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FAX/NOTE

3RD EAR MUSIC TEL/FAX: (031)304-1534 EMAIL THIRDEAR@IAFRICA.COM

MARKETING & PROMOTIONS RAE L BIRNS ESP (011)792-8476 FAX: (011)792-3579

BIOGRAPHY / INFORMATION on DAVID MARKS for the
GRAHAMSTOWN NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL - July 6th to 16th 1995
SHOW TITLE: DAVID MARKS - COMING HOME
(SONGS & STORIES from the ROCKING CHAIR)
VENUE: AMSTEL CABARET ROOM AT THE SETTLERS INN

IF YOU DON'T DO IT (ie: blow your own synth & sing for your own supper)
NOBODY ELSE WILL.....AFTER 30 YEARS IN MUSIC AND A 15 YEAR
LUNCH-BREAK DAVID MARKS HAS DECIDED TO 'COME HOME'.....BACK
INTO THE STRANGE, STRANGE WORLD THAT STARTED IT ALL:
SONGWRITING - GUITAR STRUMMING, PLUCKING & PICKING. THE
'SOUNDMAN' IS NOW ON THE OTHERSIDE OF THE SPOTLIGHT.....

INTRODUCTION:

Performing is nothing new to DAVID MARKS. He's been playing in bands since early school days (1960) and throughout his 'gold mining career' from 1963 to 1967. He matriculated in 1962 and in 1965 became seriously involved with Sound, recording, producing and promoting local words & music, BECAUSE NOBODY ELSE WAS DOING IT, save for the occasional Township Jive & Jazz festival and the odd 'left-wing' Coffee bar. The SA Record Industry (we have NEVER had a MUSIC Industry) was not interested in songs with words that challenged the status-quo. So, it was by design not choice, and absolutely no regrets, that David traveled and performed with countless Rock Bands, Actors and Troubadours in Concerts, Clubs & festivals for 30 years avoiding the 'commercial' mainstream - not only as a 'sound person, recording engineer and producer' but often as Bass player, guitar picker and resident folk singer when the situation demanded it. From his birth place in Cape Town (February 1944), through to 7 different schools and towns before he reached 13 to settle down in boarding schools at Pretoria and Witbank Technical Colleges, David has lived the life of a modern day Troubadour and Tinker.....'life on the road'.....even through 24 years of marriage, 4 children and a grandchild. From Witbank to Welkom to Woodstock and backCOMING HOME again!

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THE SONGS

DAVID has been known best, in the local industry, as a Songwriter - his songs have been recorded through the years by many artists and produced in film, TV, radio and on records, tapes & CD. A few songs have even scored school book status.

He achieved international success with his mining song, MASTER JACK in 1968 - since recorded in many different languages by dozens of artists around the world. To this day MASTER JACK remains the most successful South African written, recorded and produced song in the USA. Prior to MASTER JACK David had some chart success on LM radio in 1966 with his mining/city ballad MOUNTAINS OF MEN ('avoided' ie: banned, by the SABC for the reference to 'black men and white men' ?) and his song to Diamond prospectors FAIRYGOLD. HEY MISTER, the song written 'underground' (in a Free State Mine) for the people of LIMEHILL forcibly removed from their land in the sixties - HEY MISTER followed MR. NICO (the song about small independent traders being shut down by the introduction of 'super markets' in Southern Africa) onto the USA Billboard charts for Four Jacks and A Jill. David's 'underground' compositions were becoming noticed - often getting him into trouble with the establishment on the mines and with the authorities in the 'dim lit coffee bars' of Hillbrow, where 'communists and revolutionaries' reportedly met. (How true....JOE SLOVO and many political activists were patrons of the CUL DE SAC and TROUBADOUR in those days.)

MUSIC & THE MINES - THE TROUBADOUR & NITE BEATS

With a number of songs on the charts David continued to work in coffee bars and mines - not always as the singer-songwriter or a miner. Despite his 'commercial' success, he enjoyed working back-stage, waiting on tables in the clubs or 'stopping/mining' underground between the occasional singing engagement - this provided him with a wealth of material that molded much of his music and 'attitude' as a songwriter in South Africa.

