

RED HOUSE RECORDS

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CLIFF EBERHARDT 500 Miles: The Blue Rock Sessions

RHR-CD-221 • Release Date: September 15, 2009

An intimate album recorded at the legendary Blue Rock Studios in the Texas Hill Country!



"a soulful steam"
- *USA Today*

"Eberhardt sings with passion and with wit"
- *The New York Post*

Red House Records is pleased to announce the September 15, 2009 release of *500 Miles: The Blue Rock Sessions*, the new album from soulful songwriter **Cliff Eberhardt**. A deeply personal album, it follows his critically acclaimed *The High Above and the Down Below*, which was named the **#5 album of the year by USA Today**. This new album proves what his last indicated--that Cliff is in the midst of a personal and artistic renaissance.

Tucked away in the Texas Hill Country, Cliff recorded the twelve tracks to *500 Miles* at the legendary **Blue Rock Studio** with some of Austin's hottest players, including guitarist **Mike Hardwick** (Eliza Gilkyson, Jon Dee Graham, Kelly Willis), bassist **Glenn Fukunaga** (Alejandro Escovedo, Ruthie Foster), drummer **Rick Richards** (Mary Gauthier, Tom Russell, Slaid Cleaves), the Band of Heathens' **Colin Brooks** and famed accordion player **Joel Guzman** (Joe Ely, Los Super Seven). With these fine musicians and acclaimed producer **Billy Crockett** at the helm, the recording is flavored by the many sounds of Texas--Americana blues, Tex-Mex and soulful roadhouse ballads.

Cliff lived in Wimberley, Texas during the many months of recording, and the album captures the open space and creative spirit that flourishes at Blue Rock. In addition to housing an impressive high-end recording studio, Blue Rock hosts a popular concert series and publishes *The Blue Rock Review*, an annual journal of visual art, essays and poetry about the creative process.

In the tradition of Texas' greatest troubadours (Townes Van Zandt, Willie Nelson, Guy Clark, Jimmy LaFave), Cliff delivers *500 Miles*, a road album that swaggers with passion and humor. Starting off with a fresh take on the **Hedy West** classic "**500 Miles**" and continuing through his own powerful originals, Cliff takes us on a journey that ends with a poignant reworking of his 1990 hit "**The Long Road**." Featuring Texas singer **Karen Mal** on harmony vocals, this new version is made richer with the insight that age brings. "I wrote 'The Long Road' twenty years ago in Italy," Cliff says in the liner notes. "I was on tour with Richie Havens and he ended up doing the song with me as a duet on my first CD. I still love that recording. I did a new take on the song because after playing the song for twenty years it has changed as I have."

Like "The Long Road," the whole CD is a journey of people and places loved and lost. Highlights include the romping romantic ballad "**I Want to Take You Home**," the humorous "**I Love Money**," his heartbraking "**Have a Little Heart**" and his cover of **John Hiatt's "Back of My Mind**." An album of sonic superiority and first-rate songwriting, *500 Miles: The Blue Rock Sessions* shows that Cliff's long musical road has led him to making this--his finest recording to date.

Cliff is currently touring in support of his new album, and his full schedule can be found at www.cliffeberhardt.net or www.myspace.com/cliffeberhardt.

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BIOGRAPHY

Cliff Eberhardt knew by age seven that he was going to be a singer and songwriter. Growing up in Berwyn, Pennsylvania, he and his brothers sang together and their parents played instruments. His dad introduced him to the guitar and he quickly taught himself to play. Fortunate enough to live close to the Main Point (one of the best folk clubs on the East Coast), he cut his teeth listening to the likes of James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Bruce Springsteen, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Bonnie Raitt, and Mississippi John Hurt — receiving an early and impressive tutorial in acoustic music. At the same time, he was also listening to great pop songwriters like Cole Porter, the Gershwins, and Rodgers and Hart, which explain his penchant for great melodies and clever lyrical twists.

At fifteen, Cliff and his brother Geoff began touring as an acoustic duo, playing the Eastern club circuit until Cliff turned twenty-one and moved to Carbondale, Illinois. There he found space to develop his own voice within a vibrant and supportive music scene that included Shawn Colvin. After a couple of years there and a short stay in Colorado, Cliff moved to New York in 1978.

