

Combine **Bob Dylan** and **Tom Lehrer** and you get **Loudon Wainwright III**. Do it on a shoestring budget and record it over an old **Dead Milkmen Tape** and you get Adam Brodsky.

Adam sings and strums the same way he writes "relentlessly and without compromise" saying what everyone else wishes they could say. His music is a voice for oppressed rights, oppressed cubicle workers and oppressed boyfriends everywhere, writing with a brash sense of humor and a healthy respect for the roots of American Folk Music.

That respect has been highlighted this year. Adam spent the summer presenting a program called "**A Brief History of Folk Music**" at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia. Co-Sponsored by **Smithsonian Folkways**, the program offered an overview of the folk tradition including murder ballads, cowboy songs, sea shanties, antifolk and protest songs.

Recently named "**Best Folk Performer**" in the Philadelphia City Paper Music Awards, Adam Brodsky is one of the more distinct voices of folk in Philadelphia today. Songs like *Cubicle Girl*, *Amy and Ani*, *Jesus Owes Me \$50*, and *(the girl i like, is a ) Diesel Dyke* illustrate his outrageous style, clever wordplay and a gift for performance. Adam Brodsky leaves an unforgettable impression and a lot of laughter in his wake.

*"His in-your-face songsmithing has more in common with Woody Guthrie than most of those saccharine-sweet new-folkies"*— Washington Post

*"armed with only a guitar and a harmonica, the antifolk warrior gleefully skewers any topic that enters his twisted brain."*— CMJ

*"The Girl I Like is a Diesel Dyke, The chick I dig digs Chicks? That takes me back."*— Kris Kristofferson

*"[Brodsky's album] Folk Remedy is a return to the days when folk music meant something."*—Brandies Justice

Adam has spent this year touring the East Coast and Midwest. In Philadelphia, he sells out premier listening rooms including The Point and Tin Angel. And he has had the honor of playing with performers like **Kris Kristofferson**, **Kinky Friedman**, **The Holy Modal Rounders**, **Mojo Nixon**, **Daniel Johnston**, **Dan Bern**, **Moxy Fruvous**, **Hamell on Trial** and **Robbie Fulks**.

For booking, please contact Mary Krause at 215-923-6079 or [mary@adambrodsky.com](mailto:mary@adambrodsky.com)

# ADAM BRODSKY

**antifolk:** (*an-ti-fōk*), *n., v., adj.* a subgenre of folk music, uniting the traditions of folk music with those of punk rock. Opposed to the caramelized sounds of pop folk, antifolk embraces the traditions of Woody Guthrie and Joey Ramone and Dock Boggs. See **Adam Brodsky**.



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# ADAM BRODSKY

## FOLK

## REMEDY

HERE ARE A LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS ASSEMBLED TO TRY TO IMPRESS YOU, AND WHILE EVERY ONE OF THEM IS COMPLETELY TRUE, I MUST TELL YOU THAT THEY DID NOT ALL HAPPEN ON THE SAME DAY.

The Frolicking TroubaDork was named **Best Folk Performer** at the **2000 Philadelphia City Paper Music Awards** (combined with a token, this award permits Adam to ride the bus—transfers: 40 cents)

Nice quotes that wouldn't fit on the bio page...

*"So where the hell does Adam Brodsky of all people get off making a record this awesome?... Adam Brodsky's Folk Remedy raises the bar on what an antifolk album should be."*

—AntiMatters

*"Around Philadelphia Adam is known as the big dick" [we think they meant dork] —Village Voice*

## TRACK LISTINGS

- 6 MONTHS
- ALBATROSS
- CUBICLE GIRL
- AMY AND ANI
- NAPOLEAN'S WATERGATE
- UNMITIGATED FREAKSHOW
- DOUGH
- SOME GIRLS
- WORSE
- ALL
- SEX WITH YOU
- FIRST DAYS OF LOVE
- PATSY CLINE
- LIVING WITH DANTE
- BLOW ME
- YOU AND MY CAREER
- KICKED IN THE BUTT BY LOVE



7 75020 09732 2

*Here's a list of clubs that the Dork plays...and he sells out the shows in Philadelphia....so there!*

- Tin Angel, The Point (nice listening rooms)—Philly
  - The Khyber, NorthStar Bar (rock clubs)—Philly
  - East End Café—Newark, DE
  - Kendall Café—Cambridge, MA
  - Rosebud, Club Café—Pittsburgh, PA
  - Metro Café—Washington, DC
  - Armory High (Styleens Rhythm Palace)—Syracuse, NY
  - Mohawk, Nietzsche's—Buffalo, NY
  - UncommonGround—Chicago, IL
- ...just to name a few*

Here it is, the album Adam Brodsky has been threatening to make for years. A ramshackle collection of songs that is equal parts "Dust Bowl Ballads", "Highway 61" and "Never Mind the Bollocks". Fans of Adam's live show may view this record in the same ilk as the recorded work Eddie Murphy or Steve Allen, but in actuality it casts a spotlight past the foul-mouthed funny guy and illuminates Adam as a **Woody Guthrie (via Lenny Bruce)** for the next millennium. Remember, more often than not, Adam Brodsky is not offensive because he's vulgar, he's offensive because he's right.





