

Lee Murdock has uncovered a boundless body of music and stories in the Great Lakes. There is an amazing timelessness to this music. Great Lakes songs are made of hard work, hard living, ships that go down and ships that come in.

The music is grounded in the work song tradition, from the rugged days of lumberjacks and wooden sailing schooners. Murdock comes alongside with ballads of contemporary commerce and revelry in the grand folk style.

Murdock has been compared to the late Canadian songwriter, Stan Rogers, with a singing voice and a respect for musical traditions that is reminiscent of the great Burl Ives. Indeed, his repertoire is a seamless blend of the old work songs, mixed with his own original compositions and the work of songwriters such as Shel Silverstein, Woody Guthrie, Pat Dailey, Larry Penn and others.

On the traditional side, Murdock draws heavily on the archives of authentic sailing songs collected in the early twentieth century. Housed at the University of Michigan, Professor Ivan Walton's collection of songs of the Great Lakes sailors was unpublished until 2002, when Detroit journalist Joe Grimm completed Walton's work, published by the Wayne State University Press and titled, *Windjammers, Songs of the Great Lakes Sailors*. Murdock's contribution of the musical scores to the text filled a long-missing link in North American folklore and song.

While other musicians have revived some of the songs collected by Walton, Lee Murdock has been the primary artist in bringing these songs to life, and audiences have readily embraced these new, "old" songs and asked for more. In addition to his contributions to the Walton book, Murdock has released twelve CDs between 1980-2006, and two CDs with accompanying books. His *Lake Rhymes, Folk Songs of the Great Lakes Region*, is a 144-page book with 18 songs, over 70 historic photos and illustrations, and classroom-ready exercises to meet learning objectives in history, music, social studies, geography and language arts. It is available from Lee's web site, www.leemurdock.com or from Amazon.com.

With a deeper understanding of the folk process, Lee's repertoire combines historical research and contemporary insights. Making folk music for the modern era, Lee Murdock's work is a documentary and also an anthem to the people who live, work, learn and play along the freshwater highways of North America.



**"A fine job of recreating history and holding it up to a poet's light."
-Sing Out! Magazine**

"History, mood, wonderful arranging. Murdock's intelligence and detail are a joy to listen to."

-George Francis Maida, WCVB Radio, Richmond, VA

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