

# Nathan Davis Still Lives

## A Documentary Film

### Nathan Davis BIO

Born in the small North Carolina town of Southern Pines, as the only child of devout Christian fundamentalists, Nathan Davis was educated in Christian schools, and trained as a classical pianist. It quickly became obvious, to his parents and to his music teachers, that he had a great deal of natural ability. His first piano teacher made the comment that it was very difficult to teach an 8-year-old child, with perfect pitch, who had more talent than she did. He began to write poetry as a young teenager, at first secretly. At about the same time he began to teach himself to play the guitar.



He wrote his first songs, including the much-acclaimed "Bittersweet," before he was 17 years old, and put together a band, beginning to play gigs before he got out of high school.

On his 18th birthday, he left the small town in North Carolina where he was born, and went to St. Louis, MO, where he became a member of the band, End of End, and gained a great deal of real world experience. Returning home after several months, he promptly left again, this time for Atlanta and the Olympics. He soon discovered, though, that he could make more money playing for tips on the street corners.

After the Olympics were over, Nathan began his wandering years. Many days were spent not knowing where he would spend the night. He found himself at one time or another in New Orleans, Memphis, and all up and down the southeast, ending up in far flung Alaska for a year or so. A coffee shop owner in Alaska convinced him that he needed to leave the state and go back to his roots, back where he could find a larger audience. She said that he was the most talented person she had ever met.

After coming home to Southern Pines, in 2000, he began experimenting with various band members, from a short-lived funk-rock band called "The Lost Cause," to an acoustic jam band trio known as "Alibi." Alibi released a very limited run CD, self-titled, which is out of print at present.

All the while, he was writing songs, lots of them, chronicling a life lived on the highways of America, searching for meaning, sorting out his often conflicting beliefs. Way more than just songs about love gained and lost, Nathan wrestled with the demons of alcohol and drug abuse, and sang about it. He sang about doubt and pain and frustration. He wrote about the unfairness of life.

He has a remarkable style, writing poignant lyrics full of pain, hope, heartbreak, love, despair and strength, always telling his story with passion and honesty. He carries his songs with convincing ease and a powerful depth.

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As one journalist said about him, "He did not write music. He didn't sing it. He transformed himself into it." His songs are gut-wrenching. He took every emotion he ever felt, turned that emotion into poetry, set the poetry to music and then set it on fire.

In the beginning, he got gigs in local bars and restaurants and found that people wanted him to play songs they were familiar with, cover songs. In order to play, he had to do some of those. However, he picked the covers that he played carefully – songs that reflected how he felt, the struggles that mirrored his life, songs he could feel. And he played them his own way.

Interspersed throughout in those early gigs were his original songs and soon people began to listen to what he was singing about. It wasn't long until the crowds were beginning to request his songs, not the covers. Not long after that, they were singing along with him.

Recorded live in 2000 at the Jefferson Inn in Southern Pines by Chad Stites, Nathan's first CD, *The Holly Show*, completely sold out and is now considered a collector's item, with people all over the country still searching for the stray copy.

In 2001, Nathan began a collaboration with a talented teenage producer named Grant Walker, a nine-month long project involving many hours of work that became *Out of My Skin*, a studio album showcasing not only Nathan's writing and performing abilities, but also his ability to arrange and produce music as well as play multiple instruments well. It went on to become the best selling local artist album at Davis' hometown Sam Goody music store.

By the fall of 2003, he was performing in Raleigh, NC and the surrounding area, and connected with the very well-known, Grammy-nominated producer, John Custer. The two men instantly formed not only a business relationship, but a friendship, and began working on a studio album, the soon-to-be-released *Revolution Lane*. (The release of this CD has been delayed because of Nathan's death.)

In November of 2003, Chad Stites again recorded Nathan performing at the Six String Café in Cary, NC. That recording, produced by John Custer in early 2005, became *Nathan Davis Live!* It features the keyboard of John Henry Trinko and bassist Jeff Crawford. One fan in California called it "the best live recording" he had ever heard.

In between all of this, Raleigh-based video producer Roger Flake had been taking hours and hours of video in preparation for a DVD.

By this time, Nathan was back on the road, traveling throughout much of the southeast, and gaining fans wherever he went. In the summer of 2006, he toured South Carolina and Florida for several weeks, to very receptive audiences wherever he went.

On August 22 2006 Nathan was found dead at his grandmother's house. The cause of death was attributed to methadone poisoning and ruled accidental.