November 11–18, 1999  
disc quicks|rock/pop

## Adam Brodsky/Butch Ross

*Folk Remedy/Selected Works of Friction*  
(Permanent)

There's really no substitute for seeing Adam Brodsky live. Half the fun is watching him think up clever introductions faster than he can say them. But his second full-length, *Folk Remedy*, with songs well crafted enough to stand on their own, is the next best thing. Brodsky's good at quickies: "All" condenses the history of the world into 60 seconds, while "6 Months" — in which boy meets girl, boy dates girl, then boy loses girl — is even shorter. Scamming on chicks is a recurring theme, and there are at least three Positively Grape Street moments here. It takes a delicate balance of attitude and aptitude to deliver lines like "Mojo Nixon by the bar, was drunk and talking crass/He took a kick right in his nads when he grabbed Liz Phair's ass." With a backing band or just the Permanent Records chief accompanying himself on guitar and harmonica, it's all good (except the cranky "Napoleon's [sic] Watergate" and the cornball "Patsy Cline"). Buy *Folk Remedy* and you'll get a highly entertaining hour of raw, literate folk/punk without leaving home to see one of Brodsky's manic shows, though you should do both.

Labelmate Butch Ross' *Selected Works of Friction* has one seething standout in "New York," with its keen observation that "The city they named twice is more a time bomb than a town." Too often, though, his vignettes fizzle, as on the Shawn Mullins sound-alike "Airborne." The more fleshed-out songs are a mixed bag, as "Spider & the Fly" works better on subsequent listening. But mostly, Ross comes off as a rootsier James Taylor.

—M.J. Fine

*Adam Brodsky, Butch Ross and special guests will play at Permanent Records' release party on Sat., Nov. 13, 9p.m., Upstairs at Nick's, 16 S. Second St., 215-928-0665.*

## 'Folk Remedy' Adam Brodsky Permanent Records

Adam Brodsky is on a mission and will stop at nothing to destroy folk music as you know it. Relax, you'll thank him for it later. Brodsky's not shy about his intentions, and he certainly doesn't mean to hurt anyone. "Folk Remedy" even comes equipped with its own caveat: "If ears begin to bleed, discontinue usage and administer Gin Blossoms immediately." Consider yourself warned. Brodsky is a practitioner of the growing genre of anti-folk, which is pretty much exactly what it sounds like. Brash, irreverent and full of attitude, anti-folk seeks to ignite a little of that revolutionary spirit, if not action.

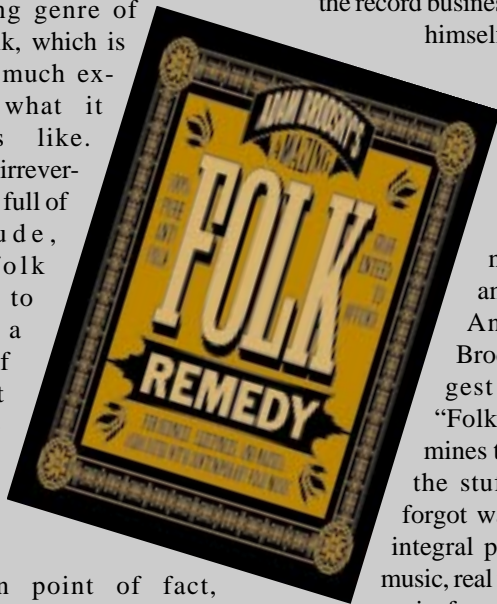
But in point of fact, Brodsky's sharp, wordy brand of anti-folk isn't as much revolutionary as it is reactionary. Borrowing heavily from Bob Dylan in both stylistic convention and brazen attitude, "Folk Remedy" is a return to the days when folk meant something, with a little postmodern sensibility and a little vulgarity thrown in for good measure.

What Brodsky is out to destroy isn't necessarily folk music. Rather, it's that hippy-dippy, "let's explore our feelings" stuff that somehow got mistaken for folk when all the real folkies (read Dylan, Guthrie, Baez, et al.) died and/or made themselves irrelevant.

Brodsky's a versatile songwriter & he's a skilled wordsmith, and yet some of his best numbers are his shortest, like the quickie-relationship-sum-up "6 Months" and the 30 second history of the universe, brilliantly titled "All." Perhaps the best piece of the album is "Unmitigated Freakshow," where he takes friends, family, the record business and even himself to task in

the kind of bitter recrimination you just never see anymore.

And that's Brodsky's biggest strength. "Folk Remedy" mines the past for the stuff that we forgot was such an integral part of folk music, real folk music, music for and by the folk, the people, you, me and everybody. He doesn't always hit his mark, but he gets it right more often than not, and it sure does feel good when he does. Adam Brodsky will perform live on WBRS on Wednesday, March 22.



# JUSTICE THE

# The Washington Post

So much to do on Friday, **Juan de Marco's Afro-Cuban All Stars**, another member of the extended Buena Vista Social Club family hits town Friday, performing at Lisner Auditorium (202.994.1500) British punk country band **the Mekons** have a tasty new CD out and they'll play Friday at the Black Cat (202.667.7960) with openers **Johnny Dowd** and **the Rapture**. Its a Just After Mardi Gras party, Friday at the State Theatre (709.237.0300) when zydeco band **Roy Carrier & the Night Rockers** Comes to town along with local openers **Zydeco Crayz** (with dance lessons at 8pm) **Adam Brodsky** is one of the few folk singers out there willing to risk

insulting you with his often outrageous tunes. His in-your-face songsmithing has more in common with Woody Guthrie than most of those saccharine-sweet neo-folkies out there. Check him out Friday at the Metro Cafe (202.518.7900).

Opening for **Shonuff** and local funk headliners **Congregation**. Yet another fine choice for Friday is British metal/alternative hard rockers **Lukan**, who have a powerhouse EP out and will rock that night at **Phantasmogoa** (301.949.8886) along with **Compression, Spite** and **Stricknine**.

