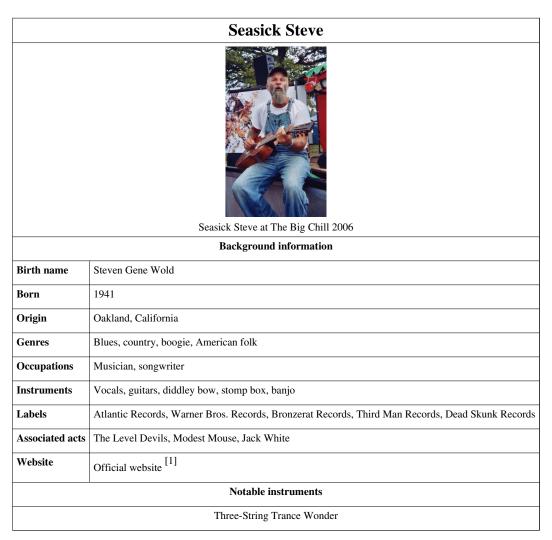
Seasick Steve



Steven Gene Wold, commonly known as **Seasick Steve**, (born 1941)^{[2] [3] [4]} is an American blues musician. He plays (mostly personalized) guitars, and sings, usually about his early life doing casual work.^[5]

Life and career

Childhood and early life

Wold was born in Oakland, California, USA. [6] When he was four years old, his parents split up. His father played boogie-woogie piano and at five or six years old, Wold tried to learn but could not. At age eight, he learned to play the guitar (he later found out that it was blues) from K. C. Douglas, who worked at his grandfather's garage. [7] Douglas wrote the song "Mercury Blues" and used to play with Tommy Johnson. Wold left home at 13 to avoid abuse at the hands of his stepfather, and lived rough and on the road in Tennessee, Mississippi and elsewhere, until 1973. [6] [8] He would travel long distances by hopping freight trains, looking for work as a farm labourer or in other seasonal jobs, often living as a hobo. [7] [9] At various times, Wold worked as a carnie, cowboy and a migrant worker.

Of this time he once said:

Hobos are people who move around looking for work, tramps are people who move around but don't look for work, and bums are people who don't move and don't work. I've been all three. [10]

Adult life and early musical career

In the 1960s, he started touring and performing with fellow blues musicians, and had friends in the music scene including Janis Joplin ^[7] and Joni Mitchell.^[8] Since then, he has worked, on and off, as a session musician and studio engineer. In the late 1980s, while living in Olympia, near Seattle, he worked with many indie label artists.^[8] Kurt Cobain was a friend.^[11] In the 1990s he continued to work as a recording engineer and producer, producing several releases by Modest Mouse^[12] including their 1996 debut album *This Is a Long Drive for Someone with Nothing to Think About*. In Dutch newspaper 'The Telegraaf' of May 31 2011 Steve denies this saying (in translation): Net als iedereen zag ik hem wel eens lopen en zei dan 'hallo'. Dat maakt ons toch geen vrienden? "Just like everybody else I saw him pass by in the street and said hello to him. That doesn't make us friends". Regarding his 'friendship' with Janis Joplin (same source): "We both lived in San Fransisco in the sixties. Period".

At one time, living in Paris, Wold made his living busking, mostly on the metro. [3] After moving to Norway in 2001, Wold released his first album, entitled *Cheap*, recorded with The Level Devils (Jo Husmo on stand-up bass and Kai Christoffersen on drums) as his rhythm section. His debut solo album, *Dog House Music* was released by Bronzerat Records on 26 November 2006, after he was championed by an old friend, Joe Cushley, DJ on the Ballin' The Jack blues show on London radio station Resonance FM.

Breakthrough and subsequent career



Seasick Steve performing in 2009 at the Hard Rock Calling festival in London's Hyde Park.

Wold made his first UK television appearance on Jools Holland's 'Annual Hootenanny' BBC TV show (broadcast on New Year's Eve 2006) where he performed a live rendition of "Dog House Boogie" on the 'Three String Trance Wonder' and the 'Mississippi Drum Machine' (see below). After that show his popularity exploded in Britain, as he explained in an interview:^[9]

I can't believe it, all of the sudden I'm like the cat's meow!

He was well received in the UK, winning the 2007 MOJO Award for Best Breakthrough Act and going on to appear at major UK festivals such as Reading, Leeds and Glastonbury. In 2007 he played more UK festivals than any other artist.

