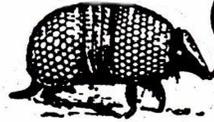
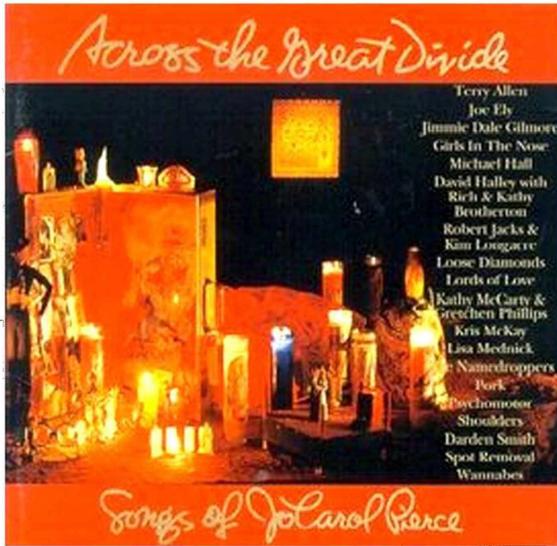


KERRVILLE KRONIKLE

No.14

5th. Year



YOU NEED TO OWN THIS ALBUM



ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO
G R A V I T Y

“Bald Eagles at Buchanan Lake”
Words & Music by Patricia Long,
AKA “Pat Hardin”

Steve Gillette

Kerrville - kompacts,
kassettes & other
ko incidences.

JON IMS

Across the Great Divide
Songs of Jol Carol Pierce

Artists and Songs

TERRY ALLEN | BLAME GOD
JOE ELY | QUEEN OF HEAVEN
JIMMIE DALE GILMORE | REUNION
GIRLS IN THE NOSE | DOES GOD HAVE US BY THE TWA? OR WHAT?
MICHAEL HALL | HEAVEN AND HELL (THEIR EXACT LOCATIONS)
DAVID HALLEY (RICH & KATHY BROTHERTON) | LOOSE DIAMOND
ROBERT JACKS & KIM LONGACRE | APOCALYPTIC HORSES
LOOSE DIAMONDS | RUBY
LORDS OF LOVE | SOMETHING MORE
KATHY MCCARTY & GRETCHEN PHILLIPS | BLUE NORTHER
KRIS MCKAY | ACROSS THE GREAT DMDE
LISA MEDNICK | BUTTONS OF YOUR SKIN
THE NAMEDROPPERS | SECRET DAN
PORK | MY BOYFRIEND
PSYCHOMOTOR | SACRIFICIAL ISLAND TOMBSTONE
SHOULDERS | BORDERLINE TANGO
DARDEN SMITH | SCRATCH UPON HER WINDOWPANE
SPOT REMOVAL | JIM HENRY HENLEY
WANNABES | YOU BOTHER ME

DEJADISC

SO WHO IS JO CAROL PIERCE, ANYWAY?

"Bald Eagles at Buchanan Lake"

Words & Music by Patricia Long,
AKA "Pat Hardin"



The first occasion I listened to Steven Fromholz narrate Patricia Hardin Long's lyric "Bald Eagles at Buchanan Lake," it kind of passed me by. Second time around, I was much more attentive. *It is a truly magnificent piece of work.* Segments of the lyric, after repeated playing, continue to give me chills. Patricia Long has completely inhabited the body of Max, the storyteller, successfully absorbing in the process every male nuance, with his/her words. The pictures he/she paints, mean that one day, I'm just gonna have to head North West of Austin, and go see Lake Buchanan. Particularly if it's in late October, and *the bald eagles* are there.

A few thoughts on this 128 line epic - *Seldom Falls* is such a great name for a cascade. I can almost picture the *Canyon of Eagles* and the limestone cathedrals. "*Gone are the nations in every direction, Scattered like leaves in the wind, But over these cliffs a spirit remains, Long past the lives of those men.*" - gives me the chills, because it is a timeless universal truth. There is no doubt in my mind, that there are *special/magical* places on the surface of this spinning sphere - I've been privileged in my life to visit a few of them. As far as those Indian nations (or any nation for that matter) are/is concerned - *Things come. Things go. Life never stutters for a microsecond; it just goes on and on and on.* "Now I could get in my car and drive a long way from Tow, And don't know where the hell that I am" - is a typical *Maxism*; he's been in love with the Lake since he first caught sight of it as a young lad. After that, there was never any reason to go anywhere else. Big Buch was universe enough for him. Love, history, geography, natural history, spirituality and great humanity - Patricia Long captures them all here. Most of all [like Max], I trust that I can manage to retain *a passion and my dream* as I grow older; and in the end, I hope that I can leave something *tangible* behind.

To obtain a copy of the "Bald Eagles at Buchanan Lake" cassette (9 min. 14secs.) mail \$7.50 to 207 Bulian Lane, Austin, Texas 78746. Also available is a 17" *11" poster which features the full lyric and cassette cover art. The poster costs \$6.00. Make cheques payable to MARATHON MUSIC. For residents outside the US, add \$1.00/item to assist Patricia with postage costs. Texas residents add 6% Sales Tax.

ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO GRAVITY



When I put Issue 13 together, I felt that it didn't quite fit. In hindsight, how could I miss out one of my *Albums of 1992*. What we're talking about here, is a musician with a blue blood pedigree. Generations of it. The Escovedo family is steeped in *Rock Americana* from the sixties and San Francisco, through to the eighties and Minneapolis. Based on the foregoing, it would have been something approaching a miracle, if Al had failed to find a niche in the recording industry.

Having stayed around long enough to appear on Rank & File's self titled, first cowpunk epic in 1982, Al went on to help found the True Believers. That five piece combo managed to issue one hell of a fine album on Rounder/Capitol in 1986, then cut another which still languishes in a locked vault somewhere. The True Believers subsequently mutated into the Make Believers, and ground to a halt at the close of the eighties. Other Escovedo sonic projects in the last couple of years have included the hard beat of the late Buick Mackane, the as yet to be heard Setters, and of course, the current *soundarama* expanse that is the Alejandro Escovedo Orchestra.

Fact. An Al Escovedo solo album has been a long overdue necessity for some time. It took the nous of the *hometown boys* at Watermelon to pull the whole damned affair together. Cut as 1992 opened at Austin's Hit Shack, with Steve Bruton in the producers chair, "Gravity" covers a wide spectrum of undiluted rhythms and genres, while lyrically remaining consistently true to Escovedo's ancestral vision of life.

From the insistent beat over the chorus of the opening cut "Paradise," through a pair of rowdy tunes - "One More Time" and "Oxford" - which I'll swear, the Glimmer Twins would kill to have in their catalogue, Escovedo proves that he can sweep out the cobwebs with taste. In a lighter vein, "Five Hearts Breaking," "Last To Know" and "She Doesn't Live Here Anymore," unveil the atmospheric and personally tailored face of Escovedo's words and music. The pop/rock melody of "Gravity/Falling Down Again" clocks in at over seven minutes, closes Al's solo debut, and cloaks a work of extreme lyrical desperation.

Don't defy gravity, simply buy it.

JON IMS



The interview with Jon Ims took place in his Holiday Rambler, Presidential 3000 camper, in the lower meadow of the Quiet Valley Ranch campgrounds on Monday 1st June 1992.

I'm from Erie, Pennsylvania. It lies on the Southern edge of one of the Great Lakes, up in the North Eastern section of the country. I grew up playing in rock n' roll bands. Cleveland, Buffalo and Pittsburg are the main cities around Erie. Very industrialised - steel towns - so the rock n' roll was real basic. Cleveland had glam rock. Pittsburg had soul music. Buffalo was a College town and was pretty hip. Acts like the Greatful Dead used to come and play there. I didn't grow up with any folk influences, or traditional music influences, because I was never exposed to that music. All I heard growing up, was rock n'roll on the radio.

How much did the British pop music invasion during the first half of the sixties, influence you.

Enormously. I was into Motown. Initially, it was a combination of that, Buddy Holly and the Everly Brothers. Then The Beatles, Dave Clark Five and Gerry and The Pacemakers. I loved their melodies. That was the first British invasion. When the art rock of Pink Floyd, Procol Harum, Soft Machine and Emerson, Lake and Palmer arrived - all those brilliant keyboard oriented, sophisticated groups - I really, really got into that. I come from a classical music background. My sister is a classical musician and my mother played piano. I grew up with that, and so there was a kind of kinship which I felt.

Did your family ever influence you to become a classical musician.

No. It was all around the family. They were doing it. I guess I didn't show an interest in the piano at an early age, like my sister did. She gravitated towards that instrument. I gravitated towards sports, when I was a kid. I was into lots of team sports. I didn't really begin to pick up the guitar and think seriously about learning to play, till I was about sixteen. I think I got one on my birthday. I was always a singer in rock n' roll bands, and gradually became a closet songwriter. I always had this fascination with songs and songwriting. I remember one of my favourite albums when I was growing up was

"Oklahoma" - the Broadway show with Oscar Hammerstein's lyrics. I just loved those songs. I was always into lyrics.

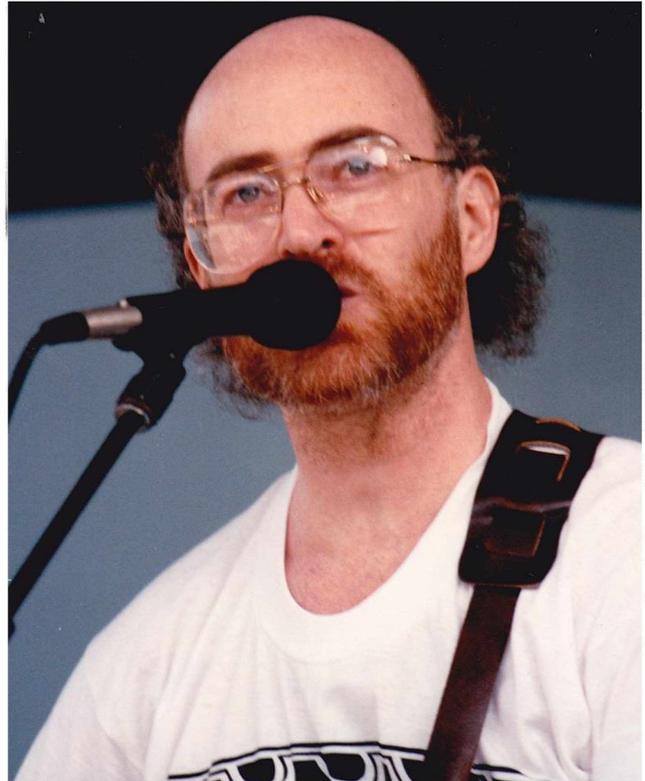


Photo: Arthur Wood, Kerrville Kromikle Katalogue.

Jon Ims - Kerrville Folk Festival 27/5/89

When did you start playing in rock n' roll bands.

When I was fifteen, I joined my first band. It was called Little Amber and The Light Runners. We did Dylan songs and others by The Byrds, The Lovin' Spoonful - that folk rock thing. I was really interested in that. At the same time, I was listening to Tim Hardin and Eric Andersen. Tim Buckley. Tom Rush.

How did you find out about those people.

From friends who went to school in the Boston area. They went to Prep schools there. These guys would come back during vacations and bring all the music which they had found in New York and Boston. The folk music thing of the late sixties and the beginning of psychedelia. That was my writing influence. I started writing in about 1968. Songs which were poetically heavy and intense. I was an English major in College, and immersed myself in Gregory Corso, Laurence Ferlinghetti and Alan Ginsberg. All the beat poets. I was trying to sound important, sophisticated and intelligent. You know, all that teenage stuff. I started writing songs in College as a result of the Drama Department putting on a play called "Summer Tree," about a Vietnam

veteran who died. He was looking back at his life. In retrospect. They wanted a Greek theatre effect, where they would freeze the characters and put a spotlight on a singer over in the corner. They asked me to write six or seven songs, to go with this play. I did that and the play turned out to be a very popular one. I went to College in Erie, Pennsylvania. Gannon College and also Mercyhurst College. They were both small liberal arts Colleges. Heavy on the liberal. Mercyhurst especially, was an arty school. There was a lot of artists there, who gave the place a real free thinking, University atmosphere.