Buffalo's **Scott Carpenter & the Real McCoys** play real roadhouse rock and roll and will prove it Saturday at IOTA (703/522.8340) Noisy,

jangly melodic local rockers **Anne Summers** have a solid new CD which they'll celebrate Saturday with a show at the Black Cat (202/667.7960) along with **Papas Fritas** and **Ladybug Transistor**. Saturday at Lewie's (301/652.1600) It's Richmond's funkiest sax player. **Plunky** and his band **Oneness**, while at the Velvet Lounge (202.462.3213) that night it's Charlottesville's rockiest rock band. **Clare Quilty**.

I'm not quite sure what the ads mean about the "re-birth" of Nation (202/432.7328) but they've got local soul'go-go'/jazz hero **Chuck Brown** there on Sunday night and hat's all i need to know

—Eric Brace

# The Des Moines Register datebook

Weekly Entertainment Guide, 2.21.2002  
Des Moines Register.com/entertainment

## Crazy + talented = Adam Brodsky

Philly musician tells it like it is in his irreverent antifolk music.

By KYLE MUNSON  
REGISTER MUSIC CRITIC

Puree the poetic wisdom of early Bob Dylan ("The times they are a-changin'") with the three-chord blare of the Ramones ("I wanna be sedated") and the resulting concoction might end up sounding like Philadelphia "antifolk" musician Adam Brodsky.

Antifolk? Great, just what we need. Another confusing musical subgenre. Not that Brodsky on Monday was overly concerned with illuminating the finer points of antifolk before his Iowa debut on Friday night at Java Joes Coffeehouse. He was busy in the sud-

"I'm at my dad's doin laundry, 'cause that's the rock 'n' roll way," he said from Philly.

Brodsky's ribald, breakneck acoustic guitar-based songs are a hybrid of, as he put it, (A) "punk rock before it was ruined by the Sex Pistols and the British Invasion" and (B) "folk music before it was ruined by the singer-songwriters."

To review: Folk + punk - antifolk. The front cover of Brodsky's latest CD, "Folk Remedy," bears a promise/warning: "Guaranteed to offend." The back cover bears another: "If ears bleed, discontinue usage and administer Gin Blossoms immediately."

Contained within are 15 blasphemous tracks that mine equally his insecurities (the chorus to a love song goes "I can't believe that you let me have sex with you") and fantasies (the song "Amy and



Details

Who: Adam Brodsky,  
When: 9:30 p.m. Friday.  
Where: Java Joes  
Coffeehouse, 214 Fourth St.  
Admission: Free, but tips  
encouraged.

PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Ani" concerns, respectively but with maximum irreverence, more famous musicians Frant and DiFranco).

"I went out there and found it was easier to strum like a spaz than to fingerpick," Brodsky explained of his musical emergence in the 90's.

His day job as he wrangled with his muse? Brodsky drove a doughnut truck a couple of times a week, a lax schedule that gave him "real-deal Generation X" credentials, he bragged. Mondays he actually peeled himself off his parents' sofa to test his songs in front of an audience at an open mic night.

These days, Brodsky the songwriter sometimes feels like he's "perpetually scraping the inside of a mayonnaise jar" and that doesn't have any more Hellman's in

it," but his first 40 or so songs gushed forth.

"I actually thought I invented antifolk," he said. But in 1996, Brodsky connected with a teeming New York scene where similar artists already had been signed by major record labels and promptly dropped.

Undeterred, Brodsky clawed his way from club to club across the country by cultivating a broad audience. Flexibility is his middle name, though that's not the F-word he most often drops in song. "I can play in an all-ages weenie folk room, and I can also open for a hardcore band," he said.

At a family restaurant/microbrewery in Delaware, Brodsky once was railed at by an irate audience member for playing "Jump on a Cross and Die" on Good Friday, so he developed what he calls a tamer "wedding set." For adults' ears only he unleashes "Everyone's F\*\*\*\* in the Head" in its fully explicit glory; in front of families the song becomes "Everyone's Touched in the Head."

Ever heard the adage that comedy = tragedy + time? Well, Brodsky believes wholeheartedly in deleting time from that equation. This eager, rapid slayer of sacred cows subscribes to "funny is funny" -- period.

"I hate the hypocrisy of everyone," he huffed.

Look out, Iowa. You were warned.

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# ARTVOICE

May 25 - May 31, 2000 V11n21



rants. Brodsky is a member of the growing gang that is to folk what punk was to rock 'n' roll: a kick in it's bloated self-congratulatory, self-righteous ass. While appearing to obliterate folk music, they knock it back down to its foundations. If Mr. Brodsky "had a hammer," well, I think you'd be hearing a different type of song. "Anti-folk" just seems to be a way of categorizing this music until someone comes up with a better names, and I wouldn't hold my breath until then.

