

JAIME MICHAELS BIOGRAPHY

The song. Ask Jaime Michaels what's the most important aspect of what he's been doing for the past few decades and that will be his answer. The song. It shows in the craftsmanship of his tunes, in the care that he applies to each choice of a word, each musical phrase. Northeast Public Radio's Wanda Adams Fisher put it this way in a review of Jaime's album *crooked...* "When you hear him sing, you can tell whether he's smiling, yearning, pining, or questioning. He writes and co-writes songs with special meanings, selects songs written by others that also have statements to make. And make them he does--not with an attitude, but with a sense of purpose, a sense of belief that music is as critical to life as breathing itself."

It's been this way from the beginning. There has been music in Jaime's life for as long as he can remember, whether it was church hymns in Latin, his parents playing the old upright piano in his childhood parlor or his favorite Uncle Joe teaching him his first chords. When Joe entered the army, he left an old guitar with Jaime. And when Joe wound up stationed in San Francisco during what's become known as the "great 60's folk music scare", he started to send Jaime albums of folks like the Kingston Trio, Peter, Paul & Mary and Bob Dylan. Jaime absorbed it all. Then, listening to the radio one night as a young teen, he discovered the musician who, to this day, remains his all-time musical hero, Boston folkie Tom Rush. Tom was never a particularly prolific writer but he was and remains a genius at finding songs that speak universally. Jaime listened and learned. And listened some more.

It's been a winding musical path from his first solo gigs in the coffeehouses of Boston and Cambridge to several years as a bass player in the acoustic trio, Beckett, opening shows for Livingston Taylor, Doc Watson, Dave Van Ronk and Jonathan Edwards among others. The 80's found Jaime living in the South Carolina low country, spreading his rock and roll wings as lead singer for cult rockers "the Truly Dangerous Swamp Band". He spent eight years with the Swamp Band, crisscrossing the country playing colleges and bars, learning a whole new musical language, opening shows for rockers like Little Feat, Bonnie Raitt, Delbert McClinton and Paul Barrere's Bluesbusters.

In the early 90's, Jaime tired of the rock and roll road life and returned to his first love, acoustic music, but this time with an edge. In 1997 he moved to the southwest desert town of Santa Fe, NM where, for the first time in his career, he began to seriously write. And write. And write some more. Eight solo albums so far, each filled with finely crafted songs that showcase his passionate voice and the varied musical influences he's absorbed over the years.

Jaime still tours the country playing house concerts and festivals from Texas to Alaska, California to Florida. Italy. England. Just Jaime and his wonderfully worn Taylor guitar. And the songs.

As Mark S. Tucker remarks in his FAME review of Jaime's newest album, the *man with the time machine*, "Michaels watches the side currents of life, not the hurtlingly frantic noise and images...far more the missed opportunities, the mistakes, the wrinkles in the heart. We may be living through the 21st century, but work like his takes us back to a Mayberry that's a lot scruffier around the edges, an indeterminate era when our fantasies about such things danced a little differently."