Having started writing songs, did you consider branching out as a solo act,

I started playing in College coffee houses as a solo act, on nights when the band wasn't performing. Gradually the band became more and more popular. We were on the verge of getting a record deal, but had no idea or inclination about the business aspect of it. Lots of clashes with personalities and egos occurred, and the band finally broke up. Left on my own, I had a number of songs which I had written. I had met some musicians who came through the area playing the College circuit. I auditioned for what was called the New York coffee house circuit in 1974, or maybe it was 1975. I was accepted. I played at The Bitter End, which was a thrill for me. Then they put me on College tours. I started playing around the country at College coffee houses, and as an opening act for concerts. Whatever I could get. Hit the road with my guitars and my little station wagon, and drove all over America. I've played over 500 College shows.

How old were you, at this stage,

Twenty five. I was eager to hit the road and be like Jack Kerouac. Be an artist. I was intent on becoming an American songwriter, irrespective of whether it brought me success or not. I knew when I was young that I was supposed to do this. I know that I'm doing, what I was put here for. I was on the road full time, from about 1975 until the early eighties.

When did you stumble across Kerrville,

Around 1976 or 1977. Mike Williams brought me here as his guest and got me up on the main stage to sing a song, in front of the big crowd. The next year, I entered the New Folk

competition and I lost. I was heartbroken, because I wanted to win so badly. I went home, improved my songwriting. The following year I came back and won it. That would be 1977 or 1978. Ever since then, I've been a main stage performer here and have cultivated hundreds of friendships - I have met all of the songwriters and artists in this area.

For you, was winning Kerrville significant,

Yea, it did a lot to enhance my self esteem. The sense that I really was going in the right direction with my work. That I had the talent and could do it. I needed that affirmation at that time, because I was just beginning to break into this area. It got me a level of respect and I guess, a certain amount of respect and stature, within this little microcosm.

Where had you met Mike Williams,

We met in a motel room. I think it was in Racine, Wisconsin at a music convention. We were doing a showcase for different Colleges. They would have these picking parties in motel rooms after everything was done. Mike and I happened to be sitting next to one another. He had this extremely long hair and a red beard. The wierdest guy I had ever seen in my life. I had all these wierd songs and he'd never heard of me, or met me. In one night, we just hit it off. We just knew that we were going to be best friends for life. There was a big party in that room and we snuck of to another room, with just a small amount of people. We sat and played guitars till the sun came up. That was the beginning of our friendship and it has lasted all these years.

Have the songwriters here had any influence on your style of writing,

That's a funny question. I've probably learned more about performing, than I have about writing from Kerrville. The opportunity to see so many solo people get up and perform - people like Mike Williams or Valdy. There have been a number of people who have really given me permission, in a sense, to be free and open on stage. Be who I am. The performers that I've just mentioned, are certainly among that band of people.

Was this because you had been naturally shy onstage,

No, not really. It was more like you have to learn how to perform. Remember I was a

Theatre and English major in College, so I have been on the stage most of my life. Seeing and studying the great solo acts. Steve Goodman. Loudon Wainright III. Watching Jethro Tull. Watching Mick Jagger work a crowd. All of that, you learn. I've been a student of that for years. As far as my writing goes, that comes from a place that has been my own for a long time. I have digested the history of rock n' roll, the history of country music - seminal country music from the thirties and forties - Jimmie Rodgers, then into Hank Williams and Lefty Frizzell. George Jones and Merle Haggard. I immersed myself in all that stuff.

Looking at another side of the coin, what about seminal American folk music and say Woody Guthrie,

No. I was never influenced by traditional folk music, as much as say, by the second generation in that field. The New York folk scene. Tom Rush, Eric Andersen, Judy Collins, Tim Buckley. The generation which came after Josh White, Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger.

Everything post 1965 then,

Yea. Peter, Paul and Mary, I remember, would have been one of the first albums that I listened to, that was folk. In a sense, they were commercialising things. They were the pop end of the tradition. That's as far as I went back.

So you were on the road. At one point, you settled in the Colorado area,

I moved to Denver in 1978. It was the most beautiful town in America that I had seen. It was a perfect location, because it was central in the country. It had an airport. It had mountains. It had great weather. Lots of sunshine and low humidity. I was in love, and I moved out there with my girlfriend. I continued playing in Colleges for a number of years after that. Then it got to a point where I had been driving around the country by myself for years. Not really making any contact with the commercial music industry at all, but making a great living playing Colleges. It was a *one way street* and it got old for me. I stopped doing it, because I felt that it was becoming almost self parody. I was acting. I wanted to have a life that was more vital than that. So I stayed in the Denver area, and played little mountain clubs and bars - they didn't pay a whole lot of money, but I had a home in Denver and an audience of people that would listen. I grew

as a songwriter and as an artist during the years that I wasn't on the road. I learned how to write. I stayed home a lot. In Denver there was a place called the Rainbow Music Hall. I opened there for Randy Newman, and a number of acts like that. Got some exposure of that nature. Basically, it was little mountain bars. One in particular called The Little Bear up in Evergreen, Colorado, I played every other Saturday afternoon for years. I would be able to experiment and work on stuff like the Led Zeppelin parody that I do. Stuff like that, would develop over weeks and weeks of playing at a place. Finally songs would become audience tested. That was wonderful.

When did recording your own songs become an option,

1981 or 1982. I wrote "Two Of A Kind," which was a pivotal song in my life. It has since been recorded something like twenty three or twenty four times, on different albums. It's like part of the culture now. I won a songwriting award for that song. The American Song Festival. At that time, it was this big national contest. It had different divisions. I won the award that year in the Vocalist category. That song introduced me to a whole other level of people's awareness. I recorded with a top flight producer and learned how to sing in a studio.

Where was Jon Ins "1" recorded,

In a number of different studios. Basically "1" is a bunch of demos. People kept asking me if I had an album out. I kept saying "No." One day I realised that I had something like forty songs on various demos. I threw together the best ones and put out a ninety minute cassette. Sold them from the stage to whoever wanted to buy them. It was a very simple little operation. A *Mom and Pop* kind of thing. I did a second tape in 1983. Another twenty four song tape. I did it in a more controlled situation. A little eight track studio. I was learning more and more about recording. Making mistakes, but learning. Then I cut my third tape in 1988. That's when I wrote "She's In Love With The Boy," which proved to be another pivotal song. The second tape contained "Falling Out Of Love" which is the song Reba McEntire had a hit with last year.

In terms of the songs on those three albums, did you find a lot of inspiration living in Denver,

No. It didn't have anything to do with my

environment. It probably had more to do with my personal growth. I'm more of a cerebral writer than an environmental one - if that's an appropriate word. As my inner life grew and I began to reflect on it, I began to mature. My writing took on that maturity as well. My artistic focus was getting more and more clearly honed. I guess you would call me a realist. Maybe, a minimalist. I don't know how minimal. My philosophy consists of a direct approach and a simple approach. All of my songs have a central idea. There's not a lot of sub plots going on. It's pretty honed. A lot of folk music specialises in sub plots - which go on and on - can introduce all kinds of characters and this and that. My songs, in a pop sense, are usually under four minutes and are about one thing. I use a lot of elements that are essential to pop writing, like repetition of certain phrases. I am really strict about form - I maybe have one or two songs that are ballads, which are over four minutes long - most of my songs roll in at around three and a half to four minutes. They say what they have to say, as simply and as quickly as possible - maybe with a little bit of wit thrown in - then, next song.

Has humour always intrigued you. There's a very rich, almost waspish sense of humour, in a lot of what you write.

Yea, there's a cynical kind of a -

I was trying to avoid saying that.

That's OK. It is cynical, but it's not cynical in the way that it's negative and hateful. It's cynical in a *tongue in cheek* way. It's a light cynicism and comes from the paradoxes of living in America. It is a paradox. Especially if you're an artist. I guess I've always been funny. When I was in grade school I was funny and could turn a phrase. Say something witty which worked. I've used that. It's just a gift I have, and I use it in my songwriting.

You're also an observational writer.

Yea. I'll draw conclusions or form opinions and deliver them in a witty way.

Do ever get a negative reactions from people when you focus on something that is important to them.

I have sometimes. It's usually when you play a song that could be misunderstood or misinterpreted by people. Especially if you

play it before they get to know who you are. For example, in the first two or three songs of a set at a show, if you play something like that - it's not a good idea. I've learned that if you establish who you are early on - your personality, and your sense of humour - where you are coming from - then later on in the set or the evening, once they feel comfortable with you, you can throw it in. It's timing and where you put it. I've learnt that. To an audience that doesn't know who I am, I try to *break the ice* so to speak, at the beginning. Before I get too crazy or cynical or whatever.

You don't seem to co-write many songs. There is however one on the third album, with Randy Handley, who has a very long Denver history.

In fact, we've been writing some new songs together in Nashville. Randy just moved there. I don't co-write a lot, because I've worked for a long time to create the unique style I have. I have a point of view and I'm comfortable with it. I have co-written with others. I'm not against it, it's just that I write a different kind of a song when I co-write.

Was Randy still with Mary Flower and Katy Moffatt when you first met him.

I met all those people in the late seventies, when I moved to Denver. They were part of the folk scene, which I was new to. I used to go to clubs and watch Randy or Mary play. They were already established artists in the Denver area when I moved there.

Who is Peter Hoepfner.

He's one of my best friends. He had this incident happen to him, where he got on the wrong airplane. Instead of flying to Denver, he flew to Las Vegas by mistake. He told me about it at breakfast one day. We developed it into a song. People love that song. It certainly was fun writing that song.

You mentioned earlier how many times "Two Of A Kind" has been covered. Through your three cassette albums, were many other songs covered.

Yea. "West Texas Wind" has been covered by lots of people. The Seldom Scene. The Dixie Chicks. I don't know how many albums that song is on. "What Good Is A Love Song" has been cut a number of times. "Magic On A Tennessee Night." It's mainly the folk/country songs which have been covered a

lot, because of the people I know in those fields. The ones that they tend to choose from my repertoire, are songs which they feel most comfortable with. Those songs get attention, while there's a number of others that would not necessarily be appropriate for those people. In the next few years, those songs will probably end up being cut by Nashville country artists.

Was it the fact that Tricia Yearwood cut "She's In Love With The Boy" which triggered the move to Nashville,

Actually it was Reba's song, "Falling Out Of Love." It was getting some attention, even before Tricia Yearwood came along. That's what set me thinking there was a chance for me to make a name for myself in Nashville.

Did you make the move with your eyes wide open,

What do you mean by that.

In terms of stepping into a league where a lot of greater business pressures would be placed upon you,

Oh yea, I knew that was coming. That was part of the - it's an enormous life decision to move from a comfort zone and a beautiful place like Denver, Colorado, go to a music business centre and become immersed in a situation where you turn your art and your work and your thoughts into something which is consumer targeted. It's a tough decision. I made the decision, because I feel confident as an artist that I've already pretty much matured and will continue to grow. I know who I am. I'm not going to be changed by Nashville. If I'd made the move ten years ago, I might have been. I know what I can do. I know that I'm good.

Having done three cassette albums to date, is a record deal something that you're aiming towards, Is that part of the plan,

Oh yea sure. It definitely is. I would love for that to happen. I don't know if that's in the cards or not, but I'm going to continue to move towards that goal. I've always been a solo entertainer/songwriter. Nashville has interpreted me now. Their perception of me is that I'm this hit songwriter, because that's their first experience of me. Hopefully I'll be able to have a dual career of writing songs that other artists cover, as well as maintain my own career as a performer. I hope so.

