



Gerald Ross

Concert artist and instructor... ukulele, Hawaiian steel guitar and guitar.

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Successfully blending the sounds of jazz blues and swing, Gerald Ross has created a ukulele style uniquely his own. Whether he is playing jazz standards, popular favorites, delta and urban blues, Tin Pan Alley melodies, New Orleans rhythms or boogie woogie, it's bound to be a delightful surprise to any listener. He has the rare ability to transmit an infectious good humor to his audience through a tasteful combination of outstanding instrumental talent and an eclectic repertoire. An experienced musician, Gerald Ross is equally at home in a concert hall or on a small club stage.

Click on photo to download a hi-res copy. Photo credit: Kelly Anderson, 2014.

Musical Biography

Gerald Ross is comfortable with just about every type of "roots" music there is, from western swing, bluegrass, Hawaiian, blues, jug band music, jazz standards, Tin Pan Alley, New Orleans rhythms to boogie-woogie, and he plays it all on guitar, lap steel, Dobro and ukulele.

He's performed in concert with Bonnie Raitt, Arlo Guthrie, Doc Watson, Johnny Gimble, Riders In The Sky, Brownie McGhee and many others. He appears in the award winning film documentaries "The Mighty Uke" and the PBS syndicated "Wheatland – The First 40 Years." Gerald won the Solo Artist Category of the 1993 WEMU Jazz Competition and has appeared many times on "A Prairie Home Companion."

Today Gerald is one of America's best-known performers, entertainers and advocates for the ukulele. He's released seven solo CDs, published instructional materials, and is very much in demand as a music festival instructor in the United States and abroad.

Industry Reviews

"Gerald Ross is an entire music festival and music camp in one! He does it all with style, grace and wit. As a teacher, Gerald is extremely organized and easily gets the concepts across to his students whether on ukulele, lap steel guitar or swing guitar. As a performer and headliner, he captivates the audience by the diversity of styles he plays as well as his ability to move between the various instruments he plays. Other performers relish the opportunity to have Gerald accompany them as he makes everyone sound better than they really are! Gerald is fun to work with and musicians and students alike appreciate his willingness to share his talents to help them achieve new musical goals!"

Noel Tardy, Organizer,
Lone Star UkeFest



Listen to
**Take the
"A" Train**

"On stage, he is entertaining and very, very funny. His musicianship is superb and his audiences love his subtle--and tasteful--sense of humor. And while Gerald is an endearing solo performer, his fellow musicians know they can turn to him when they need back-up, whether it's on the upright bass, guitar, lap steel guitar, or ukulele.

Gerald is an excellent teacher as well. His workshops are well-planned, user-friendly, and constantly evolving. He gets nothing but the highest marks from his students, who love him for his skill, knowledge, and generosity.

As a staff member of both the Wine Country Ukulele Festival and the West Coast Ukulele Retreat, Gerald arrives on the scene prepared and well-organized and is always willing to step in where needed. If I could clone him, I would."

Elaine de Man, Coordinator/Organizer,
Wine Country Ukulele Festival

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"When I hire my staff, there are three main things I look for: (1) Great musicianship (2) That the person conduct him/herself in a professional manner (3) That this is someone who is pleasant & easy to work with. Gerald Ross has all three in spades! He plays great (and on multiple instruments!). He is a wonderfully prepared, organized, and thoughtful teacher and a polished performer. And he is SUCH A NICE GUY.... he makes everyone feel important. He doesn't need much sleep, either! Just make sure he has coffee in the morning and he keeps on going... I would highly recommend Gerald for any performing venue or instructional seminar."

Wendi Bourne, Coordinator,
Swing Week at Augusta Heritage Center

"Gerald is truly one of the greatest multi-instrumental musicians in the Midwest. His repertoire includes Hawaiian steel guitar, ukulele, guitar and bass, and many more instruments. You would be hard pressed to find a musician with the breadth and depth of musical knowledge that Gerald possesses. His three CDs cover blues, swing, Beatles, Hawaiian, Tahitian, Latin, Italian, Aboriginal, and original instrumental arrangements and compositions. He has been featured on Bosko and Honey's Ukulele Safari, and has been a guest numerous times on the "Prairie Home Companion" with Garrison Keillor. When Gerald goes to a ukulele festival, and the Windy City Ukulele Festival was no exception, everyone wants to jam with him. He always gets more stage time than everyone else. That's because of his expertise on all of the instruments he plays and his ability to adapt to most any musical style. His warm personal demeanor, friendly smile, and intricate melodies always seem to mesmerize the crowd. Gerald Ross is the cream-of-the-crop of professional musicians, and continues to leave his audiences happy and wanting more."

Terry Truhart, Co-Organizer
Windy City UkeFest

"Gerald Ross is the consummate musician. He plays steel guitar, guitar, and ukulele with great expertise in any style. We have commissioned him as house guitarist of the TSGA Non Pedal Session in Dallas for the last 3 years - and each year he skillfully accompanies over a dozen very diverse steel players and performs his own excellent steel guitar set. We're very fortunate that he will be returning to Dallas again this March."

Rick Alexander, Coordinator
Texas Steel Guitar Association Annual Jamboree

Reviews from Students

"From the first moment to the last, [Beginning Hawaiian/Western Swing Lap Steel Guitar] was the best class I have ever taken! Gerald had a clear syllabus which outlined what he would do each day. He was organized in all of his lessons from beginning to end. He combined explanations with presentations and individual help. The class was quite varied in ability and he worked with each student on his/her own level. Even the things I had already learned from my teacher at home were covered by Gerald in such a way that I learned even more! I was not in his ukulele class, but all the students from that class, too, told me how much they learned in Gerald's class. He is an awesome teacher! I personally hope that he can teach an intermediate lap steel class next year.

A Student in Gerald's "Beginning Hawaiian/Western Swing Lap Steel Guitar" Class, Augusta Swing Week 2010

CD Reviews

Absolute Uke

...a textbook showcase for his engaging style and crafty arrangements. Of particular note is the Latin-tinged fare: Antonio Carlos Jobim's bossa-nova smash "Wave" sounds as if it were written for uke, while Manuel Ponce's beloved 1912 composition "Estrellita," arranged here for solo uke, positively glows in Ross' capable hands.

All too often, standards arranged for ukulele can sound like novelties or thin approximations. But Ross' arrangements sound totally organic, conveying the true spirit of the tunes while displaying his impressive uke technique.

Marc Greilsamer, Ukulele Magazine, Fall 2015

Swing Ukulele

Gerald always performs brilliantly and his timing can't be beat. He puts a lot into his production quality and you can hear it in everything he produces. This is one great collection and I'll be listening to it frequently. I do have to say that once my wife gets her hands on this CD, it will be a while before I see it again. If you love swing, and I most certainly do, this CD is a must for your collection.

Mickey Maguire - Ukulele Player Magazine

Ukulele Stomp

Long a familiar face on the Ann Arbor and national music scene for his work with the Lost World String Band, among others, Ross is an excellent guitar player who is also accomplished on Hawaiian steel guitar and Cajun accordion. However, on his latest recording it's the uke that wins pole position. Every track is tastefully arranged and masterfully performed -- Ross plays all the instruments on the album -- and every tune serves as yet another fine vehicle for displaying the ukulele's unique capabilities. Ukulele Stomp belongs in the winner's circle.

Sandor Slomovits, Current Magazine Nov. 2006