Wold toured early in 2008, playing in various venues and festivals in the UK. He was joined on stage by drummer Dan Magnusson. KT Tunstall also dueted with Wold at one concert (Astoria, London, 24 January 2008). Wold also played many other festivals throughout the world in 2008, including Fuji Rock in Japan, East Coast Blues & Roots Music Festival in Australia (also in April 2008), [13] and Roskilde in Denmark. [14]

Wold's major-label debut, *I Started Out With Nothin and i Still Got Most of it Left* was recorded with Dan Magnusson on drums, was released by Warner Music on 29 September 2008 and features Ruby Turner and Nick Cave's Grinderman.^[15]

He has toured the UK extensively since 2007 being supported by Duke Garwood, Gemma Ray, The Sugars, Billie the Vision and the Dancers in January 2008, Amy LaVere in October 2008 (Melody Nelson at the Brighton Dome on 7 October) and Joe Gideon & The Shark in January 2009. His tours in October 2008 and January 2009 were all sold out and included performances at the Royal Albert Hall, The Edinburgh Queens Hall, the Grand Opera House in Belfast, the Apollo in Manchester, the City Hall in Newcastle and the London Hammersmith Apollo. [16] [17] [18]

In 2009, Wold was nominated for a Brit Award in the category of International Solo Male Artist, [19] That same year, BBC Four broadcast a documentary of Wold visiting the southern USA entitled *Seasick Steve: Bringing It All Back Home*. [20] On 21 January, Wold hosted "Folk America: Hollerers, Stompers and Old Time Ramblers" at the Barbican in London, a show that was also televised and shown with the documentary on BBC Four as part of a series tracing American roots music. [21] [22]

Seasick Steve participated on Australian television show *Spicks and Specks* in April 2009, wearing a beaten up John Deere cap. Wold admitted to having enough money to finally buy a model 60 John Deere Tractor, and joked that he could now really hold up traffic, a reference to the joke of his 51 Chevy breaking down at a music festival and requiring a push from members of the Icelandic band Sigur Rós.



Seasick Steve performing in 2009 at the Hard Rock Calling festival in London's Hyde Park.

In an interview with an Australian magazine, Seasick Steve attributes much of his unlikely success to his cheap and weather-beaten guitar, 'The Trance Wonder' and reveals the guitar's mojo might come from supernatural sources. "I got it from Sherman, who is a friend of mine down in Mississippi, who had bought it down at a goodwill store. When we were down there last time he says to me, 'I didn't tell you when you bought it off me, but that guitar used to be haunted'. I say, 'What are you talking about, Sherman?'. He says, 'There's 50 solid citizens here in Como who'll tell you this guitar is haunted. It's the darnedest thing — we'd leave it over in the potato barn and we'd come back in and it would be moved. You'd put it down somewhere and the next morning you'd come back and it would have moved. When you took that guitar the ghost in the barn left'. He told me this not very long ago and I said to him, 'Sherman! Why didn't you tell me this before?' and he said, 'Well the ghost was gone — I didn't want it around here no more!'" [23]

On 3 January 2010, Seasick Steve appeared on the popular BBC motoring show *Top Gear* as the Star In A Reasonably Priced Car. He was the last star to drive in the blue Chevrolet Lacetti. ^[24]

In February 2010, Seasick Steve was nominated for a Brit Award in the category of International Solo Male Artist for the second consecutive year. [25]

In 2010, Seasick Steve made numerous festival appearances throughout the summer, including the Pyramid Stage at the Glastonbury Festival, [26] the main stage at V Festival [27], the main stage at the Hop Farm Festival and many more. [28]

In February 2011, Seasick Steve signed to Play It Again Sam to release his new album with the exception of the US, where it will be released on Third Man Records. Subsequently his new album You Can't Teach An Old Dog New Tricks was released on his new labels and it was announced that ex Led Zeplin bassist had played on the new album, and appeared to promote the new album and thus performing with the duo.^[29] This has caused some to believe that he will tour with Steve as a part of his backing band, joining his current drummer Dan.

Musical equipment

Wold owns (and plays) several obscure and personalised instruments, including:

• The **Three-String Trance Wonder** — This is a normal guitar that resembles a Fender Coronado or a Teisco EP-7, but with only three strings. It has an old Harmony pickup added (with duct tape) and is tuned to G, A and B using an E string in the A position, a D in the G position and a G in the B position. At his gigs, he often tells the story that he bought it for \$75 in this condition in Como, Mississippi from a man named Sherman, who later told him he only paid \$25 for it the day before. Wold vowed never to add another string, and that he would tour the world telling his story of how Sherman ripped him off. [9] All in good fun as Sherman Cooper is a good buddy, who gave him the guitar having had it nailed to the wall as a decoration. [8] A lot of the time he also adds (while

picking up or putting away the guitar) that it is the "...biggest piece of shit in the world, I swear." On a BBC interview Steve claims that the guitar was found by a friend of him, just with the three strings on it. So he decided to keep it that way