## **Seduced By Your Own Weapons: Laying it on the Line with Adam Brodsky and Mimi Bourgeois**

"Folk" music. Peace and love. Political correctness. Consciousness raising. Wednesday night, May 31, at Nietzeche's there isn't gonna be any of that crap going on. Anti-folk music, yes, and if anything gets raised it might be a few eyebrows and a lot of drinking glasses. Philadelphia's own wild child troubador, Adam Brodsky, is coming to town at the invite of Michael Meldrum's Buffalo Song Project. Brodsky comes full armed with an acoustic artillery

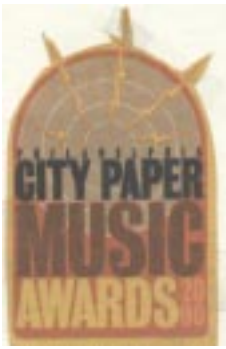
Joining in on the evening's excitement is Mimi Bourgeois, a performer who bears a shocking and uncanny resemblance to Buffalo's own visual artist Mary Begley (nudge, nudge, wink, wink). Her performance is topical, emotional and "over-the-top-and-out-the-door," all done in a style that Ms. Bourgeois succinctly calls "gothic cabaret." Humor, tragedy, love and lust are touched

## **see you there**

of songs and banter that'll really light your fire, baby. Check out some song titles: "Jesus Owes Me Fifty Bucks," "Bite Me," "Prom Vomit," "The Girl I Like is a Diesel Dyke..." This isn't to say that Brodsky stays completely in Mojo Nixonville (although he does mention Mr. Nixon in song; he sings a bit about Moko grabbing Liz Phair's butt in "Amy and Ani.") Harsh truths and scathing honesty are included in his songs and darkly coming between-song

upon in bluesy, minimalist musical surroundings (okay, a guitar). Other topics are guns, death and the color black, all with a little sidewinder of campiness slithering about them, in case the less hip think that this is a Diamanda Galas thing. She'll be telling it like it is and it is twistedly stylish. The show starts at 9pm. Get ready to put your little hand in the leather glove of a grr-ooovy experience.

*-robn conniff*



## BEST FOLK PERFORMER OR SINGER-SONGWRITER

# ADAM BRODSKY

September 28–October 5, 2000

## Hear Here

### Notable local releases and shows.

by Brian Howard

The big revelation at the *City Paper* Music Awards 2000 ceremony was that y'all are winners. Yeah, it's a cloying, warm-fuzzy sentiment, but nonetheless true. The Trocadero ceremony last Thursday was a wickedly diverse gathering of Philly talent. Sitting at a table in the middle of the whole proceedings you could see the Axis guys, the Permanent Records folks and the Tappersize people all with a quick sweep of the room. Witnessing hosts Lady B and Jim McGuinn hit it off and get behind the Sara Weaver fund was great. And the great response for the first annual Jennifer Carey Emerging Writer Award — presented to preserve the memory of a friend and CP contributor tragically murdered this year — was moving. (See excerpts from Ben Remsen's winning entries.) And big ups to most for sticking around till the end this year (of course the after-party probably had something to do with that).

Though it would be great to leave it at everyone being a winner, it's also important to give props to the people who took home the hardware, the people chosen by over 100 local industry judges as the best in their categories.

The award for Best Producer went to James Poyser whose Axis partner Vikter Duplaix accepted. (Brian McTear, Larry Gold and Mike Villers were the other nominees.)

Odean Pope took best composer over Charles Cohen, Andy Bresnan and Stephen DiJoseph. The Delta 72 edged out K-Floor, Roi and Lenola for best rock band

and Blue Maxx's Incognegro beat out Flo Brown, LM Mental and Fathead in the best hip-hop category. Cozmic Cat proclaimed a victory "for the ladies" in the Best DJ Mixer category (over Rob Paine, Deep C and Dozia) and Cosmo squeaked past DJ Jazzy Jeff in the Best DJ Scratcher field which also included J Smooth and DJ Active.

Adam Brodsky should win an additional award for best acceptance speech for his win in the Best Folk Performer or Singer/Songwriter. He claimed he brought a date so that when he lost he'd get a "mercy fuck" but since he won he figured his date would go home with Mia Johnson who, with her partner Hoagy, was also nominated along with Nancy Falkow and Psych-A-Billy.

The Jazzheads took Best Jazz Performer in a field that included New Ghost, Ben Schachter and Minas. Spoken Hand edged Animus, Blackthorn and Benny and the Vildachayas in the Best Roots/World Music category. The opera-spoofing Beach Balls took Best New Music/Classical performer over Network for New Music, Settlement Music School's Contemporary Players and Temple School of Music.

Jill Scott couldn't attend to accept her award for Best Female Vocalist due to a bout of Sudden Sensorineural Hearing Loss (a.k.a. Sudden Deafness Syndrome). She beat out Amber DeLaurentis, Nancy Falkow and Jaguar, who peeled the paint off the ceiling with her soul-shaking, woman-centric mid-ceremony performance. Ursula Rucker took home her second CPMA (she was voted last year's artist most deserving of a record deal) for Best Lyricist/Songwriter over Matt Pond, The Last Emperor and Quentin Stoltzfus. Duplaix took his second trip to the stage to pick up his own award, this one for Most Stylish, out fashioning Tapping the Vein, Sweetie and The Delta 72.

If you couldn't make it to the awards, but still want to sample some of the flavor, the 15-song compilation disc of nominees that

Adam "Mercy Fuck" Brodsky



was handed out at the event is being made available on [www.citypaper.net/contest.shtml](http://www.citypaper.net/contest.shtml), free to the first 350 loggers on. The disc includes tracks from Deep C, Jill Scott, Matt Pond PA, New Ghost, J Smooth, Sweetie, Swisher, Benny and the Vildachayas, Lenola and what we believe are some of the first CD tracks from Flo Brown and LM Mental.

