

DAVID GRISMAN

BIOGRAPHY

CURRENT 2007

For over 40 years, mandolinist/composer David Grisman has been busy creating "dawg" music, a blend of many stylistic influences (including swing, bluegrass, Latin, jazz and gypsy) so unique he gave it its own name. In doing so, David has inspired a whole new genre of acoustic string instrumental music—with style and virtuosity, while creating a unique niche for himself in the world of contemporary music.

Praised for his mastery of the instrument as well as his talents as a composer, bandleader, teacher and record producer by the New York Times, David's role as an acoustic innovator continues to grow. After recording for several major and independent labels, Grisman founded his own company, Acoustic Disc, which he runs from his studio in northern California. After launching the label in 1990, David entered the most prolific period of his distinguished career, producing over 60 critically acclaimed, sonically superior recordings of acoustic music (five of which have been nominated for Grammy Awards).

David discovered the mandolin as a teenager growing up in New Jersey, where he met and became a disciple of mandolinist/folklorist Ralph Rinzler. Despite a warning from his piano teacher that it wasn't a "real" instrument, Grisman learned to play the mandolin in the style of Bill Monroe, the father of bluegrass music. He took it with him to Greenwich Village where he studied English at New York University and became immersed in the proliferating folk music scene of the early 1960s.

In 1963 Grisman made his first recordings as an artist (the Even Dozen Jug Band - Elektra) and producer (Red Allen, Frank Wakefield and the Kentuckians - Folkways). In 1966, Red Allen offered David his first job with an authentic bluegrass band, the Kentuckians. While studying the music of his bluegrass mandolin heroes like Bill Monroe, Jesse McReynolds and Frank Wakefield, Grisman began composing original tunes and playing with other urban bluegrass contemporaries like Peter Rowan and Jerry Garcia, with whom he would later form Old & in the Way.

David's interests spread to jazz in 1967, while playing in the folk-rock ensemble, Earth Opera. A failed attempt at learning to play the alto saxophone turned him into a student of jazz musicianship and theory. In the meantime, his burgeoning career as a session musician gave him experience playing other types of music and opportunities to stretch the boundaries of the mandolin. His discography is filled with notable Artists including Sam Bush, Jerry Garcia, the Grateful Dead, Stephane Grappelli, Emmylou Harris, Chris Isaak, Del McCoury, Dolly Parton, Bonnie Raitt, Linda Ronstadt, Earl Scruggs, Martin Taylor, James Taylor and

Doc Watson. David's unique instrumental style found a home in 1974 when he formed the Great American Music Band with fiddler Richard Greene. "Nothing against singers," said David, "but it became apparent to me that I could play 90 minutes without one. Besides, Elvis never called." Within a year, Greene moved on to join a pop act, and David met guitar wizard Tony Rice, who moved to California where they started rehearsing a new group, the David Grisman Quintet, which also included bassist/ mandolinist Todd Phillips and violinist Darol Anger. The rest is string band history.

For more than 30 years, the DGQ has won numerous polls and awards and has headlined at major jazz, folk and bluegrass festivals around the world. DGQ alumni (including Tony Rice, Mark O'Connor, Mike Marshall and Darol Anger) have gone on to establish successful careers as leaders of acoustic music.

Current DGQ members include bassist Jim Kerwin, flutist Matt Eakle, , percussionist George Marsh., and the newest member, guitarist Frank Vignola

In 1990, David founded the Acoustic Disc label with his friend and manager, Craig Miller, and two other long-standing friends from New York, Artie and Harriet Rose. To date, the label has released over 65 CDs, including seven with Jerry Garcia, all produced or co-produced by Grisman.

David Grisman has always been a pioneer. He has deeply influenced several generations of musicians through his own musical explorations, and with the continuing success of Acoustic Disc has helped make artist-owned independent labels a viable force in the modern music business.