Because the clubs were great (the Bitter End, the Speakeasy, Kenny's Castaway, Folk City) and the company amazing (**John Gorka, Suzanne Vega, Lucy Kaplansky, Julie Gold, Steve Forbert, Christine Lavin, and Shawn Colvin**), New York was an ideal musician's boot camp. Though he put in long hours as a taxi driver, Cliff worked steadily on his music throughout the 80's, doing solo gigs and studio work, and playing guitar on the road with **Richie Havens, Melanie** and others. Singing advertising jingles for products like Coke, Miller Beer and Chevrolet ("The Heartbeat of America" campaign) allowed him to devote more time to his songwriting.

In 1990 Cliff's song "My Father's Shoes," appeared on Windham Hill's Legacy collection, leading to a deal with the label. They released Cliff's first album, *The Long Road* (1990), a work featuring a duet with Richie Havens. The critical response to this debut was outstanding (*The Philadelphia Inquirer* called the album a "repeatedly astounding collection"). He followed with two more records on Windham Hill before releasing **12 Songs of Good and Evil** (1997) on Red House Records, which stemmed from a chance meeting with Red House founder Bob Feldman at John Gorka's wedding. Cliff recorded two more albums before his critically acclaimed ***The High Above and the Down Below***, named the **#5 album of 2007** by *USA Today*. Produced by legendary musician and Red House Records president **Eric Peltoniemi**, it was recorded in Minneapolis with noted jazz players **Gordy Johnson, J. T. Bates** and **Rich Dworsky** and was his first album after spending several years recovering from a car accident. With a new lease on life and a fresh batch of songs, Cliff embarked on what has turned out to be an artistic renaissance. Recorded in the Texas Hill Country, Cliff's new album **500 Miles: The Blue Rock Sessions** may be his finest to date. An intimate album of powerful originals and unique covers, it features a reworking of his hit "The Long Road," a song made more poignant after nearly two decades of touring and recording.

Long one of the most respected songwriters on the club scene, his peers often mine his catalog for themselves. Cliff's song "Memphis" was included on ***Cry Cry Cry***, an album of collaborative covers by the "folk supergroup" of the same name (comprised of **Dar Williams, Lucy Kaplansky** and **Richard Shindell**). Other performers who have recorded his songs include Richie Havens, Shawn Colvin, **Russ Taff** and **Buffy Sainte Marie**. A collection of his songs has been published in *The Cliff Eberhardt Songbook* (Cherry Lane Publishing).

RED HOUSE DISCOGRAPHY

500 Miles: The Blue Rock Sessions (2009)

The High Above and the Down Below (2007)

School For Love (2002)

Borders (1999)

12 Songs of Good and Evil (1997)

QUOTES

“in one word, perfection. Cliff Eberhardt is on the brink of becoming a major recording artist.”

—*Maverick*

“one of contemporary folk’s greatest songwriters”

—*Sing Out!*

“Eberhardt has a weary, timeless voice...full of soul and subtle humor.”

—*Examiner*

“eloquent and compelling, producing the kind of album that puts many other singer-songwriters to shame”

—*Rock ‘n’ Reel*

“a real guitar master”

—*New Hampshire Public Radio*

“Eberhardt is as welcome as iced tea in August.”

—*People*

“the arrangements conjure up a moody, adult sound, mostly shadow-covered meditations on love’s broken promise...something like Frank Sinatra if he were Fred Neil”

—*Rambles.net*

“Eberhardt is better than ever, Steve McQueening his way into your heart at about ninety-eight miles an hour, kicking ass with fresh insight and new ways to lament old yearnings.”

—*Philly Rock Guide*

“like Tom Waits without the cigarette throat”

—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“One of the most talented musicians on the solo acoustic circuit... full of well-crafted songs and rich, emotional vocals.”

—*Seattle Post Intelligencer*

“In a field of sensitive, new-age guys, Eberhardt digs deeper into life’s complexities and discovers much more compelling things to celebrate.”

—*The Boston Phoenix*

“Melding pop, rock, and folk styles into a rich melange, Eberhardt fits gracefully and solidly in the singer/songwriter niche.”

—*Seattle Weekly*

“Eberhardt is a superb singer, with a vast credible range of emotions, and a soulfulness that draws from rock and pop, but also from the best folk ballad styles.”

—*The Boston Globe*

“With a lyrical mix of resentment and respect, a strong strum and a voice as angry as it is pretty, Cliff Eberhardt blows the world’s [sensitive, soft-hearted singer-songwriters] out of the water.”

—*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

“If life were fair and stardom based on raw talent, Cliff Eberhardt would be a household name.”

—*The Washington Times*