Overheard: Local shows you should see this week include a performance in a store. South Jersey's The Secession Movement will crank up some selections from their brand new *ak-e-'dem-ik* (Keep Safe Records) on Tue., Oct. 3, at State of the Art Records on South Street with El Paso's Level. Secession Movement is in the punk/emo vein and draw comparisons to current emo darlings At The Drive-In with their arching, epic sweeps. Singer/guitarist David Downham keeps the delicate balance between impassioned and too-cool-for-school, and the four-piece's songs steer clear of punk mimicry... If you're looking for more electronic local flavor, get in on Hologram 3 at La Tazza (108 Chestnut St.) on Sat., Sept. 30, with all your friends from tbtmo including Spintronic and rare sets from Blue (members of Mall and Pacifica) and Fingernail. Look for tbtmo to possibly team up with San Francisco indie/electro label Darla for releases by Pacifica, Transient, Tremolo, Collette Carter and more.



November 11–18, 1999

icepack

by a.d. amorosi



Duly noted has been mah appreciation for the contemptibly stigmatic and outrageously silly phraseology of anti-folk fuck Adam Brodsky. His first CD, *Dork* (on his Permanent label), is a sly dogged masterwork of whimsy and weariness. So what could Brodsky do to top that or his recent TLA opening slot for Kris Kristofferson (“I only wish I hadn’t mentioned the mini series *Amerika*” says Brodsky, “or sung the theme from *Convoy* for that matter.”)? He’s just released a second CD, *Folk Remedy* — that celebrates its release at Upstairs at Nick’s on Nov. 13 (see review in *Discquicks*) — that’s just like the first, only more so. Throughout *Folk Remedy* Brodsky strips bare the wack humor of *Dork* only to fill it up with in-your-face screwball disgust and longing. The songs that make you giggle, like “Amy and Ani” make you cry. The songs that are serious, like “Patsy Cline,” make you cry more. Songs that are funny and serious — “Albatross,” “Living With Dante” — make ya weep uncontrollably. “My favorites are the ones that are funny and not funny at the same time,” says Brodsky. Utilizing the Dylan philosophy of recording (get the best musicians into one room and surprise ’em with tunes), *Folk Remedy* is fleshier than its predecessor in that a full band came for two tracks, “Dough” and “Cubicle Girl” (with Hammell on *Trial*). “I only agreed to drums and electric guitar on those songs when all involved swore to me it would sound like Chuck Berry not Buck Cherry.” Also celebrating Permanent waves is hippity-hoppity folkie Butch Ross, whose *Selected Works of Friction* is out on the label. It’s a happy Nick Drake with a stumbling Bronx backbeat, an upright bass and a fiddle. “I try to write songs that have the same attention to detail as Gershwin or Porter but aren’t show tunes,” says Butch about his literary hick-hop.



May 4–11, 2000

six pick

## Adam Brodsky

Simply put, if you’re looking for a good time, go to an Adam Brodsky show. Sharply funny, with some smart and serious thrown in, the Philly native’s two upcoming shows should make for a good vacation from standard sugary-fake folk. Brodsky dubs his return to the traditions of masters like Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly “antifolk” and serves it up with some healthy irreverence. For his “A Brief History of Folk Music” performance at 30th Street Station Brodsky will regale commuters with a variety of classic folk tunes including murder ballads, social change songs and Negro spirituals. He hopes he’ll open a few ears and minds to music people may not be familiar with and entertain those closet folkies who put on a suit and work for the man. After a little tinkering, he’d like to make it a series, inviting guest musicians to play with him and taking the show to schools. If you can’t make it to the show at the train station, pencil yourself in for Brodsky’s May 5 show at the Tin Angel, which should be his usual no-holds-barred antifolk spectacular.

—Rosemary Darigo

*Fri., May 5, 11 p.m. with Tory Cassis at the Tin Angel, 20 S. Second St., \$7, 215-928-0978. Wed., May 10, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 30th Street Station.*

# MODE

## Adam Brodsky

*Folk Remedy*



by Ed Yashinsky

In the liner notes for *Folk Remedy*, Adam Brodsky goes out of his way to spell out influences ranging from Woody Guthrie to Bob Dylan to The Sex Pistols to Lenny Bruce. But truth be told, Brodsky is nothing but a wiseass, an incredibly hilarious wiseass, but a wiseass nonetheless. The cool thing is the music world needs someone like Brodsky to come along from time to time to keep all the dickheads honest. The majority of *Folk Remedy* deals with busted relationships, one-night stands, and sordid sexual tales, and even though some relationships pop up multiple times, *Folk Remedy* works because of



Brodsky's great wordplay and stellar storytelling. Don't expect any mind-boggling music revelations on *Folk Remedy*. Most songs play it close to the vest sticking to three chord and stripped-down production, but Brodsky is all about

lyrics. One great song, "Amy and Ani," dusts off a Brodsky famous fantasy ménage a trios and then proceeds to name check a bundle of the greatest songwriters of the past 40 years at a Brodsky show the next evening. And while *Folk Remedy* may get be a bit long on the tongue-in-cheek stories, Brodsky deserves recognition for one of the best breakup songs ever written in "Some Girls." It's buried a little deep in the CD, but it proves that when Brodsky drops his facade, he can deliver great songs. (Permanent Records, [adambrodsky.com](http://adambrodsky.com))

