

# Michael Peter Smith, Songwriter

Wherever you go.  
Whatever you do.

He stays in your head...

One of the most captivating songwriters in the folk arena, celebrated musician Michael Peter Smith has toured the United States and Canada for nearly five decades. He creates new work on a constant basis, and music's finest performers record his songs. His beloved song *The Dutchman*, a signature piece for the late Liam Clancy, and recently heard on the Celtic Thunder PBS television special (and CD), is considered a classic.

**Wherever he is** – touring concert venues, clubs, theaters, folk festivals, at house concerts, or teaching writing workshops, in powerful songs, award-winning musical scores, and unforgettable recordings – **musical mastery is in whatever Michael does.**

Michael Smith, the lyricist, composer and performer of renown, is a voracious reader and never at a loss for material. As early as age 16, when he set the words that appeared on the grave of Robert Louis Stevenson, Michael was adapting and setting literature, children's stories, and poetry to music. Michael's songs set poems

*“Michael Smith stands out as one of the few undisputed geniuses among singer-songwriters.”*

SING OUT! MAGAZINE

by F. Garcia Lorca *Five in the Afternoon*, Wallace Stevens *Blue Guitar*, Chilean poets Gabriela Mistral *Swallow* and Pablo Neruda, Irish poetry *Songs of the Kerry Madwoman* chamber opera, poems by Patricia Monaghan, and Chinese Tang Dynasty poets *Painted Horse*. Passages from Robert Cole's *The Spiritual Lives of Children* were transformed in *We Become Birds*. The words of essayist Ann Carson appear in a surprising way in Michael's song *Seurat*. Watch for Michael's appearance in *And the Poet Sang*, a performance for the Poetry Foundation in Chicago, September 14/15, 2012.



In his theatrical debut, Michael composed and performed the music for the Steppenwolf production of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes Of Wrath*, touring with the cast and director Frank Galati from The Royal George Theater in Chicago to the La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego, from the National Theater in London to Broadway, where the play won the Antoinette Perry Award for Best Play, 1990. Letters from Michael's sisters contributed to the 1994 production *Michael Margaret Pat & Kate* at Victory Gardens, which won four Joseph Jefferson awards, for Best Revue, Best Actor In A Review, Best Original Music and Best Production.

A 17 year collaboration with Jamie O'Reilly resulted in *Pasionos: Songs Of The Spanish Civil War* at Chicago's Theater on the Lake and Lunar Cabaret and touring, returning to Victory Gardens with the revue *Hello Dali*, the ballet *The Gift of The Magi*, and their newest offering *Songs of a Catholic Childhood*. Anne Hills commissioned Michael to set mystical child savant Opal Whiteley's diary entries for *The Heartsongs Of Opal Whitely*. Puppeteer Blair Thomas and Michael co-created the musical based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Snow Queen* for Victory Gardens, Oscar Wilde's *The Selfish Giant* for Chicago Children's Theater, and a meditation on *Moby Dick*, with lyrics adapted from Melville's classic prose.

*“Hearing the songs of Michael Smith in this day and age is like reading an anthology of Hemingway's short stories after decades of only comic books. It's a realization that songs can hold a whole lot more than they're usually expected to hold, they can possess a genuine sense of place and time as evocative and magical as the finest literature.”*

PAUL ZOLLO, SONG TALK MAGAZINE

#### More about Michael:

[www.jamieoreilly.com](http://www.jamieoreilly.com) -or-  
[www.michaelsmithmusic.com](http://www.michaelsmithmusic.com)

#### Listen to Michael:

[www.cdbaby.com/cd/smithmichael](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/smithmichael)

#### For Bookings Contact:



#### Jamie O'Reilly

*A Voice for the Soul of the City*

#### J. O'Reilly Productions

Cultural Arts Consulting & Artist Management  
Website & Blog: [jamieoreilly.com](http://jamieoreilly.com)  
E: [jamie@jamieoreilly.com](mailto:jamie@jamieoreilly.com)  
Cell/Text 773.203.7661