David would take the train after underground shifts at Grootvlei (East Rand) to play Tuesday evenings with partner BIG MAC at Des Lindberg's TROUBADOUR in Noord street; or he would hitch from Welcome (St. Helena) in the Free State to play week-ends at ABE'S NITE BEAT in Hillbrow, waiting tables between gigs. He played bass for a number of 'Rock' bands and for various mine functions. With songs on the charts (1966/1967), he decided to leave the mines for DURBAN, playing Bass for HARRY POULOUS (at many clubs including TILES) and for a number of bands, THE DRIVE, THE PRIVILEGE etc. This is where his friendship with FREEDOMS CHILDREN and BRIAN FINCH began - these times sowed the seeds for many future collaborations - KEN E HENSON & BRIAN, the MALOMBO and FREEDOMS CHILDREN "Valley of a 1,000 Hills" project and the ABSTRACT TRUTH band and TOTUM and many more.

After some months on the hotel circuit, (the PERSIAN ROOM at the FOUR SEASONS through 1967/68 and the CHATTER BOX in the ASTRA HOTEL - where Sol Kerzner had been an assistant manager some months before) he

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returned to the Johannesburg clubs before leaving for the USA in February of 1969. On the Reef he worked (during the day) throughout 1968 for the legendary DOC HUGH TRACEY at the ILAM (INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY FOR AFRICAN MUSIC). Having just won the SARIE AWARD for SONG OF THE YEAR and featured regularly in the media, people were often surprised to see him catching a train to work in Roodeport at the ILAM or serving coffee in the evenings - as David explains, under the circumstances in South Africa at the time, with the record 'industry', the SABC and the laws of the day, it was difficult to become a 'star' with a clear conscience, despite his personal (lucky) commercial successes.

As assistant manager of the TROUBADOUR for a few months in 1968 (IAN LAWRENCE was owner at the time), David introduced a teenage JOHNNY CLEGG on Sunday evenings together with acclaimed (but, at the time politically incorrect) South African poet and writer CREDA MUTWA. These amazing early 'cross cultural' shows were extremely popular at the TROUBADOUR and the occasional Art Gallery, but were ignored by the media and upset the authorities no end - MURIEL PIENAAR, Johnny's 'singing record-executive' mother was the ever proud promoter and encouraged Johnny and Creda's shows. David again got involved with JOHN and SIPHO MCHUNU on his return from the USA in 1970, for the next 8 years, featuring them at many memorable events: TRIBAL BLUES (Wits 1971), the SA NATIONAL, DURBAN and PE FOLK FESTIVALS, FREE PEOPLE'S CONCERTS, MUSIC for AFRICA & GUITARS for AFRICA etc.

WOODSTOCK, HANLEY SOUND AND THE USA '69

It was the songs that got DAVID MARKS to the USA and coincidence (or synchronicity - however you want to look at it) that got him into Sound and WOODSTOCK and many other great tours and festivals throughout the States in 1969. It was a lucky-break with HANLEY SOUND in Boston that took him away from the Nashville songwriting trail. USA '69 was indeed a very STRANGE world! Over Christmas in Boston at 11 degrees below, he wrote CLEAR, COOL, CALM & STILL (an anti-pollution song about sunny South Africa - from an idea by SA poet Philip de Bruyn) and 'cut his sound teeth' mixing for LITTLE RICHARD, BO DIDDLEY, GENE VINCENT, LORD SUTCH and JOHN LENNON (with ERIC CLAPTON, ALLAN WHITE, KLAUS FOREMAN & YOKO ONO) etc at the 1969 LIVE PEACE IN TORONTO festival working with the sound crew on many memorable festivals that included THE ROLLING STONES, JIMMI HENDRIX, WILSON PICKET and others. Living between New York's Greenwich Village and Cambridge in Boston, he went on to work with many of the best singer-songwriters (HOYT AXTON, JERRY JEFF WALKER, TIM HARDIN, DONOVAN etc) and toured with some of America's great 'revolutionary' bands: THE TURTLES (Frank Zappa's FLO & EDDIE), 3 DOG NIGHT, THE BAND, JOAN BAEZ, THE CHAMBERS BROS, JOE COCKER, THE BYRDS, THE DOORS, GRAND FUNK and many more.

