

**we  
still  
can't  
say  
good  
bye**

A musicians'  
tribute to

**Chet  
Atkins**



***He spent his life cheering everybody else on...***

He just loved music and loved people that made it and would champion a young kid...or a young guitar player that would come along.

- *Vince Gill*



***When I heard his record on the radio, it stood out so much because it sounded better than everyone else.***

Just his tuning, his timing, his sound, his ideas, the quality of the recording was phenomenal to me...I really didn't have a clue what he was doing, but I just knew whatever that was, that's what I had to have, that's what I wanted to do.

- *Tommy Emmanuel*

He had a sound that was compelling and a way to play that was technically like "How do you do that kind of thing?"

***To learn Chet's style, it requires a lot of study, there's nothing easy about it.***

- *Bryan Sutton*



This project...is kind of a labor of love for me. I have wanted to do a tribute record to Chet Atkins for many years because

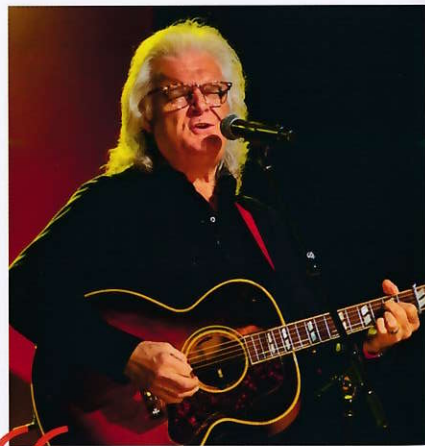
***he was such an inspiration, not only to me, but every guitar player in the world.***

- *Carl Jackson*



**“When Chet played the guitar, you felt every bit like you were hearing a singer...”**

- Sierra Hull



**“All of us that are guitar players, we admire and still love Chet so much**

**There was no one any more individual and unique as Chet was...**

- Ricky Skaggs



**“Chet could sound like three or four guitar players at one time.**

- Guthrie Trapp

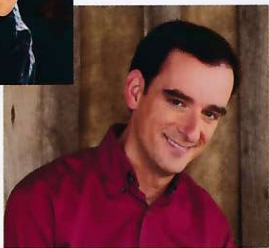


**“He had this dream for himself and he found a way to make it come true, and then he found a way to make it come true for everybody else.**

- John Knowles







He knew how to work with people in the studio.  
And above all... **the reason he did so much is because he was so loved, trusted, admired, and respected.**

- Dolly Parton

“



“

**To me, he's the father of the Nashville sound.**

He would take anybody under his wing and help 'em if he really believed in them...

- Brent Mason

The thing about musicians that I found in my life, is they all really like being around each other. They all support each other.

**There's a kind of a family that goes on... Chet was kind of the head of the family in a way...**

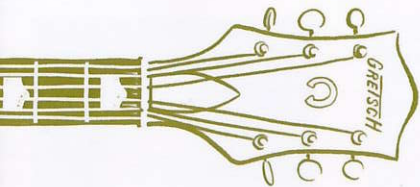
- Emmylou Harris



“

**If you wanted to work and you wanted your songs on the radio and wanted to have hit records, you talked to Chet Atkins.**

- Jerry Douglas



# *a few notes on what you're about to hear*

Chet Atkins. CGP.

Certified Guitar Player.

As if certification were necessary. Few guitarists in any genre were as influential and reached across styles as smoothly as the charming Atkins, who understood music on a cellular level – and created new styles of playing, picking with just his thumb and two, sometimes three fingers, while trying to emulate his own influence, Merle Travis. It's why his elegant 1955 album, containing his breakthrough “Mr. Sandman,” is called Eclectic Guitar.

Just as eclectic are those who would join Chet's growing sphere of influence. Eric Clapton. Earl Klugh. Johnny Winter. George Harrison. Vince Gill. Paul McCartney. Peter Frampton. Ricky Skaggs. Glen Campbell. Dave Edmunds. NRBQ.



