

### Kelly Joe Phelps - Tap the Red Cane Whirlwind

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes \(unavailable\)](#)



Released in 2004, this album gives a unique glimpse into the creative spontaneity of Kelly Joe. Being that this is a live show it offers great insight into Kelly Joe's playing style, his off the cuff improvisation, as well as his unique treatment of each song. Be sure to check out the song *Cardboard Box of Batteries*.

### JD Crowe & the New South - Self Titled

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



So this is what happens when you take the bluegrass hot shots of the time and blend them all together. On this album JD Crowe, Jerry Douglas, Ricky Skaggs, and Tony Rice all combine to make, in my opinion, one of the most significant albums in acoustic history. The stand out tracks on this one are *Old Home Place*, *Summer Wages*, and *Rock, Salt, and Nails*.

### Bob Dylan - Self Titled

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)

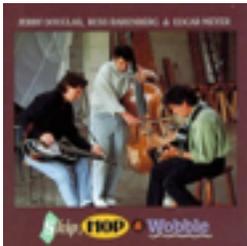


Not sure what else to say about this album other than to hear a songwriter of this caliber on his first effort is like taking a trip back in time. You can hear how young and eager his voice is and it features some incredible cuts such as *In My Time Of Dying* and *See That My Grave Is Kept Clean*. An absolute must listen!

### Jerry Douglas, Russ Barenberg, Edgar Meyer - Skip, Hop & Wobble

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



If you haven't heard Russ Barenberg play at all you are missing out, an incredibly melodic player, with impeccable tone. On this album Mr. Barenberg happens to be flanked by none other than Edgar Meyer and Jerry Douglas... Quite the acoustic trio I must say!!! A real treat for tone maniacs out there!!!

## Mississippi John Hurt - Avalon Blues: The Complete 1928 Okeh Recordings

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)

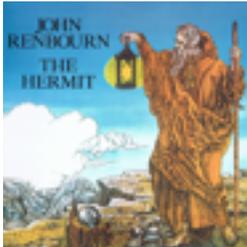


Pure fingerpicking delight with the wonderful smooth vocals that Mississippi John Hurt was known for. This album just oozes vibe; you can almost smell the whiskey and cigarettes in the studio while John Hurt recorded this. No overdubs here folks... purity in every sense of the word.

## John Renbourn - The Hermit

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)

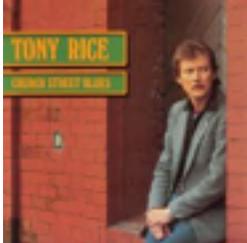


Melodic, melodic, melodic... an album containing some of the most intricately crafted guitar songs. Incredible style and technique employed here and wonderful tone... I highly recommend listening to this one with headphones. It is like a master class in musical phrasing.

## Tony Rice - Church Street Blues

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)

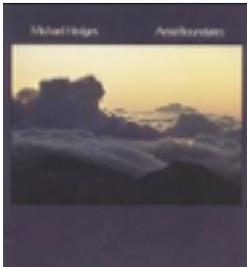


Containing songs like *Last Thing On My Mind* and *One More Night* This is basically an album of ear candy... classic tunes played on a prewar D28... hmm does it get any better? Yep, it sure does, Tony Rice is the one playing and he pretty much wears all of these songs out.

## Michael Hedges - Aerial Boundaries

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



Released on the Windham Hill label in 1984, this Hedges album is like opening the door into a whole new world... and style. His percussive techniques and unique tunings are all on display here. This album is a bit off the beaten path, but well worth the journey.

### The Infamous Stringdusters - Fork in the Road

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



A modern bluegrass album from the “new generation” of bluegrass. These guys exhibit incredible musicianship and from the dobro to the banjo on over to the guitar the tone and feel are spot on. Before you know it you will be hitting repeat on this one. If you only plan on checking out one track I highly recommend *Moon Man*.

### Bryan Sutton - Not Too Far From the Tree

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



A collection of the most formidable flatpickers around. This album is essentially a smattering of some of the best players, playing some of the most iconic instruments. With the likes of Bryan Sutton, Doc Watson, Dan Crary, Norman Blake, among others. This is a whirlwind tour of the flatpicking style.

### John Fahey - The Legend of Blind Joe Death

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)

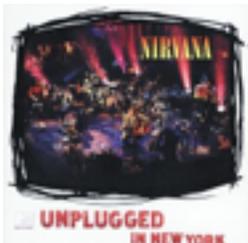


Primitive blues at it's best here. This is another one that I highly recommend listening to with headphones; some of the subtle nuances Mr. Fahey has in his playing style are like little hidden treasures when you hear them... and under headphones they are even more noticeable.

### Nirvana - Unplugged in New York

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



I felt it necessary to add this album to the list, this is one of the records that got me into acoustic guitar, as I am sure it did many people. Not only did this album act as a liaison for the acoustic, it also happened to be a very raw look into one of the most influential bands of the 90's. This one is very easy to enjoy front to back.

### **Gillian Welch - Soul Journey**

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



Between Gillian's voice, David Rawlings' guitar playing, and the songwriting prowess that they both have; this collection of tunes seems to end all too quickly. Mellow is the mood conveyed here and they do it well with plenty of vocal harmony to go around.

### **Keith Whitley and Ricky Skaggs - Second generation**

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



Vocal harmonies done to perfection. This is a classic album that has a traditional bluegrass sweetness about it. Between the playing, singing, and song choice this album is a complete package.

### **David Grisman, Jerry Garcia, and Tony Rice - The Pizza Tapes**

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



A candid look into the studio while these three acoustic icons record some of their favorite tunes. The contrasting tones of the three make for a very full sound and an interesting look at how the two guitar players exhibit nearly polar opposite, but complimentary, styles.

### **Ry Cooder - Paris, Texas Soundtrack**

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



The subtleties of this soundtrack essentially grab you by the ear and say, "Listen to me!!!" I was floored when I first heard this, the dynamic swells and overall vibe of this album are ethereal and seemingly from another world. This is surely a late night listening experience.

### Leo Kottke - 6 and 12 String Guitar

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



No album has every reached out and punched me in the face, but if this one had arms I would have two black eyes and quite possibly a concussion. The sheer acoustic guitar power exhibited on this album is undeniable. Make sure to wear a mouthguard and headgear when stepping into the ring with this album... it is an acoustic heavyweight.

### Chris Thile & Michael Daves - Sleep With One Eye Open

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)

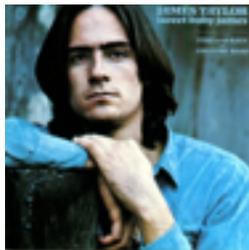


Mandolin virtuoso and flatpicker extraordinaire get together to do a duet album and the result is a true acoustic gift. They play through some classic tunes and Michael Daves sings his lungs out. From slow ballad to bluegrass hot picking, this one is sure to please.

### James Taylor - Sweet Baby James

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)

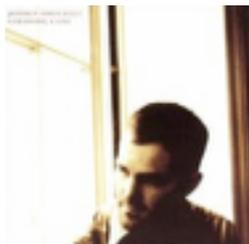


Signature guitar licks, unreal songwriting, and a classic voice; an album perfect for a Saturday morning. It is imperative that this one is listened to front to back and inside and out. Pour yourself a nice tall cup of coffee and kick back to this masterpiece.

### Jeffrey Foucalt - Stripping Cane

[Buy on Amazon](#)

[Buy on iTunes](#)



A unique voice, and a true songwriting talent. Jeffrey writes songs that have this incredible visual element to them and matches them with fitting guitar playing... never too much... never too little... always just right. A must have album for any acoustic songwriter enthusiast.