

# Hand Me Down Land

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Wichita Falls, Texas, artist, Steve Bedunah has parlayed his successful performances into a debut album *Hand Me Down Land* that chronicles the land, the cities, and the contemporary characters that inhabit them. Fans kept asking Steve if he had a CD out. Now he does.

At first you may think the album is country or folk, but if you listen closely you will realize it has many musical roots and it may be best described as Americana. Even though Steve uses the physical land as a setting, the real settings are psychological landscapes. They are stories, vignettes, told sometimes with grace, sometimes with pathos, and sometimes with humor.

His characters are country and urban. They face problems in a psychological terrain they don't fully understand. They search for solutions in their own way. Often they don't have the answer, but they try. The characters are real; the solutions imperfect. Steve's songs chronicle the affairs of the human heart, the sufferings of the common people, and their attempts to celebrate life.

The rollicking rhythms of songs like "Rocking Chair Lullaby" and "The Johnstons" add tension to the characters' problems and bring life to their dilemmas. Their stories come alive with the energy of the music. We sing along and sympathize because we know their problems are our problems.

Slower tempos like "I Watch Your Shadow" and "There He Goes (Say a Prayer)" bring a sense of reflection to the lives of these contemporary people. The rhythms of the songs suggest energy about the people who are far from quitting, individuals born of a dogged determination. They haven't given up. They rise to meet their situations as best they can.

Steve's visions of the land and people started from memories of his grandparent's farm in East Texas. It was the pine trees, the cotton fields, the dog trot cabins still in existence, but most of all it was the people, the vividness of their character that caught his attention. Steve inherited his story telling ability from his grandfather's Mark Twain sense of humor and keen insight into motivations of the human heart. "When I was a kid we'd spend the mornings getting lost in the pine thickets or stomping through the spring-fed creek behind the farm house," remembers Steve, "but my favorite part of the day was at the dinner table where my grandfather would tell stories about the different people he encountered growing up and living in East Texas."

Steve's experiences growing up in the western/urban city of Fort Worth added to his vision of city and country people. When Steve was seven, his father witnessed him strumming away on a tennis racket in front of a mirror. He was loudly singing a current Beatle's song. Only a few days later his father brought home a guitar and informed him that he had enrolled Steve for lessons. Steve listened to his older brother John and his friends discuss the philosophy of Bob Dylan while the vinyl album turned on the family stereo. The Fort Worth stockyards began a rebirth while Steve was in high school. He listened to the new styles of music created by such artists as Willie Nelson, B.W. Stevenson, Waylon Jennings, and Steve Earle to name a few.

Steve later moved to Wichita Falls along with his portfolio of songs. It was at an impromptu back stage meeting at a fund raising event with Ray Wylie Hubbard that provided the inspiration for Steve to begin performing at local venues and festivals. "I helped Ray load his equipment into his van, and he invited me backstage," says Steve. "We talked about music and he gave me some insight on beginning a serious songwriting career. It was truly inspirational and humorous at the same time." After the meeting with Hubbard, Steve began laying the groundwork for his soon to be released CD *Hand Me Down Land*.

*Hand Me Down Land* is available in retail record stores and on-line retailers, or may be purchased online at [www.stevebedunah.com](http://www.stevebedunah.com).