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COMING HOME - PART ONE

He returned to the country in 1970, on a mission: to share his good luck (but no good fortune) and experience with South African folk, jazz, rock and traditional musicians. To establish a sorely needed 'music infrastructure' among the many talented, but totally ignored and often intimidated South African Musicians, David began working with musicians in Soweto - from JABULANI AMPHITHEATRE to MOFOLO PARK, from the EYETHU (where 3rd Ear Music officially started in December of 1970 - the first Sound re-enforcement Music company in Africa) and the 'Y', 3rd Ear Sound traveled many townships with memorable shows, theater and festivals - more often than not free-of-charge to the promoter, from 1971 for the next 5 years.

He toured with BARNEY SIMON & MACKAY DAVSHI'S PHIRI (featuring a talented cast that included a young Felcia Mabuza-Suttle, Abigail Khubeka, Barney Rachabane etc etc); set up festivals, not as a promoter, but as a 'soundman', with no budget (promoters and Musicians take the door) in MAMELODI, ATRIDGEVILLE, KWA THEMA, DAVEYTON etc. Then onto Wits where he established what was to become the most popular annual campus event in the country: THE FREE PEOPLE'S CONCERTS, in association with the South African Folk Music Association and a number of student organizations (Aquarius, NUSAS, SASVA etc) the shows had to be free of charge - mixed shows and gatherings of any nature were prohibited by law. Collections were held and clothing collected, but more often than not musicians, sound, staff and students all worked for free.

FAMILY, TOURS & THEATER

DAVID met actress FRAN DOWNING in 1970 and were married in Durban, 1971. From then on it was 'life on the road' (thanks to Fran) that has lasted from a secure family from 1970 between Johannesburg and Durban, to date - a string of clubs, shows, festivals, theaters and children were produced - The Oxford Hotel in Rosebank, the Village in Orange Grove; Totum at the Palm Beach in Durban, the Chelsea Underground in Hillbrow, Dinty's in Yeoville, the Nitebeat, the Market Theater and others. Together with Mannie Manim and Barney Simon David opened at the MARKET THEATER in 1976 - producing the music events and building a cross-cultural theater audience at The Market. 2 Years earlier, David brokered a deal with the Oxford Hotel to convert the Blue Fox into a permanent theater for Barney and Mannie's COMPANY productions. PETER PROWSE had used the Blue Fox (a supper room) on occasion for his memorable shows, while 3rd Ear Music ran the NEW TROUBADOUR downstairs. 70's theater included working on the controversial GODSPEL production for Des and Dawn in Lesotho and the infamous mixed Theater 'trial' at the Wits University Great Hall.

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A SOUND AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

No amount of money or time could have bought the experiences and places that David has seen from behind his Mixing Consoles and Tape Recorders. Besides the shows, theater and festivals, as a 'sound person' he would often 'string' for foreign news agencies - TV and Radio News Teams. During and after the 1976 Soweto uprising, into Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique and Angola at the height of the war - 9 years previously he had toured that beautiful country mixing sound for PERCY SLEDGE, RICHARD JON SMITH, COCKY TWO BULLS and the MIRACLES, David was now mixing with the horrors of war. Ironically, but not surprisingly, 3rd Ear Music's 'other' successful but heavily banned singer-songwriter, ROGER LUCEY was one of the 'News cameraman' on that Angolan trip.

kwaZULU/NATAL CITIZEN

Based in Durban since 1985, David has continually been involved with theater, sound, songwriting, recording and shows. He has produced, mixed and recorded many South African and international artists through SABC restrictions, banning of records and the closing down of festivals, clubs and theaters. The show as they saymust go on.....Among the many artists that he has worked with, most are still around today: ROGER LUCEY, SIMBA MORRI, SIPHO MCHUNU, MALOMBO, MANGO GROOVE, JOHNNY CLEGG, BRIAN FINCH, SYD KITCHEN, DARIUS BRUBECK, STEVE NEWMAN, MADALA KUNENE, ROD McKUEN, SHAWN PHILLIPS, SIMBA MORRI, HUGH MASEKELA, DES & DAWN LINDBERG, CHRISTOPHER FAYA, TONY COX and many others....

