

From David Malmberg

"My musical journey has been anything but ordinary. It all started at the age of six when I picked up the accordion, immersed in the worlds of classical and jazz music thanks to my father, accordionist Larry Malmberg."

"At ten years old, everything changed when I heard Jimmie Rodgers perform 'Kisses Sweeter than Wine.' The power of lyrics combined with music struck me like lightning. I thought to myself, 'I need to learn how to do that.' So I borrowed a four-string guitar from a friend, armed with a few chords scribbled on a piece of paper, and taught myself my first folk song, Merle Travis's 'Dark as a Dungeon.' I performed it for my 8th grade choir class and earned an 'A' from my teacher, Mrs. Westby. From that small but meaningful beginning, I pursued every opportunity to sing and play. Music took me many places, eventually leading me to Spain where I studied classical guitar, an experience that would prove to be one of the most defining chapters of my life."

"Over the years, I have worked to document my musical adventures. Today, ten albums exist ranging from folk to gospel, pop to classical, representing over one hundred original compositions. It is remarkable how much can accumulate over a lifetime."

"Yet through it all, I have never forgotten that moment I first heard Jimmie Rodgers. It sparked a lifelong education in American folk music. I have always been fascinated by the human need to sing, and more importantly, to sing about something. That curiosity led me to discover artists like the Kingston Trio, Peter Paul and Mary, The Chad Mitchell Trio, Ian and Sylvia, and then deeper into the roots of the music through Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Jean Ritchie, Leadbelly, Blind Willie Johnson, and Bob Dylan, among others. What struck me most was the realization that this music is a living history, rich with stories that reflect the defining moments of this great nation. As I said, we have always sung about something."

"Today's concert celebrates that tradition, offering a sampling of our shared musical heritage. While we cannot cover everything, we hope to share a few timeless gems that remind us of who we are and where we come from."

"My deepest gratitude goes to the songwriters who have contributed to American Journey, including John Stewart, Bob Dylan, Willie Johnson, Paul Simon, Ian Tyson, Billy Ed Wheeler, Gordon Lightfoot, and the countless anonymous voices whose music has been passed down through generations."

"It is my sincere hope that you enjoy these songs as much as I have enjoyed discovering and assembling them. The selections will be announced from the stage."