July 06, 2000

# MODE

## SYRACUSE NewTimes

Issue No. 1559

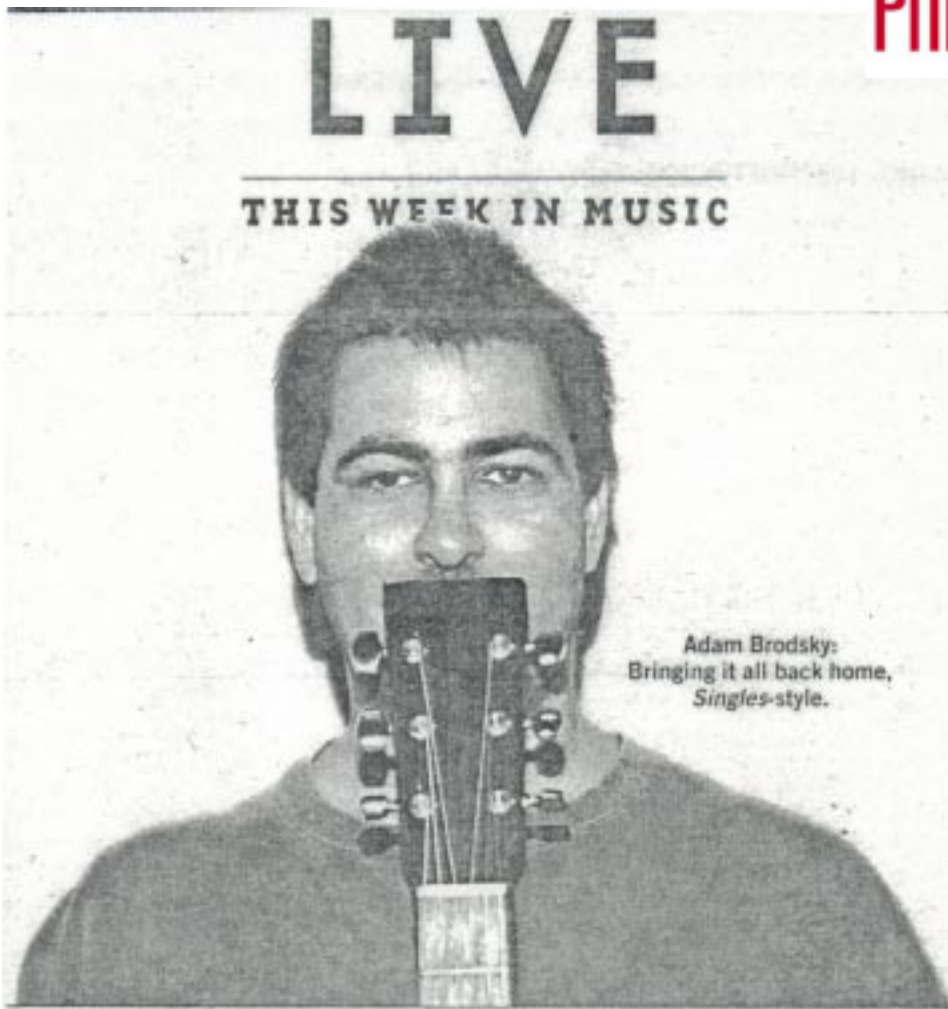
February 14-21, 2001

### Adam Brodsky



*The self-proclaimed dork brings his brand of anti-folk folk to town Sunday, Feb. 18, 9p.m., at Armory High, 314 S. Franklin St. Named Best Folk Performer in the Philadelphia City Paper Music Awards, Brodsky's clever wordplay and outra-*

*geous style incorporates harmonica, guitar and a healthy dose of screaming. While his music contains the influence of folk legends such as Bob Dylan, it has much more in common with the brash humor of punk rock. His originals include songs like "Jesus Owes Me \$50," "Bite Me," and "Why I Didn't Call." He currently plugs his album Folk Remedy (Permanent Records). \$4-\$6. 472-2665.*



### Philadelphia Weekly January 2000

Sophomoric name-dropping. Nasal whining. Restraining order. These are phrases Adam Brodsky probably hears every day. But on his second album, the new Folk Remedy (Permanent Records), the wiseacre anti-folkie reveals that underneath it all (or perhaps because of it all), he wants to be loved. That he wants to be loved, specifically, by bisexual female singer/songwriters is beside the point. (You also get the feeling that, in a pinch, he'd settle for the deaf, dumb and blind daughter of a liquor-store proprietor.)

But to say that Folk Remedy is Brodsky's prayer to the heavens each night before cuddling up with a box of Kleenex would be disingenuous. In fact, the Philly artist fancies himself a one-man wake-up call to sleepy folkies everywhere—especially those content with the low, nostalgic rumble of John Gorka and his ilk.

And provided those folkies still haven't heard Brenda Kahn, Hammell on Trial, Paleface or, by extension, Beck, Folk Remedy might prove a hair-raising experience. With its bashing, talking blues, 10-dollar distortion pedals, epileptic harmonica and Brodsky's wandering rants, the album is unrelenting in its enthusiasm and caustic only when Brodsky almost unwittingly shows a little tenderness. At the end of "Patsy Cline," he lets loose the line: "I play my guitar onstage/ I eke out an adequate living/ I fall to pieces in my car." Elsewhere, Brodsky summons even more influences: Leonard Cohen, John Prine, the Violent Femmes and, of course, Bob Dylan. "Unmitigated Freakshow" is Brodsky's "Gates of Eden," played out on the set of Singles or Reality Bites.

Yeah, it feels dated. And sure, Brodsky's fears that the music he loves has been polluted—and that means anything from Dylan at Newport on. But the kid's got heart, and words to spare. By my count, that's remedy enough.

