

## John Fullbright from the ground up



# John Fullbright

## *From the Ground Up*

“I have no doubt that in a short time, John Fullbright will be a household name in American music.” — Jimmy Webb

2012–2013 has been a groundbreaking year for John Fullbright, and the Grammy nomination for *From The Ground Up* was just one of many highlights. Since its release in May 2012, Fullbright’s first studio album has garnered high praise from peers and pundits alike, making the young Oklahoman the most talked about young singer/songwriter in music today.

In December, Jimmy Webb presented John with the prestigious ASCAP Harold Adamson Lyric Writing Award, calling John “one of the best writers I have heard in a long, long time.” Earlier in the year, John was invited to sing for the Chuck Berry Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame Tribute. While the rest of the cast strapped on Fender guitars, John played “Downbound Train” on piano as Chuck sat twenty feet away.

Born in Bearden, Oklahoma, Fullbright went to school in nearby Okemah, also the hometown of Woody Guthrie. It was at the annual Woody Guthrie Folk Festival that John first started to make a name for himself in the picking circles on the festival campgrounds. In 2009, John burst upon the southwest music scene with a stellar live album recorded at Oklahoma City’s renowned Blue Door, a venerable Oklahoma venue that Fullbright has used as his home away from home. *Live At The Blue Door* was recorded as a calling card, a way to introduce John at the 2009 Folk Alliance conference. It did that—and more. Without any promotion, the self-produced CD has sold 4,000 copies and continues strong sales today. In 2013, John will headline the Friday night show on the main stage at WoodyFest. Both *Live at the Blue Door* and *From The Ground Up* have set sales records for WoodyFest, making John the most popular artist in the history of the festival.

In *From the Ground Up*, Fullbright traverses an emotional and musical terrain that is extremely broad, showing equal acuity with tender ballads and songs that make you want to drive faster with the windows rolled down. Fullbright’s earliest songwriting heroes, Townes Van Zandt and Mickey Newbury, infuse this record, but so do Jimmy Webb, Randy Newman, and many of Fullbright’s songwriting compatriots from Oklahoma and Texas. Firmly rooted in a variety of musical styles, he draws on what has come before, but without imitation. Forget labels when you listen to John Fullbright. He is not folk, not Americana and not pop, but possibly the best fusion of them all.

Fullbright co-produced the album—the photo on the cover shows him on the front porch of the house where both he and his father grew up—with the owner of 115 Studios in Norman, Okla., Wes Sharon, who also played bass on the album. Fullbright played many of the instruments on the album: all of piano and harmonica, almost all of the organ parts and much of the guitar work. Musicians from the legendary to the infamous lent their talents: Terry “Buffalo” Ware and Andrew Hardin added guitar, while Fats Kaplin played violin and steel guitar. Other musicians on the album are Giovanni Carnuccio III (drums), John Knudson (organ), Jess Klein (background vocals) and Ryan Engleman (guitar).

John Fullbright is a young man who finds love, beauty and pain in the here and now, and skepticism and disdain for those who would take advantage of the dreams of those hoping for a better world. That he can articulate his worldview with an almost otherworldly precocity makes his debut studio album, *From The Ground Up*, worthy of attention. From the fertile ground of Oklahoma, another songwriting legend may be blooming.

## Press Clippings

*John Fullbright: Oklahoma kid hits big time* — The Times of London

*John Fullbright Lays Down His Roots*— American Songwriter

*John Fullbright Takes the Little Record That Could to the Grammys* — CMT Edge

*“Young Master of Unbridled Americana” John Fullbright Receives ASCAP Foundation Lyric Award* — ASCAP Foundation

*John Fullbright a young master of Americana* — The Boston Globe

*John Fullbright: The Man (And Album) Written in Oklahoma* — NPR Weekend Edition

*John Fullbright: Folk-rock straight outta Okemah* — The Los Angeles Times

## Quotes

“It’s well put together. The vocals communicate wisdom and experience... and can be both gruff and tender. The performances convey the idea of the musician as an itinerant, a troubadour moving from town to town, soaking up the true spirit of America and its people. And the songs, whether rockers or ballads, are timeless in the sense that they could have been written at any point in the last 30 years, although super-attuned listeners might be able to discern essence-of-21st-century in the production, even at its least fancy and adorned.”— Paul Lester, *The Guardian*

“Fullbright’s SXSW showcase—the first of eight gigs he has here this week—was as perfect as if it were a Jonathan Demme concert film... Fullbright synthesizes the best songcraft from his home state—Webb, Leon Russell and, by default, Merle Haggard... He’s got a tune called ‘Forgotten Flower[s],’ a thoughtful country lament, that Tom Waits and Randy Newman could fight over.” — Thomas Conner, *Chicago Sun-Times*

“I’ve only heard a few songs, but it’s pretty clear that John Fullbright is one of the most talented young guns out there. Sometimes I think the art of songcraft—using characters, story, language, melody to create something lasting—is a vanishing art, practiced only by old fogies like me. It’s good to see a 21-year-old stepping into this tradition and keeping it fresh and alive.” — Slaid Cleaves

“...an extraordinary collection of surpassing depth and maturity. It’s just voice, guitar, the occasional harmonica and a whole bunch of words, each and every last one perfectly measured and placed.” — David Menconi, *Raleigh News-Observer*

“No one who encounters Fullbright in person is likely to forget songs like ‘Jericho,’ ‘Blameless’ or ‘High Road,’ all of which come close to Mickey Newbury excellence in lyrical brilliance... and close to Guthrie in raspy Okie Dust Bowl plaint.” — William Michael Smith, *Houston Press*

## **Contacts and Press**

Website: <http://www.johnfullbrightmusic.com/>

Press info and high-res photos: <http://www.johnfullbrightmusic.com/press/>

Booking and press contacts: <http://www.johnfullbrightmusic.com/contact/>

## **Management and Promotion:**

Greg Johnson  
Blue Door Music  
2805 N. McKinley  
Oklahoma City, OK 73106

Office Phone: (405) 524-0738  
Mobile: (405) 761-3761  
Email: [bluedoorokc@gmail.com](mailto:bluedoorokc@gmail.com)