

A Conversation with Peter Mulvey
by Frank Goodman (7/2006, Puremusic.com)

Busker poet, Red Sox fan, enlightened romantically cynical fingerpicking wonder, and empirically reluctant mystic Peter Mulvey puts it all together in his ninth full-length release, *The Knuckleball Suite*.

He is a wondrous songwriter, more in love with life than with himself, who is pulling all and everything from every corner of his worldly life and inner life and putting it on the table. He is a funky and very lyrical guitarist, and has a partner in crime in David "Goody" Goodrich that raises the string ante exponentially. Their stringbiosis is uncanny at times, and it's always supporting Mulvey, who's always supporting the song.

Unlike most songwriter types, Mulvey and Goodrich went into the studio with a few jazz guys who play various other styles and cut the basics in two days without thinking about it too much. Play it a time or two, agree on a blueprint, and count it off. Handful of overdubs, and mix.

We talk about his history in the subway, his experiences touring many times in Ireland, and his roots; how his bedside manner is a coping mechanism, and why he keeps practicing.

He is a touring machine with a very good label behind him for these last five releases (one as part of Redbird, a group that includes labelmates Kris Delmhurst and Jeff Foucault). So one wonders, when he is clearly one of the very best out there, why he is not yet more famous. I'm sure there are reasons, like he needs a bigger triple A radio single, needs a TV shot, and why aren't Signature Sounds and Hear Music/Starbucks joined at the hip? Enquiring minds want to know.

What remains to be said is that you can see from our two reviews of his last two solo records that we are big fans of the artist, and highly recommend you pick up *The Knuckleball Suite*. What he's saying and what he's playing spells out his greatness, and his fiercely original streak. Don't miss him when he comes to town.

Puremusic: First of all, incredibly sporting of you to do this interview on very short notice.

Peter Mulvey: Oh, no problem, man. I'm home. I'm off the road, so I have pretty free days.

PM: I am truly remiss in not having interviewed you before, because I like your music a lot and reviewed both *The Trouble With Poets* and *Kitchen Radio*. Those are both great records.

PeterM: Well, thank you very much.

PM: And although we did not get to meet, I did see you play in that nice little pub at South by Southwest on that Signature Sounds evening.

PeterM: Oh, yeah, yeah. That was a fun time.

PM: That was cool. And I did get some video footage of Kris Delmhorst and Mark Erelli, but by the time you went on, I was chummin' up these women friends, and the post was in my way, and so--

PeterM: Oh, yeah. Yeah, the hazards of South by Southwest

[laughter]

PM: Indeed. But I think I did get a half of this song, and a half of that song, and so I think I might just stick them up in the context of this interview so people can see you do that cool thing you do.

PeterM: That'd be great. [But unfortunately I didn't get back to Nashville, where that tape is waiting, wound up in Miami instead.]

PM: So I'm just going to act as if we've met, because we're both Irish Americans, I'm sure, and those kind of guys.

PeterM: Yeah, sure.

[laughter]

PM: Are you Irish all the way back? Or what's your background?

PeterM: Yeah, my great grandfather was a Leitrim farmer. And then he immigrated to upstate New York, and then settled in Northern Wisconsin. He's a dairy farmer. His kid was a dairy farmer. My dad grew up on that dairy farm.

PM: Wow.

PeterM: Yeah, just a few generations in, we are.

PM: Yeah, so you're breaking the dairy chain.

PeterM: Actually, my dad did. He became a seminarian, and that didn't work out, and he became a social worker.

PM: What does that mean for one's dad to have become a seminarian.

PeterM: Oh, he was studying to be a priest.

PM: Right. After he'd sired you, and whoever else was along?

PeterM: No, no, no, no, no. Long before.

PM: Oh, before he became a family man.

PeterM: Yeah. He was a seminarian, and that didn't work out for him.

PM: Right, as it so often does not.

PeterM: Yeah, no kidding.

[laughter]

PeterM: I think he was not cut out for it, because I'm his second of four sons, and he's a great dad.

PM: Yeah, and meant to be so, apparently. Well, good for him. So what kind of a family, then, did you grow up in, Peter, and what were you like as a youth?

PeterM: It was a big talkative brawl of a family. I mean, I've got an older brother and two younger brothers and a couple of parents who were--I guess I'd call them old school leftists, but not the pot-smoking, bead-wearing kind.

PM: Right.