Neck all speak to the way Atkins brought out the best in even the best. Not bad for a kid born in the East Tennessee mountains of Luttrell, who was enthralled by Travis and Django Reinhardt and got his first Sears Silvertone at 9. If the above – and his 13 Grammys, plus a Grammy Lifetime Achievement award, nine Country Music Association Instrumentalist of the Year awards from a three-award run

Tommy Emmanuel. Duane Eddy. Brian Setzer. Brad Paisley. Dickey Betts. Steve Wariner. Nick Lowe. Marty Stuart. Dick Dale. Then there are the records he made with Travis, Les Paul, Jerry Reed and Mark Knopfler. All masterclasses in not just playing, but the joy that music can offer. The Atkins-Travis Traveling Show, Chester & Lester, Me & Jerry, and Neck &





in the '60s, followed by six in the '80s – is beyond. His induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Billboard Century Award and Country Music Hall of Fame is almost unthinkable. But there's his career: as a producer,



label executive, and champion of talent. He may've gotten his start playing on local radio shows around the country, but his break came backing up Mother Maybelle Carter and daughters June, Anita and Helen in Knoxville. Asked to appear on the Grand Ole Opry, the group moved to Nashville. Atkins himself joined the Opry in 1950. His gift for bringing out the best in other musical beings was revealed.

Before long, he was consulting Gretsch Guitars, running and figuring out how to get the best sounds out of RCA Victor's Nashville Studios before being asked to run the label's Nashville division. Under his stewardship, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton, Waylon Jennings, Connie Smith, Bobby Bare, Reed and during a racially tumultuous time Charley Pride joined the label.

He and Owen Bradley also – in an attempt to thwart flagging sales – stripped the steel and fiddle off the tracks and added the Jordanaires and strings to create what became known as the Nashville Sound. Smoother, more sophisticated, country started crossing over to pop – and Atkins, who believed in music more than formats, was thrilled.

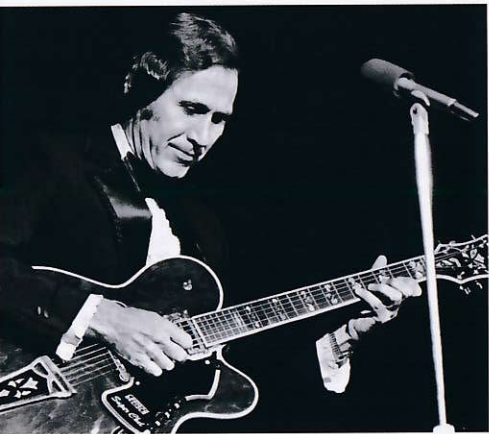
Half a century after starting his recording career, Atkins moved to Columbia Records. Already the youngest inductee into the Country Music Hall of Fame, he just kept making music. Sometimes jazz-leaning, other times Dire Straits-absorbing, there was room for plenty of playing when Atkins took a stage or went into the studio. It's what makes that six-pack of CMA Awards in the '80s so sweet.

Carl Jackson, himself no stranger to Grammy Awards, understands. One of the storied music man's acolytes, two decades after Atkins passing, he's bringing *We Still Can't Say Good-Bye* to fruition. Not merely a hot-picking homage to the legendary, almost instrument-defining legend – hear Ricky Skaggs' flying, no picks, just fingernails **"Yakety Axe"** for maximum impact, Jackson's fashioned a tribute that embraces the myriad aspects of Atkins'

storied career.

From Australian icon Tommy Emmanuel's opening **"Mr. Guitar"** through Bryan Sutton and Jerry Douglas' grassy **"Sleep Walk,"** James Taylor and Alison Krauss' yearning **"How's The World Treating You"** to Ashley Campbell's mirthful **"Alley Cat,"** as well as





session masters Brent Mason's velvety "**Lover Come Back**" and Guthrie Trapp's silken "**Caravan.**" it captivates. Vince Gill's aching vocal performance on "**I Still Can't Say Goodbye**" offers the depth of humanity that Atkins conjured across his career. Gill also teams with Clapton – who plays three different guitars -- and gospel/bluegrass vocalist Bradley Walker for a miraculous

**"So Sad (To Watch Good Love Go Bad),"** which allows the guitars to be as subtly potent as the voices. For while Atkins was a guitar man, it was because he knew properly played instruments could deliver as much emotional truth and impact as the voice.