Whether it's on a public stage or out in a field, you appear to adore singing songs. Having settled in Nashville, do you still tour,

Yea. I do small tours. I go in Texas, Arkansas or Colorado. Basically this has been an eight month period of getting to know people in the Nashville area and breaking into the business part of it. My plans for the next year, are more touring and getting out and playing more.

Would you even consider financing your next recording,

I might do that, if the business side of it doesn't come through within a certain amount of time. I might do my own project again, just to keep recording.

Have you a massive stockpile of songs waiting to be heard,

I thought when I moved to Nashville - the fear is, that you'll dry up, because there is so much pressure. Everyone is looking at you. The fear is, that you won't write anything that is real or true to your heart, because of the pressure. The exact opposite is true. I've been writing more than ever. I've really been writing what is true for me. I have no idea if any of these songs will ever be hits or anything like that, but to me that's almost irrelevant. I love what I do. Believe it or not, the success has freed me to concentrate on writing, much more than I ever have for ten years. I was trying to get noticed from a region of the country that has no music industry. It was very difficult. I spent lots of time going to the Post Office and mailing off cover letters and all of that. Maintaining a long distance relationship with Nashville. Now that all this success has happened, those doors are open to me. I don't have to push anymore. I can just write. I have an enormous backlog of songs that haven't been recorded. Some haven't even been demoed.

When you say that doors are now being opened to you, do you feel aggrieved,

Timing is something that you could talk about for hours. I probably wasn't ready in many aspects of my life. At the same time, country music has changed and shifted and incorporated in the past four or five years, much more of a divergent use of elements and styles. People like me were culturally irrelevant to country music in the early

eighties, during the *urban cowboy* phase - now "She's In Love With The Boy" can become a major mega hit. Five years ago it might not have gotten played at all on country radio. It's not like a modern thing.

Down in your camp, there was a newspaper - The Dallas Morning News, Three words in a Jon Ims article, made me smile. They were "hot, new songwriter." The emphasis obviously being on new.

Again in a Nashville context, the perception there is that I am a new writer. My reputation has been forged outside of that area. In that context, I am new to Nashville. I am new to commercial fame. I won the Breakthrough Writer of the Year award this year, on Music Row in Nashville. I've been writing songs for twenty five years [Laughs].

Are you going to collaborate with other writers in Nashville.

I'm talking to people. Don Schlitz and I are talking. Jim Photoglo is another one, who has written songs for The Dirt Band. A number of country artists. Kathy Bailey of Bailey and The Boys. Steve Wariner and I have talked. Lionel Cartright and I have talked. I think that if I live in Nashville for a couple of years, I will simply keep running into these people socially. I'll end up writing with a number of them. We'll find out who I'm comfortable with. I'm looking forward to writing with Don Schlitz for example.

Apart from two cuts on the 1988 RCA Songwriter Project album "Signatures," Don's only solo album "Dreamers Matinee" from ten years back, pretty much comes from the same area of songwriting as yours.

You know the funny thing is, he doesn't have to do anything anymore. Yet he gets up and goes to work every day at nine or ten o'clock - he shows up and writes all day. He writes because he loves to. He certainly doesn't need the financial incentive anymore. He's a wonderfully funny, cynical guy. He's very cynical like me, so I think we'll be able to write some good songs together.

How do you feel about the three tape albums that you put out. Do you see them as valid for that period of your life -

That's over. I've discontinued all three tapes, because I'm not satisfied with the quality of them. I still regard them as being demo projects and not really for public consumption, except by people who know me and

have seen me perform live and who forgive me. There are glitches on those tapes and they're not perfect. There's drum machines as well. People who have seen me live, see them in context. Now that I'm nationally known, I can't have those tapes floating around the country. Hopefully I'll do a project soon, which will reflect a much higher level of quality.

Finally, where did you come up with the Led Zeppelin parody.

People in a bar kept yellin' out that they wanted to hear "Stairway To Heaven," just like they yell out that they want to hear "Freebird," or any of the other songs that are the Top 5 requests of all time. As a solo act, the idea of playing "Stairway To Heaven" is absurd, because of the big guitar solo in there. That's so essential to the song. One day, I was feeling particularly cynical, so I said "OK, I'll play it." I made up, probably about one third of it live onstage and got some laughs. The soundman came up to me afterwards and said "You ought to develop that into a song. That could be a really good song." I went home and developed it. Then I performed it again in this bar, the next time I played there. It knocked them dead. Over the years, I've worked on the theatrical aspect of it. The physical body movements and all that. It has become a real showstopper. It's a wonderful, theatrical, funny little piece. There's a number of songs which I perform, that I'll never record. If you know me or you've seen me live, they're special to that.

You appeared on David Newberger's "Camp Cuisine" recording from 1989 Kerrville Festival.

About five years ago, we used to go over to Phil Fletcher's camp, as he is a great cook. We used to sing to him, for our supper. Mike Williams and I were in another camp at that time. Then we decided to consolidate the music and the food, so Camp Cuisine was created. Then David Newberger came in, in 1989, and he had a DAT machine which was the great new way to record. He also had this microphone we called *The Droid*. It was around continually, so he had hundreds of hours of us working up these songs. "She's In Love With The Boy" was a camp favourite at that time, so he had maybe a hundred versions of it. He picked one that was relatively free of screaming babies and out of tune guitars to go on the CD. That's a valid chronicle of the creative energy that happened at our camp,

during that one particular summer. That CD was an example of some of the best songs that came through the camp.

With the success that you've had of late, is it still special for you to come back to Kerrville,

Oh yes. This is my base camp. I'm here for eighteen days this time. It's my roots and my family. I'll always come here. This is my family. It's a place to reassess your life. We meet once a year, in a very intense creative atmosphere. Everybody brings whatever they have been going through psychologically all year, to a place where they are free of their jobs, telephones and televisions. They sit down with people who know their history and who forgive them, and they unload. There's lots of camaraderie and support systems with people's marriages and relationships, and where they are at in their life artistically. Lots of that stuff gets admitted, that wouldn't normally be admitted back home. A very cathartic process occurs. Everybody leaves here renewed, with a sense that they have a new perspective on whatever their major life issues are. That's why I call it home. I go home and there are lots of things that I have learned here from conversation.

=====
**Kerrville-kompacts,
kassettes & other
koincidences.**



Following that avalanche of reviews in KK13, here's a more restrained survey of some recent singer/songwriter and other releases.

Kristina Olsen's self titled debut album was produced by Nina Gerber. Ten of the eleven tunes were penned by Olsen, the exception being the old blues *work ethic* standard, "John Henry." As well as *the here and now*, on a handful of cuts, Kristina's words capture the prequel and sequel to those boy/girl relationships. Both the positive and negative faces of such affairs. The folky feel of "Cry You A Waterfall," contrasts with the smoky, late night jazz that is "Practising Walking Away." On the latter, Kristina's words focus on the *temporary* nature of friendships, imbuing them with a worldly wise poignancy.

The finely observed and gently reflective "My Father's Piano," draws inspiration from those ancestral links which are irrevocable and nigh impossible to sever. Seemingly understated, the lyrics to Olsen's anti-war

"Shades Of Grey," strike the target with the devastating accuracy of a computer guided laser beam. Not that all is totally serious in the *world* of K.O. When the female participant in "Lousy Night For Music" indicates that she's about to "put my tongue in your ear, I'm going to taste what you're going to hear," you know that Olsen has an *off beam* angle on humour. Another fine, songwriting discovery from the House of Philo. Seek and engage for finite pleasure. Available from Topic Records, 50 Stroud Green Road, London N4 3EP.

As far as David Rodriguez is concerned, I guess it's time to *jump down* off the fence. Following two self released cassettes, the material contained therein has been transferred to two (partially duplicated) CD's. First, on the Swiss Brambus label is "Landing '92," which clocks in at 70 minutes. The 17 cuts are drawn from the Chicago House * 10 songs [1990]/Anderson Fair * 7 songs [1991] sets. Meanwhile, the fifteen original "Man Against Beast" Chicago House tracks have been retitled "The True Cross," by new San Marcos based independent label, Dejadisc. The latter disc also includes the bonus cut, "Deportee (Plane Wreck At Los Gatos)" with David and Lucinda Williams sharing the vocal. The song was cut in the studios of Austin radio station 107.1 KGSR, last summer. The mailing address for Dejadisc is 537 Lindsey Street, San Marcos, Texas 78666. All of Rodriguez' recent releases have been stripped down, live recordings, with voice, guitar and little other support. As such, I find they seriously lack colour. That said, there's no doubting Rodriguez' skill as a lyricist. Sadly, my comprehension and understanding of Mexican/American issues raised in his songs, is somewhat limited. As a result, I undoubtedly miss the nub of the social message in the lyrics.

Uncle Tupelo's third album "March 16-20, 1992" belies their two earlier, rock oriented sets. Produced by R.E.M's Peter Buck, the fifteen tracks merge eight band originals with a half a dozen traditional tunes [eg. "Coalminers," "Moonshiner" and "Satan, Your Kingdom Must Come Down"] plus Charlie & Ira Louvin's "Atomic Power." There's a desperation about the acoustic feel of this album, which matches these dark days of the early ninties. A stunningly honest album.

The next recordings arrived at KKHQ c/o of my good friends down in Conroe, Texas - Blair Powell n' Lendell Braud. Dave Crossland's

cassette "Here's To The Ride" is a truly fine album of contemporary, self penned material, with some of the backing tracks having a traditional instrumentation/feel. Scot Johnny Cunningham's fiddle being quite stellar at times. Dave's ten originals are augmented by the traditional "Shenandoah" and "Jimmy, Dearest Jimmy." Favourite cuts include the patriotic "The Eagle," while in "My Town Now" an adult develops from an innocent youth, as each verse unfolds. Pride of place goes to the anti-war lyric of "The Ballad Of Joseph Schultz." Viewing the events from a German perspective, being a neat twist. The mailing address for Dave's cassette is Purple Beech Music, 29 Borton Avenue, Akron, Ohio 44302. Alan Damron has more albums under his belt, than I've had hot dinners. "Silver" is his latest offering. Not a songwriter per se, his only contribution here is "Tears Of The Lakota" co-penned with Bill Ward. The work of some of my all time favourite songwriters is included here - namely, Tom Pacheco, Bill Ward and the late Stan Rogers. Available from Allen Damron/Quahadi, 5107 Fort Clark, Austin, Texas 78745.

Any guy with the nous to write songs with Michael Smith, is OK in my book. Dennis Dougherty has written with Fred Koller as well; what's more, he has camped at the Quiet Valley Ranch on numerous occasions. Raised in Idaho, Dougherty is now New York based, and "Pony Ride" appeared on the Local Folkel label back in 1991. It's a gentle acoustic folk/country cross-over set. A drifter heads for home in "Lonely Side Of Town," the hometown/childhood memories of "Stream At The End Of My Street" and the lost love of "Paulina" (written with Michael Smith), are my favourite cuts. Mailing address for Dennis Dougherty is 21 Forest Street, Montclair, New Jersey 07042.

"Indoor Fireworks" is Katy Moffatt's second album for the Swiss Red Moon label. Supported by a five man band, The Great Unknown - who consist of the cream of Austin's support players (being Messrs Glasse, Neubert, Muse, Heath and Starr), they turn in a workmanlike set. On the other hand, "The Greatest Show On Earth" on Round Tower, co-produced by Katy and Tom Russell, is a whole other sack of gold. I'd even go as far as to suggest that it's the best thing which Ms. Moffatt has recorded. Although a fair percentage of the material on "Indoor Fireworks" sources from the team of Messrs Moffatt & Russell, all of the songs on "The Greatest Show..." were penned by the duo, individually and together.

Overall the Round Tower album has an engaging acoustic feel, with Katy's *aching* vocal well to the fore where necessary, underscored as usual by Andy Hardin's tasteful guitar work.

