

## Amos Garrett Biography

Amos Garrett certainly is one of the most accomplished guitar players working today and yet Amos Garrett is not famous. Should be, but isn't. Ask Stevie Wonder, Chet Atkins, or any of ten dozen players who know that guitar invention is the mother of rock and roll. Amos plays better one-handed on an off-night than most guitar players put together. His friends say it's always been that way. Early in his career, Anne Murray hired him to play on the sessions that produced Snowbird. Even more importantly, Ian and Sylvia Tyson asked him to play with The Great Speckled Bird, which (along with The Byrds) was one of the very first country rock groups that changed the direction of pop music.

From there, Amos went to Woodstock and recorded and toured with Maria Muldaur, Paul Butterfield's Better Days, and the entire Bearsville Records stable. A growing reputation as a studio player persuaded him to make the move to California, where he recorded with more than 150 other artists, from Jesse Winchester to Stevie Wonder, from Emmylou Harris to Bonnie Raitt, and Todd Rundgren to Martin Mull.

His reputation as a guitar hero continued to spread, and in Canada he began to build a real following as an exciting and reliable club entertainer. Amos now makes his home in the foothills of Turner Valley, Alberta, Canada and is rarely seen without the company of his veteran band, which he named the Eh? Team. Kelly Jay Fordham (keyboards), Brian Pollock (bass), and Thom Moon (drums) know every twist and turn of his playing, and they give him incredibly heartfelt support.

The new interest in Garrett's work is also a result of his own recordings. His long-term relationship with Stony Plain Records, based in Edmonton, Alberta, has so far, created seven remarkably different albums.

The first Amos Garrett record on Stony Plain was a series of duets with the remarkably laidback singer Geoff Muldaur. The next two were studio albums (Go Cat Go, done in 1980, and 1982's Amosbehavin'). But one of his most remarkable albums-which won a coveted Canadian Juno Award in 1989-was a sterling collaboration with Texas Tornado Doug Sahm (remember the Sir Douglas Quintet?) and Gene Taylor (who used to work with the Blasters and with Downchild) called The Return Of The Formerly Brothers.

Stony Plain has since released a followup, Live In Japan, that was cut in 1990 as the band barnstormed through clubs and concert halls in Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto. Like most of the other records, it was released in Europe, the U.S., and of course, in Japan.

Home In My Shoes pays tribute to Garrett's boyhood days, especially on Stanley Street, a sinuous tune in the memory of the old Esquire Club in Montreal, where the teenaged Garrett learned by watching the likes of B.B. King, Fats Domino, T-Bone Walker, and Ben E. King. You can find his virtuoso version of Sleepwalk on this album.

Third Man In is a collection of great covers and originals, superb guitar playing, and deep-as-a-river vocals. Garrett's favorite songwriters-Bobby Charles and Percy Mayfield are represented, and his rich bass voice illuminates tunes from Solomon Burke, Tony Joe White, and fellow western Canadians Johnny V., Dean Cottrill and Mark Sadler-Brown.

The Cold Club is a collaboration with Oscar Lopez, David Wilkie, Karl Roth, and Ron Casat. Amos says, "The Cold Club began as a rehearsal project for the five of us to play favourite music forms that didn't fit the styles of our regular performing units. As such, we are liable to do ANYTHING, as long as it fits into the definition of World Folk, our new collective genre."

"Off The Floor Live", the newest Amos Garrett release, was recorded live at Edmonton's Sidetrack, the very same club where Amos played his first gig with his band, the Eh Team, exactly 10 years ago. Over two nights, the joint was jumping and the record proves what an amazing live club act Amos and his players have become. Augmented by Gary Koliger on rhythm guitar and three powerful horn players, the

band takes off in overdrive from the start. Of the 13 tracks, ten are tunes which Amos has never recorded before.

However busy Amos Garrett is with a guitar in his hands, there is always time for fishing, and there is always time for a ball game. You might spot him in the stands with a beer, wearing a hat he got from an Eskimo he met in the Northwest Territories. The hat has a working clock on the front with the question: What Time Is It? At the back, the answer: It's fishing time.

A fitting slogan for a man who's still, note for note-one of the best damn guitar players in the world.