

Mp3 Joel Fafard - Farmer's Tan



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"Fafard has begun to set himself apart from the legions of folksy Prairie singer-songwriters with the sort of instrumental prowess you'd expect from a fingerstyle deity" Bartly Kives Winnipeg Free Press 10 MP3 Songs FOLK: Power-folk, WORLD: World Fusion Details: Joel Fafard is that rare breed of instrumentalist: the kind whose appeal reaches far beyond the realm of serious guitar enthusiasts. The gifted slide fingerstyle player writes stirring, melodic compositions that paint pictures as vivid as any song with words. He introduces them on-stage with hilarious commentary delivered in a "hillbilly farm-boy" stage persona that quickly wins his audience over. And when he sinks his chops into a number like "Face Down in the Rhubarb," well, let's just say the serious guitar enthusiasts aren't disappointed either. Fafard's new CD and another thing is his second collection of moving and atmospheric instrumentals that draw on roots, blues, country, bluegrass and even Celtic inspiration. Among the highlights is the lovely, expansive "Mesquite Morning," the moody, Celtic-tinged "Megan and the Wascana Cyclone" and the instantly hummable title track. The arrangements, featuring Richard Moody on viola and Gilles Fournier on bass, have drawn comparisons to early Zubot and Dawson, while the overall feel of the work has been described as "simple," "earthy," and "expressive." Eight of the eleven tunes are reprised as solo guitar pieces for the CD's bonus tracks. Many of Fafard's tunes have cryptic titles that figure heavily into his live show. Not content to simply show off his wizardry, Fafard proves himself the consummate entertainer, setting up the pieces with short stories that indicate the source of the title. "It's not that men aren't romantic," mutters Fafard, playing something of a redneck caricature of himself, "it's just that we are romantic about all the wrong things. like hockey and trucks and barbeque." A few songs later, he intros "Mesquite Morning" by concluding that, seeing as he's such a romantic guy, it stands to reason that he'd write a love song to "a big hunk of red meat." Joel Fafard grew up in Pense, Saskatchewan in an artistic

but not musical family. He picked up the guitar at 15 and took a few lessons from celebrated prairie musician, Jack Semple. He went on to study for two years at the well-respected Capilano College music program in North Vancouver, but ultimately left over "artistic differences." He is mostly self-taught and counts Bruce Cockburn as the biggest inspiration behind his current style. Fafard first established himself in the mid 90s as a folk/roots singer-songwriter, releasing three albums and earning critical praise for the maturity of his writing. He toured coffee houses around western Canada and did a brief stint with Scruj MacDuhk, the predecessor of the Juno Award-winning Duhks. He appears on their debut recording, *Live at the West End Cultural Centre*. In 2001, Fafard released the roots/rock *Head Smashed In*, his third solo CD, and took a shot at touring the bar scene. Despite positive feedback though, he wasn't happy. He was just about to hang up the guitar once and for all when he decided to try the one thing he never dreamed he could actually make a career of: being an instrumentalist. Three years ago, Fafard traded in the roots rock circuit for the life of an instrumental headliner, and it's been all up hill from there! His debut instrumental CD, *Rocking Horse*, was nominated for a Western Canadian Music Award for Outstanding Instrumental Recording. The Follow up CD and ...and another thing received the award for Outstanding Instrumental Recording at the WCMA's in 2006. CBC Radio picked a track as the theme music for *Between the Covers*. "Megan and the Wascana Cyclone" was featured on Mel Bay's *Master's Anthology for Finger-Style Guitar Solos Vol. 3*. "Voodoo Hoodoo" appears on the latest volume of *Six Strings North of the Border* from the Borealis Recording Company. Fafard has performed at major festivals across Canada, toured Germany, Switzerland and New Zealand, opened for Joe Cocker and Burton Cummings and played with members of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. The Winnipeg Free Press says of him that he plays "with the sort of instrumental prowess you'd expect from a fingerstyle deity." Most recently, Fafard played to sold out houses in Alberta and Saskatchewan as part of the Wheatstock! tour, a double bill with fellow Saskatchewan artist, Eileen Laverty. He is currently scoring the second season of SCN TV series "Middle of Somewhere" with Jason Plumb of the Walton's. Fafard's songs "Night Crossing" will be heard this fall on CTV's "Alice, I think." and "Alice in Grenfell" in PBS's "Road Trip Nation" The number of successful Canadian roots instrumentalists can probably be counted on one hand, but Joel Fafard is living proof of the old saying that if you do what you love, success will follow. Discography ...and another thing (2006) Outstanding Instrumental Recording, WCMA's *Rocking Horse* (2003) Nominated Outstanding Instrumental Recording, WCMA's *Head Smashed In* (2001) *Farmer's Tan* (1999) *Scruj*

MacDuhk Live (1997) Fierce Warmth (1996)

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