Two notable and much overdue reissues from Austin's Watermelon label, are Darden Smith's "Native Soil" and Tish Hinojosa's "Taos To Tennessee." The CD version of the former album, Darden's 1986 solo debut, boasts the addition of "Wild West Show" to the original decade of tracks. "Taos To Tennessee" dates from 1987, and has only been available on cassette up till now. The CD version includes a previously unreleased interpretation of Bill Staines' "River," but eliminates the original cassette opening cut "Georgetown." The mailing address for Watermelon is P.O. Box 402088, Austin, Texas 78704.

I mentioned Pete Kennedy's simultaneous CD release of "Shearwater - The Art Of The Unplugged Guitar" and "Channel 3" in the last issue of KK. The latter album mixes songs and instrumentals, and exposes Pete the rocker, with shades of Springsteen in "Heart Of Darkness" and "Tough Love." "Channel 3" opens the set, drawing inspiration lyrically from *the box in the corner*, with an instrumental version closing the disc. Acoustic oriented instrumentals sums up "Shearwater..." with jazz rhythms and traditional melodies sitting comfortably side by side. The title cut, "Chataqua" and "Love Will Return" are well worth hearing. As well as the Damascus address which I quoted in KK 13, you can also contact Pete via Noteworthy Productions, 124½ Archwood Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Quite a number of the reviews of Tish Hinojosa's "Culture Swing," appear to conclude that it's her 1990 A&M album. Just proves how thorough some reviewers are in preparing their work. Check out the liner booklet, which clearly states that the dozen tracks were cut at The Fire Station Studio in San Marcos last May. What's more, Booker T. Jones produced the first version of "Culture Swing," while Tish took on that mantle on this set. I can also confirm that there's a variation in the song titles cut for each album. Outstanding cuts on "Culture Swing - II," include the ballads "Every Word" and "Something In The Rain," while in an uptempo vein "San Antonio Romeo" is Tish's reply to the Bob Wills classic.

It's over a decade since the appearance of "A Life And Time," Mary McCaslin's last studio album. Sadly, husband Jim Ringer passed away

last Spring. "Things We Said Today" is an eighteen track compilation drawn from her three mid/late seventies solo albums for Philo, plus "The Bramble And The Rose," the title cut from her duo disc with Jim Ringer. This lady was *Nanci Griffith* before the one from Texas was ever heard of. A damned fine compilation, it may well provide the spark which gets Mary back into a recording studio once more. Available from Topic Records.

I'd hoped to review Greg Trooper "Everywhere" (Black Hole), Jerry Giddens "The Devils Front Door" (Doctor Dream), Gary P. Nunn "Totally Guacamole" (Campfire) and "Live At Poor David's Pub" (Poor David), plus the long awaited "Austin Skyline" from Jimmy La Fave. Track them down before the next issue appears; I'd recommend them all. Otherwise look out for more about them in KK 15.

Steve Gillette



When we last featured my 1989 Kerrville interview with Steve Gillette in Issue 12 of the KRONIKLE, we had reached mid 1966. Steve had performed at the Philadelphia Folk Festival that year, and was being regularly featured at Colleges on the Eastern seaboard of the USA. The story continues.....

I lived in New York for two and a half years. I had a little apartment down in the Village, at 210 Sullivan Street. It was right around the corner from The Bitter End. That was a magical time and also a difficult time. I was homesick. I was transplanted from Orange County in California, and didn't have my old support group of family and friends - I had a lot of new friends and was really excited about being involved in the life of the Village and the music. I got to be present at a lot of special times. I remember one time at The Gaslight, Phil Ochs borrowed my guitar and did a set. That was a big thrill for me. It was actually my first night in New York, after playing the Philadelphia Folk Festival. I came to New York and initially stayed at The Hotel Albert. It's still there and is kind of a rough place. I don't want to damage their reputation any, but then I don't think I could. A lot of people know about The Hotel Albert. It was \$35 a week at that time, which was just about all I could afford. I stayed there for about seven or eight weeks. During that time, I wrote a lot of songs. "Back On The Street Again" was one of them. Later on, when I got some breaks, "Back On The Street Again" was the first really big song I had.

When I went back out to California in the Fall, before my album came out, I taught that song to a couple of friends of mine - Maury Manseau and John Bettis sang together as a duet. Later on, they split up and Maury formed a group called The Sunshine Company. That song became the first hit record that I had, which was really a tremendous break [ED. NOTE. I presume that John Bettis, is the same guy who ended up composing songs with Richard Carpenter]. In Los Angeles they were playing The Sunshine Company record, so when I came home, it was almost like the return of the prodigal son. It was that sense of having a hit record. It became a bigger hit in Los Angeles than it was anywhere else. It never really got on to the charts in New York or Chicago. Without those two major markets, you can't really have a Top 10 record. In Los Angeles, it was at the number 5 spot for about twelve weeks. Nationally, it never got higher than the Top 30 in late 1967. That was still enough for the song to open a lot of doors and generate some royalty payments. At that point, I got married. It was now August of 1969. It was really amazing to get a royalty cheque in the mail, for more money than I could earn in a month playing dates. I was able to buy a little house in California, get married and settle down. That was a great joy, and a step up for me. At the same time, in some ways, it marked a shift into a new direction in my life. I now had a fixed base. I had house payments to make and a more domesticated lifestyle. I wasn't travelling and playing in little clubs anymore. I wasn't in the mainstream of folk music scene. That was in New York. In the Village. I had been a part of that. I had loved it so much, but from late 1969 onward, I found myself more or less homebound in California. What it meant was, at the same time, I had wonderful new opportunities after that chart song. I had access to publishers. I was able to give songs to a lot of other people. That's the time I got songs on Linda Ronstadt's albums - and a lot of other people who were recording in California. I wasn't really in the mainstream of the folk music world. That was located in small clubs all over the country. Many of my friends were still performing in them on a very successful level. A lot of those people are on the ranch today. People like David Ray and Eric Anderson. Peter Yarrow of course. Many of them guys like me, who just thrived on the experience of being with new people each week, or each time we would go and perform. Everytime that you'd go into a little community, you'd find yourself in the middle of what already existed there.

You didn't have any way of knowing about the community of folk music people who lived there - people who were interested in music of consciousness, music of tradition, music of awareness and of ideas. You often fell right into this wonderful support group. That was something really great. Being based in California was a very different thing. There I was confronted with the music industry and it's priorities, which are very different. The priorities being record sales. If you're selling records you're a hero. If not, you're a bum. I was alternately a hero and a bum. Like I said, I was making house payments - my life was really in order, in a lot of important ways. I was basically pretty happy.

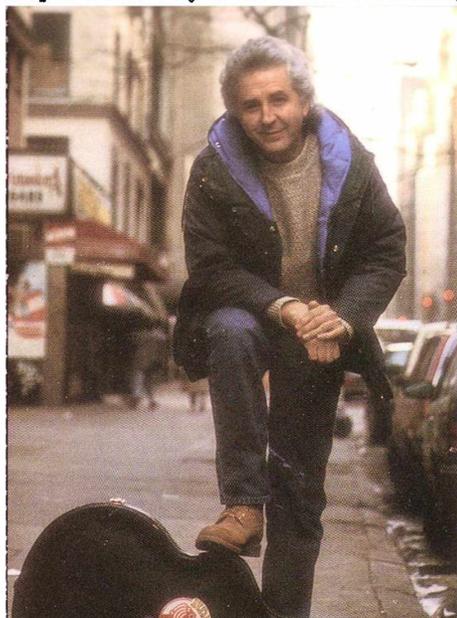


Photo: Steve Gillette/Compass Rose Music



Steve Gillette - Liner Photograph to "American Songwriter"

Did you work in local clubs, once you were based in California.

I was still able to work at The Golden Bear and at McCabe's in Santa Monica. Also at the Ash Grove and The Troubadour. I did travel a little bit. As a matter of fact my wife Danna and I, travelled up to Colorado to play in a club in Aspen, called The Aspen Inn. At least once a year. For us, it was a vacation. A different way of travelling. It was the kind of thing where we would get the booking - my wife didn't play or sing - and we would just go there a combine it with a vacation. I got to work there with Earl Scruggs, Josh Graves and Randy Scruggs. I also worked there with The Limelitters. It seems to me that I went there with Bud and Travis one time. Those were wonderful times to still be in the mainstream of performing, but with another emphasis. It didn't involve travelling the

folk circuit, the way I had before. We had a paid hotel room, and a paid vacation for a week. A chance to ski and a chance to see people like The Limelitters.

Through that period, did you primarily consider yourself a songwriter for other artists.

Yea. I was more active in the industry side of things. I was involved in publishing. As a result of that, if you're trying to survive in the music business, and you're right there in the marketplace, what you find yourself doing is you try to get experience of as many things as possible. Producing demos, being a session musician, singing on demos and on commercials, doing voice overs. I did some things for Disney. Others for television productions. Talk about getting further afield from what you do, I remember that I was the voice of God on a production called, The Mystic Moods. These were a series of albums, which had the sounds of the rainforest, surf and other different sounds. This production was very ambitious - they went to Stuttgart and used the Symphony Orchestra there. They had this huge production and in it was this voice, which comes out of the kettle drums. They were produced by a friend of mine and he asked me to do it. It was fun. You can see what I'm saying - when you're in the music industry, suddenly everything is reflected in the glitter of showbusiness. Television. The corporate media. It's not exactly a dirty word. It's just that here at Kerrville, you're in the presence of many people who are completely independent artists - who not only don't have access to the corporate media, but aren't seeking it. They can sell their cassettes where they play. They can play in the small clubs and get along fine. As a trade off, they have the freedom to be as clear and as plain as they can be.

The next thing that I'm aware of, is when you worked on Ian Matthews' album "Some Days You Eat The Bear, And Some Days The Bear Eats You."

I met Ian when he came to California to play at The Troubadour. He contacted me through a mutual friend and I went up to The Troubadour to see him. He staying at this little motel called The Tropicana. A lot of the performers who played The Troubadour, stayed there. By the way, that was also the place where I first met Bob Gibson. Odetta as well. I took Ian out to lunch and we had a long talk. I ended up getting him to come to our house to stay. Later on, when Ian's wife Chris came

out with their little daughter, whose name was Darcy, they stayed with us. Ian is a very talented man and a wonderful singer. He's one of those people who always seems to come up with a record deal and a new project. He probably always will. Matthews Southern Comfort was quite a group. I really liked what they did. I was thrilled when he cut my song "Darcy Farrow." I think the reason he connected with that song, was because of Ian and Sylvia. I think they were big fans of Ian and Sylvia. You'd be amazed how many people here on the ranch, are Ian and Sylvia fans. Tom Russell - I don't know if you got to hear Tom and Katy Moffatt last night - Tom performed for years with a partner [ED. NOTE Another opportunity to mention Patricia Hardin Long], and they were patterned after Ian and Sylvia. Now that Tom has the opportunity to write songs with Ian Tyson, it's like they've grown up together. They have these instincts that work. As a result, they write beautiful things.

Between 1967 and 1979, did you record any other albums, I'm not aware of any.

