

## Jud Caswell – Bio

Judson “Jud” Caswell was born Belfast, Maine and raised on the family farm in Morrill. These days Caswell is based out of Brunswick, Maine. Jud’s mother was a folk music fan, and the youngster grew up listening to albums by Maine based Maritime folksinger Gordon Bok, the New York based folk/pop duo Simon & Garfunkel, and Britain’s Cat Stevens. Of course there was also a flirtation with The Beatles. As a result Jud sang around the family home even in his pre-school years. While attending elementary school Caswell became involved in the music programme and excelled in playing the saxophone [4<sup>th</sup> grade] and bassoon [6<sup>th</sup> grade] and was a member of the choir. As a result Jud was selected for the All State music programme. Following graduation from Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham, Jud enrolled as a physics major at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire but soon switched courses to music and took up playing the guitar. As a graduate Jud went on to work for his father’s engineering company, while concurrently improving his guitar playing skills and appearing at open mics. in nearby venues. The Side Door Coffeehouse in Brunswick became one such regular stopping off spot, and as his solo career developed Caswell became a featured performer at the venue.

Jud’s debut solo recording, “**Better Things**,” currently out of print, was recorded during the Spring of 1994 at Python Studios in Norwich, Vermont. The sole contributor to the album, vocals apart, on the recording sessions Jud played guitar, bass and saxophone. A self-produced collection, the ten Caswell composed songs included “Alderdown” the current name of the Mainer’s record label. Caswell eventually built his own recording studio, the Rat Room, and in addition to recording and producing his recordings, produced CD’s for other local players. Following a four-year silence “**Simplify**” appeared, recorded at the Rat Room. Another self-produced collection that featured twelve original compositions, on the recording Caswell played guitar, bass, saxophone, flute, whistles, keyboards and percussion. The other session players were Marsey Caswell [vocals], Nat Hussey [lead guitar], John A. Monroe [digeridoo] and on selected tracks, there were appearances by bassists, Sam Sherry and Stew MacLehose.

Apart from Jud [guitar, bass, saxophone, flutes, whistles, percussion and vocals], the support players on his third outing “**Between The Pavement And The Sky**” were Marsey Caswell [vocals], Nat Hussey [bass], Alfred Lund [ashiko, percussion, drums and vocals], Martin Swinger [vocals] and Steve Johnson [trumpet]. Like its predecessor, this self-produced album was recorded at the Rat Room, and featured thirteen Caswell penned originals. Featuring fourteen songs “**Lost And Found**” was recorded at Jud’s new home studio, Frog Hollow, and the contributing musicians included Bill Kelleher [bass], Tom Corcoran [drums], Robby Coffin [lead guitar], Ed Howe [fiddle], Marsey Caswell [vocals], Steve Gerlach [vocals] and Paul Schaffner [hammer dulcimer], plus on one cut, Josh Caron [drums] and Alfred Lund [percussion]. At Frog Hollow, Jud continues to produce and engineer projects for other Maine musicians

In the new millennium, Caswell successfully entered a number of songwriting competitions. In 2004 he was a finalist in the Boston Folk Festival Songwriting Competition, and a winner of the Rose Garden Coffeehouse Performing Songwriter Competition and the Great American Song Contest. The following year Jud was a finalist in the Telluride Troubadour Competition. 2006 saw him reap a number of awards, including winning the Suwannee Springfest Songwriting Contest, Wildflower Arts and Music Festival Songwriting Contest, Boston Folk Festival Songwriting Competition and the Grassy Hill Kerrville New Folk Contest. The same year Jud was chosen to appear in the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival Emerging Artist Showcase. In early 2007, Caswell won the Plowshares Songwriting Contest.

Most of the eleven-song “**Blackberry Time**” album was recorded and produced by Jud at Frog Hollow Studio. The contribution by Pat Wictor [slide guitar] was recorded at the Augur Compound, Durham, Connecticut, while Amy Speace [vocals] and Karen Mal [mandolin, vocals] were recorded in the downtown Marriott in Memphis, Tennessee, during the February 2007 Folk Alliance Conference. The other players on the Brunswick sessions were Andy Rice [upright bass], Craig Record [drums] and Marsey Caswell [vocals]. Apart from “Peace And Quiet co-written by Caswell and Speace, the remaining songs were penned by Jud.

Caswell began touring outside of Maine and New England in early 2005 and has shared stages along America’s eastern seaboard and in Texas and Illinois with John Gorka, David Wilcox, Bill Morrissey, Lucy Kaplansky, Roger McGuinn, Cliff Eberhardt, Chris Smither, Jonathan Edwards, Ollabelle and others.

Discography : **“Better Things”** [1994] ; **“Simplify”** [1998] ; **“Between The Pavement And The Sky”** [2001] ; **“Lost And Found”** [2004] ; **“Blackberry Time”** [2007] :

**Arthur Wood**

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