

## Mp3 Sol Dillingham - Guitar Voices



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Fingerstyle solo acoustic guitar, relaxing, yet stimulating, with emotional colors, reminds listeners of Leo Kottke and Windham Hill artists. 14 MP3 Songs EASY LISTENING: Mood Music, FOLK: Gentle Details: As a Fingerstyle guitarist, my aim is to transmit some image or emotional color using the guitar strings alone. Influences include everyone from Dan Fogelberg, Bruce Cockburn, Windham Hill artists and mostly Leo Kottke. I learned my craft taking classical guitar lessons at Indiana University. Combining the technical with the inspirational is what creates these solos. I suppose a good place to start my path towards the guitar would be the cafeteria at Lawrence North High School in Indianapolis. The year was 1978, give or take a year, and I can still remember walking into a quiet room, fresh off the morning bus ride. I saw a guy with a guitar on his lap. As I walked toward him he strummed a big fat major chord, ... I froze... it sent chills through my body. I know at that very moment that I wanted to investigate this new sound. It may sound overly dramatic, but I remember it like it was yesterday. I felt absolutely penetrated and mesmerized by the sound waves as they washed over through me, I'll never forget that moment. In those days I played clarinet, sang in the choir and marched in the marching band, and after that morning in the school cafeteria I added guitar lessons once a week. Almost immediately I found I had a strong desire to pick the individual strings instead of strumming. Songs like Stairway to Heaven by Led Zeppelin and especially Dust in the Wind by Kansas, really started me in the direction I wanted to go. I started pouring through Cat Stevens and especially a Dan Fogelberg song book, playing them all using a traverse pick or variation. If I was picking, I was happy. Soon I started creating my own songs, drawing inspiration from another acoustic soloist, George Winston and my all-time favorite, Leo Kottke. Among my first creations is the song Indiana Skies which was recorded in LA using a cheap plastic microphone. This first collection of songs was recorded in 1985 out of a desire to not forget what I had been playing on a

daily basis. Most were instrumental songs with some vocals. I felt no delusions of grandeur, just a common sense voice in my head that said, "If you don't record them, you will forget them.". I took classical guitar lessons at Indiana University in 1985 through a private teacher, Sulimen Zai. I remember sitting down at my first lesson trying to impress the teacher with one of my songs. He was not too impressed. He pointed out how my technique, or finger positions, were all wrong. Still though, he said there was some talent and potential. I had survived my first classical guitar lesson at Indiana University! I went into the lesson feeling intimidated by the schools' reputation and came out realizing that hard work alone could keep me coming back week after week. If I hadn't practiced enough he could always tell, so the pressure was on. My finger speed, tone quality and efficiency all improved quite a bit, but beyond just playing the notes, a new challenge emerged... learning how to really express a song. No biography would be complete without mentioning Leo Kottke. For those of you who are unfamiliar with his music, he is the best I've ever heard. As a fingerstyle guitarist who is first and foremost an instrumental soloist, his music defies classification. A friend put on one of his albums back in the 1980's, when the song White Ape came on I felt totally emotionally moved. I never had felt such a connection with an instrumental song, but I can remember both a feeling of being touched emotionally and a feeling of awe that one guitarist could be playing all those notes at once. Leo's influence comes through his songs like Slightly Exaggerated, Saturation Saturday, Bustin' Out and Full of Melody. Leo is truly the Captain Kirk of the acoustic soloist, he has gone where no man has gone before, in my opinion. To be continued...

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