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4 To Watch For
Writer: Rob Cooper
Issue 15

4 To Watch For: Mark Geary

On the Road Again

The spirit of Jack Kerouac must've possessed Mark Geary when he took his show on the road, leaving behind what seemed like the ultimate gig. Geary—who'd left Dublin, Ireland, in 1992, NYC-bound—landed a spot playing at his brother's coffeehouse, Sine-é, a quaint little Irish joint on St. Marks Place in New York's East Village. At the historic venue, Geary often opened for Jeff Buckley. But instead of staying put and trying to impress label execs, he opted to criss-cross the world playing to crowds of both MTV spring-breaking frat boys in Barbados and Buckley-worshippers in Dublin.

"As a songwriter, the most important component of all was that I wanted to be kind of a dusty road warrior," says Geary. "I thought that was necessary as part of the equation that I lived on the road—a sort of country-and-western or hippie notion that that's what it meant to be a songwriter."

To Geary, staying close to home base "doesn't make you any better as a writer or performer." He's been traveling and playing so long that when it came time to make a second album, he cut the whole thing with relative ease. "There comes a point when you've gone and you've literally done a thousand gigs and you're kind of on top of your game," says Geary.

His sophomore album, *Ghosts*—sweet, melodic and altogether enchanting—is fondly reminiscent of Buckley, with breathy angel-voiced lyrics on "Up & Up" and twangy guitar on "Morphine." "I think what I got from [Buckley is] that you bring yourself up to the stage, you bring yourself up to the table, and you say, 'this is who I am,'" Geary says. "So anything that comes after this is a bonus."

Moving forward in true Kerouac fashion, with plenty new experiences under his belt, Geary is ready to find new places to visit and new audiences to play to. Even he doesn't know where his current tour will end, but his instincts to leave Ireland, then New York haven't steered him wrong yet. "I think I'm gonna be OK. I'm just gonna be taken care of," he says. "I just have that sense about it."



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