

Mp3 Kendall James - Blacktop Dog



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Songs of love, sin, suffering, death, and redemption 10 MP3 Songs FOLK: Power-folk, BLUES: Acoustic Blues Details: Kendall James Guitar Biography When I look back at my life at all the joy, sorrow, and tumultuous change Ive experienced, one thing stands out as a constant the familiar comfort of a guitar in my hands. It seems to me to be a perfect way to organize the chronology of my life, and career. 1961 Roy Rogers Plastic When I was born in Dexter, Maine I had a guitar waiting for me. It was only a toy, and my stubby baby-fingers held me back a little, but I did a lot of picking with Dad on it, and used it for balance while learning to walk. 1965 Dads Harmony Flat-top It had 1/4 inch action and poor intonation, but I played it for hours. Dad told me I could have a real guitar of my own if I could play Tom Dooley fingerstyle. I picked along with The Kingston Trio until my fingers bled. To this day, when Im noodling absent-mindedly, I find myself singing, Po Boy, youre bound to die. 1969 Silvertone Archtop Sunburst My first real guitar. This is the one that I really got serious on, I learned all the licks from Dads Chet Atkins, and Johnny Cash records, and first fell in love with the blues. 1972 Fender Mustang When I opened the case Christmas morning, I was so overwhelmed I burst into tears. It was cherry-red with white racing stripes, and I played it through a Fender Vibro-Champ amp. After Christmas dinner, I disappeared into my room with my record collection, and only came out begrudgingly for meals and school for the next eight years. 1976 Fender Stratocaster Dad traded my Mustang in on the Strat. I played dozens of Jay Chattaway pieces on it in my high school stage band. I got my first paying gig, in a local wedding band The Rod Palmer Orchestra. We did standards, country, rock and jazz. Rod is an institution in my hometown. Many of his alumni have gone on to careers in music. I also started my first rock band The Hughie Dewes Blues Band, with my friends Dave Holden, and Mark Ivey. We covered Aerosmith, Grand Funk, The Eagles, and the Commodores. Id give anything for a video of us in our heyday three skinny

white kids, trying to sound so bad. Both of them have since become men of the cloth. Mark is a traveling evangelist, and Dave is a minister. Im still waiting for the call.

1980 Gibson FlyingV Following a disastrous six-week college experience, and a terrifying phone-audition, I flew to Florida to join Free Fare a non-profit, O-town-like organization that sent bands around the country, playing high school assemblies. We did three daytime shows, sometimes in three different locations, and a full-length concert each night. It was grueling, but very educational. They were sponsored by Gibson guitars, and that year marks the only time Ive strayed from the Fender fold.

1981 Fender Telecaster Custom After I came back home, we formed Fast Eddie and proceeded to play every bar, bottle club, and frat party in Maine. We literally played behind chicken-wire, fought our way out of clubs after gigs, got stiffed by football players at Sigma Nu, and had our lead singer get vomited on twice in one night.

1984 Fender Acoustic Following a couple of years of scuffling around with Fast Eddie, and with a beautiful new daughter Duska, in my life I decided to settle down, give up music, and join the Air Force. Everyone thought I was kidding, but I spent New Years Eve of 84 in basic training. After the first two weeks of screaming at us, we earned the privilege of spending a little time at the recreation center. It had a music room with instruments you could sign out. I chose a cheap Fender flat-top from the shelf, went into a sound-proof practice room, and played the blues and cried my eyes out for an hour.

1985 Fender 57 reissue My resolve to quit the music biz, lasted about a year, until I entered a base talent contest with a borrowed guitar, and won. I then found myself in the audition process for Tops In Blue the Air Forces version of Up With People. We did a series of elimination contests eventually leading up to the Air Force World Wide Talent Show. I placed 2nd as an instrumental soloist, (behind an accordion player!) placed 1st as a self-accompanied vocalist, and played in the pit band. We played Whitney Houstons Saving All My Love For You, behind twenty-three female singers in one night. I bought the 57R in a music shop outside the SAC base in Minot, North Dakota.

1987 Alvarez Yairi DY 44 I bought my beautiful cedar-topped Yairi as a celebration of surviving four years in the Air Force. I settled in Utah, became a carpenter, and began to really focus on songwriting. Ive written almost all of my songs on that guitar, Ive pawned it dozens of times through the hard years, and once watched in horror as Audrey my girlfriend at the time, accidentally ran completely over it with her pickup. I patched it up, and still play it today, almost twenty years later. In Utah, I formed Big Leg, providing me with an outlet for my new crop of songs. We backed up the amazing Salt Lake City singer Megan Peters, and had a run at the big time opening for acts including John Mayall, and headlining all the major clubs in the area. We

had fantastic early success, and attention earning Meg a record deal on her own, and then flamed out in full Icarus style. I left the band, and with the encouragement of my friend and songwriting mentor Pat Pattison, moved to Nashville, where I figured it would only be a short time before I had songs all over the radio dial. 1993 Fender Custom Shop Stratocaster It turns out that I had seriously over-estimated my odds of success in Music City. I learned a lot about songwriting, and the business of songwriting all of it the hard way. I built houses, baked at Fido, and got rejected up and down Music Row. After six years of struggle and ego butt-kicking, I sold my beautiful custom Strat for bus fare, and depressed and disillusioned ran back home to Maine to lick my wounds and figure out what to do with myself. 2003 Fender Mexican Stratocaster After a year of fly-fishing and soul-searching, I came up with a plan to do this on my own terms to write, record, perform, and market my music myself. I moved to Bridgeport, CT working as a carpenter for the insanely rich for two years, and saved up the money for all the things I would need to reach that goal. One of the first things I bought was this old, beat-up Mexican Strat, that spoke to me from the window of a music store. Weve got a lot in common weve been around, gotten beat-up pretty good, scratched and abused, but we both have still got the fire, and are still capable of that funky sound. 2004 Taylor 712 CE As much as I love my old Alvarez, I knew I would need a new, reliable, electronically advanced guitar as my main axe. I chose the Taylor, marking a real commitment, personally and financially, to my new goals. Its a beautiful instrument. I recorded my CD with it, and its the guitar youll hear if you come see me live. Late at night though, after a gig Ill pull out the Yairi just for balance, as I learn to walk this new path. 2006 Marting LXM I bought the Mini-Martin to take with me to the Kerrville Folk Festival this year, where I was a New Folk finalist. It's a great little campfire guitar!

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