That doesn't mean he didn't value the lyrics or singers. Sierra Hull, 5-time and counting International Bluegrass Music Association Mandolinist of the Year, matches her playing prowess with a shimmering vocal on "**All I Ever Need Is You.**"

All the colors of life, emotions, reality is what made Atkins – the player and the man – a master of nuance. Brad Paisley's "**Windy and Warm**" starts



straightforward, evolving into his own style, while Jackson's "**In His Hands**" is whimsy and history and John Knowles' guitar and Catherine Marx' piano "**The Entertainer**" says it all without a word. Gareth Pearson, "the Welsh Tornado" delivers a playful "**Mr. Sandman.**" Finally, "**Freight Train.**" the Guitar Country signature, delivered by an all-star collaboration of the Chester Bees. To hear Jackson, Clapton, Trapp, Sutton, and Campbell run one

into another, followed by Mason, Emmanuel, Skaggs, Hull, Gill, Jackson's protege Isaac Moore, Knowles, Paisley, Jensen and Pearson, is to understand how deep this man's legacy reaches. Fluid, delicious, evocative, jazzy, measured, free, it made Atkins' mark on music so important and unique.

- **Holly Gleason,**  
**Nashville, TN**





## Mr. Guitar

Emmanuel [3:17]

© 1959 Universal Music Publishing  
Pty. Ltd. (APRA)

### Tommy Emmanuel C.G.P. & Michael Cleveland

Acoustic Guitars: Tommy Emmanuel C.G.P.  
Fiddle: Michael Cleveland  
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman  
Bass: Kevin Grantt

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## Lover Come Back To Me

Hammerstein/Romberg [2:38]

© 1928 Williamson Music Company/  
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(BMI), WC Music Corp. (ASCAP)

### Brent Mason

Electric Guitar: Brent Mason  
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman  
Bass: Kevin Grantt  
Piano: Catherine Marx

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## Alley Cat

Bjorn [2:29]

© 1962 Music Sales Corporation (ASCAP)

### Ashley Campbell & Thor Jensen

Electric Guitar: Ashley Campbell  
Electric Guitar: Thor Jensen  
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman  
Bass: Kevin Grantt  
Piano: Catherine Marx

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## So Sad (To Watch Good Love Go Bad)

Everly [3:25]

© 1960 Tropicbird Music (BMI)

### Vince Gill & Bradley Walker featuring Eric Clapton

Lead Vocal: Bradley Walker  
Duet Vocal: Vince Gill  
Harmony Vocal: Carl Jackson  
Acoustic Guitar: Eric Clapton  
Electric Guitars: Eric Clapton  
Gut String Guitar: Carl Jackson  
Steel Guitar: Mike Johnson  
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman  
Bass: Kevin Grantt

(cont.)

Piano: Catherine Marx

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## Yakety Axe

Randolph/Rich [2:00]

© 1958 Sony Tree Publishing (BMI)

### Ricky Skaggs with Charlie McCoy

Acoustic Guitar: Ricky Skaggs  
Harmonica: Charlie McCoy  
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman  
Bass: Kevin Grantt  
Piano: Catherine Marx

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## Sleepwalk

Farina/Farina/Farina [3:43]

© 1959 Trio Music Company/Carbert  
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Company/Aniraf Inc. (BMI)

### Jerry Douglas & Bryan Sutton

Acoustic Guitar: Bryan Sutton  
Dobro: Jerry Douglas  
Bass: Dennis Crouch

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## In His Hands

Jackson [4:30]

© 2001 Colonel Rebel Music (ASCAP)

### Carl Jackson

Lead Vocal: Carl Jackson  
Gut String Guitar: Carl Jackson  
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman  
Bass: Kevin Grantt  
Piano: Catherine Marx  
Violins: David Davidson & David Angell  
Viola: Kristin Wilkinson  
Cello: Carole Rabinowitz  
String Arrangement by: David Davidson

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## Mr. Sandman

Ballard [2:13]

© 1954 Edwin H. Morris & Company  
(BMI)

### Gareth Pearson

Acoustic Guitar: Gareth Pearson  
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman  
Bass: Kevin Grantt  
Keyboard: Catherine Marx

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## Windy And Warm

Loudermilk [2:25]

© 1961 Loudermilk Music (BMI)

### Brad Paisley

Electric Guitar: Brad Paisley

Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman

Bass: Kevin Grantt

Piano: Catherine Marx

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## How's The World Treating You

Atkins/Bryant [3:17]

© 1956 Sony Acuff Rose Music (BMI)

### James Taylor & Alison Krauss

Lead Vocal: Alison Krauss

Duet Vocal: James Taylor

Gut String Guitar: Carl Jackson

Acoustic Guitar: Carl Jackson

Steel Guitar: Mike Johnson

Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman

Bass: Kevin Grantt

Piano: Catherine Marx

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## Caravan

Ellington/Mills/Tizol [3:51]

