

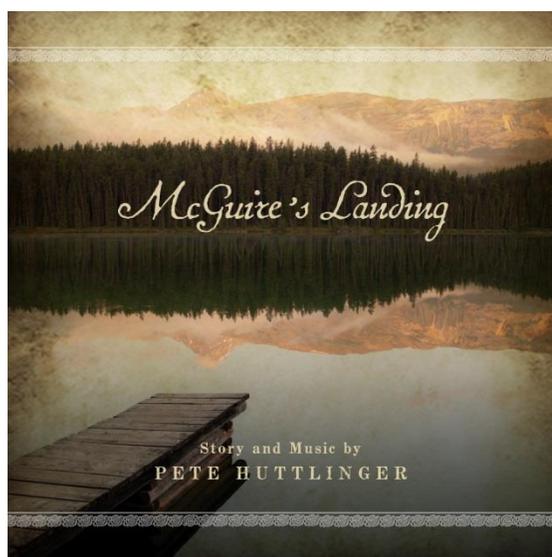
# *McGuire's Landing*

Story & Music by Pete Huttlinger

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST 20

A Story of the American West Told in 15 Songs & a 52-Page Narrative

*"I believe I survived a stroke and  
end-stage heart failure  
so I could complete this project."  
—Pete Huttlinger*



**THE ORIGIN:** While touring as John Denver's lead guitarist, Pete Huttlinger composed and demoed an instrumental piece he named "McGuire's Landing." Upon hearing the demo, Denver asked Huttlinger what the song was about. "It's not about anything," said Huttlinger. "It's just a tune I came up with." Again Denver pressed him, "What's it about, Pete? I *know* you must have had some picture in your mind when you wrote it. So what were you seeing?" Huttlinger admitted that he visualized images of a girl standing on a shore and looking out to sea for her lover's return. That was enough for Denver. "I want to write lyrics to your song," he told his young sideman. Huttlinger readily agreed. But Denver died in an airplane crash in 1997 before he could contribute his part.

**THE PROCESS:** In 2004, Huttlinger recorded "McGuire's Landing"—still sans lyrics—on his album, *The Santa Rita Connection*. The song, with its wistful Anglo-Celtic overtones and delicate picking patterns, soon became one of the most-requested tunes in his shows. This reaction convinced him he should follow Denver's lead and develop the song's narrative potential. Thus he began composing a cycle of songs and writing an accompanying prose story about the bold Irish immigrant S. McGuire, who arrives in Boston just as the Civil War is ending, and who, with his new found friend, Artemus Jackson, heads West to claim territory on which to construct his own corner of the American Dream. Huttlinger began recording tracks for *McGuire's Landing*—the album—in 2006.

**THE ROADBLOCKS:** On November 3, 2010, Huttlinger suffered a near fatal stroke that for days paralyzed his right side and stole his speech. Exerting enormous effort, he slowly pushed back the paralysis and was even playing guitar again when he was devastated by end-stage heart failure, the result of a cardiac abnormality that had plagued him since childhood. So serious was the affliction that he had to be life-flighted from Vanderbilt Hospital, near his home in Nashville, to Texas Heart Institute in Houston, where he was outfitted with a heart pump (known as a VAD—Ventricular Assist Device) and spent the next four months in the hospital recovering.

**THE COMMITMENT:** In addition to writing all the lyrics and composing the music for *McGuire's Landing*, Huttlinger also sings and plays guitars, banjo and mandolin on the various tracks.

**THE ALBUM ANATOMIZED:** Four of the songs—"The Ghosts From Below," "The Blessings Of Winter," "Here Comes The Cold" and "Falling"—have lyrics that both forward the narrative and stand alone as complete compositions. In the remaining numbers, one can hear jigs, reels, waltzes and hoedowns of the kind that gave such color and sense of place to Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring*. Huttlinger's guitar stylings here are a virtual "slide show" of moods and emotions, flowing untremored from foreboding to frolic, anticipation to euphoria.

**THE RECOVERY:** "I had been so busy making a living with other musical projects that *McGuire's Landing* had taken a backseat," Huttlinger explains as he looks back on that perilous period. "Then I landed in the hospital for all that time. I thought if I could just get healthy enough again to play, maybe I could finish the album." And that's exactly what he's done. He recorded the final four songs for the album and finished writing the book after he was released from the hospital over a year ago.

**THE CAST:** Joining Huttlinger on the album is a range of top-notch vocalists and musicians including Herb Pedersen, of Desert Rose Band renown; accordionist Jeff Taylor, from Rounder Record's The Time Jumpers; violinist Andrea Zonn, of James Taylor's band; bassist Byron House, who tours with Robert Plant, Emmylou Harris, Sam Bush and Rodney Crowell; L.A. vocalist Mollie Weaver, and a number of Nashville's finest symphonic musicians.

**THE MAESTRO:** Huttlinger has become widely-known as one of the most awe-inspiring acoustic guitarists in the world. He has performed at Carnegie Hall numerous times and was invited to participate in Eric Clapton's Crossroads Festivals. As a sideman he has performed with John Denver, LeAnn Rimes, John Oates, and many others. Huttlinger has recorded on his own Instar label, Steve Vai's critically acclaimed Favored Nations label and Windham Hill. In 2000 he won the respected title of National Fingerstyle Guitar Champion.

**THE RESULT:** You have it here in your hands.

*"Love is a land of hope and wonder."*—Pete Huttlinger