—JOEY SWEENEY



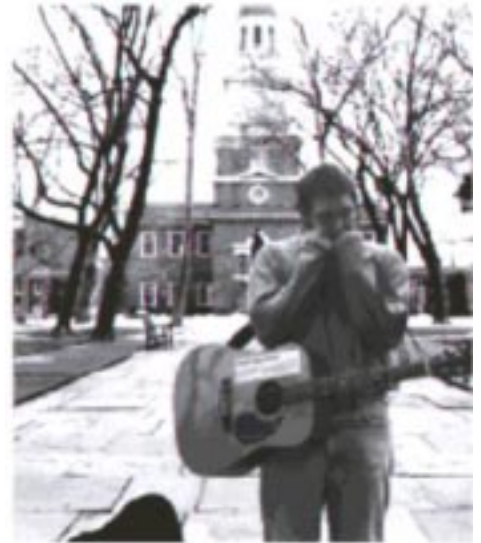
Sacramento News and Review, Nov. 1, 2001

Music Pick of the Week

## Folk you, buddy

By Jackson Griffith

Actually, we love folk music, despite any griping to the contrary you may have read in this paper recently. So when a three-pack of pretty good guys, one of whom plays the accordion, hits town in a packaged revue titled “Abrasive Folk Tour” to make some underpowered noise at the True Love Coffeehouse, it is incumbent upon us folk-music enthusiasts (and fellow travelers) at the SN&R to bring this august (actually, November) occasion to your attention. Either Carmaig de Forest (from L.A.), Adam Brodsky (from Philly, home of soul) or Geoff Berner (with accordion, from Vancouver, eh?) will be hitting the stage at the True Love, 2406 J St., on Thursday, November 1, at 9 p.m., with much mirth and mayhem to follow; for safety precautions, beware of flying silk panties. Cover’s \$6. Call 492-1002 for more info.



*Adam Brodsky does a “Woody”: This guitar, um, may not kill fascists, but on occasion it growls at Republicans ...*

# Adam Brodsky on How To Be Abravely Folk

The Quest, November 2001 - Reed College; Portland, OR

"I left the country for three days, and apparently the Constitution got vetoed," Adam Brodsky said as he broke into "Uncivil Rights." It's the kind of line - and the kind of song - one would expect from a folk show. In fact, from a quick glance the Meow Meow looked unbelievably typical. White guys with acoustic guitars, polemic rants against the radical right and organized religion - it seemed straight out of your average open mic night. In a word, it all seemed too easy.

Fortunately, Brodsky had more than a few surprises up his sleeve. Standard folk songs like "Jesus Owes Me Fifty Bucks" gave way to sardonic pieces like "Hookers and Blow," and Brodsky's asides soon shifted to everything from ex-girlfriends to swing music. It quickly became apparent that, with a sharp wit and penchant for the down and dirty, Brodsky was not your average folk singer. The Bloodhound Gang sticker on his guitar case should've been a tip-off.

**"I LIKED [REED COLLEGE]. IT HAD A REAL GOOD VIBE...YOU SEEM LIKE A BUNCH OF HIPPIES - BUT IN A GOOD WAY."**

Adam Brodsky quit his day job in August 1998 to pursue a career playing folk music. He was thirty years old, and already past any sort of pop-culture prime. Dreams of rock stardom were not just far off, they were out of the question. But then again, much of Brodsky's appeal seems happily accidental.

"I had no intention of being a folk singer," he said. "Then I got a gig, and people came, and, all of the sudden, I don't have a job - this is what I do."

Brodsky got a degree in communications from Elizabeth Town College in Middle of Nowhere, PA, the kind of education that guarantees a position behind the counter at Starbeks for the rest of eternity. Instead of corporate servitude, Brodsky picked up an acoustic shortly after graduation and began teaching himself some chords. He never took a lesson, instead getting inspiration from some unlikely sources.

"There's a definite Richie Havens influence in my work that nobody sees but me," he said. It

shows. By strumming his acoustic "as if it were a cheap Japanese strat," his playing is much more aggressive - and energetic - than your standard folk picker.

Brodsky estimates that he has written close to 300 songs in his three-year career, although time and experience have taught him that being prolific does not always mean being good. "Now I can tell if a song needs to be aborted in the first trimester," he said.

Lyrically, Brodsky took influence from the pillars of folk - specifically Phil Ochs, the sardonic 60s songwriter and author of songs like "Love Me, I'm a Liberal."

Ochs' combination of biting humor and ironic political commentary is used effectively by Brodsky, especially in a track like "Hookers and Blow." The song oscillates between the verses which relate issues of health care, foreign policy, and class struggle, and the sing-along chorus that bring it all down to, well, hookers and blow. And it works - the song's humor keeps the listener engaged but off-guard, allowing the polites to sneak in unnoticed. The combination of the obvious and subtle, the direct and round-about, make for a more sophisticated folk song - even if it is called "Hookers and Blow."

"People are very reticent to combine comedy and tragedy," Brodsky said about what could easily be called his out-of-line sense of humor. "I don't think that's right."

His emphasis on making the audience laugh gives dimension to what would otherwise be a run-of-the-mill liberal philosophy. Brodsky can appreciate differing points of view, if only for the comedic value and nothing else. "These guys on the far right are just as passionate [as the left-wing radicals], even if they are completely wrong."

Brodsky also sidesteps easy categorizing by varying his act and aiming his poison tongue at topics besides politics. Nearly half the songs he performed were hysterically self-deprecating diatribes about ex-relationships.

"Now is not the time for self-respect," he said to the audience through a wry grin.

Brodsky has much to be respected for. If his career in folk music is happily accidental, then so is his timing. The unexpected success of the O Brother, Where Art Thou? soundtrack earlier

this year is signaling a revival in traditional music (called Trad by folk hipsters).