3rd Ear Music Sound, Publishing and Recording was founded in 1967 by BEN SEGAL & AUDREY SMITH in the face of record company apathy to local music and the establishment's refusal to listen to our own musicians and songwriters. David went on to become director of 3rd Ear Music in 1970 and has remained director every since. He was a founder member of the NATAL CULTURAL CONGRESS (NCC) and initiated the MUSIC ASSOCIATION of NATAL (MANA) which he chaired for 3 years. (It is interesting to note that in 1968 David formed the NATAL FOLK MUSIC ASSOCIATION - the first 'folk music' association in Natal with one of his current 3rd Ear Music partners VERLEN 'GINGER' SEIPP, and was chairman of the SOUTH AFRICAN FOLK MUSIC ASSOCIATION in 1972.)

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CURRENT PRODUCTIONS & EVENTS

Annual music productions include the SPLASHY FEN MUSIC FESTIVAL, GUITARS for AFRICA, GUITARS for PEACE & the SINGERSONGWRITER PROJECT. 3rd Ear Music is currently negotiating to bring CROSBY, STILLS & NASH to South Africa in January 1996....this MAY be David's last music promotion....from here on in he will concentrate on his own music and shows, possibly even making a record in the process.

David has never appeared formally at any show that he has produced. Always writing and occasionally performing for other producers and directors, he continues to 'get involved'.....Politically, musically, socially.

COMING HOME - PART 2

The 'switch' from behind the sound-desk and the studio glass to a stage all of his own was as natural as the next project. "Age is just a number they say.....the Rolling Stones will not, will not fade away." A line from ROCKING CHAIR one of David's currently popular (as yet unrecorded) songs which will feature in Grahamstown. Accompanied by virtuoso guitarist ALLAN JUDD, David will not look back to reminisce or self-indulge.....he intends to 'build a sound foundation' of fact and fancy from experiences molded out of the rock that is South African music.....a 30 year launch after a 15 year lunch-break into a journey that can only belong to the future.....at 51 anybody can do it.....and if you don't, somebody else will!

ROCKING CHAIR (p)(c)3rd Ear Music 1993

Words & Music by DAVID MARKS

When he turned Free he could Rock ' Roll
(They say) Music saved his very Soul.....
Well, he's just turned 50, watch him move
There's just one thing left in life to prove.....

Would you still Love him
Would you care
If you saw him Rolling in his Rocking chair? (x2)

From One to Ten his world went Pop!
He reach Sixteen.....he Jive and Bop!
Rap or Metal grunge and Funk
When Lips get loose and hearts get sunk

(continued on Fax 7)

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(continued from Fax 6)

From 16 down to 21...
Watchout Greenpeace here he come
Hey Cool! No School! It's Rock 'n Blues....
Now turn on the world and blow a fuse.....

Everybody Loved you
With Flowers in your hair
You were so far-out man Rolling with that Rocking Chair (x2)

From 21 Tears 32....
It's Trad and Jazz and a few Children too!
Video Music is all they want to play
But the Rolling Stones will not fade away....fade away....

From 35 old daze were best?
Country & Classics and Time's the test
Stolen minutes - Bored Room Rules!
Headlines! Deadlines! Ship o' Fools.....

All you need is Love
And some Tender care
When you think you're ready for that Rocking Chair (x2)

From 60 up until the end
That Rocking Chair becomes your friend!
Like Elvis in that Jail-house Rock....
You just grab that Chair, and Rock, Bop, Pop!

Everybody will Love you - you're still there
You made it Pops -
From the Cradle to the Rocking Chair (x2)

Age is just a state of Mind
No matter what you leave behind
Age is just a Number they say.....
The Rolling Stones will not, will not
Fade away.....fade away.....