

Preston Reed

“A groundbreaking guitarist.” - Acoustic Guitar Magazine, January/February 1996

Preston Reed is a guitarist of many parts - so many parts that when he brings them all into play, first-time listeners often find it impossible to believe that they're hearing just the one musician, in real time.

At full tilt, Reed's fingers, thumbs, fists and hands at once suggest a drummer, keyboardist, bassist and several guitarists at work. It's a dizzying, exhilarating phenomenon. A portrait of the acoustic guitar as full-on heavy metal band.

But impressions of rock bands - and high speed trains and dueling, pulling tractors - are only one side of Reed. While acknowledging that somewhere inside him there is a screaming electric guitarist pacing like a caged lion, Reed is also a player of deep sensitivity who can compose and play a blues or a ballad with a touch reminiscent of his great jazz piano-playing hero, Bill Evans.

Reed's entry into this guitar odyssey was inauspicious enough, his path thereafter largely self-discovered. A few chords learned from his guitar playing father, a brief, very brief, flirtation with the ukulele, clandestine practice sessions of his favorite Beatles and Stones songs on dad's guitar and then a too-strict classical guitar teacher led to premature retirement.



At 16, however, Reed heard Jefferson Airplane's rootsy blues offshoot, Hot Tuna. His interest was rekindled big time. Acoustic guitar heroes John Fahey and Leo Kottke were studied, their styles absorbed but not imitated, and at this point things really begin to get interesting because, at 17, Reed, by now precociously proficient, played his first live gig, supporting beat poet Allen Ginsberg at the Smithsonian Institute.

Just getting on a train from his native Armouk in New York state to Washington was a cool adventure. And it was just the first of many, not least of which was the one which resulted from his signing his first deal with a major record company, MCA, through the auspices of his friend, country singer-songwriter Lyle Lovett.

Determined to make the most of this opportunity, Reed pushed himself to go beyond the standard fingerpicking styles he'd perfected. The result was the

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beginnings of the startlingly innovative style, with its percussive, two-handed fretboard attack, that you hear today and which has caused guitar luminaries such as Al DiMeola and the late Michael Hedges to describe Reed as "phenomenal" and "inspiring".



Reed's compositional talents extend to film soundtracks and prestigious commissions for the Minneapolis Guitar Quartet, and as well as appearances alongside Bonnie Raitt and Linda Ronstadt his major performances include an historic live satellite broadcast on Turkish National Television in 1997 with renowned saz player and composer Arif Sag which reached an audience of 120 million in 17 countries, prompting a flood of international telephone

calls to the station from stunned viewers.

Since 1979, he has recorded thirteen albums and three videos and charmed audiences on three continents. He continues to tour with the same hunger and relish that informs his guitar playing and he gives regular workshops where he passes on the techniques he has developed for extending the acoustic guitar's possibilities. The secret, he says, is to relax and let the guitar patterns run by themselves. Which explains how, at full tilt, he may sound like a full-on heavy metal band but he still won't have broken sweat.

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“Fretting with two hands on an acoustic guitar is a chore for most players. But Preston Reed makes it sound as easy as breathing.” - Musician

I want to rave about Preston Reed's 'Metal.' Reed has taken the genre in the most innovative directions, both with technique and with composition. The title track, an acoustic tribute to heavy metal, will drop your jaw. - Playboy Magazine

... phenomenal. - Al Dimeola

[Reed's] two-fisted attack turns the acoustic guitar into an entire rhythm section. - Jazziz

“If I'm a hard core guitar player, Preston Reed is petrified. He's so into it that he has alchemized. I've never seen anyone more precise. He's really inspiring.” - Michael Hedges in

Fingerstyle Guitar interview, March/April 1996

“Reed's propulsive one-man grooves echo Soundgarden and Joni Mitchell. Rich tunings are worked over with body slaps, harmonic tickles, sweet melodies and confident passion.” - James Rotundi, Guitar Player, July 1996

“One of the most unique and challenging acoustic guitar albums ever...Reed's pieces are as visually and emotionally provocative as his technique is dazzling. Both guitar aficionados and casual listeners will find much to enjoy in this creative yet completely accessible work. Find it!” - Hilarie Grey, Jazz Times, June 1996

“Electrifying...an innovative guitarist who, with his resourceful tapping techniques, can make one acoustic guitar sound like a full rock band.” - Jon Bream, Minneapolis Star Tribune, January 12, 1996

Principal Recordings

Handwritten Notes

Outer Bridge, OB1001 (2000)

Ladies Night

Dusty Closet Records, DCD-96002, (1997)

Metal

Outer Bridge, OB1002 (2002), originally released on Dusty Closet Records, DCD-95001, (1995)

Border Towns (out of print)

Liberty 98708, (1993)

Halfway Home (out of print)

Liberty/Capitol Nashville Master Series 95885, (1991)

Blue Vertigo (out of print)

Capitol Nashville Master Series, 94381, (1990)

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(includes Pointing Up and Playing by Ear)
Flying Fish 7011, (1990)

Instrument Landing (out of print)

MCA/Universal Master Series, 7800, (1989)
and Liberty/Capitol Nashville Master Series, 93957 (1990)

The Road Less Traveled

Flying Fish 70423, (1987)

Playing By Ear (out of print)

Flying Fish 324, (1984)

Don't Be a Stranger (out of print)

Folkstudio, (1982) (Released in Italy only)

Pointing Up (out of print)

Flying Fish 244, (1982)

Acoustic Guitar (out of print)

Sky Records, (1979)

Other

Groovemasters, Volume 1

Solid Air Records, (1997), Duet with Laurence Juber

Video

Muriel Anderson's All-Star Guitar Night

HomeSpun Tapes, (2000), Concert video, Compilation

Preston Reed in Concert

Homespun Videos, (1997), Concert video , 60 minute solo performance

Muriel Anderson's All-Star Guitar Night

HomeSpun Tapes, (1996), Concert video, Compilation

Fingerstyle Guitar: New Dimensions & Explorations, Volume 1

Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop, (1995), Concert video, Compilation

The Guitar of Preston Reed: Expanding The Realm Of Acoustic Playing

Homespun Tapes, (1994), Instructional video