



## 'Guy with guitar' back at home venue

Greg Macdonald, Special To The Times

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At school at Galt Collegiate Institute, Grade 10 student Conor Gains is known as the guy with the guitar.

In the world of blues music, he's known as one of the genre's bright and up-and-comers.

Gains, who has played in clubs across North America, will perform at Cafe 13 on Main Street on March 14.

The 15-year-old has already wowed audiences in major centres such as Toronto, Montreal and Nashville.

And despite some success in larger cities, Gains' favourite place to play is still Cafe 13.

"It's sort of like my home venue, it's really where I got my start," he said.

Gains started playing guitar when he was eight years old and was clamoring to learn chords from his father even earlier. He was performing live by the time he was 12.

Gains has played in legendary clubs such as B. B. Kings in Nashville and at the Montreal Jazz Festival.

"That was crazy. I got up on stage and the crowd was so big and supportive," he said.

"I wish I could play there all the time."

Gains even got the opportunity to play with the Jeff Healey Band during a tribute to the late musician.



Conor Gains and his band will perform live at Cafe 13 on March 13. The 15- year-old blues prodigy has wowed crowds all over the continent.

He's come a long way from the nervous preteen who stepped on stage to jam with local musicians.

"The first time I was on stage I was really nervous and scared for my life because there were girls there," Gains said.

"But I also felt really cool because I was on stage and playing guitar."

That feeling has never left the young guitarist and he still relishes performing live shows along with his band-mates, bassist Lewis Leone and drummer Joel Goodwin.

Gains started out doing mainly covers and performing with other musicians. These days, he is working on original material.

"I love to play my own songs live and seeing people really love it and know the lyrics," he said.

He hopes that he will one day cut an album, but wants to wait until the time is right.

"I want to be in a spot where I know I'm ready and have a clear idea," Gains said.

"Then I want to go in and do it quickly. "

His songs are a little different than the blues guitar he's known for and have a more mainstream feel, Gains said.

"Basically I want to be a singer-songwriter that can play really great guitar," Gains said.

Gains will play original material during his show at Cafe 13.

Tickets for the Conor Gains Band live at are on sale at the cafe for \$10.

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