- The One-Stringed Diddley Bow This is a one stringed string instrument played with a slide (He uses an old screwdriver for this purpose). It consists of a 2-foot-long (0.61 m) 2x4, with a semi-loose piece of broom wire nailed to it at both ends. It was made especially for him by James 'Super Chikan' Johnson.
- The 'MDM' (Mississippi Drum Machine) A small wooden box that is stomped upon, providing percussion. It is decorated with a Mississippi motorcycle license plate ("MC33583"), and a small piece of carpet. [8]
- **Roland CUBE Amplifier** Placed on a chair to his left and set to the 'tweed' setting. [30]
- The **Morris Minor Guitar** When on the TV show *Top Gear*, presenter Jeremy Clarkson commented that Steve's car history of over 100 cars included a Morris Minor. Steve then presented a 4-string guitar that his friend had made out of two old hub caps from the Minor joined back-to-back, playing it a little in the episode. Jeremy Clarkson replied that it was the best use of a Morris Minor he had ever seen.

Nickname

When asked about his nickname, Wold has said: "because it's just true: I always get seasick." When he was ill on a ferry in Norway, later in his life, a friend began playfully using the name and, despite Wold not rising to it for a while, it stuck. When asked about his name on British Sunday morning television show, Something for the Weekend, he replied, "I get sick on boats, that's it!" [7] [9] [31]

Personal life

Wold married his second wife, Elisabeth, in 1982 and together they have three grown-up sons. Wold has problems putting down roots in one place, and he and his wife have lived in 59 houses to date. They currently live in Norway and the UK.^[8]

One of Wold's sons, Didrik, is an illustrator who is responsible for designing all of Steve's album artwork, merchandise, print ads, and websites. His youngest son, Paul Martin Wold, played drums on Dog House Music and first made a guest appearance with him on percussion/drums at the Astoria in January, 2008 and has since performed with Seasick Steve frequently, playing washboard, shakers, tambourine, floor tom and occasionally guitar. He also works as Steve's guitar-tech. Paul Martin Wold, aka Wishful Thinking will be releasing his debut album 'A Waste of Time Well Spent' on November 2, 2009 and will showcase a selection from the album whilst touring the UK with Seasick Steve. [33]

Discography

Studio albums

Album Title	Album details	Chart positions						
		AUS [34]	BEL (FLA) [35]	FRA [36]	IRE [37]	NL [38]	SWE [39]	UK [40]
Cheap	Released: 2004 Label: Bronzerat Records	_	_	_	_	_	_	198
Dog House Music	Released: 27 November 2006Label: Bronzerat Records	_	99	_	69	_	_	36
I Started Out with Nothin and I Still Got Most of It Left	Released: 29 September 2008Label: Warner Bros. Records	17	38	107	13	_	30	9
Man from Another Time	Released: 19 October 2009Label: Warner Bros. Records	_	13	191	15	_	_	4
You Can't Teach An Old Dog New Tricks	Released: 27 May 2011Label: Play It Again Sam	<u> </u>				6		

Compilation albums

Album Title	Album details	Chart positions
		UK [40]
Songs For Elisabeth [41]	Released: 5 February 2010	33
3	Label: Atlantic Records, Rykodisc	

EPs

Album Title	Album details	
It's All Good	Released: 17 June 2007	
	Label: Bronzerat Records	

Singles

Year	Single	Peak chart positions		sitions	Album
		UK	UK Indep	US	
2007	"Dog House Boogie"	187	_	_	Dog House Music
2008	"Cut My Wings"	151	_	_	
	"It's All Good"	_	5		non-album single
	"St. Louis Slim"	_	_		I Started Out with Nothin
2009	"Walkin' Man"	_	_		and I Still Got Most of It Left
	"That's All"	_	_	_	Man from Another Time

Backing Band

Current Members

- Dan Magnusson Drums, percussion (2008–Present) [42]
- John Paul Jones Bass Guitar (2011–present)^[43]

Former members, as 'The Level Devils'

- Jo Husmo Bass Guitar (200?–Present)
- Kai Christoffersen Drums, Percussion (2004)
- Dan Magnusson Drums, Percussion (2004–2006)

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External links

- Official website (http://www.seasicksteve.com)
- Official Facebook page (http://www.facebook.com/seasicksteve)
- Official YouTube Channel (http://www.youtube.com/seasickstevevevo)
- Official MySpace page (http://www.myspace.com/seasicksteve)
- Seasick Steve interview at musicOMH (http://www.musicomh.com/music/features/seasick-steve_0908.htm)
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- Hobo-Low: Seasick Steve Appreciation Forum (http://www.hobo-low.com)
- Record Label Bronzerat recordings (http://www.bronzerat.com)

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