PeterM: But they were more sort of the--they dressed like nerds, but like wherever they go they form a block watch, and my mom runs tutoring programs. They still are this way. But we were kind of street Catholics, although that wound up not working out for us, either.

PM: Right. As it so often does not.

PeterM: Yeah. We all wound up leaving the church. So it's your basic sort of nerdy community-activist science-geek kind of family.

PM: Oh, science geeks, to boot.

PeterM: Yeah, we've always been pretty interested in just science and reality.

[laughter]

PM: For lack of a better term, indeed.

PeterM: Yeah.

PM: So are you the only one, then, in the long run, who went an artsy route?

PeterM: I am. Everybody else is a schoolteacher, or has been a schoolteacher at one point. We got one engineer, got a couple of schoolteachers. And yeah, so I'm it as far as someone who went and did this for a living.

PM: Wow. But no surviving Catholics?

PeterM: No, not a surviving Catholic--well, in the greater family, my Uncle John and my Aunt Mary. But in my nuclear family, no, not a Catholic among us anymore.

PM: Yeah. Although us six kids all went to Catholic school, there were no surviving Catholics when the smoke cleared.

PeterM: Yeah, exactly.

PM: That's just how it goes.

PeterM: Yeah. I mean, culturally speaking, you'll always be Catholic.

PM: [laughs]

PeterM: It's just like being Jewish, practically--I mean, it just sticks with you. It's like being Chinese American.

PM: [laughs] Which I'm, at the moment, surrounded by. So what were you like as a youth, what was your youthful personality?

PeterM: Oh, lord, I was your typical dreamer kid, probably a little sad, who kind of lived in his head. I played Dungeons and Dragons, did all this sort of nerd stuff. I just have always been introspective and probably a little down.

PM: Wow.

PeterM: Yep.

PM: Which makes the follow-up question all the more compelling--and how do you think your personality has changed over time?

PeterM: You know, not much.

PM: Really.

PeterM: [laughs] Yeah. I mean, this is weird, but I tend to be kind of an introspective and down guy. But at the same time, I should say my coping mechanism has always been to talk with people, just talk.

PM: Yeah.

PeterM: That's how I get along, that's how I get them to like me, that's how I learn whether I like people. I'm just a very talkative guy, but I'm not in that sense an outgoing gregarious dude.

PM: Not small-talkative.

PeterM: No. I always go for the end zone, and it's always been that way.

PM: Yeah, right. I mean, it's right there. You can see it from here. You might as well.

PeterM: Yeah. But then the only thing that's changed--I mean, my personality, I think, is much the same. It's just that you get older and you learn to deal with it. You learn not to get tossed around by it so much.

PM: And an odd thing that you find in this business, especially the singer/songwriter part of the business, is that so many of the very good people are deeply introspective types, for whom it would seem very unlikely that they spend their lives on stage, and yet it's what has occurred.

PeterM: Yeah. What you'll find is sort of the two types. And I probably fall into the type that pretty much--I like approval, I'm pretty allergic to disapproval.

PM: Oh, yeah.

PeterM: And then very rarely you'll find--I've got a friend, Jeff Foucault, and that guy is, well--he's a seriously private guy.

PM: Is he?

PeterM: Oh, yeah. I mean, I am, too, but our methods of defending our privacy are very different. Mine is to just talk a great gale of--you know, talk a whole shit storm of--

PM: Right. Find your way through this, yeah, right.

PeterM: But it isn't actually hugely personal. And his is a little bit more pragmatic and direct. He just doesn't like to talk about things that he doesn't like to talk about, and he's perfectly comfortable letting people know that.

PM: Would you tell us, please, about that first and fateful trip you took to Ireland, and the relationship as a person and a performer to that country that bloomed in the years that followed.

PeterM: Well, I took a semester there. And it was a great old time. Mostly what I did was I'd cut classes on Thursday and go in and make it a really long weekend in Dublin. I would crash on friends' couches, street musician friends that I'd met.

PM: So you met street musicians pretty soon.

PeterM: Pretty quick, yeah.

PM: Because you just started busking yourself? [For those unfamiliar with the term, it means playing in public, on the street or in the subway, for instance, with an open instrument case or a hat for tips.]

