

Mp3 Joel Rafael Band - Folk: Modern Folk



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A blend of traditional and contemporary folk music with original songwriting and a world beat. Folk Music for the 21st Century. 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, FOLK: Gentle Details: The 1995 winner of the Kerrville Folk Festival 'New Folk Emerging Songwriter' award, Joel Rafael and his band make folk music for the 21st century. Considered to be San Diego's premier acoustic band, they have successfully blended contemporary folk music with heartfelt songwriting and a world beat. With Rafael's daughter, Jamaica, on violin and viola, Carl Johnson on acoustic lead guitar, and Jeff Berkley on ethno-percussion, the band's collective musical energy builds bridges across generations. Rafael was born in Chicago, Ill., and raised in the San Gabriel Valley suburbs of Los Angeles. He was exposed to and loved music from the time he was a child, but it was the folk music of the early 60s that began to stir his interest in writing as he studied the writing and performing styles of Woody Guthrie, The Limelighters, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Ian and Sylvia, Ramblin' Jack Elliott and dozens of others. Disillusioned by the Vietnam War and his impending draft, Rafael moved to the Northwest in the late 60s. He continued to write and perform, but the folk scene was giving way to the pop music wave, and venues for acoustic performers soon became few and far between. In 1970, Rafael and his wife Lauren moved to the western Cascades and lived in a small cabin along a river in the rainy northwest woods. As the increasingly unpopular war wound down and the draft ended, the Rafaels returned to California, settling in the rural foothills of North San Diego County. There, while raising a family, Rafael continued to chronicle his life and times in song. During the 70s, 80s and early 90s, Rafael performed around southern California in various groups including as a duo with Rosie Flores. As a solo performer and with his band, he opened shows throughout the southwestern United States for artists including Crosby, Stills and Nash, Sheryl Crow, Laura Nyro, Taj Mahal, Iris Dement, Emmylou Harris and the legendary John Lee Hooker. In 1994, the

Joel Rafael Band, in their current form, released their first, eponymous CD on Rafael's own Reluctant Angel Records. The album won the San Diego CCMA award that year. In 1996, the band released a second CD, Old Wood Barn, which was an 'Americana Hot Pick' in GAVIN. Their third and newest release, Hopper, is the most compelling and evolved offering from the Joel Rafael Band to date. Produced by Joel Rafael with the help of Dan Rothchild (Better than Ezra, The Lost Butterfield Tapes), who also played bass, and Paul Dieter (After the Storm - CSN, Live at the Wiltern - CPR, I'm Alive, Looking East - Jackson Browne, Blue Indians - John Trudell), who engineered and mixed the recording, Hopper is being released on Inside Recordings, an independent record label that Jackson Browne started in 1999. The album is distributed through E-squared, Steve Earle's record label, and RED. Based on the earthy and honest style of the 60s folk movement, but full of relevance for the 21st century, Rafael's songs are both unique and familiar; familiar because they are authentic, and unique because they speak to us about our lives - here and now. What sets him apart from many others is his frequent inclusion of extended family - for his grandparents, parents, wife, children and friends are often the characters that populate his ballads, and he serves up a slice of true Americana in every song. Rafael's songs evoke the inspiration, the hope and the greater realization that there is more to life than what is readily apparent.

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