

www.jackgrace.com

The man Jerry Lee Lewis once likened to "that Cash kid, but good" has enjoyed a long and varied career. Jack Grace is that man: a singer, songwriter, and guitarist who's been touring and recording for over 25 years. His duet with Norah Jones, "Bad Wind Blowing" was a standout tune on his last recording, *Everything I Say Is A Lie*, produced by Joan Jett and Steve Earle's former guitarist Eric Ambel. He's performed with a diverse collection of artists, like the aforementioned Lewis as well as Doc Watson, Fishbone, Junior Brown, The Meters and has even shared the bill with Merle Haggard.

Hanging out backstage with Haggard had a particular significance. When Jack handed over his 1947 Gibson acoustic to Merle to autograph, the country legend lifted the guitar into the air, saying, "I think I feel a few more songs in this one."

He's contributed tunes and scoring to several movies, including both *Super Troopers 1 and 2*, with the cult hit "Big Bear," as well as the rollicking "What I Drink and Who I Meet at the Track," heard in *Beerfest*. A seasoned solo performer, his current focus, Jack's groups have comprised a variety of configurations over the years. With a revolving cast of characters, he leads anything from simple guitar, bass, and drum trios to seven-piece ensembles complete with piano, steel, trombone, and trumpet.

A Brooklyn-born renaissance man, Jack didn't plan on a musical career. While at NYU he studied drama, determined to be an actor. Yet music has been an important part of his life since childhood. Once he finally picked up a guitar, he was ready to embark on his musical adventures.

His first band, Steak, had a Zappa-inspired sound with a funky foundation. The group initially carved out a loyal fanbase in Boulder, CO, before venturing to San Francisco for a spell, and finally to NYC. As the group's members took time off to work on other projects, Jack's solo career blossomed. Taking advantage of this freedom, he spent a few years working on his country music chops without leaving his rock roots too far behind. The release of *The Martini Cowboy*, his seminal work of the period, cemented his urbane alter-ego. The character was a culmination of his merging the cosmopolitan charisma of an NYC playboy who was deeply immersed in the thriving Americana scene in Brooklyn. He even found the energy to work as a correspondent for the national public radio show "The Takeaway" and Sirius XM's "Freewheelin". But then it was time to move on.

For his next phase, Jack left the city for Bearsville, NY and began re-tooling his sound. His songs came to include Latin influences, inspired by his frequent pilgrimages to Mexico. Fully reclaiming his rock roots, he also sprinkled in some jazzy notes from time to time as well. Now he follows where the tune leads.

Extensive touring has enabled the affable artist to establish strong personal and professional connections, many of whom are musicians he shares the stage with both at home and on the road. He recently spent a year in the UK, exploring a new dimension of his music and recording his upcoming release, *What a Way to Spend the Night*. Local Cambridge musicians, Fabian Bonner (bass) and Ian Griffth (drums) supplied the backbone for these sessions. Jack might be the only guy around to have a band in both Cambridge, UK and Cambridge, MA. He has a stable of musicians stretching across North America, allowing him to team up with old pals in Canada, Austin, West Virginia and elsewhere.

Steak is back in his life too, with the band gigging around the NYC and wrapping up a new recording. While the band puts the finishes touches on the new album, Jack the solo artist is also gearing up for the release of *What a Way to Spend the Nigh*t, which features the aforementioned Bonner and Griffith as well as long-time collaborators Bill Malchow on keyboards and J. Walter Hawkes on horns. When he has free time, Jack continues to pursue his love of acting, as well as contributing articles to the *Red Hook Star Revue*. Where he goes from here is anyone's guess, but it's certain to be a hell of a ride.

Acclaim

- "It sounds like Cole Porter meets Gene Autry."
 Clyde Haberman, *New York Times*
- "He's like that Cash kid, but good."

 Jerry Lee Lewis on hearing Jack live
- "...a skill at painting perfect vignettes with their songs some humorous, some heartbreaking but always drawn from real life."
- Exclaim (Canada)
- "He has been known to praise whiskey and large glasses of beer." New York Times
- "...f***ing splendid...you can practically taste the whiskey dripping off the songs.
- Village Voice

Jack has performed with

- Merle Haggard
- The Meters
- Norah Jones
- Doc Watson
- Junior Brown
- Jerry Lee Lewis
- The Oak Ridge Boys
- Charlie Louvin (The Louvin Brothers)
- Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks
- Wayne Hancock

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