, we think about those songs. I mean we could be anywhere in the world, and we hear that song we would immediately be moved back to that time, I mean when my dad passed away those were the songs we played at his wake. The songs are a big deal to the family, it's just the way it all played out. In those mid seventies. It was Gordon Lightfoot.

Overall Gordon was a role model to young musicians, but it wasn't only his music that makes him inspirational. Its his values and refusal to throw them away for money or fame.

Gordons songs covered quite controversial topics.

Some of which were very big risks. Like his song "nous vivons ensemble" which was about the québécois separatism dispute. The main message of the song was "we're stronger together as one" which was a pretty dangerous to discuss at that time in canada.

Various times Gordon was told his songs were not good for "fanning the flames" of disputes or public worries, his response was "I don't want to just make people happy I want to make them think."

I truly believe he accomplished that goal, his songs made my family happy, but he also opened their eyes to the importance of topics around them.

"Hello my name is Chera Rasmussen"

Kaia: Out of Gordon lightfoot's songs that you can think of right now which ones do you believe got peoples attention?

Mom: one of the things I found pretty special about Gordon Lightfoot was he put a lot of energy a lot of meaning into his music. Some of the songs Gordon lightfoot wrote and recording that became popular on the radio, created quite an energy in people. I don't think that's what he intended. I think he meant to make a story and be part of history, like for example his song "Black day in July" was very controversial. That song was about riots in Detroit in 1967. The song was played on many radio stations but quickly banned because it caused too much unrest amongst people. I really think Gordon Lightfoot meant some of his songs to be more like a tribute to pay respect, to things that happened to people.

Kaia: I agree, I do think Gordon meant for his songs to be more of a tribute, he was shooting for a journalist style of song. It was meant to be a way he captured history. Music is tricky that way, it's more dependent on the way the listener hears it. Almost less than what the artist intends, it's all up to perception.

Another thing that's up to perception like songs is the character of an individual.

With every great person there's always a flaw. Something that you never really expected of them.

On my mom's side of the family Gordon lightfoot is still a Canadian legend, but they wouldn't go out of their way to say he was the greatest Canadian.

Back in the 60s my baba was dating a man who was a very talented musician.

"In 1965, he was off to Halifax for a leadership training program with the Royal bank, while he was there, on his way back to Winnipeg the airplanes were closed because of a ice storm. He sat all night in the waiting area of the airport and he met a person

there. It was Gordon Lightfoot. Gordon was there with some of his technician people, and had his instruments there. Everyone was sitting together in the waiting room. Bill (her boyfriend) was a fan of Gordon's music. Bill went over and chatted with him and they became friendly they started talking. Bill told him he loved writing songs, he told Gordon about a song he wrote "rainy day people" that was supposedly about me breaking up with him. He shared the song with Gordon lightfoot, Gordon really liked the song and had Bill teach it to him. They spent the whole night there until they could get on there flight. Bill told me this story before we completely stopped talking to each other. He said that he had been at that Halifax airport and shared his song with Gordon. Lo and behold two years later Gordon lightfoot comes out with a song called "rainy day people" and it was Bill's song and he didn't give him credit.

Hit hot:

After hearing my babas story I NEEDED to know the truth was Gordon light foot not as great as I thought he was?

The suspense killed me and I did some web surfing.

Typing...

I ended up finding Bernie Fiedler Gordon's promoter since the early days. On his website was his phone number and called him.

Phone ringing..

To my surprise he picked up. He told me how to contact lightfoot's manger and I gave their office a call. Their secretary put me on the call list.

Chill music ends

Thanks for listening to this episode of relative recital, stay tuned a new episode that will include all the details I learn from Gordon Lightfoot's manger. You will be the first to find out if my babas story is true. This was your host Kaia, you'll hear from me soon

"The wreck of Edmund Fitzgerald" instrumental plays