PeterM: Exactly. And then I would either busk with them or I'd busk on my own. Or I would take a long week and I'd hitchhike around somewhere. And that's it. And in some ways, that's the whole deal for me. That's where I started doing what I do, and I've been doing it ever since, which is to go around and find some little joint to play music in, and it might be a street corner or a subway station, and nowadays hopefully it's a small club or a small theater. But I really have not done anything different since I was nineteen years old. So it's coming up on twenty years that I've done this.

PM: Wow. And so you literally started doing it in Ireland?

PeterM: Well, I had played some in little coffee shops and such around Milwaukee. But the idea of just sort of diving in, that happened in Ireland.

PM: Milwaukee. Did you ever know the Violent Femmes or John Kruth or any of those Milwaukee people?

PeterM: Oh, yeah.

PM: They were a little before your time, or--

PeterM: They were a little before my time. But I know John Kruth. I've done shows with him. He lives in New York now, I think.

PM: Yeah, I'll probably see him on the street today. I'm in SoHo at the moment, and from time to time I bump into him and Marilyn on the street.

PeterM: Yeah, say hi for me, man.

PM: Indeed.

PeterM: I love that guy. I admire that guy. He's a great musician, and he's writing books about people now. That's cool. [Kruth has written an acclaimed book on Rahsaan Roland Kirk and in recent years has been at work on *the* book about Townes Van Zandt.]

PM: Yeah.

PeterM: And in the Femmes--I was in a play with Victor DeLorenzo. I was in a production of *The Rhinoceros* with him. So that was fun.

PM: Wild.

PeterM: Yeah, exactly.

[laughter]

PeterM: I haven't met the rest of them, but I do know that sort of Milwaukee crew. And also, Paul Cebar, who is a great, great Milwaukee musician.

PM: I've heard about him, but I'm not familiar with his music. And isn't Willy Porter from there?

PeterM: Yeah, he's practically a neighbor. He lives over in Wauwatosa.

PM: He's pretty amazing.

PeterM: Yeah, he's quite a guitar player. He's quite a thinker. He's got a great mind.

PM: Oh, yeah, that doesn't surprise me. I don't know him personally, but you'd almost have to be to play like that.

PeterM: Yeah.

PM: So that really covers part of that question, the relationship that developed in the years to come, with Ireland?

PeterM: Well, I started touring there again in 1997. And I got to say, the gigging there is pretty chaotic.

PM: Is it?

PeterM: Yeah, it's pretty old school. I'm working with this agent who just refuses to own a cell phone, he refuses to own a fax machine. So in some ways he's not progressing into the modern scene, and so I'm probably not connected with the particularly current scene. But man, it's really something. You just go over there, and you have a bunch of gigs--a bunch of old pubs. And you meet some pretty crazy people, and it's worth it to me.

PM: Now are they all going crazy when you're playing, or do they like to listen? What's that about?

PeterM: No, they're a great listening crowd. The Irish will seriously listen. I think they listen more attentively, but they're also more animated--certainly than an English crowd. English crowds are incredibly polite.

PM: Painfully reserved.

PeterM: Exactly.

PM: Wow. But there are gigs aplenty. Have you ever gigged at the Spirit Store in Dundalk?

PeterM: I've been in it. It's a great, great joint. And I keep trying to get a gig there.

PM: Ah. That's the town where our people come from, a bunch of our people.

PeterM: Oh, no kidding.

PM: So I always ask that of friends of mine.

PeterM: It's a great joint. They got great T-shirts.

PM: Oh, really? Oh, I'll have to get one over there, then. So like Ireland, but different, another place you have a strong relationship to is the subway.

PeterM: Yes.

PM: You probably know more about playing in the subway than most anyone one could meet, or so I'm led to believe. Tell our readers something about that world, and how it help shaped you as a performer, and again, as a person.

PeterM: I've said this a hundred times, but it's the best description I can give. You know that movie *Groundhog Day*?

PM: Yeah.

PeterM: It was like a ten-minute version of that movie.

PM: [laughs]

PeterM: The train goes away, now you have an empty platform. And you have silence. And you have someone coming down an escalator. And over the next ten minutes, somewhere between ten and fifty people are going to come down that escalator.

PM: [laughs] That's an amazing way to put it.

PeterM: What will you do? What song will you sing? How will you get that song to light itself up and reach these people? And then, give or take five or ten minutes, two songs, maybe three, and then they're gone.

PM: Right. How are you going to get them to throw something in your case.