You know, there is one album. During that time, there was a lot going on in my life. I had a lot of opportunity to be involved in the industry. I was writing a lot. The songs I was writing, were more in the commercial realm. After "Back On The Street Again," it was as if people were saying, "OK, you've had a break and that's good. Here's the opportunity to get more songs recorded, but give us songs that can be a part of what's happening now." After Woodstock and after The Beatles, there was a great shift of emphasis in the country. I was writing songs that I couldn't perform by myself. They needed more going on. I began to do my first, fledgling record productions with other musicians. I'm not real proud of those productions. A lot of them are very pretentious and amateurish. A lot of them have terrible drums sounds. It came down to this. There wasn't really an opportunity for me to get involved with a record company, that was going to do it for me, so I produced a record on my own. It was a very, very limited budget project. Actually, it came out of working with my friend John Ware. John was the drummer for Linda Ronstadt, at that time. He later joined The Hot Band, and had been with Michael Nesmith and The First National Band. I actually met John through Mike Nesmith. Mike and I were old friends from the club I mentioned - the one John Denver played at - Ledbetters. When Mike first came to

California from Texas he was playing "Different Drum," which became a Stone Poney/Linda Ronstadt hit. All of these people were kind of in flux. I had the chance to go into the studio with what would have been the perfect situation for me, if I had been clear enough to see it at the time. It was John Ware playing drums and producing. My friend Randy Stirling engineering. A very talented man and a great engineer. He worked on a lot of my projects over the years. We were in an eight track studio in Claremont. Bob Warford played guitar - a wonderful, wonderful pull string guitar player. He was one of the people who developed the instrument with Clarence White. Hank DeVito played steel. Nicolette Larson was there singing some harmony. She and Hank DeVito were together at that time. John Selk played bass. Later on, he went on to play with some of Linda's bands and other groups. Who was playing piano? Oh gosh, my mind has failed me there. We went into the studio - I remember one of the tracks on the equipment wasn't working - we only had seven tracks and we cut four songs. They had a wonderful feeling about them. This was a real step toward what we would now think of as contemporary country - the L.A. country movement. The Burrito Brothers, Byrds kind of country rock. These guys were all playing on those sessions, with all those other people. Basically it was Linda Ronstadt's band. Those four songs were wonderful. I loved them, but in a way, they were a little bit early for what they are. We did these things in 1972 or 1973 - Hank DeVito was very, very young. I'd known him at The Bitter End in New York when he was fifteen. He grew up in the neighbourhood. He would pass out flyers for my friend David Wilkes who managed that club. Hank did beautiful things and these were good tracks. I still love them. They're on eight track. I didn't really shop them around, as I didn't have any representation. I didn't have a manager, or a record company or anything. I couldn't get any commitment from a company that would prompt doing a record proper. I saved up a little bit of money, and rented a sixteen track tape recorder. I had some friends who were in a group called The Hello People. They had a house which they shared. They had a little mixing console there. A low budget piece of equipment. They also had a four track machine, so we rented this sixteen track professional tape recorder. Had it delivered. It cost us \$250, for 24 hours rent. It was all we could afford. We set it up and plugged it in. We could only record eight tracks at a time. We could only mix

very, very crudely. Randy Stirling engineered it. John Ware played drums. A bunch of other friends sang. My wife Danna sang on it. Jim Horn played some flute. My friend Spanky MacFarlane sang on it. She was still with Spanky and Our Gang at that time. In 24 hours we recorded twelve songs. Four of them, we'd already done in the eight track, which we had copied off to two inch tape. We added some more background parts and stuff. We ended up watering them down terribly. I'd have been happier if we had left them alone, as they had a good feeling to them. That became the basis of an album that I put out on my own. We only made 1000 copies of it. I released it as an artists limited edition. I signed and numbered each one. The reason I did that, was because I couldn't afford to do a colour cover. I used black paper for the cover. I had a white card printed. It looked like a stationary card and we glued each one on the front by hand. One the card it said *Artists Limited Edition*. It had a line where I signed my name and then numbered it. They're all gone. Somebody told me that they saw one advertised in a collectors magazine for \$250. They're out there somewhere. A few of my friends have them and my dad'd got one. It's really not an album that I would ever want to reissue. Out of that album, came a lot of good associations. A lot of good things. I was also able to pass some of them out as demos and get songs recorded. It was helpful. The album was called "Back On The Street Again."

In 1979, you cut the "Alone Direct" album for John Delgatto's, Sierra Briar label.

I had known John a long time, because we were involved in the same circle of people. He had been recording various things over the years. As a matter of fact, John is a great archivist. He has sort of disbanded the record label, and now has a video tape archive which is very successful [ED. NOTE. At the time of the interview, Steve's comment about the recording arm of Sierra Briar was true. Late last year, the label was reactivated with the release on CD of an extended WLIR-FM "Gram Parsons & The Fallen Angels - Live 1973" recording. Other CD and video releases have followed. For further details, you can contact the label at P.O. Box 5853, Pasadena, California 91117-0853, U.S.A.] and he has a lot of very good early television and music productions. Early Beach Boys and Hootenanny shows. John had the idea of doing the album. His company Sierra, was just holding it's own - on a survival level.

There was a woman who worked for him, whose name was Marsha Necheles - Marsha was a wonderful person and a good friend. She was also a fan of the music. Anyway, she encouraged John to put together a production. At the same time, John had the idea that a *direct to disc* album would have additional appeal to the market. That audiophile, collectors type thing. I was open to it, because he thought that I was one of the few people who could do an album like that. I was used to sitting there on a stool, playing my guitar, and doing a lot of songs one after another. With *direct to disc* as you know, you begin at the beginning of the lacquer disc - the hot cutting tip of the cutting lathe, cuts a groove. As that groove is continuous, you can't stop between songs. You go all the way through each side. To record the album, it took just two Tuesday nights. We recorded without any tape at all, direct to the lacquer master. I think we recorded six versions of Side One and eight of Side Two - the same list of songs each time. There were a couple of false starts and it took quite a few hours. What happens when you do that, is you get some pretty good performances. Your mind is more concerned with not making a mistake. With not being too loud, and not being out of tune. That kind of thing. We used five different guitars, so that there would be always be a guitar that was in the correct tuning for the next song. And that the guitars would be perfectly in tune, before we started. We had to have everything set up perfectly, then we'd start the cutting lathe. I still believe that vinyl is capable of an extremely good sound.

The recording also came across with a live feel.

Yea, and it was very alive, because there was nothing to do, except get on with it.

Most of the songs you cut, came from the 1965-70 period.

We talked earlier about my being involved in the music industry, and loosing the thread of the folk music circuit. Also the travelling which that involved. A lot of the songs which I wrote during the seventies were more production oriented. They needed a bass, drums and piano. For that album, we felt the appropriate thing was to go for the truly acoustic solo approach, which brought us back to those older songs.

In the same year, Regency Records issued an album of titled "A Little Warmth," produced by Graham Nash,

Did you choose him to produce your album.

That's a bit of a complicated story. The "Alone Direct" album actually came about in the middle of this other project. Part of the reason for that, was that Crosby, Stills and Nash decided to reform, do an album and a tour. Graham Nash and I had cut quite a lot of the album by this stage. It meant that there was a gap of eight or nine months, where I wasn't able to make any progress on the album. During that time, we made the *direct to disc* recording. That's another reason why the older material turned up on it. The new material was going on the album which Graham and I were doing. The whole project came about because of Mac Holbert. There was a fellow who played bass in my band at that time - when you work in Los Angeles and you're doing demos, and playing in clubs - at that time, everybody aspired to having a band. I had a lot of friends who helped me with song demos and in the studio. People that I wrote with too. I put together a band and the bass player was a fellow named Les Bohem. Les and Mac were very old friends. Les introduced me to Mac. He came out to hear us play a lot. Took an interest in the band and in the songs. Mac is a good songwriter. He and Les wrote quite a few songs together. As a matter of fact, the title song from that album was written by them. Mac is Graham Nash's lifelong friend. He's his road manager. He does a lot of business management and at one point was Graham's manager. Now there's a management company which takes that responsibility, because it's quite a lot of work. Mac still works for Graham. They've done a lot of projects together. For a lot of the things that Graham gets involved in, like travelling around the world to do different benefit concerts, Mac is his right hand man. Mac approached Graham - well, he gave him a tape of my songs. I got to meet Graham, during a wonderful day which Graham Nash and David Crosby organised. There's a place in Hollywood, the Harold Lloyd Estate. It had been owned by the old silent movie actor. It's a very beautiful old mansion in Beverley Hills. Graham and David rented the estate for one afternoon and produced this event dedicated to awareness of the issues of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. Those things are contemporary. Three to four hundred people were there. They were treated to wonderful talks and demonstrations. Jacques Cousteau was there. Ralph Nader. This was before the MUSE concerts, but it was a progression toward that. Imagine us sitting out on the grass, in 1978 I guess - an

election year - Proposition 15 was on the ballot. This event marked the first step in creating an awareness with a lot of people - most of the people invited, were from the music industry. Linda Ronstadt. Joni Mitchell. James Taylor - literally the gods. Graham was very articulate and totally aware of the issues. You can imagine what that day was like. It was an incredible experience. There was some music, but it was mostly a business like approach to "Let's talk about the issues. Let's get educated." I was amazed at the dedication of everyone who was there. It wasn't a social hang out. It wasn't a chance to do business, or talk, or give people tapes. The people there, were very dedicated to the issues. A lot of those same people went on to be involved in the MUSE concerts. James Taylor, Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt. Graham of course. John Hall. My old friend Tom Campbell was one the seven producers of the MUSE concerts. That was the day I met Graham. After that, we went on to have more and more of an association. There's another good friend of mine, whose name is Alan MacDougall. He now works for BMI. At one time, Alan worked for A&M Records. He put me in a studio with James Burton and a number of other top players - Emory Gordy - he tried to produce some demos to be reviewed by A&M for a possible record deal. In the end, they decided not to proceed with it. Alan was still looking for a way to work with me, because he was dedicated to my music. Graham and Alan were also good friends. In our discussions, Alan and I talked about the possibility of asking Graham to take on the role of a silent partner, and to lend his name to the project. Mainly to help us get a record company involved. Mac eventually approached Graham about the proposal. Graham said "I'd love to do it, but I want to be practically involved. I don't want to just lend my name." As it turned out, Graham had a 24 track studio in his San Francisco house. I was excited that he wanted to be part of it. We ended up recording the basic tracks at his house. Because we were in the Bay Area, we worked with a lot of the people that Graham knew in that area. John Barbata and Pete Sears from the Starship. The guy who really amazed me was Stan Celeste. He was the piano player with Bonnie Raitt's band. He had a powerful blues/ragtime style. Chris Darrow came in and played some mandolin. David Lindley played on a lot of different cuts. Jennifer Warnes sang on it. You know that was awkward, because I wasn't there when she came to the studio. I was in Europe for a month. That was the only time they were able to

arrange for her to come in. A lot of really fine moments are connected with that project. Graham invested a lot of money, energy and time. I have tremendous respect for him, because he was there every minute the tape was rolling. He contributed so much. He sang wonderful harmony parts. He's got a really unmistakable voice. It's a thrill for me to listen to that album now, and hear him and all those great people.

By 1978-79, were you becoming desperate to get back into the performing side of the business.

