

# Phil Heywood

It's something of a well-kept secret that Phil Heywood is one of the premier acoustic guitarists working today. His list of achievements includes a stint with internationally renowned guitarist **Leo Kottke**, who, after hearing Heywood for the first time, promptly asked him to join his tour so the two could play duets. Heywood is a former **National Fingerpicking Champion** (1986) and winner of the **American Fingerstyle Guitar Competition** (1987), events judged by some of the genre's top players and performers. He has appeared on NPR's *A Prairie Home Companion* with guitar legend **Chet Atkins**, and shared the stage with a host of the best regional, national and international guitarists and songwriters, among them **Norman Blake, John Renbourn, Greg Brown, Stephen Fearing, Tim Sparks, Peter Lang, Pat Donohue, Robin and Linda Williams, Dave Ray, and Spider John Koerner**.

Listen with half an ear to a Heywood performance and you will soon be fully absorbed in his wide-ranging grooves and dynamic tone. His playing encompasses the rhythmic pulse of the early country bluesmen, the melodic flair of contemporary steel-string guitar, and the nuanced right hand attack of the classical guitarist. Lucid, lyrical, soul-grabbing guitar instrumentals are his stock-in-trade, yet he frequently fields requests to sing more. His warm, plainspoken voice blends seamlessly with his rock-solid guitar work and draws the listener in with equal allure. Playing or singing, his rootsy sources bubble to the surface in a way that is organic, eminently accessible, and, as one fan put it, bound to "make your ears smile."

Heywood has earned standing ovations at the **Cedar Cultural Center** - the Twin Cities' major acoustic music venue - following CD-release concerts for his most recent recordings. *Banks of the River* (2003) and *Circle Tour* (2001) are in many ways companion pieces, parts of a continuing excursion tapping into and branching out from the roots of American fingerstyle guitar music. With his original pieces and choice of covers, Heywood takes his audience on a musical pilgrimage through a rich landscape that is both personal and linked to tradition, paying homage along the way to a lineage of inspiring players who have sprung from native soil.

**For more information: [PhilHeywood.com](http://PhilHeywood.com)**