Mp3 Ukulele Man - Crazy Old World



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A cross between Cab Calloway, Ukulele Ike, Abbie Hoffman, and a mild-mannered Captain Beefheart; if the Pogues were a Cajun band that hung out with Robert Fripp, they might sound a bit like the Ukulele Man his Prodigal Sons. 15 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, FOLK: Angry Details: My Mystical History with the Ukulele The Early Years I used to be smaller - like when I was born in 1944. Even then, I was bigger than a ukulele (maybe not as sweet). Any way, as I kept getting bigger, at least my Mom thought I was sweet; so, in 9th grade Dad took me to "Uncle Somebody's" pawn shop and bought me a cheap baritone uke. The man said it was "just right" for me (maybe it was my glasses). As you can probably tell, I never got any "formal training." So, graaaadually, I became - by my college years - what the musically impaired call "pretty good" - playing zany and profound three-chord "folk-revival" ditties (three-chord punk hadn't been invented yet). The hope was to be "good" enough to impress the girls on "Spring Break"!! But fate intervened. On our first night in Ft. Lauderdale, while exiting a blatantly orange-tinted hamburger establishment, we were - without provocation (other than Mac's "Beatle" haircut) - attacked by local toughs!! Needless to say, their beer bottles were no match for my ukulele (I'd taken "Fencing 101" freshman year), but it was a bittersweet victory, all-the-same. The uke was a mangled tangle of shellac, splinters, and string. Refusing all efforts toward resuscitation, it never spoke again and was buried at sea. I like to think of it as sailing on through the warm Caribbean, a moss-draped ghost uke, in search of Arthur Godfrey. Thus began the dark period of my life, ukeless and forced back upon the second-hand "Gene Autry" guitar I had bought from my friend Ham for \$35.00. The Middle Years "middle age" the stars aligned, compelling a colleague to sell me his Kay soprano ukulele (\$5.00). Obviously neglected, the uke came out of the closet, demanded attention, inhabited my hands, colonized

my mind! Time had flown - Gene Autry was dead - folk and punk had had their day, and it was time to build a bridge to the 21st Century!! The uke and the Ukulele Man were just the ones to do it!! In a frenzy we started - the uke, the muse, and I. The rest is history. Influences: Dad, Big Billy Goat Gruff, Mom, Horton, "Hippity Hop Bunny," Captain Video, Howdy Doody, Pinky Lee, Captain Kangaroo, Scrooge McDuck, Sister Ann Mary, Alfred E. Newman, Mark Twain, Li'l Abner, Tarzan, Uncle Vern, Turok Son of Stone, Aunt Sis, Laurel Hardy, Hank, Sally Flowers, Soupy Sales, The Kingston Trio, The Mouseketeers, Pete Seeger, Little Richard, Ed Sullivan, Elvis, Sherlock Holmes, Chuck Berry, the Plymouth, Honorable Ball Peen Man, Woody Guthrie, Edgar Rice Burroughs, the Beatles, Edgar Allen Poe, Dylan, "Brown Eyed Girl," Inherit The Wind, Herman's Hermits, Herman Melville, the DeSoto, the Temple of Psychic Prophecy, The Monkees, the "Jones-Lawrence Memorial Award," Don Quixote, Indian Ike, Twilight Zone, MLK, "The Conqueror Worm," Star Trek, Malcolm X, Robert Frost, Dr. Strangelove, Venice, The Rolling Stones, Fellini, "Ozymandias," Don McLean, Edvard Munch, Animal Farm, Al Crapp, the TR3, Emily Dickinson, Kung Fu, T.S. Elliot, The Crucible, e.e. cummings, Leaves of Grass, Jung, Steven Crane, the Bug, Joe Cocker, Brave New World, Carlos Castenada, "Eldorado," Bob George, New Orleans, Pee-Wee's Playhouse, Kenny Sparky Mona and Ray, John Lennon, Caf Du Monde, San Francisco, "The X-Files," Waiting for Godot, Oscar Wilde, the Redwoods, The Simpsons, Manhattan, the Eldorado. Where I've Been Where I Am Hey Folks, I was a good boy. I was a Boy Scout, for god's sake - an Eagle Scout!!! I loved nature, America, and service to my community, state, and nation. I said the pledge every day at school, saluted the flag, went to church on Sunday, received First Communion, celebrated the July 4 revolution (learned how to "grill"), read "Dear Abbey," heard Paul Harvey, mowed the grass, got good grades, went to college, voted, sang the national anthem and the alma mater at every football game, got a job, got married, had children, put my nose to the grindstone. Sharing this with me were Joe McCarthy, the civil rights movement, assassinations, Viet Nam, Richard Nixon, John Lennon (assassination), and oh, yeah - Ronnie and George the First. At some point I woke up. Maybe it was because I learned enough to see through Paul Harvey (later Rush), and tired of Abbey's telling idiots the obvious. Maybe it was recognizing that a "caring" organization like the Scouts could hate homosexuals and atheists. Maybe it was that "good grass," good burgers, good grades, and good boys seemed over-rated. Maybe it was the hypocrisy of the church hierarchy, or the obvious reality that "communion" at the altar didn't correlate with communion in other ways (whether Catholic or Protestant - I tried both). Maybe it was that the state

legislature ordered me to lead the Pledge every day (something I had already been doing), or that the same politicians ordered me to teach how wonderful they were (something I hadn't been doing). Maybe it was because I got tired of hearing hours and hours and hours and hours of talk - personally and in the media - about "Sports!" - but almost no discussion of reality - just fricking sports! Maybe it was the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Maybe it was because when I tried to join the air force, I was declared legally blind, but the army tried to draft me anyway. Maybe it was because I was told in the 60's that if we lost in Viet Nam, Communists hordes would stream into the US through Mexico (I'm still waiting - dominoes set up on the table). Maybe it was because businessmen in the 60's and 70's said, "America, love it or leave it," and at some point they started taking their own advice. Maybe it was because Ronnie loved the unions in Poland and busted the unions here. Maybe it was because they wounded Reagan and killed Lennon. Maybe it was because the FBI screwed Leonard Peltier. Maybe it was because Mumia Abu-Jamal was railroaded in Philadelphia. Maybe it was because I read "A People's History of the United States" by Howard Zinn. Maybe it was because reactionary interests have so efficiently and effectively crushed the American spirit I was taught and loved as a child. Or maybe it's just because I got cable. In any case, folks, I'm awake now!! You can count on that! Take the red pill, Ukulele Man

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