Yes. That's true. It was also a period of emerging awareness. A period of growing as a person. As I got more involved - I hesitate to say, in the issues - but you know what I mean. There was a lot of people around in the music industry who were starting to feel that some very serious things were going on in the world. Being involved in the music industry, as an industry, somehow there was the difficulty of compromising a lot of those energies. Trying to translate our feelings about the world being a better place, in terms of the necessities and the priorities of the music industry. What we found was, if you can sell a lot of records, you're a hero. I began to feel that only a few people were really in a position to do that. One of the problems for me, was the constant conflict of "Do what you have to do to be successful. Then you can begin to say what you want." I really did subscribe to that pretty much. I more or less went along with that idea up to the point where I realised, that just to have your own ideas, may require you to act according to them. I came to a point in the early eighties where - you may call it a *mid life crisis* or a *crisis of awareness* or whatever - I was signed to a publishing company called Famous Music. It's a sister company to Paramount Pictures and is owned by Gulf & Western. They were paying me good money to write songs, which as I thought at first and anyone would think, was miraculous. To think that someone was actually paying me to do what I love to do most of all. It was great. I know many, many people are able to make their living writing songs. For me to have that validation, was a tremendous step. Over a period of two to three years, I was able to work with lots of different kinds of material. I was studying philosophical and spiritual things. I was learning a lot about the American Indians and American foreign policy. Let me say, as plainly and unneuphemistically as I can, I was coming closer and closer to a crisis of awareness. I

began to realise that I needed to do my own work, for it's own reasons. I needed to be willing to live on whatever I might be able to earn, doing my own thinking. What it might mean, is that I needed to relinquish my 3600 square foot house in the Hollywood Hills. I might need to let the XKE go and I did. There's a pun there, on *XK ego*. What I mean is, I came up against a real crisis. I did leave. I did break off that whole chapter of my life. I left my marriage. I left my place in the music industry. I left my publishing opportunity. I left all of that behind me and went back to this place in California - Newport Beach, where I had been as a young person. Where I'd always felt centred. I'd always felt it was a place where I could be in touch with real things. I used to walk out on to the rocks at Crona Del Mar - this rock jetty which goes way out into the bay. It demarks the mouth of the bay. There are two rock jetties, each about a half mile long. I used to walk on the Southerly one, every night. Far out into the night. I was dealing with very, very serious things. My mother was going through an illness - she had muscular dystrophy. I was of an age, where it can be a hereditary or a genetically transmitted disease. I was experiencing a lot of fears about mortality. I had a lot of difficulty embracing the reality of my life. I thought that I'd live forever. That there would always be time later on, to do what I wanted to do. After fifteen years in the music industry in California, I'd reached a point of *burn out*. I wasn't an alcoholic. There were no drug related problems. It was more a matter of being aware of what was going on in the world, combined with being aware of the unfulfilled promise of my own life. Not necessarily in terms of success, but in terms of a feeling of authenticity. A feeling of being self actualised. It didn't matter that it wasn't on a great level. Levels of success, in terms of other people's definition of you, is an external thing. Many times, we project that on ourselves, and force ourselves to be subject to it. What I always thought, was that Hollywood was the big game. It was like the baseball player wanting to play for the Yankees. Nothing else would do. I always felt that the only success, was the *big success*. The Beatles success. Movie success. Television success. I didn't know exactly how I fitted into that. I didn't see myself as another Elvis Presley. I just felt that that was the place where it had to be. I can't honestly say, that I gave it every bit of the benefit of the doubt. I can't say that I really paid my dues, and

worked and worked and worked, and failed and still didn't have success. I think what it was, was there was an ambivalence. I had difficulty in getting connected to my energies. My own gifts. What I now realise, is that the willingness to be small, to be simple - the willingness to be unheralded - the willingness to die in complete anonymity, is in a way a key to having access to one's own true possibilities. I was caught up in this ego struggle. Trying to prove that I was somehow great or important. That I needed to be recognised. Now, having some encouragement from my friends here at Kerrville, and having the ability to go into a place I've never been before and play for people who may know something about my music, is all the encouragement I need. It's all I ever needed, yet I was cut off from it for a long time. I began to feel very much like - in the Greek tragedy of The Medea - there's the story of the man who travels to a far province, marries a woman and takes her back to his home. She experiences tremendous alienation and disorientation. Eventually she loses his love, suffers the additional alienation of being cut off from him and eventually murders her children. This is serious Greek tragedy that I'm talking about. That idea of the foreigner - of being foreign to your own native territory within, is a very serious thing. Many people go through it. The temptation of fame and the riches that it really did bring to me. Wonderful things. I had the possessions. Not on the scale of a rock star or anything, but I was indulgent. I was caught up in those things. I was held captive by them. When it did come down to it, the hand had to be played. I took refuge in what had always been for me during my youth, a place where I could be in touch with a certain timelessness. A transcendence. What that meant was, I found a place within me where I could meditate. Where I could start to draw from artistically. That's when I began to write songs like "Bed Of Roses," "Glass Houses," "La Guitarra" and "Heartland" - the newer generation of songs. I started to travel again as well.

On "A Little Warmth" you worked with a writer called David MacKechnie, where did you meet him,

David and I wrote a lot of things together. We met in a movie studio at MGM. We were there to do a project - I got involved through a friend of mine, whose name is Jeremy Cronenberg. Jeremy and I also wrote songs together. One of our songs was picked for a movie called "The Outfit" which starred

Robert Ryan and Robert Duvall. Jeremy and I went to the sessions. We cut ten different versions of the song, for the title theme. They used the version with harmonica only. No vocal or anything. We had other versions with strings. A full orchestra. I even sang on six versions. One with only guitar and my vocal. Jerry Goldstein, who is a very talented man, was writing the other soundtrack music. I enjoyed working with him a lot. Jerry and David MacKechnie were collaborators. David was Jerry's lyricist. He's a really good lyricist. We spent Monday nights for about five years, writing and working and struggling with that dialogue which collaborators need to have. You have to relearn everything, in terms of each other's vision. That was a very good association. David lives in Oregon now. We're going to see him at the beginning of August, when Cindy and I go to play at the Puget Sound Guitar Workshop. David and I wrote "Sweet Melinda," which John Denver recorded. We wrote a lot of songs for "A Little Warmth." Our song "Happy Hour" has been recorded by quite a number of people. It was cut by a group called Snuff, who had a chart record with it. It was also in a movie called "Door To Door," about salesmen. A very funny movie about this con man. David only writes lyrics. When people come up to me and ask how they can get involved in writing, and would I take a look at some of their poems, I always feel compelled to ask them if they have ever thought about trying to take on some of the music part of the creation process. Not because they have to be a good musician to be able to write, but because you don't want to be limited to having to depend on someone else to bring your song to full realisation. I always felt that, that was a difficulty for David. In some ways, I felt protective of him. He needed me, to make the songs come to life. In any collaboration, you need each other. My problem was, I always felt that I needed to be there for David - I always felt that no matter how much I could do to keep our songs moving along, success depended on me. That was a difficult place to be. You need to have mutual respect and camaraderie and help each other - you don't want to think that either of you is completely subject to whether or not the other one can get it across. Really, our writing didn't have any difficulties. Seriously I mean, we really were a very good productive team. When I started to *swing out of my orbit*, and to lose my sense of being completely dedicated to the principles of the corporate music industry - I really started seeking another

way to be. I went back to that old thing, which had always worked - which was, to sit with my guitar in a truly quiet place - where whatever quiet voice could come through, had a chance to do just that. In a sense, I began to disappoint some of my friends because I wasn't as ambitious. I wanted to *resign my membership of the club*. I began to be very resentful of the whole idea that there was a right group. The *in group*. The elite. I had always struggled to be part of it. I had always wanted to be recognised by it. To be part of it. Finally, it didn't matter. I have a few gold records. I have a few million selling and some platinum records of my songs - not as an artist - I had always tried to push these things ahead of me. Create this big edifice that was the Steve Gillette Museum of Contemporary Music - whatever that might be. Eventually, it got to a point where it wasn't enough.



Bill Brennan Photo

CINDY MANGSEN & STEVE GILLETTE

Did Kerrville find you, or did you find Kerrville, Obviously you went back to performing at folk festivals.

It saved my life (laughs). Well you know, there's a fellow who figures very strongly in this - I hesitate to say rebirth - but someone in my life who came along at a time when I really needed him. They say when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. For me this guru, or this person, was my friend Charles John Quarto. When I was in the midst of my struggles with a lot of these things, I still had an income coming in from Famous Music. They were paying me \$1500 a month. What it meant was, I was doing quite a bit better than a lot of my friends. That was one of the problems. I was separated from my friends, because I was still successful. I felt a little guilty about that. When I first met Charles John Quarto, I was in New York. We actually met several times over the years,

and I had been aware of his work. Later, I ran into him at Mac Holbert's house. Mac threw a birthday party for his lady, Teresa. Charles was standing in the kitchen and I went up to him and said, "One thing I really want to know. Charles you're a poet. Do you really make your living with your art. Do you really survive." Here was an example of a person that I knew was highly respected. Michael Murphey and Charles wrote "Geronimo's Cadillac." I wanted to know. Here was a man who was doing what I dreamed of. Anyway, Charles and I had some long talks about it. I actually ended up paying him for writing lessons. \$45 for an hour. Mostly it would turn into a session where we would talk about many things. He'd give me a whole list of things, like tone. He'd say "Let's analyse the songs we really like in terms of how they maintain their tone. Where does it change. How does this character fit in. What's the integrity of this theme. Is that really the right word. Is rhyme important in all these things." He really challenged me to think and to grow. I really began to develop as a writer through my association with him. His poetry was a great influence, and I began to set them to music. "Grapes On The Vine" is an example of that. Then we began writing songs in true collaboration, which was exciting and very challenging. Charles is a gifted man. He's also a very - I hesitate to say demanding - it's just that if you're in a tete-a-tete with him, he kicks the level up pretty quickly. It's like playing chess with somebody who is ready to move real fast. I can't keep up with him when it comes to puns. If the subject is trees, he's got a hundred of them - he'll go through them real fast - you know he's got a lot of them already memorised. It's just that he's so fast. He's amazing. He's also got a great sense of humour. Charles influenced me a lot. He gave me the confidence to accept that if a song really did have some special thing in it, others would appreciate it and value it. You see up until that time, I had been working in the music industry, where the only thing that was appreciated and valued - I don't mean to put it down - but really it was, the dollar. You cannot make art subject to the dollar, in a way that gives you any sort of access to it. You cut yourself off from it, when you make it object oriented. Every time Charles and I talked about performing, the name Kerrville kept popping up. He'd say "You've got to go to Texas. You've got to hear Michael Murphey. You've got to be in Austin. You've got to hear Jerry Jeff." Charles had worked on the "A Man Must Carry On" album and

written the piece about Hondo Crouch [ED. NOTE. Was the title of the piece, "His Heart Was So Full Of Mischief," "It Shall Be A Midnight Music" or "Like Some Song You Can't Unlearn" ? Actually, it was all three]. Charles has collaborated with so many people. He is now working with David Crosby. He's been a teacher to many, many people and is greatly revered. Yet, he's a person who has always lived close to the line. I came up with the thought once, in terms of this idea of not wanting to have any sort of security - of not being able to create security in one's own life. How can you stand to live in a way, where you don't know if you're going to have money - or you don't know if you're going to be in control of your situation. My dad's a lawyer. He's certainly a member of *the establishment*. A wonderful man, and someone who has always provided. He has always felt that it was important to do that. I always say "My dad thinks I live too close to the line. But to me, the line is a circle." My sense of that is - Charles is someone who is willing to cast his bread upon the water. Literally. He's willing to rely on the truth of what he does, and know that it will come back to him in a form that will provide for him. Even if he hasn't taken care of business, in the way that most people feel is so important. That's a difficult issue. To be poor was very, very difficult for me. I connected it with shame. I felt shame at not having money. That was probably exactly what I needed to do. I needed to go through a period where I had nothing.

When did you first come to Kerrville.

1984. Charles was here. He asked me to send a tape to Rod. He had told Rod about me, many times. Rod told Charles that he was aware of me, and that I was on the waiting list. At that time, it was a four year list. It's probably still that long these days. The list is kind of an arbitrary thing - what it means, is that Rod is aware of you. He would love to have you here, but there is no real reason to interrupt the list. There are people who come to this festival every year, who appear as if out of nowhere. They just happen to be special in some way or other - or relevant to something that is happening. There are a lot of good reasons for people to be here, that have nothing to do with waiting in line for consideration. Either in terms of their career or credentials. Charles said "You've got to send Rod a tape, because he would like what you do." I sent him a tape and unconsciously, did everything right. I sat

down and switched on the recorder. I said "Hello Rod, this is Steve Gillette. Here's a few of my songs." I played "Darcy Farrow," "She's Not You" and three others. I also tacked on some studio demos that we'd done. There was a diversity of material there. One of the studio cuts was "Bed Of Roses." Rod told me later that he played "Bed Of Roses" for people in the car, when he picked them up at the airport. He told me he liked it. He felt that it was good. That was very gratifying to me. I think it was because of that, that he invited me to the festival. And because I'd had other people cut my songs. It was time for me to come. I didn't realise, that it was time for me to come, in the other important ways. When I got here, I was a fast talking music business semi-con man. I knew all the answers. I sat down at a campfire and listened to a couple of songs. I thought, "I know what I'm doing here. I've been in the bigger places." I played one of my pop oriented, synthetically clever, quick witted kind of things. It was tin. It was false. It only took me that long to confront myself. To recognise the idiot that I was. Then it was a process of - like the alcoholic who hits the bottom - fortunately, I was among people who allowed me to confront myself in a way that wasn't painful. It wasn't condemning. I realised that I was a media junkie. I was a fame seeker. All these wrong energies. I was truly able - not immediately - but over a period of time, year after year, and through a lot of other experiences which came out of Kerrville and touring Texas - having some really close friendships and true life involvement and intimacy with people - that enabled me to confront these things and work with them, and become another dimension of myself in the process. It's been a truly transformational experience in so many ways. The specifics I'm sure would bear that out, although they might be a little gruesome for some of your readers. Kerrville is a place like that for everyone. Everyone eventually recognises, that you're among people who are doing the same thing. They're growing and they're open to it. They'll let you work on things.