© 1936 Sony Harmony (ASCAP), EMI  
Mills Music Inc. (ASCAP)

### Guthrie Trapp

Electric Guitar: Guthrie Trapp

Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman

Bass: Kevin Grantt

Piano: Catherine Marx

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## All I Ever Need Is You

Holiday/Reeves [3:28]

© 1971 EMI U Catalog Inc. (ASCAP)

### Sierra Hull

Lead Vocal: Sierra Hull

Harmony Vocal: Carl Jackson

Acoustic Guitar: Sierra Hull

Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman

Bass: Kevin Grantt

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## The Entertainer

Joplin [2:22]

© 1975 Sony Tree Publishing (BMI)

### John Knowles C.G.P. with Catherine Marx

Gut String Guitar: John Knowles C.G.P.

Piano: Catherine Marx

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## I Still Can't Say Goodbye

Blinn/Moore [4:01]

© 2008 Ocean Street Music (BMI)

### Vince Gill

Lead Vocal: Vince Gill

Gut String Guitar: Carl Jackson

Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman

Bass: Kevin Grantt

Piano: Catherine Marx

Steel Guitar: Mike Johnson

Violins: David Davidson & David Angell

Viola: Kristin Wilkinson

Cello: Carole Rabinowitz

String Arrangement by: David Davidson

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## Freight Train

© 1957 Figs D Music/Sanga Music Inc  
(BMI)

### The Chester Bees

Gut String Guitar: Carl Jackson, John  
Knowles C.G.P.

Electric Guitar: Ashley Campbell, Carl Jackson,  
Thor Jensen, Brent Mason, Isaac Moore, Brad  
Paisley, Guthrie Trapp

Acoustic Guitar: Eric Clapton, Tommy

Emmanuel C.G.P., Vince Gill, Sierra Hull,

Gareth Pearson, Ricky Skaggs, Bryan Sutton

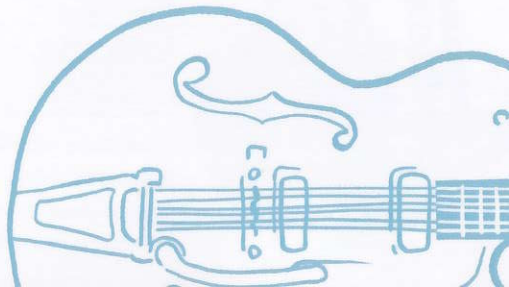
Drums & Percussion: Tony Creasman

Bass: Kevin Grantt

Piano: Catherine Marx

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# thank you's acknowledgements credits



**Special Thanks to:** Martin Fischer and Kathryn Russ at Opry Entertainment for their extraordinary support and total embrace to make this a genuine tribute.

A warm and grateful nod goes out to Ryman Auditorium, Circle Network, Country Music Hall of Fame, Chet Atkins Appreciation Society and so many in the Nashville music community for being at our side every step of the way.

Produced by Carl Jackson

Executive Producers: Rodger Glaspey & Ken Leister

Co-Executive Producers: Alice Sells, Gary Janzen & Toyo Shimano

Engineered by Luke Wooten

Recorded at Station West, Nashville, TN

Eric Clapton Guitars Recorded by Simon Climie

Vinyl Pressing: RTI, Mastering by Ryan K. Smith

Marketing, Album Creative & Design Direction:

Gary Janzen, Janzen Brands

Album Design & Illustration: Darren Johnson

Liner Notes by Holly Gleason

Chet Atkins Story by Robert Oermann

Guitar Photography: John Farrell

Printing: Microforum Services Group

Publicity: Mitch Schneider & Lyndie Wenner, SRO PR

Vince Gill, Brad Paisley, James Taylor and Alison Krause appear courtesy of Universal Music Group

Michael Cleveland appears courtesy of Compass Records

Ricky Skaggs appears courtesy of Skaggs Family Records

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When Chet presented his "Certified Guitar Player" (C.G.P.) award to Jerry Reed, Steve Wariner, Tommy Emmanuel, John Knowles, and Paul Yandell, he was specifically qualified to do so. After all, he was only passing along the certification that God had clearly bestowed upon himself. Chester B. Atkins was a hero and inspiration to every one of us "pickers" across all genres.

*- Carl Jackson, Producer*