PeterM: Yeah. And how do you get them to maybe buy a CD over time, et cetera. It's beautiful, because it's the same moment under a microscope, and it's the same moment under a microscope like 200 times a day.

PM: Wow!

PeterM: It's a brilliant way to learn, man.

PM: It's a wondrous way to describe it as well. [laughs] That's unbelievable.

It's an incredible symbiosis that's evolved between yourself and David Goodrich over the years.

PeterM: Yeah.

PM: A partnership that's rarely duplicated in the music world. And as amazing as that cat is on the guitar, on the lap steel he's a frickin' God.

PeterM: Yeah. He's a really, really great musician. He really is. And we are very lucky, I think, to have found each other.

PM: How did you find each other, then?

PeterM: We worked in a guitar shop together in Boston.

PM: Aha.

PeterM: And that's basically the entire story. We met there, and we just started hanging out, and we started playing music, and we started having a great time doing so. And then a few years in, his band broke up and he started gigging a little more primarily with me, and producing the records and writing with me. And I think we've never really looked back.

PM: So you guys do a lot of writing together as well?

PeterM: Yeah. We wrote pretty much the whole *Trouble With Poets* record, and most of *Kitchen Radio* is co-written. We wrote those together.

PM: And what about this record, the *Knuckleball Suite*?

PeterM: Now, this was the first one--I mean, two of the tunes he co-wrote, but the bulk of the record I just wrote at home myself. It was about time that I could--this record really feels, I think, like--you know the whole thesis/antithesis/synthesis thing?

PM: Uh-huh.

PeterM: This is a serious synthesis record. This is me putting together all of the time that I've spent listening to Goody, and listening to all my influences--Greg Brown and Chris Smither, and my friends, Jeff Foucault and Kris Delmhorst--all that stuff, and just sort of wadding it all up and seeing what it does on its own.

PM: Yeah. It's really a fantastic record, Peter.

PeterM: Thank you. I'm real pleased with it.

PM: It's a really great record. And before we get off the Goody subject, tell us something about his new record.

PeterM: Oh, his new record is tremendous. What can I say about it? It's called *Dust of Many Horses*. I mean, this all happened--the guy writes so much that when he puts out a record he gets to choose just sort of the best forty minutes of the hours and hours and hours of output that he has. And so this record, it has a great shape. I'm convinced this record--my description for it is that it's kind of like a question mark, the shape of the record. It's sort of perceived straight, building on its themes, and then it takes this broad arc sort of lefterly, and then around through the Curt Cobain tune and the John Coltrane tune.

PM: Right.

PeterM: And it gets stranger and stranger and further afield. And then at the end it sort of reels itself right back in. I think of that as like the dot that's close to the beginning.

[laughter]

PeterM: And it's a real great record.

PM: What Coltrane tune did he cut?

PeterM: It's called "After the Rain."

PM: Yeah, I know that song. Beautiful song.

PeterM: I actually played it with him. That was a first for me.

PM: You played it with him on acoustic, or?

PeterM: Yeah. We both just sat and played acoustic guitars. He taught me the basis of the tune, and then I put it together.

PM: Wow.

PM: Do you practice anymore, and do you continue to get better on the guitar?

PeterM: All the time. It's the one thing I regret that I don't make enough time for. I practice more now than I ever did. And there's so much room to go. I have a feeling the next couple of records--one of the things I want to do is a record of jazz standards. And that's just going to force my hand.

PM: That's going to take some woodshedding.

PeterM: Exactly. But yeah, I practice more and more as I go on. I'm just kind of one of those--like I read more history now than I used to, and I read more biography now, and I read more science now than I used to. You know what I mean?

PM: Yeah. I see the influence there, yeah.

PeterM: I wish I could be a student all over again.

PM: I notice you played lap steel and slide on the record you were talking about producing for Hayward Williams.

PeterM: Yeah, a little bit of that, yeah.

PM: Let's say something about him.

PeterM: Oh, Hayward has got it. I mean, he's just got that thing in spades.

PM: Is he a young cat?

PeterM: Really young, like twenty-three, twenty-four years old. So it's just good to see. I heard a record of his tunes, and I thought, "Well, I could help this guy make a record."

PM: Right.

PeterM: And I was glad to do it, I was pleased.

PM: That's cool. Signature Sounds , that's been a pretty amazing home for you, has it not?

PeterM: Yes, it has. I love the label. I love my label mates, Jeff Foucault and Kris delmhorst and Mark Erelli, Chris Smither is going to put a record out on Signature sometime soon. And it's just great. It's great to work with people who will actually answer the phone.