Folk has not been mainstream for years, but its current wave of popularity is still doing Brodsky wonders. He hosts "A Brief History of Folk Music," a Smithsonian-sponsored tour of colleges and bookstores, has released several albums, and is currently on the nationwide "Abrasive Folk Tour."

But Brodsky is not riding the bandwagon; if he wanted to do that, he pointed out, he would have joined a rock band. "I play folk because I like it," he said. "If it enjoys some popularity, that's good."

**"JESUS OWES ME FIFTY BUCKS  
I LENT IT TO HIM IN GOOD FAITH  
AND WOULDN'T IT BE MY  
LUCK HE GOT CRUCIFIED BEFORE  
I GOT REPAID"**

The simplicity of folk appealed to Brodsky immediately. "I am a song-writer," he said. "The best way to convey a song is a guy and a guitar...[Folk is] deliberately made so that anyone can do it. I respect jazz; jazz is difficult and those guys are brilliant. But I can't play jazz."

Folk currently finds itself at an odd crossroads. The genre thrives on relevance, political and cultural; but the time when relevance sold albums is long past. Hense about twenty people showed up for the tour's stop at the Meow Meow. But rather than be deterred, Brodsky simply put on the kind of intimate show people may one day reminisce about in a "I-Saw-Him-When" sort of way.

Until then, Brodsky has plans for a business making politically moderate bumper stickers ("Keep 1st Trimester Abortions Legal" and "Some Nukes" being two ideas), and wants to earn enough money to be able to afford cable again.

However he does it, watching him strum his heart out last week at the Meow Meow, you got the sense that so long as Brodsky kept finding himself and the world funny, everything would be okay.

-Evan McMurray



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## Metroland

March 23, 2000

Adam Brodsky, Spacely Sprockets

When Philadelphia singer songwriter Adam Brodsky boasts that his material is “100 percent antifolk,” he’s not kidding. The first track on his debut album, *Adam Brodsky’s Amazing Folk Remedy*, is a rant called “6 months” which tracks an entire relationship in three 10-second segments. Elsewhere on the disc, Brodsky thumbs his nose at the gentle vibe of most folk music with angry, potty-mouthed tracks including “Blow Me” and “kicked in the Butt By Love” (on “Cubicle Girl,” he even commits the folk-music no-no of saying that he’d rather date a corporate drone than a sensitive coed.) Brodsky’s

music is bracing because he sings motor-mouthed, tongue-twisting lyrics in a nasal whine over jitter, Bob Dylan-on-speed melodies; **his appeal lies in his dark sense of humor and his willingness to tip sacred cows.** (In the name-dropping screed “Amy and Ani,” he spouts: “Mojo Nixon by the bar, drunk and talking crass/He took a kick to the nads when he grabbed Liz Phair’s ass/his head snapped back like he was made of giant Pez/So he went and copped a feel offa Joan Baez.”) Lovingly described by former Albanian Ed Hamell as “a bad motherfucker,” Brodsky will perform tomorrow (Friday) at Mother Earth’s Café with spacely Sprocket opening. (8 PM, Free, 434-0944)

## Phoenix

### Random House

### Simple Thoughts From a Simpleton

By John O’Neill

If you have an hour to kill before heading out this Friday, drop by Cool Beans on Green Street for a special show from Philly’s number-one antifolk phenom. Adam Brodsky. **Rocking on traditional folk music with a very punk aesthetic, Brodsky has released a second disc, Folk Remedy (Permanent Records) – a Top 10 for the year**

Guaranteed to anger more conventional folkies. Brodsky marries Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan to the Violent Femmes and Mojo Nixon. He’s a marginally talented guitar player, has a voice that’s occasionally bray, and is often ridiculous. On top of that, he’s brash, drop-dead witty, raw, literate, impassioned, and better than most of what you’ll hear. Make sure to buy a copy of the disc while you’re there.



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# Phoenix

march 24th, 2000

Chuck-less for an early evening show at Cafe Fantastique. Saturday's not-to-be-missed show happens at Cool Beans with Philadelphia's ugliest son and antifolk. Adam Brodsky (you can also catch him live in studio on WCUW's Friday edition of *CrossTracks*). Armed with a not-too-awful voice (in a Bob Dylan-meets-Gordan-Gano kinda way), marginal guitar skills, and a tremendous new album called *Folk Remedy* (permanent), Brodsky had us falling over ourselves here at HQ. **Mashing together blues, folk, punk, and country with a little social commentary and lot of screwed-up relationships. Brodsky comes across like a genetic meld of Woody Guthrie and Mojo Nixon. It's an odd balance between old-folk musicianship and bark-at-the-moon maniacal.** Do yourself a favor and check this kid out. The Lucky Dog (which is next door to Cool Beans so you can go on over after Brodsky's set) has a big night with one of our favorite new bands, Prizefighter. You'll also want to catch Boston's Long Distance Runner.



ADAM BRODSKY: In Philadelphia folk circles. Brodsky is known as the big dick. Strapping on a guitar and doing numbers like "The Girl I Like Is A Diesel Dyke." The guy likes to make fun of sappy singer-songwriters (John Gorka is his Antichrist) and blast the idea of the peace love and falafel folkie with a punk rock attytoode. ) on this "Naked and Dirty" tour, he brings together an eclectic group - some antifolk, some ultra folk - from along the eastern Seaboard. Living room at 8. Detweiler:

## VALLEY ADVOCATE

march 23rd, 2000

**Adam Brodsky:** Saucy humor-packed humdinger of a folkster. 8pm Fire and Water Café, 5 Old South St. Northampton, 586-8336