

Kreg Viesselman – Bio

Kreg Viesselman was born on 21st February 1973 in Wells, Minnesota, the youngest of three siblings, and he lived there till the age of eighteen. His father was a schoolteacher and his mother painted. In terms of a musical influence in the Viesselman household, Kreg's father was the prime mover. Accompanying himself on a baritone ukulele, he would regularly spend his leisure hours performing folk songs [eg. "The Fox" and "Jamaica Farewell"]. The rest of the family would regularly join in - vocally, and it became a family activity that young Kreg loved. Kreg was a member of the children's choir in Methodist church by the age of five, and his mother and older brother, Buzz, are still adult choir regulars. As for Kris, his sister, Kreg joked *"She sings in the shower."*

From the age of eight, Kreg took piano lessons for a period of three years. His first public performance, aged eight, was a piano recital. As part of the music programme, in middle school and high school, Kreg took trumpet and drums, got his first harmonica at the age of 12 and his first guitar nine years later. Following high school Kreg went on to major in Biology with a minor in art and graduated from Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa in 1995. According to Kreg, in his late teens, one summer job involved working a twelve hour shift in a Wells, Minnesota cannery *"sucking unacceptable sweet peas from a conveyor belt with a vacuum tube."* In the last decade he has been *"a Marine Science Instructor in Big Pine Key, Florida, a Wilderness Trip Leader in Maine during the summers of 1994-99, a school teacher for "at risk" youth in Maine for 1997-99."* In addition, he has sailed as mate on several sailing vessels around the Florida Keys, as well as undertaking a host of carpentry, forestry and farm jobs from Maine to Oregon.

Kreg co-wrote his first song with a friend and co-worker, or in Kreg's words *"sailor/marine scientist/harley riding guy,"* John Booker, in 1994. Kreg was given his first guitar by a friend soon afterwards. Viesselman's musical influences as a listener run the gamut of contemporary to traditional. In practical terms the former equates to *"John Prine, Bill Morrissey, Richard Thompson, Jesse Winchester and Taj Mahal,"* while in the traditional music field Viesselman quotes *"Mississippi John Hurt, Elizabeth "Libba" Cotton and Rev. Gary Davis."* Kreg further defined his love for music with *"I have always liked songs that strike a strong emotional chord, with a good sense of melody. More importantly, I like songs that tell stories with some sense of authenticity and authority...probably taken from personal experience."* A friend taught Kreg his first guitar chords, an event that he feels was profound and pivotal in his life.

Kreg won the songwriting competition at the Eugene, Oregon, Willamette Valley Folk Festival in Y2K and was a Telluride Troubadour finalist in 2002. Produced by Craig Patterson and Gary Dunn, and recorded at Morningwood Studio in Jamestown, Colorado, the year 2000 saw the release of Viesselman's debut solo album **"Many Rivers"** on the PME Record label. It featured eleven original songs. Kreg's self-titled follow-up, produced by Evan Reeves, features ten-tracks and was released in early 2003. It was recorded in Colorado at Rancho Deluxe, Catch and UNC studios.

Based out of Colorado since 2000, Kreg claims to be a full time professional musician *"When I have the inclination to book the gigs. I occasionally work odd jobs in between sorties to kind of recharge and get the calluses back on my hands. I need a lot of free time to create anything worth hearing, that's why I love sailing and forestry."* As a solo act, Kreg currently plays about one hundred dates annually, and has performed at venues in New England, the Midwest, the West Coast and the Rocky Mountain states. Plans are in place for Viesselman to tour the UK in October and November 2003. As a solo performer Viesselman has been accompanied by a number of Colorado musicians - Andrew Martell Eric Thorin, Eric Moon, Evan Reeves, Laura Wade, Preacher Boy, Kevin Roper, Jennie Duberstein, Jimmy Sferes, Brian Mullins, and from the band, The Kane Reunion - Cameron Gray, Brahm Bourque and Rich Van Valkenburgh.

Discography : **"Many Rivers"** [2000] ; **"Kreg Viesselman"** [2002] :

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