



# 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

John Fullbright burst upon the Southwest music scene in 2009 with a stellar live album recorded at the Blue Door, the legendary venue in Oklahoma City. From his home in Okemah, Oklahoma—also the hometown of Woody Guthrie—Fullbright had already honed his

songwriting and playing skills to a degree that he was a favorite at festival campgrounds before he was even out of high school.

Quickly produced as a “calling card” for the 2009 Folk Alliance Conference, *Live at the Blue Door* went on to set sales records at WoodyFest, the annual folk festival honoring Woody Guthrie.

In the intervening years, Fullbright has opened for a host of folk and Americana names—including Jimmy Webb, Joe Ely, Kevin Welch, Michael Fracasso, and Steve Poltz—from Oklahoma to Europe and back.

With the 2012 release of *From The Ground Up*, Fullbright, still in his early twenties, has joined the conversation about the best new artists in music today. 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.

In the Grammy-nominated *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.

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 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: From the Ground Up* — American Songwriter

*The Promising Futures of a Disparate Pair* — The Wall Street Journal

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

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

## Quotes

“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

“There is so much flavor on John Fullbright’s debut, *From the Ground Up*, it could please folks accustomed to anything from soul to folk, to indie pop. It’s not every day a new artist shows up out of the red Oklahoma dirt... and earns comparisons to great songwriters like Townes Van Zandt and Randy Newman, but Fullbright’s music makes sense in such lofty company. His songs toss around themes of god and lust and faith and doubt like they’re all dirty shirts that have been worn for too long. Take ‘Jericho.’ Its gospel organ and dark, slogging rhythm support lyrics about searching for something — be it love or forgiveness, truth or transcendence. Everything here is on even ground — the profound as important as the profane.” — Kim Ruehl, FolkAlley.com

## **Contacts and Press**

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

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