

musicmatters

By Chris Kelly

Mark Ransom Brings Soulful Acoustic Gratification to Crested Butte

"I'm a songwriter." Mark Ransom states this point in a matter-of-fact manner when I asked him to characterize his musical fashion. "The goal of my recordings is to document the songs that I have written, and I think my performances could be described as songwriter meets jam band and I rarely offend anyone," he laughed.

This Bend, Oregon based singer/songwriter has been performing professionally for the past two years after "selling his day job" and retiring from the daily grind of being a coffeehouse owner. Now, with four discs under his belt, he's headed to the Gunnison Valley with his optimistic musical message.

Ransom grew up in Columbus, Ohio in a musical family. His dad played guitar, lap steel, upright bass and ukulele in a band called the Kokosing Valley Boys. "My dad was my main influence. He brought a lot of campfire tunes to the table and encouraged me and my brothers to play guitar." As Mark reminisced about his childhood he stated that his other influences in the roaring eighties were "everything between Van Halen and George Strait." Later, as Ransom got into college in Fort Collins, he discovered The Grateful Dead and The Allman Brothers which pushed him over the edge musically.

Upon finding himself in Oregon, Ransom became a married man and a proud father. He also formed a trio called The Mostest that he depicts as a groove-rock band. This energetic troupe will also release a self-titled CD in the spring. His four previous recordings demonstrate what a versatile artist Ransom can be, as they all have their very own dynamic. From his first homemade acoustic endeavor, to his most recent concept disc, which chronicles the story of a fictional Pacific Northwest folk figure by the name of Willie Bova, his recordings bring to the forefront a songwriter who really has something to say.

Mark Ransom will be performing as a solo acoustic act when he reaches Crested Butte. "It's just me and my guitar," he says. "I'll be doing my original material, as well as songs by artists like The Band Bob Dylan and Little Feat." Mark also adds, "For all who feel that their glass is half empty, come to my show, and maybe when you leave, you'll feel that your glass is half full, or at least, you'll feel better than when you arrived. My music is more hopeful than a lot of the stuff that's out there now."



Mark Ransom