

Andy May

**SINGER. SONGWRITER. GUITARIST.
MANDOLINIST. PRODUCER.
EDUCATOR.**

ANDY MAY: MUSICIAN AND MENTOR

By his twentieth birthday, Andy had played **Carnegie Hall** and won the legendary **Union Grove Grand Championship on guitar** at the Union Grove, NC Fiddler's Convention. He has appeared with artists as diverse as **Pete Seeger, Merle Haggard, Nickel Creek, Brownie McGee & Sonny Terry, and John Hartford** in a career spanning five decades and three regions of the nation.

"...His manner is easygoing and conversational. He not only shares his music with students, but also the creative process through which songs are written and instruments are mastered."

—Joan Gardner, Cultural Organization of the Arts, Rhode Island

As an educator, Andy's relaxed, common-sense approach to teaching is rooted in his background in developmental learning, his interest in creative problem-solving, and his career as a musician. Building on his **degree in Fine Arts and Art Education**, he has taught thousands of people to play guitar and mandolin, has been an **Artist-in-Residence** in schools throughout the Northeast, and has led **seminars for youth and adults** across the nation on such topics as creativity, performance skills, music history, and balancing life and the music business. He is a yearly performer and educator at major festivals like **MerleFest** and **Winfield** and a regular workshop contributor to the **Country Music Hall of Fame**.

Andy also started and runs the **IBMA award-winning** label, Swift River Music.



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Andy May's Acoustic Kids Showcases

Andy May's *Acoustic Kids Showcases* are **festival-based non-competitive performance opportunities** for young musicians, beginner through pro. A festival setting ensures an interested, supportive audience. In turn, the audience is treated to an Opry-style stream of entertainers, each performer doing 1-3 numbers. Andy facilitates the on-stage dialogue in the role of emcee, mentor, and educator, putting the young performers at ease with his laid-back style and genuine interest in their accomplishments.

Hundreds of young musicians have participated in *Acoustic Kids* over the years, some of them going on to become professional musicians and/or champion instrumentalists, including **Chris Thile, Sara Watkins and Sean Watkins** of Nickel Creek.

Andy May's *Acoustic Kids* has become a much-loved tradition at major music festivals, such as **MerleFest** and the **Walnut Valley Festival**, over the past 25 years.

"Andy has a remarkable ability to make kids feel welcomed and valued as a person and as a musical contributor. Not only does the program give kids good memories, but as they grow up they'll remember that their contribution is important." – Sara Watkins of Nickel Creek