PM: Yeah, I mean, I don't think the equal of that family and that organization exists elsewhere in the record business.

PeterM: Yeah, I'm glad to hear you say that, because I tend to agree. I think it's pretty unique.

PM: When I saw you play in that pub at SXSW, I never would have been able to stay, or might have had my camera confiscated because it didn't have a stupid little tag on it. It was just Jim Olsen [the founder and head of Signature Sounds] saved my ass by saying, "No, no, no. He's all right. Don't bother him."

PeterM: Yeah, he'll do that.

PM: He's a good guy.

PeterM: He really is, man. And he's a Red Sox fan.

PM: Oh, well, of course. [laughs]

PeterM: So that goes a long way.

PM: I really like the song "Lila Blue"--

PeterM: Well, thank you.

PM: --that I'm curious about her, if she's actually a person or a composite.

PeterM: Yeah, she's fiction. And that song is pretty much just a little composite of the way men are about women.

PM: Right.

PeterM: I actually had a female songwriter friend of mine, at the end of the tune--she was listening to the lyrics and she was like, "Oh, and now she disappears. How convenient for you."

PM: [laughs] Can the identity of that joker be revealed?

PeterM: No.

[laughter]

PM: That's very funny.

PeterM: Yeah, it was great. I mean, it was classic.

PM: "Now she disappears, how convenient for you." You don't have to confirm or deny, but I'm going to say that it was Kris Delmhorst who said that.

PeterM: No. Actually, I can say that it wasn't. But just go ahead and say "an unnamed source."

PM: [laughs]

It was very entertaining and illuminating to hear your song about the 10,000 things.

PeterM: Oh, thank you. I've taken to saying that it's a jazz Buddhist tune, which is a gross oversimplification. And then I say, actually, more properly it's a jazz Taoist tune with stoic overtones.

PM: [laughs]

PeterM: But I can't really sell that.

PM: Yeah, right.

[laughter]

PeterM: Not that I can sell jazz Buddhism.

PM: Maybe while we're talking on that you'd say something about the spiritual side of your life.

PeterM: Lord--well, you know...

PM: How appropriate.

PeterM: Yeah, that's a big one. I think, like a lot of ex-Catholics, I wound up sort of with that hole--that God-shaped hole, that's the classic line--where you've got to have something, you've got to have some vehicle for yourself. And a lot of friends of mine have given me books on Buddhism. And it rings a big bell with me.

PM: Yeah.

PeterM: What I like about it more than the other big religions that are out there is its empirical nature. I really like reason, and I like seeing a religion like Buddhism that says, "Just look at this stuff for yourself. We don't want you to necessarily believe in

reincarnation, we want you to observe what the hell is happening to you." Having said that, obviously Tibetan Buddhism was a real draw for me, and then it turns out to be the Catholicism of Buddhism.

PM: [laughs] Oh, that's funny. I've never heard that said.

PeterM: But it just makes sense to me. I wouldn't necessarily even say that I'm a Buddhist. I wouldn't necessarily go out on a limb and say that I'm a Buddhist, but I would say that that way of looking at things certainly makes a lot of sense to me.

PM: So you're more, say, on the mindfulness part of the equation.

PeterM: Yeah, yeah. Well, God knows mindfulness has never done me wrong.

PM: They never fought any wars over that.

PeterM: Not as near as I can tell. Actually, I just read a pretty riveting book by a dude named Sam Harris called *The End of Faith*. And he makes the Buddhist argument in a nutshell. He would say that some religions are more prone to being warped into violence than others. It's a pretty scandalous thing to say, but it kind of holds up. I mean, the perfect example he'll give is, "Yes, the Palestinians are under a ton of socioeconomic pressure, but if that's why they were suicide bombing, then where are the Tibetan Buddhist suicide bombers? Where are the South American Catholic suicide bombers? It's not happening."

PM: Wow.

PeterM: He makes a relatively scandalous argument, but I think it's pretty sound that he says, "Just go to the text and read the damn text." Right in there it tells you that you can do these things. Right in there in the Christian Bible it tells you that this is the inerrant Word of God, and follow that to its logical conclusion. Whereas Buddhism, right in the text, says, "None of this might be true." And you hear the Dali Lama say that, "I'm the fourteenth reincarnation of the Buddha of compassion, and I will reincarnate as the fifteenth, but obviously that might not be true. I can't prove that to you, and I wouldn't want to." That's a marvelous thing to say.

