

# R&B GIANT PRAKASH JOHN NOT YOUR TYPICAL ROCK STAR

## HE TURNED DOWN MORE GREAT GIGS THAN MOST MUSICIANS EVER GET, WRITES JOHN STEWART

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JOHN STEWART Column

Here's all you need to know about Prakash John. When he was touring with Alice Cooper, the band stayed in a hotel in Hartford, Conn., across the street from their venue.

The other band members hired a limo to drive around the block to arrive at the arena in style.

John slung his bass over his shoulder, grabbed his stage pass and was at the stage door in 60 seconds.

No muss, no fuss - just a delivery boy for rhythm.

He's the newest member of Mississauga's Music Walk of Fame, along with guitarist Phil X. He's also a humble man with simple priorities.

He gets more recognition in the U.S., Japan and Europe than in Canada. But he'd rather live where it's "peaceful and safe."

He has lots to brag about - becoming an architect of the "Toronto Sound" with Donnie Traiano and Whitey Glan in Mandala and Bush after teaching himself bass.

He and Glan toured and recorded for a decade with Lou Reed and Alice Cooper during their groundbreaking periods.

John was recruited by former Mississauga resi-

dent George Clinton for another Rock and Roll Hall of Fame band, Parliament-Funkadelic.

He's turned down more opportunities than most musicians see, including spots in Derek and the Dominos and Edgar Winter's White Trash. He cringes every time he hears Van Morrison's "Moondance" because he rejected a chance to play on that.

He's just as committed to gigs at Roc'n Doc's, The Harp and Lake Affect as he is to 50,000 screaming fans at Wembley Stadium.

He annually plays the July 1 event in Memorial Park, which is near where he unveiled his stone of honour last week.

He's just as proud of having coached soccer with the legendary Trevor McCallum of the Mississauga Falcons as he is of having Prince sit in with his band one night in Yorkville.

While the former Clarkson resident, who married Lorne Park S.S. grad Gail Stewart, put the long hair, bell-bottom pants and platform shoes behind him, he never got over the propulsive attraction to the blues-based music he loves.

He returned to Canada in 1979 to form the unchallenged No. 1 R&B band in the country, The Lincolns,

now fronted by his immensely talented son Jordan, who has a five-record deal with superstar producer David Foster.J

John mostly wants to talk about what a great player and singer Jordan is. His other son, Julien, is also now trying music.

Before his dad was inducted Sept. 8, Jordan spoke of how nice it is to see his father recognized, "especially in such a diverse place as Mississauga, which means so much to us."

Jordan says his famous father "lives quietly and humbly. He sacrificed a lot

in touring and opportunities. His No. 1 priority was being a father. He was around for everything. He let his children grow up normally, which is incredibly validating," says the 31-year-old.

"My father was - and is - my hero."

Prakash John is that anomaly - the rock star who mastered the family lifestyle.

*John Stewart is a retired long-time journalist with the Mississauga News. His column, My Back Pages, appears each week.*

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