

MARTIN GROSSWENDT

Musicians and critics have called him, among other things, a national treasure and a rumor in his own time. In fact, a single label can't do justice to Martin Grosswendt's dynamic musical talents. An extraordinary instrumentalist and powerful singer best known as an interpreter of 1920's and 30's blues, his mastery of numerous regional styles on guitar, mandolin, five-string banjo, and fiddle make his concerts events that audiences don't soon forget. His performances encompass the breadth and depth of Southern roots music, from classic Delta and East Coast blues to early country music to Creole and Cajun music. His love for a good song also moves him to perform material from such modern songwriters such as Townes Van Zandt, Bobby Charles and Richard Thompson.

Martin's music runs deeper than his impressive technical skills; his performances convey a depth of feeling that seems to channel musicians and times long past. His passion for the music is reflected in his encyclopedic knowledge of the history of the times and the musicians that gave it birth; his ability to communicate their stories engages listeners of all ages. It's no wonder that many informed listeners consider him one of America's great natural musical resources.

Add to all this a wry, sometimes quirky sense of humor and a quick smile, and you have an impressive performer who both entertains and moves audiences deeply. Audience members leave his performances impressed by Martin's deep love and respect for the music, the people who created it and the listeners who take the journey with him.

Martin began his musical career in the early 1970's as a session player at the original Philo Records in Vermont, recording and performing with musicians including U Utah Phillips, Jim Ringer, Mary McCaslin, and Rosalie Sorrells. At the same time, he pursued his passion for pre-war blues and created a solo career playing the music of legendary bluesmen such as Charley Patton, Blind Blake, Robert Johnson and Blind Willie McTell. His first recording, *Dog on a Dance Floor*, was released by Philo in 1979.

As a solo artist, Martin has shared the stage with legendary performers including Jesse Winchester, Dave Van Ronk, Tom Rush, Sonny Terry and Brownie Magee, Sam and Dave, Taj Mahal, Paul Geremia, Mike Dowling, NRBQ, Henny Youngman, and many others.

A gifted and passionate teacher, Martin enjoys a lively schedule with private students, both in person and via Skype. He teaches bottleneck, flat-picking and finger-style guitar, mandolin, old-time banjo and Cajun fiddle and accordion. For more than a decade he has been on the core teaching staff at music camps

including WUMB's Summer Acoustic Music Week in New Hampshire, Guitar Intensives in Maine, and Banjo Camp North and Mandolin Camp North in Massachusetts. In July, 2014 he was honored to teach at the Port Townsend Acoustic Blues Workshop and Festival in Port Townsend, Washington for the first time.

In addition to his teaching and solo work, Martin performs frequently as a duo with the remarkable singer Susanne Salem-Schatz. A devotee of older country music and Western Swing, he plays Telecaster and sings with Salem-Schatz in the Boston-based band Honky Tonk Masquerade. He also plays bass (and occasionally fiddle, guitar, and accordion) with the popular Cajun dance band Magnolia, and plays guitar and sings with the Rhode Island Bluegrass super group the Pegheads. Sunday evenings usually find him at the Skellig in Waltham, Massachusetts, playing rhythm guitar with ace fiddler Alan Kaufman, helping to lead the Boston area's longest-running old time music jam.

In recent years Martin has released two CDs, *Call and Response* and *Payday!*, which feature country blues classics, more contemporary, roots-oriented material and original compositions. His 1979 LP, *Dog on a Dance Floor*, is still available on vinyl.

Please visit his website at www.martingrosswendt.com