And can you imagine Pope Benedict saying, "We believe in the salvation through Jesus, and obviously that might just be in our heads." But here's the thing: We can say it may never have happened, but we still believe that this is a wonderful way to live your life. I don't think people would necessarily lose their minds--I don't think Catholics would--I don't think their heads would explode if one of their leaders said, "We don't know that all of this is necessarily factually true, but that's not the point. We think this is a good way to live your life." I think people are grownups. I think people would say, "Yeah, that makes sense to me."

PM: Right.

PeterM: We'll find out--or actually, I'm fairly convinced that we won't find out.

[laughter]

PeterM: I doubt the Pope is going to say that anytime soon.

PM: Yeah, we'll put that on the list of things that will never happen.

PeterM: Right.

PM: I like that video in your links for the Porter Case. That was an unusual endorsement.

PeterM: Oh, my God, yeah.

PM: [laughs]

PeterM: I cannot more highly endorse the Porter Case.

PM: Apparently not. I mean, you had a link with a video on the site. I love that!

PeterM: Yeah. It saved my ass. I mean, you see what it is, it folds into a little hand truck.

PM: It's incredible.

PeterM: Like very few objects, I would have to say I love that. Another example of an object like that would be the Boss guitar tuner. Just when somebody--this is the simplest thing in the world, and I'm not an industrialist, I'm not a giant fan of capitalism. But I am a huge fan of when somebody says, "Now, what are the needs of the given human being in this situation, and how can I meet them," and then builds something better.

PM: Right.

PeterM: I love that.

PM: Now, do you mean the TU 2 or do you mean the tuner pedal with all the circus lights?

PeterM: The tuner pedal with all the circus lights.

PM: Right, because when your eyesight starts fail, those lights save the day.

PeterM: Ah, yeah. They're nice and bright. They tell you exactly whether it's in tune or not. And this is beautiful, it's got a built-in mute switch.

PM: Right, totally important.

PeterM: The smartest thing. When somebody does that, it's always a good thing.

PM: So having purchased *The Knuckleball Suite* on iTunes, I lack credits. Can we go through some of who appears on the disc.

PeterM: You got it. I can give you the whole thing.

PM: Great.

PeterM: The core band--and we played live on every tune, so it's just us--

PM: Wow.

PeterM: --is myself on acoustic guitar and vocals; David Goodrich plays guitars and lap steel. No, not even lap. I think it was just guitars and live ambience, and I think banjo. I think he might have played banjo on one tune.

PM: Yeah, there was a banjo on one cut, yeah.

PeterM: And then Mike Piehl plays drums.

PM: And who plays bass?

PeterM: Lou Ulrich.

PM: And are these guys, aside from Goody and yourself, to whatever extent you may consider yourselves jazzers, are the session guys jazzers?

PeterM: Oh, God, yeah, yeah. I mean, all of them are marvelously educated musicians. And they play jazz and they play rock 'n' roll, they play all kinds of--they're very, very capable dudes.

PM: Right.

PeterM: And then Kris Delmhorst sings and plays a little bit of fiddle on the record.

PM: Oh, yeah, I always forget she plays fiddle.

PeterM: Yep. And Sean Staples sings and plays a little bit of banjo. A guy named Jazer Giles plays the accordion and the piano, both of which were firsts for me. I've never had accordion or piano on my records.

PM: Amazing. Never had piano on a record?

PeterM: I've never had piano on a record. This was an absolute first.

PM: Holy jeez. So let's talk about the atmosphere and the modus operandi of the actual recording session.

PeterM: The best thing in the world. We did it in like two days. We just went in, we sat down. The guys had heard the tunes, but we had not actually worked out versions of the tunes.

PM: "Here's a CD of what we're going to take, don't chart 'em."

PeterM: Yeah, exactly.

PM: Yeah.

PeterM: And so we sat down, and then basically we would say, "Well, who wants to do what and how should this sound?" And we'd talk about it a little bit. It almost always just absolutely worked, so what we would do is go "Let's figure out how to end it, and then let's record a few," and then we'd take the first or second take. Once in a while there'd be a--like a couple of the tunes were a little difficult. But we were so done by the beginning of the third day that we could recut a few things that we thought we could do stronger, and we did. I mean, it's really the way to make a record. And then we brought the other people in on an odd day to do the overdubs of little piano parts and little fiddle parts and all that. But essentially, we had cut the record within about two days.

