

Mp3 Fritz & The Freeloaders - Street Music, Vol. 1



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Acoustic alt-country, pop, and folk. 6 MP3 Songs ROCK: Acoustic, POP: Quirky Details: Fritz the Freeloaders are a front for singer/songwriter Gary McKinney (acoustic guitars, piano, accordion, and vocals). The band is based in Bellingham, Washington, USA, and was originally conceived as a bookstore performance vehicle to promote events sponsored by Kearney Street Books (Books that Rock). Gary is managing editor of Kearney Street Books--which publishes books written by or about music and musicians--as well as the author of the novel "If You Want to Get to Heaven", a wild romp across the country with an early-70's rock band. Gary himself has played in bands since high school, studied classical and jazz composition, and earned two degrees in creative writing. Thus when it came to promoting his novel, he found it hard to imagine doing so without music, or without a band, so he enlisted the help of Dave Engebretson (bass), who he had met when teaching a college course combining music and geology. Like Gary, Dave has been in bands since high school, and has a particular fondness for Northwest favorites from the 1960s. (Note that the album contains "Boss Hoss", a fabulous cover of the Sonics' classic hot rod tribute.) He and Dave had so much fun playing both Gary's original songs and an eclectic variety of covers in an acoustic format that they decided to keep going, taking their name from Dave's guide dog and band mascot, the ever-lovable yellow lab, Fritz. Next on board was drummer/percussionist Stephanie Straight. Steph was a perfect fit for an acoustic format as she is a highly respected jazz drummer who also plays in the Whatcom Symphony Orchestra and with a Greek folk music ensemble called the Makedonians. With her widely varied musical background, she brings bright ideas and a lovely touch to the Freeloaders' acoustic street music. After playing for a year on the streets of Bellingham, at Farmer's Markets, tiny pubs, parks and coffee houses, Fritz the Freeloaders recorded "Acoustic Street Music, Vol. 1", an EP/CD of six tunes, three of Gary's originals and three

covers, including Green Day's "Basketcase" done with a country backbeat and sizzling piano solo. The band will be returning to the studio soon, to record Vol. 2 of their quirky vision of acoustic rock.

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