I'm aware of the "Steve Gillette" cassette and your latest one, "American Songwriter." Did you release other recordings during the eighties.

Well, I've been a part of many projects - one of the things which happened to me the first year I came to Kerrville, was I met Linda Lowe. Linda is a wonderful person and a very good friend of mine. She lives in Houston

with her husband Carl Callaway, and has a lovely daughter. Linda and I sang together here, and subsequently decided to tour together. We did an East Coast trip which was a really fantastic thing for me. It was the first opportunity which I'd had, to go back to some of those clubs. For instance, one of the places was Cafe Lena in Saratoga Springs. I play there regularly now. Cindy and I also play there. After we met at Kerrville we began to correspond. Linda set up some dates for us to play. We ended up doing this short tour of about three weeks and then went into the studio. Her husband Carl produced what I really feel is a great album. It's only ever been a cassette up to this point. We've never got a company involved in it. Basically it was a co-operative album. Half Linda's songs, and half mine. There's such a good feeling about it, because so many fine people helped us with it. Tony Rice came down and played some beautiful guitar. On about nine of the songs. Michael Summer played piano and some bass. Ron Rebstock played some banjo. He's a great Houston player. As a matter of fact, Nanci Griffith's dad sang harmonies with us on one session. So many great moments. Great times. Because of it, I ended up playing with Linda's band. When I was in Texas, I'd play a lot of the clubs in Houston. Anderson Fair. That was a good project. I've been involved in numerous things, but really it's been a random process of jumping in where I could. As far as advancing the Steve Gillette professional edifice - the construction of it - it was so funny last night on the children's stage, Tom Chapin said, "Yes, the Tom Chapin record and cassette boutique is now here in town." I've always neglected that, partly because I could. I didn't have to survive by it. Now, I'm much more sensible about it. Cindy and I are not nearly as embarrassed to sell our recordings to people - before, I tended to give cassettes away a lot. We're not so embarrassed now, to send out a flyer which says "And by the way, these are our recordings. Here's the mailing address." Before, I never did that. I never saw it as a way for me to provide for my own individual artistic life. To create that vehicle or vessel in which I could survive as an artist. I always thought that it had to come from someone else.

You're working on a book about songwriting currently,

It's a book of things - when I started working with Charles, he gave me a lot of exercises. He gave me a lot of things which I

could pass along to other people. Over the years, I've also collected things - wonderful things, like - there's a famous letter written by Chief Seattle, which was his reply to the American government's offer to buy a hundred and fifty thousand acres of what is now Seattle. He replied, basically turning them down. He knew very well that there was no way to turn down the American government. It's a beautiful letter which calls into attention, the issues of living in harmony with the land. In American Indian philosophy, there was no such thing as private property. They contended that the land was *the mother of all life*. There was no way you could say it was mine or yours. No one could draw a line on it, or build fences on it. That's a fantastic concept. I recommend the letter to anyone. I found it in one of Buckminster Fuller's books. I also intend including essays by Albert Einstein. There's a lot of resources for a writer. Stacks of stuff. There's another essay portion in it, which is my deliberation on how you do it. What it is. What does it mean. What's spiritual materialism. A lot of it has to do with the creative process. How you get started. How you avoid blocks. How you get past writers blocks. How you can put things in a context where you have access to that process, where things will flow, rather than being hung up on the end product. We had some wonderful seminar talks here this year with John Stewart about that very subject - Kerrville is definitely a writers festival. It's the best place for a writer to be. The book is slowly evolving, and I'll finish it one day.

=====

NOTE. Since completing that interview back in early June 1989, Steve's been involved in cutting a couple of other albums. In addition, his 1967 Vanguard debut album has been reissued on CD. One album was recorded "Live In Concert" with Cindy Mangsen, at The Ark in Ann Arbor, Michigan during the Spring of 1990. When originally issued as a cassette on Steve's Compass Rose label, it consisted of a forty minute, fourteen track set. Subsequently upgraded to CD format and extended by five tracks and a further twenty minutes duration, the album was also picked up by the Swiss based Brambus label. More recently, Steve's latest solo outing "The Ways Of The World" appeared. Steve's mailing address is Compass Rose Music, P.O. Box 1501, Bennington, Vermont 05201. His recordings are also available from Danna Garcia at Canadian River Music, 4106 Tyler Street, Amarillo, Texas 79110. Ownership of at least one Steve Gillette album should be compulsory.

Across the Great Divide

Songs of Jo Carol Pierce



"Across The Great Divide," subtitled *The Songs of Jo Carol Pierce* could very well turn out to be my compilation album of the year. 1993 that is. [It was issued by the new San Marcos, Texas based DEJADISC label, during early December 1992]. *A little farther along - time will tell whether it's the compilation of the decade, let alone album of the decade.* As far as I'm concerned, it contains a perfect score of nineteen cuts and no passes.

Considering that of late, we've enjoyed various artist compilations of material penned and *made famous* by The Byrds, Leonard Cohen, The Kinks, Neil Young and so own and own....it's pertinent to note, and even stranger to relate, that this *Lady from Lubbock* has never officially released any recordings. Then again, we are talking about Lubbock, city of the ghostly lights.

At this point, a few random background details probably won't come amiss. I've already indicated that Jo Carol is a Texan. Born on the flatlands of the Llano Estacado. In the town of Wellington, in fact, she was raised in Lubbock. Back in September 1989, she graced the cover of the first edition of Austin's MUSIC CITY. During that Fall, Jo Carol performed her monologue with music "*Bad Girls Upset By The Truth*," at various venues in and around Austin. The December 1992 issue [No. 40] of the latter publication, saw her featured on *Page 1* once more. In the interim among many ports of call, Jo Carol took the play to New Mexico with David Halley and J.D. Foster in tow. For the original Austin production, Sharon Rae Ely (as in Joe's good lady) designed the costumes. Deborah Milosovitch created the stage set, while artist T.J. Nabors produced the posters announcing performances of the event. The latter trio being dues paid, former Lubbock citizens. By the way, I should add here that circa 1963-67, Jo Carol was Mrs. Jimmie Dale Gilmore. Contemporaries at school included Joe Ely, Jesse Taylor, Terry Allen, Jo Harvey Allen, Butch Hancock and Kimmie Rhodes. If Lubbock bloodlines are much in evidence on the tracks of this set, the latter flatland duo are notable absentees. On her 1988 Heartland album "*Man In The Moon*," Kimmie's lyric to "*It'll Do*," immortalised Jo Carol with the words "Carol Jo Pierce has a shuffleboard attitude, 'Cause some you win and some you're gonna loose, And she knows

how to win at the It'll Do...."

Following a somewhat lacklustre performance of "*Bad Girls....*" at La Zona Rosa in Austin during November 1991, Michael Hall (former Managing Editor on The Austin Chronicle, ex-Wild Seed, currently The Setters and also a solo act) and Troy Campbell (Loose Diamonds) stumbled into one another while partaking of a *comfort break*. In conversation, it transpired that both musicians had considered a project to immortalise Jo Carol's songs. For his 1990 Record Collect album "*Quarter To Three*," Hall included Pierce's "*I Blame God*." When Campbell's band moved from Dayton, Ohio to Austin a few years ago, they continued working as The Highwaymen for a period. The line-up later mutated into Loose Diamonds. The name came from one of Jo Carol's compositions. I ask you - Is this becoming incestuous, or just a family affair?



Photo: Dejadisc Inc.



Jo Carol Pierce

And finally, before we get to the line-up on the 19 cuts of "*Across The Great Divide*," I'd just like to mention that Kate Wolf wrote a song with the same title, for her 1981 Kaleidoscope album "*Close To You*."

Halfway through PSYCHOMOTOR'S "*Sacrificial Island Tombstone*" you'd swear that every band from The Beatles to Klaatu had reformed. It's the psychedelic sixties once more, with elements of Austin's Poi Dog Pondering and the Coffee Sergeants combining in this creation. And what's more JC, I really like this track.

Every sound which emanates from your speakers on "*Queen Of Heaven*" was committed to tape by the man himself - the reason I listen to this type of music - JOE ELY. An acoustic ballad,

full of haunting imagery, co-written by Ely, Pierce and T.J. Nabors.

Former Wild Seed and subsequent solo artist KRIS McKAY, adds her delightful chords to the title cut, a tale of a fantasy, ghostly lover. If you missed KRIS'S 1990 Arista album "*What Love Endures*," I'd ask yourself one question. "Why?"

PORK'S dual female vocal intro to "*My Boyfriend*" is totally of the wall. The cut features Alejandro Escovedo's anaesthetising, buzz saw guitar. LOOSE DIAMONDS featuring album co-producer Troy Campbell weigh in with "*Ruby*," a ballad about lost love, tinged with the faintest hint of regret.

Following some patchy releases over the last couple of years, DARDEN SMITH'S rendition of "*Scratch Upon Her Windowpane*" hails from that region where a cold tingle runs up your backbone every time you listen to it. Heartache can be so wonderful!

Cranking up the pulse rate and the decibels once more, are the LORDS OF LOVE, featuring Jesse "Guitar" Taylor and Dan Yates. The latter musician being Jo Carol's son in law, who co-penned "*Something More*" with her.

Clocking in at just over six minutes, "*Jim Henry Henley*" is the longest cut on the set. Producer, guitarist and songwriter Spot, leads the trio SPOT REMOVAL. As many words as possible, are crammed into every second of this classy song, leaving the listener breathless by the end. Could have done with more track time and a clearer mix.

JIMMIE DALE GILMORE is invited to the "*Reunion*," wherein the protagonists/former lovers part in real life, in the certainty that they will be reunited on another heavenly plane, farther down the road. The extremes of "*Heaven And Hell (Their Exact Location)*" are explored by album co-producer MICHAEL HALL. HALL'S interpretation of this lyrically bleak work strikes the bullseye with deadly precision.

"*Does God Have Us By The Twat Or What?*" is not the track to play to your maiden aunt! GIRLS IN THE NOSE, are a six piece all woman, rock band from the wilder side of town. THE WANNABES take the opportunity to list all the things which they take exception to, in "*You Bother Me*."

At one stage, Antone's Records proposed to

release this album on their new, A Lone Star label. Before financial problems got in the way, that is. It seems they requested that the next cut be dropped from the disc. Thankfully, Dejadisc weren't so radical. No tunnel vision there. LISA MEDNICK has received unanimous plaudits for her rendition of "*Buttons Of Your Skin*." JC named it *best single track* in his MUSIC CITY TEXAS review. Don McLeese nailed it with a *particularly inspired performance* tag in ROLLING STONE. So who am I, not to follow suit. The lyric is as haunting and spiritual an analysis of a love affair, as you're ever liable to hear. When Terry Clarke played the March 1989 version of Austin's South By Southwest Music Festival, he ran into LISA. At that time she was a member of a New Orleans' based duo. I've kept up to date on her activities, via Terry. The plan is to record her solo debut during 1993. You've already scored a sale here Lisa.