PM: And you cut it to Protools or--

PeterM: I don't even know.

PM: Beautiful, "I don't even know."

PeterM: I know it was cut to memory, but I don't know what system. Goody can tell you. That's the beauty of it, I mean he really--

PM: That's his thing.

PeterM: Yeah, and he understands that his job is to spare me even wondering about my any of that shit.

PM: I got to meet this guy.

PeterM: Yeah. He's great.

PM: Yeah. In fact, we got to get on this new record and cover that.

PeterM: Yeah. Go to his web page, and there's contact information there.
[www.davidgoodrich.com]

PM: So let's see, we covered some of my other questions just in our way. How many dates are you going to play this year?

PeterM: This year, probably about 160.

PM: Yo!

PeterM: Yeah. In my forties I'm probably going to cut down to maybe 130.

PM: [laughs]

PeterM: But you got to keep rolling. I'm one of those guys, I need to keep rolling, or else I just sort of get really out of shape.

PM: Yeah.

PeterM: It's just my way. It all depends on who you are. Like Greg Brown does maybe fifty shows a year, forty shows a year, and he sounds really great. He doesn't really suffer for it. Leo Kottke does upwards of 200. The man is insane, but what are you going to do?

PM: He does *200 shows*?

PeterM: I know!

PM: Oh, my God! I mean, that's how he probably developed hand problems at one time in his life, too.

PeterM: Yeah, I would imagine.

PM: He had to reteach himself how do it.

Where will your action abroad be?

PeterM: Well, we finally have an agent to do Holland and the continent--Holland and hopefully Germany, maybe, and France. And she's going to do Great Britain as well, which leaves my agent in Ireland to do Ireland. So we're going to take September, and we're just going to spend the whole month just touring England, Ireland, and the continent.

PM: That'll be great fun.

PeterM: Yeah, it'll be wonderful. And for once I'm going to actually have support. It's coming out on Rounder Europe, so that should be fun. I think it was distributed by them in the past. But this is the first time where I actually sort of have the label on board to do publicity and stuff.

PM: Oh, man. That's a beautiful development, good to hear that.

PeterM: Yeah, I'm really pleased.

PM: Where would you look to tour that you've not yet cracked, aside from where you're headed in September?

PeterM: New Zealand. I'd love to tour in New Zealand, just because I've heard it's so utterly beautiful.

PM: I've heard it's very hard to get a visa there.

PeterM: Yeah, I would imagine. I mean, small population, small--well, but I bet I could do it. I believe, yes, I'll do it.

PM: [laughs] Can you recall any--the instances where your songs have appeared in films or TV? Do you know that stuff off the--

PeterM: Yeah. The television show *Felicity* used one of my tunes, and it paid handily.

PM: It did, right?

PeterM: Yeah. And they used one on the DVD, I'm happy to report.

PM: Oh, now, that's a big deal, right?

PeterM: It is. Well, yeah, you wind up--I mean, a lot of people get a hold of it. I have to say I'm more interested in like--there have been small documentary films--there was a documentary film about neighborhoods in Portland, Oregon, they used my music. There was a small independent film called *Origin of the Species*, they used my music. And we didn't see any money for that kind of stuff. But I find that stuff interesting, like more interesting, artists sort of working at the margin.

PM: Yeah, because I mean, you're a guy that could score an indie film.

PeterM: Oh, I would love to do that.

PM: You have so many different kinds of songs.

PeterM: Yeah, I'd totally love to do that.

PM: I wanted to get that in the interview so indie filmmakers would say, "Oh, good, he wants to score my film, I'll get in touch with him."

PeterM: Yeah, exactly.

PM: [laughs] So, yeah, I'm almost out of questions. You and I could talk all day, but that's as many questions as I wrote down. I'm very happy to talk to you.

PeterM: Yeah, I'm very happy to talk to you too, Frank.

PM: You're just the kind of guy I thought you were.

PeterM: That's good, that means your sense of smell is working. So I'm going to be at Joe's Pub, I believe, in November.

PM: Oh, okay, because I'm in the city all the time. I live in Nashville, but I get to the city a lot. Great to meet you.

PeterM: Yeah, good to meet you, Frank. Talk to you soon.