

Rick Stanley is an award-winning singer/songwriter/guitarist/harper and harp-maker. These days he designs and builds custom folk harps and performs the music of his Celtic roots. He embodies the resurgence in the late 20th century of the ancient oral tradition of performance, and the rekindled interest in the folk lever harp -- emblem of Irish nationalism since the 10th century. Rick's innovative rhythmic and complicated picking style on Irish harp stands in stark contrast to the simple chords often plucked by modern troubadour harpers.



Rick has had a long career in folk music as a guitarist and singer/songwriter. He started performing in the coffee houses of Boston, New York and ultimately the West Coast where Columbia Records signed him. Under Byrds producer Terry Melcher, Rick Stanley and Pam Polland as “The Gentle Soul” made the charts with two singles, and their self-titled album on the Epic label was called “Most beautiful...album of the year” by *Billboard* Magazine. Sony/Sundazed Records released the complete recordings of *The Gentle Soul* in March 2003.

Rick worked or recorded with some of the most talented musicians in the business: Linda Ronstadt & Kenny Edwards, Ry Cooder, the Beach Boys, Glen Campbell, Al Kooper, Jackson Browne, Steven Stills and many others. The next decade found Rick living in Europe and touring the world, all the while writing songs for two more highly acclaimed albums recorded at A&M Studios in L.A. with Joni Mitchell's talented producer, Henry Lewy.

Years before the recent Celtic renaissance, Rick recorded a powerful album called *On English Hills*, containing some of his favorite Scots, Irish and English ballads and a few of his originals. Rick is a world-class guitarist, but once he started singing with a Celtic harp Rick found the perfect accompaniment to his rich “Cat Stevens” voice, as can be heard on his solo effort *The Ballad of Bothwell & Marie*.

Because his formative years were not only filled with music, but as apprentice to a master cabinetmaker, Rick has excelled at designing and building both nylon and wire-strung harps (visit his website at www.celticharps.com). The last decade has been dedicated to creating masterpieces out of wood, glue and consciousness and, of course, an equal amount of Rick's time has been given to mastering the accompaniment of his ballads and original songs with his hand-built harps. Rick performs either with his group Border Lord, or as a solo artist often accompanied by Irish fiddler Tara Dutcher and Claudine Stanley on bodhran.