

## Aengus Finnan – Bio

Aengus Finnan was born Jan 31, 1972 in Dublin, Ireland and along with his two younger sisters spent the first few years of his life living in Wexford. His parents were actors/writers and in 1975 the Finnan family moved to Ontario's Shelter Valley, near the small village of Vernonville, where they began growing vegetables on an organic farm. In parallel with running the farm, Finnans' parents used the farm buildings as workspaces where they collaborated with local actors, particularly, during the winter months. In summer the nearby fields, woods and streams became an adventure playground for the Finnan brood.

Although the family owned a record player, their small collection of recordings mainly featured folk artists. In his early teens, Aengus fell under the spell of one writer in particular, Canada's Gordon Lightfoot. Intrigued by the world around him and encouraged by his parents, aged twelve, Aengus formed a group called Youth For Peace. This was not however a musical group; rather an organisation that could act as a voice for the young on local, national and global issues. They held public meetings, raised funds and went on to publish a booklet that in narrative, poem and illustration set out their aims and concerns. The following year, Aengus joined the International Youth for Peace and Justice Tour.

During Finnan's mid to late teens, numerous changes took place in his life. Enrolled at Lester B. Pearson College on Vancouver Island he studied visual art, following which, aged 18, he became a member of Canada World Youth and worked for a number of months on a dairy farm near Coteau Station, Quebec. Later he enrolled at Montreal University, majoring in Archaeology but didn't complete the course. Moving on again, Aengus then worked as a diver studying water quality in Athabasca, Alberta. Moving east once more, Aengus enrolled in the Theatre Department at Montreal's Concordia University. In a matter of months he made his singing debut at a local pub, and was introduced to the music of the late Stan Rogers. Having successfully completed the four-year course, Finnan helped form a touring theatre company called The R.R.1 Players but the project never took off due to a lack of funding and regular work.

Entering another educational establishment, the Teacher's College at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario he undertook a course in "Native and Northern Education." At the age of 23 his first teaching post, with Grade 7 and 8 classes, was at a school in Moosonee located on the west bank of the Moose River near James Bay. Aged 25, and restless to express himself in front of more than a classroom of 12/13 year olds, Aengus abandoned his teaching career for that of a singer/songwriter. He returned to Shelter Bay and began writing songs. When he left Moosonee he had only composed one original song. In the ensuing two years he criss-crossed Canada playing to whoever would listen or book him, mainly in pubs. In Toronto in 1999, Aengus met Paul Mills who would eventually help produce his debut recording "**Fool's Gold**." With a recording to sell and to pass to promoters, Finnan's career moved into a phase of performing in theatres, clubs and at summer festivals.

In a matter of five years, Finnan has developed into a nationally acknowledged folk talent and is beginning to make his mark south of the border. He hosted the television commercial for the 40<sup>th</sup> [2000] Mariposa Folk Festival, has performed at Kennedy Centre in Washington D.C. and shared stages with Canadian favourites Garnet Rogers, James Keelaghan, Stephen Fearing and Tamarack.

In the spring of last year, he toured Canada for six weeks accompanied by David Rogers [Stan Rogers stepson] and Trevor Mills, following which they went into the studios to record Finnan's sophomore album "**North Wind**." In 2002 Aengus entered the Kerrville Folk Festival's New Folk Songwriting competition and was one of the half dozen annual winners, following which Finnan was signed by Borealis Records and the Canadian based label released "**North Wind**" in September last year.

Discography : "**Fool's Gold**" [1999] ; "**North Wind**" [2002] :

**Arthur Wood**

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