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LADYSMITH CHRONICLE

Montreal musician walks across Canada

By Stephen Thomson - Ladysmith Chronicle

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If you see Simon Walls walking along the highway through Ladysmith later this month with his backpack and acoustic guitar, don't expect him to try and hitch a ride.

The 24 year old from Montreal has vowed to travel by foot from one Canadian coast to the other as part of a musical pilgrimage.

Starting in Victoria on April 12, Walls plans to cover 9,000 kilometres as part of the 18-month tour. There is a six-month break scheduled to start in October before he continues the second half of the journey from Sudbury, Ont. to St. John's, Nfld.

Walls said the walking tour is a way to promote his music and connect with an audience that is different from what other artists are doing.

"I just feel that everyone is driving in a van, everyone is trying to get into the music business, everyone is trying to do the same thing," he said by phone from Montreal.

While the journey may seem daunting, Walls already has some experience with long-distance foot travel. In 2008 he traveled 1,000 km across Spain over five weeks.

Walls said expects to cover around 27 km a day on his cross-country trek and he has been training for three months to prepare.

"You never know what's going to happen, but I'm pretty confident actually," he said.

His route will mainly follow major roadways that run parallel to the United States border.

Walls said he is booking some shows in larger centres, but also hopes to busk and find other spontaneous opportunities to perform. His second album, No Clue Yet, is due for release in October.

He has a budget of \$20 per day and plans to either camp in his one-person tent or crash in the homes of friendly strangers.

Walls said he expects to pass through Ladysmith sometime around April 22.



Simon Walls is walking from coast to coast as part of a musical pilgrimage.

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