

The Yummy List
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The Pilgrim: A Tribute To Kris Kristofferson – Various

He has led a life writ large: Rhodes Scholar, movie star, helicopter pilot, wildcatter, activist and especially songwriter. Here on this American Roots Publishing tribute, the man who gave romance to redneck living and dignity to cracked hippie reason is feted with bruised and heart-racing renditions of some of his best loved songs: Gretche Wilson's "Sunday Morning Coming Down" as real and raw as anything out there, while Rosanne Cash's "Loving Him Was Easier Than Anything I'll Ever Do Again" is elegant and silken even as its stained with equal parts regret and wow -- and Brian McKnight's "Me and Bobby McGee" pushes the roadweary classic into an easy soul lament.

Versatility and veracity mark Kristofferson's work -- and this survey of who Kristofferson is to the roots acts that matter is a fitting witness. Emmylou Harris, Todd Snider, Rodney Crowell, Patty Griffin, Shooter Jennings, Bruce Robison and Kelly Willis, Randy Scruggs, Lloyd Cole and Jill Sobule, Willie Nelson and a code of Kristofferson's 1970 demo of "Please Don't Tell Me How The Story Ends." Brilliantly cast, better executed, a wonder to search out.