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Lavoie uses what he's got

Singing to the Anglos

Elliott Lefko
Winnipeg-born and Montreal-raised singer/songwriter Daniel Lavoie claims that it's not how good a singer you are, but how you use what you've got.

"I've been singing for 15 years," says Lavoie, 32, who has recorded four French albums as well as a recent English album entitled *Cravings*. "I know how far I can go and I don't worry about it. I just keep going until I hit a brick wall."

Lavoie's music is folk-based, with an influence of jazz. Discussing his form of songwriting, Lavoie compares himself to a painter. "It's creating images, moods, and visions. I begin with a rough sketch, then use colours to achieve the final detail on plastic."

Commenting on his recent entrance to the English Canada music market, Lavoie, who last year was named Quebec's best male vocalist, admits that "it's a step backwards. I've had to learn

to communicate with a new mentality — a new culture. The most difficult thing is to learn how to speak English to people from Calgary and Toronto so that they can relate to it."

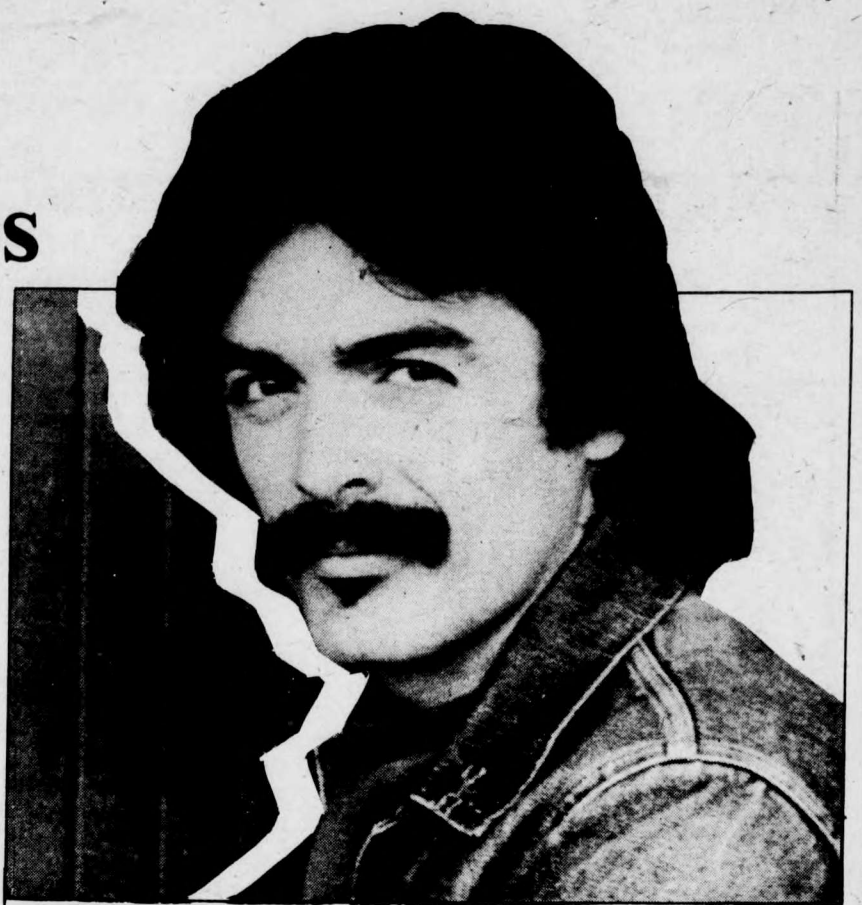
Lavoie feels that he has to accommodate his style to suit Anglo audiences. "In French I stress the poetic side, and work on images, without saying things blatantly. In English it's not the same way. You can't be as subtle."

Modern poet

For the last five years the dark-haired, mustachioed Lavoie has been making an annual concert tour/pilgrimage to France. "I began playing in the cities, and then the countryside. It's not an overnight thing," he cautions.

"They are open to Quebec music," he continues. "But you really have to convince them. They have to like it."

Besides his concerts and



Daniel Lavoie is intent on breaking through to the English Canada music market with his new album, *Cravings*.

albums, Lavoie has written and recorded some music for films. However, he says, the extra work takes up too much time from his

central focus: "Where I am — where most Canadian artists are — is just getting by. You can't spread yourself too thin."

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