One day back in April last year, I heard DAVID HALLEY perform "*Loose Diamonds*" at a nearby hostelry. He'd already blown me away with his own "*Man Of Steel*," although I must admit that it was a close run thing with Jo Carol's song. If my memory serves me well, David also played "*Buttons Of Your Skin*." You don't easily forget moments like that. HALLEY is joined by RICH & KATHY BROTHERTON for the album version of "*Loose Diamonds*." Probably my second favourite track here.

The SHOULDERS waltz their way through the gentle "*Borderline Tango*." THE NAMEDROPPERS meantime, provide the only non Austin contribution. All the way from Tucson, Arizona c/o Dan Stuart of Green On Red. In the circumstance, it's appropriately titled "*Secret Dan*." KATHY McCARTY of Glass Eye and GRETCHEN PHILIPS of the now deceased Two Nice Girls, join forces for the emotionally raw "*Blue Norther*."

The supporting players on TERRY ALLEN'S cut "*I Blame God*," boil down to an amalgum of family/hometown players. In the former vein, son Bukka (piano) and wife Jo Harvey (mocking vocals), are joined by Lubbock bred drummer Davis McLarty. ALLEN spits out every word and line with relish. ROBERT JACKS was Pierce's stage partner when "*Bad Girls Upset By The Truth*" played in Austin. He is joined by former Reiver KIM LONGACRE for the closing cut "*Apocalyptic Horses*," as Jo Carol's psyche takes to the Great Divide once more.

OK, time to press the [total] replay button again. What chance Volume II?

A Kerrverts Festival 50.



There is a reason, There is a rhyme,
There is a season, There is a time,
and then, there's the latest KERRVERTS FESTIVAL 50.

DEJADISC

1. The Dutchman JUAREZ feat. MICHAEL SMITH & BARBARA BARROW "Juarez" Decca DL75189 [1970], #
2. The Way To Calvary ROD MACDONALD "Highway To Nowhere" Shanachie 8001 [1992],
3. Years BETH NIELSEN CHAPMAN "Beth Nielsen Chapman" Reprise 9 26172-2 [1990],
4. Buttons Of Your Skin LISA MEDNICK "Across The Great Divide/Songs Of Jo Carol Pierce" Dejadisc DJD3203 [1992], # 
5. Sligo Honeymoon 1946 TERRY CLARKE "The Shelly River" Minidoka MICD005 [1991],
6. Yarrington Town MICKIE MERKENS "Texas Summer Nights, Vol. 1" Potato Satellite PS2-1000 [1983], #
7. Thanks For Asking MICHAEL McNEVIN "Secondhand Story" Mudpuddle Music (cassette only) MM1001 [1992], #
8. Polaroids SHAWN COLVIN "Fat City" Sony/Columbia CK 47122 [1992], #
9. Bald Eagles At Buchanan Lake PATRICIA LONG narrated by STEVEN FROMHOLZ Marathon Music (cassette only, no index no) [1992], #
10. Loose Diamonds DAVID HALLEY c/w RICH & KATHY BROTHERTON
"Across The Great Divide/Songs Of Jo Carol Pierce" Dejadisc DJD3203 [1992], #
11. She Doesn't Live Here Anymore ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO "Gravity" Watermelon CD 1007 [1992], #
12. Look Over Your Shoulder MARK HEARD "Legacy 2 - A Collection Of Singer Songwriters" High Street 72902 10314-2 [1992], # 
13. Sandstone Champagne ANDY WILKINSON "Deep In The Heart" Adobe ADOB 1008 [1992], #
14. Downtown LOOSE DIAMONDS "Blue Days, Black Nights - A Mini LP" Amazing AMZ-1032 [1992], #
15. Mary Magdalene MANDY MERCIER "Forgiveness And Rage" Wild Cantinas (cassette only) [1992], #
16. The Dance CARL BROUSE "American Hotel" DTI Records DT-3214 [1983], # 
17. Book Report L.J. BOOTH "Big Hourglass" Agua Azul CD0003 [1992], #
18. Lines Around Your Eyes LUCINDA WILLIAMS "Sweet Old World" Chameleon 61351-2 [1992], #
19. Coalminers UNCLE TUPELO "March 16-20, 1992" Rockville/Dutch East India Trading ROCK6090-2 [1992], #
20. Deportee (Plane Wreck At Los Gatos) DAVID RODRIGUEZ/LUCINDA WILLIAMS "The True Cross" Dejadisc DJD 3202 [1992], #
21. I Am A Town MARY CHAPIN CARPENTER "Come On, Come On" Sony/Columbia 471898 2 [1992],
22. The Eagle DAVE CROSSLAND "Here's To The Ride" Purple Beech PBC3 [1991], #
23. The Wing And The Wheel Nanci GRIFFITH "One Fair Summer Evening" MCA MCF3435 [1988],
24. Growing Old LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY "Transformations" Olivia ORCD967 [1992], #
25. My Father's Piano KRISTINA OLSEN "Kristina Olsen" Philo PH 1147 [1992], #
26. Every Single Day GREG TROOPER c/w THE FLATIRONS "Everywhere" Black Hole BH0113 [1992], #
27. Wake Up! George MICHAEL FRACASSO "Love & Trust" Little Fuji (cassette only, no index no) [1992], #
28. Home Is A Place Inside Me TOM PACHECO "Tales From The Red Lake" Round Tower RTM CD 42 [1992],
29. Woodbrook MICHEAL O' SUILLEABHAIN "Gaiseadh - Flowing" Virgin CDVE915 [1992],
30. I Don't Love You Much Do I GUY CLARY "Boats To Build" Asylum/American Explorer 61442-2 [1992], #
31. This Heart Stops For Railway Crosses KATY MOFFATT "The Greatest Show On Earth" Round Tower RTM CD 50 [1993],
32. All Souls Night LOREENA MCKENITT "The Visit" Quinlan Road/WEA 9031-75151-2 [1991],
33. Never Had It So Good MARY CHAPIN CARPENTER "The Best Of Mountain Stage Live Vol. 3" Blue Plate BPM-003CD [1992], #
34. Rise From the Ruins THE COMPANY "Tenth Anniversary Fast Folk Review/Live At The Bottom Line" Fast Folk Magazine FFCO 604 [1992], #
35. Weary Eyes DAVID RODRIGUEZ "Landing 92" Brambus 199235-2 [1992], #
36. Nobody But Me GARY P. NUNN "Totally Guacamole" Campfire CF0001 [1992], #
37. She's All He Ever Sees In Me KATY MOFFATT & THE GREAT UNKNOWN "Indoor Fireworks" Red Moon RM-CD 1006 [1992], # 
38. Stream At The End Of My Street DENNIS DOUGHERTY "Pony Ride" Local Folkel 6687 [1991], #
39. Someone To Dance With SCULLION "Guinness Tour '92 - Bringing It All Back Home" Hummingbird HB CD 0001 [1992],
40. Bunker Hill MICHAEL PENN "Free For All" RCA 61113-2 [1992], #
41. Every Word TISH HINOJOSA "Culture Swing" Munich/Network MRCD 165 [1992], #
42. Wild West Show DARDEN SMITH "Native Soil" Watermelon CD 1009 [1992], #
43. Siver Wings RORY BLOCK "Ain't I A Woman" Munich/Network NETCD 0038 [1992], #
44. My Old Friend The Blues STEVE EARLE "BBC Radio 1 Live In Concert" Windsong WINCD 020 [1992],
45. This House JANIS IAN "Breaking Silence" Sony/Columbia 472376 2 [1992], #
46. Killing Fields Of Love JON STRONG "Follow Me..." The Serious Recording Company CD SRC 1 [1992],
47. O Marie DANIEL LANDIS "The Best Of Mountain Stage Live Vol. 1" Blue Plate BPM-001CD [1991], #
48. These Blues JIMMIE DALE GILMORE "The Best Of Mountain Stage Live Vol. 2" Blue Plate BPM-002CD [1991], #
49. The River JOHN STEWART "Bullets In The Hour Glass" Shanachie 8005 [1992], #
50. Heal In The Wisdom BOBBY BRIDGER "Live At The Kerrville Folk Festival 1986" (cassette only, no index no.) [1987], # 

All albums released in the UK, unless marked, US releases marked #, European releases marked #, Introductory rhyme taken from the Bobby Bridger song, "Heal In The Wisdom" - The Kerrville Folk Festival Anthem.

Contents.

Patricia Hardin "Bald Eagles At Buchanan Lake" & Alejandro Escovedo "Gravity"	p.2
Jon Ims interview 6/92	p.3
Kerrville - kompacts, kassettes & other ko incidences	p.9
Steve Gillette interview [Pt. 4]	p.11
Songs of Jo Carol Pierce "Across The Great Divide"	p.21
The latest Kerrville Festival Top 50	p.23

Editorial.

Having started reproducing my 1989 interview with Steve Gillette way back in KK No. 9, subsequent parts appeared in issues 10 and 12. Somewhat irregular really. This time around, I've finally managed to do *the honest thing* and complete publication of that interview. The Jon Ims interview, marks the first of my Kerrville 1992 taping sessions to appear in the pages of the KK. With loads more words from 1992 to follow.

The current plan as of the next issue of the Kronikle is to switch to a more sophisticated computer (An IBM compatible 486SX-25, driving Wordperfect for Windows if you're into the jargon). Having first mastered the new technology, this magazine may not appear any faster than currently. The printface should however, improve immeasurably. Bet you can hardly wait to see it !

Many thanks to those of you who responded regarding my request for a copy of the 25th anniversary FOLK CITY video. My curiosity has now been sated thoroughly.

One idea which has been wandering through the *canyons of my cranium* of late, is to launch a free [provided that you're a subscriber, that is] *Small Ads Page* with the next issue. The maximum insert length should be around 50 words, including a contact address or telephone no. No final decisions yet, it really all depends on your response. The Ads may appear as part of the loose Back Issues flyer which has been enclosed with the Kronikle of late. Although I'm well aware of the existence of the trade in "Live Tapes" - *the operations of one particular individual resident in the UK, who profits by the sale of live songwriter tapes [many of the artists involved, have appeared in the pages*

of the KK], totally pisses me off - I certainly don't want to see the Small Ads become a blatant avenue for pursuing the latter activity. There I've said it ! Most singer/songwriters I can think off, are barely scraping a living from their art. *And I do mean their art. Not something to be captured for immoral gain by state of the art technology.* In this issue, Steve Gillette comments that for some, songwriting is an irresistible calling. I can understand and accept that. Having traded surplus/unwanted CD's, vinyl albums etc with quite a number of KK subscribers, I'm in no doubt that most of you carry spare items in your collections. That guy in Hong Kong, might just have a spare copy of Mary McCaslin's debut album on the Barnaby label, which you've been searching for, for the last decade. So why don't you let us all know. KK subscribers are resident in Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, most of Europe and Scandanavia. Another thought - considering the restricted release of certain minor label CD's of late, maybe we could *cross borders* and satisfy each other's appetites in that area (eg. David Olney had two albums issued in Europe only, last year. One in Italy, the other in Holland). I know for a fact that the latter items are extremely hard to come by in the U.S.A. As I said earlier, I await your response.

The personal reasons which contributed to the non appearance of the "No Two Alike" illustrated songbook during the Winter of 1991/92, are fully understood and accepted. It just seems that since we're now into 1993, the wait is getting a little long. The cassettes were released over a 14 month period, commencing in the Fall of 1990. A similar period has now elapsed since the appearance of the last cassette. Why are we waiting ? Address your enquiries to Lubbock or Leave It, 406 Brazos, Austin, Texas.

Regarding the contents of this issue and in no particular order, thanks are due to Rod Kennedy, Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, Jon Ims, Heinz Geissler and Patricia Hardin Long. This issue is dedicated jointly, to the memories of the late Mark Heard and Renee Horton.

18 November 1982

I held up a leaf
and read the palm
of a Sycamore tree



ALPHA RAY