

Tim Grimm – Bio

Tim Grimm was born in Fort Wayne and raised in Columbus, Indiana. Fired by a desire to “*tell stories*,” in 6th Grade Tim performed in the school play. It was the first of many such appearances. The following year, Grimm picked up a guitar that his parents owned – a 1967 Harmony - and taught himself a few chords. Over the ensuing decade on numerous occasions he’d put the guitar down, only to reacquaint himself with it later. Following high school, Tim enrolled as theatre major at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Graduating with a Master of Fine Arts degree, he went on to work in regional theatre in Chicago.

In his final year at Ann Arbor, Tim had picked up the guitar again, learned a few traditional folk songs and in tandem with his acting career, began pursuing music semi-professionally in Chicago clubs. For a couple of years, through the late eighties, Grimm performed in venues such as the legendary Old Town School of Folk Music. At one stage he had honed his guitar playing skills by taking lessons at Old Town. Grimm began writing his own songs and recorded the album “**True Heart, Kind Mind**” which he released on his own Vault label. He formed a band, The True Hearts, and they were the Midwest regional winners of the Marlboro Country Music Round-up. His sophomore solo disc was titled “**Broken Down Palace**.”

With his acting career in the ascendancy, Tim moved to Hollywood, where he spent the next six and a half years working as a movie and television actor. Made for television “**Dillinger**” [1991], which starred Mark Harmon, was the first movie he made. Grimm went on to appear in “**Backdraft**” [1991], “**Clear And Present Danger**” [1994], “**Mercury Rising**” [1998], “**The Insider**” [1999] and more recently “**Joshua**” [2002]. On television he appeared in series such as, for two seasons, “**Reasonable Doubts**” as well as “**Home Improvements**,” “**JAG**” and “**Turks**.”

During his time in California, Tim solely pursued his acting career. As he told an interviewer recently “*There was no muse. I was in L.A. to be an actor and that's all I did.*” Occasional visits home brought Tim to the realisation that he was happiest in Indiana. The decision was made and moving to Columbus, with his actress wife, Jan Lucas, and their two sons, Tim purchased a farm. He continued appearing in movies, but from his *chosen* base in Indiana. According to his web site, these days he’s a “*Singer-songwriter, actor, hay-farmer.*” Back in Indiana, as well as tending the farm, Tim has worked in regional theatre productions and he began playing music once more.

Tim Grimm’s *comeback* album, appropriately titled “**Heart Land**” [1999] was a storytelling delight. Apart from A. P. Carter’s “Sowin’ On The Mountain” the ten other songs were Grimm originals. Recorded at Airtime Studios in Bloomington, Indiana where Carrie Newcomer has worked on a number of her recent albums, one of the session players was Jason Wilber [guitar, mandolin].

Songs on the “**Heart Land**” album went on to win awards in the John Lennon Songwriting Contest (country), The Great American Songwriting Competition (folk/country) and “Best Traditional Folk Song” in the Just Plain Folks Music Awards. The album also received a nomination for an Independent Music Industry Award (bluegrass/country). The Chicago Sun-Times dubbed Tim Grimm, 2000’s “*Best Discovery*” on the Midwest Roots/Americana scene. Closer to home, Indianapolis Monthly magazine listed him in their year end “Best of Indy” issue as, their singer-songwriter of choice.

I mention John Prine sideman and solo act in his own-right, Jason Wilber, earlier. Wilber and Grimm became close friends, sufficient that when Tim worked on a new production of James Still’s play “Amber Waves” it was decided to include music. Recorded at Airtime, and featuring individual compositions by Jason and Tim, as well as collaborations by the pair, the soundtrack album “**Amber Waves**” [2000] also included Woody Guthrie’s “Blowin’ Down This Old Dusty Road.” In addition, local Bloomington players such as Gordon Lowery [fiddle] and Dan Lodge-Rigal [piano] were collaborative writers.

To date, apart from Newcomer, Tim has opened shows for Richard Thompson, Lowen and Navarro and his long time friend, Ramblin’ Jack Elliott. Tim penned liner notes for Jack’s Grammy winning Red House album “**South Coast**” [1995]. Vault Records, Tim’s label, released The Clodhoppers’ album “**Still Standin**” [2002], which he produced. Tim Grimm’s latest solo album “**Coyote’s Dream**,” recorded at Airtime, was issued in early 2003, and was co-produced with Wilber. As well as eight Grimm originals, Wilber contributed the closing song “Heaven,” and the set includes a rendition of the traditional “Buffalo Skinners” featuring Ramblin’ Jack.

On **"Names"** with assistance from local musicians such as Carrie Newcomer, Grey Larsen, Jason Wilber and Dan Lodge-Rigal, on which he covers songs by old school folk musicians such as The Carter Family and Woody Guthrie, contemporary roots singer/songwriters Robert Earl Keen, the late Mickey Newbury, Gillian Welch, John Prine and Tom Waits, plus from the rock field John Mellencamp and Bruce Springsteen. During 2004 Tim was voted American Roots Music, Male Artist of the Year by Freeform American Roots Music DJ's. Featuring new Grimm penned material, plus a cover of Dylan's "Girl from The North Country," Wind River Records released Tim's **"The Back Fields"** in late 2005.

In 2007, Tim was one of five Bloomington area performers that contributed songs and their musical talents to the compilation recording **"Wilderness Plots."** The nineteen original songs were based on Scott Russell Sanders' 1983 book of short stories, of the same name, that related the settling of the Ohio river valley circa 1780's through to the 1860's. The quintet went on to perform in public accompanied by Russell who delivered narrations from his book. A music/narrative performance DVD featuring Sanders and the quintet, and titled **"Wilderness Plots,"** was produced by Indiana University the following year. **"Holding Up The World,"** a Vault Records release that appeared in the summer of 2008, was a ten-song collection that featured eight Grimm penned originals, a couple of which were co-written with his wife Jan Lucas. Contributors to the album included Lucas, Detor, White, Jason Wilber, Dan Lodge-Rigal and David Weber.

Discography :

with Carrie Newcomer, Krista Detor, Michael White and Tom Roznowski : **"Wilderness Plots"** [2007] :
Solo : **"True Heart, Kind Mind"** [1990] ; **"Broken Down Palace"** [1991] ; **"Heart Land"** [1999] ; **"Amber Waves"** with Jason Wilber [2000] ; **"Coyote's Dream"** [2003] ; **"Names"** [2004] ; **"The Back Fields"** [2005] ; **"Holding Up The World"** [2008] :

Arthur Wood

Kerrville Kronikles 09/03, 02/06 & 06/08.

[1025 words]