

# MAY 2018 RELEASE

Folk / Roots / Bluegrass / Americana

Folksinger

**MICHAEL JOHNATHON**

# MOONFIRE

PoetMan Records USA

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MEDIA and RADIO tools:

[MichaelJohnathon.com/MoonFire](http://MichaelJohnathon.com/MoonFire)

The all-American banjo ... solo, instrumentals, some with vocals and some complete with a 21-piece orchestra section. Michael Johnathon delivers the most unexpected song arrangements imaginable. Most of the songs are Johnathon originals, and flow seamlessly alongside musical gems like *Summertime*, *East Virginia Blues* and the Uncle Dave Macon chestnut *Over the Mountain*. Musicians include founding member of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band **John McEuen** who helps validate Johnathon's complete re-write of the story of Mr. Bojangles, plus **Sam Bush**, **John Cowan**, **JP Pennington** of EXILE fame, multi award winner **Rob Ickes** on dobro and others.

## THE SONGS (\*denote original compositions)

- 1 **MoonFire**\* lovely instrumental with fiddle and mandolin
- 2 **In the Evening** by *Leroy Carr*, 1930's bluesman with Ben Sollee on cello Rob Ickes on dobro
- 3 **Darlin' Corey** *traditional* with a Beatle-esque production; John McEuen on mandolin, Rob Ickes on dobro and 21-piece string section
- 4 **Over the Mountain** *traditional* made famous by Uncle Dave Macon; Homer Ledford on mandolin and fiddle
- 5 **Summertime** *live performance*; by George Gershwin as part of the Porgy and Bess opera; Melissa Deaton on background vocal
- 6 **East Virginia Blues** *traditional* with John McEuen on mandolin, Rob Ickes on dobro
- 7 **BAN-Jokes** \* *live performance*; every banjo joke possible shoved into a 5 minute banjo song
- 8 **Mousie HiWay** \* *live performance*; Homer Ledford on mandolin and fiddle, Ruth McLain upright bass
- 9 **How Can I Keep from Singing** *live performance of the traditional* song performed with the Niles String Quartet
- 10 **Ballad of Bojangles**\* complete re-visit of the **Jerry Jeff Walker** song made famous by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band; with John McEuen on mandolin and 21 piece string section
- 11 **Autumn Song** \* solo banjo and vocal recorded in a small cabin on an iPhone 6
- 12 **MichaelB Rag** \* traditional instrumental with Sam Bush on mandolin, Ben Sollee on cello & John Cowan on bass
- 13 **Flowers** \* based on a Ralph Waldo Emerson quote; with flute quartet, Rob Ickes on dobro and Sam Bush on mandolin
- 14 **The Baghdad Breakdown** \* sitar and full band; what would bluegrass sound like if was from the middle east?
- 15 **Heritage** \* Ben Sollee on cello, based on the James Still poem
- 16 **Go, Laddy, Go** \* celtic flavored clawhammer banjo with string quartet
- 17 **Apology Song** \* with John McEuen on second banjo
- 18 **Little Maggie** traditional, solo recorded on the iPhone 6
- 19 **SongFarmers Front Porch Rockin' Chair Rag** \* solo instrumental; recorded in a small cabin on the iPhone 6
- 20 **Taco Bell's Pee-Shooter** \* instrumental with Raymond McLain on mandolin
- 21 **Front Porch Swing** \* smooth front porch banjo song
- 22 **Cosmic Banjo** \* banjo in a rock setting with horn section and electric guitars
- 23 **Ode to Joy** \* solo banjo recorded on a rock outside of Henry David Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond; Beethoven



**MOONFIRE** is a fully produced, radio ready 23-song celebration of the open back, long neck banjo.

*All long neck banjo performances recorded and arranged by Michael Johnathon ©Rachel Aubrey Music Incl/BMI*

**NOTE: all instruments on these recording are real, no computer generated or synthesizer tracking was used.**

# PRESS RELEASE

RELEASE DATE: MAY 2018

**“Yes, I am a dreamer. For a dreamer is one who can find his way by moonlight, and see the dawn before the rest of the world.” - Oscar Wilde**

Among the throngs of musicians in the folk world, few have elevated “dreaming” to such a high artform as Michael Johnathon.

From composing the *Woody Guthrie Opera* to writing the *Walden play*, creating the national SongFarmers movement to producing the wildly successful broadcast of the *WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour*, solo concert tours of coffeehouses to the upcoming tour of symphony orchestras with his “*Songs of Rural America*” performances, his accomplishments can easily overshadow a very important point:

Michael Johnathon is an *excellent* musician.

His 14th album release, **MoonFire**, comes on the heels of “**Mousie HiWay: The Adventures of Banjo Mouse in Appalachia**,” his fully illustrated book that introduces bluegrass music to kids. The MoonFire CD is a 23-song album in honor of the instrument he loves best: the banjo.

The banjo came to us from Africa, the musical instrument of black slaves ... and soon became the instrument of white men wearing black face. Eventually a fifth string was added and it became the instrument of white people playing bluegrass music. The point is the banjo is an instrument of all people, born from pain and struggle and then ended up on the front porches of working people, relaxing in the evening as the sun went down.

**“I love the banjo, I love where it came from and I love what it represents,”** says Johnathon from his log cabin home near Lexington, KY. **“Most of all, I love the way it sounds. To me the banjo is more than just a bluegrass or folk instrument, it is a songwriter’s tool and one of the most adventurous musical colors possible. This is an album of songs that I enjoy picking on my front porch ... perhaps presented in an unexpected musical canvas, but that’s the way we roll ‘round here.”**

What is striking about the MoonFire album is that most of the songs are Johnathon originals, and flow seamlessly alongside musical gems like *Summertime*, *East Virginia Blues* and the Uncle Dave Macon chestnut *Over the Mountain*. Musicians on board include founding membebr of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band John McEuen who helps validate Johnathons complete re-write of the story of Mr. Bojangles, plus Sam Bush, John Cowan, JP Pennington of EXILE fame, multi award winner Rob Ickes on dobro and others.

From the plaintive opening title song to the rocked out ending of Cosmic Banjo, the passionate lyrics of Heritage (based on a James Still poem) to the humor of Ban-JOKES, the MoonFire if an album rich in musical textures and more surprises than one CD should be allowed to present. Johnathon’s rendition of Darlin Corey alone should be an award winner.



**MANAGEMENT: Honor Music Ent.**  
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*Take the inventiveness of Bob Dylan,  
the melodic voice of John Denver,  
add the showmanship of Garrison Keillor  
and that’s Michael Johnathon.”*

**Bob Spear, Publisher, HEARTLAND REVIEW**

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[CaneyCreekMovie.com](http://CaneyCreekMovie.com), [WoodyGuthrieOpera.com](http://WoodyGuthrieOpera.com)

**RADIO SERVICING**

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