

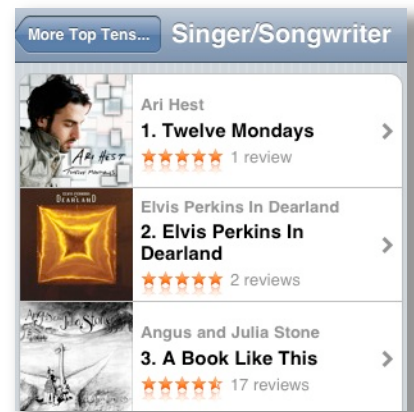
Ari Hest "Delivered the Goods," Praises ACOUSTIC GUITAR MAGAZINE; USA TODAY Gives Hest a Second LISTEN UP MUSIC PICK

'Twelve Mondays' Hits #1 on iTunes' Singer-Songwriter Chart: Paste Premieres Video for Single 'Dead End Driving'

"Reason To Believe" ends the record in an almost U2 feel and is a powerful ending to a full and complete album"

Ari Hest continues to ride a wave of national and regional coverage, in support of his new CD 'Twelve Mondays'. In a profile in their May issue, **ACOUSTIC GUITAR MAGAZINE** praised that Hest had *"delivered the goods..."* and **USA TODAY** recently gave Ari their second *LISTEN UP MUSIC PICK*.

On **FOX-TV's GOOD DAY ATLANTA**, Hest's project was described as *"unprecedented,"* and upcoming coverage in **The Washington Post**, **San Francisco Chronicle**, **Performing Songwriter.com**, on **ABC-TV Sacramento** and elsewhere is likely to share that sentiment. Here's why:



'Twelve Mondays' features re-worked versions of 12 fan-selected songs, culled from Ari's recently-completed, trailblazing '52' project, during which he *wrote, recorded, produced and released one new song per week, for 52 weeks in a row*. Stream selections from 'Twelve Mondays' here: brickwallmgmt.com/arihest/



Watch Ari's performance of his new single, 'Dead End Driving', on **Good Day Atlanta**: myfoxtatlanta.com/dpp/entertainment/good_day/Ari_Hest_Celebrates_Release_of_New_CD_032709

Pastemagazine.com premiered the Official Music Video for the song, here: http://www.pastemagazine.com/action/paste_station/view/1491/music/ari_hest_dead_end_driving

Hest recently performed two songs from the new album on **NBC-TV's WEEKEND TODAY SHOW IN NY**, and his segment may be seen here: youtube.com/watch?v=Dqv5K1eT4HQ

THE BOSTON GLOBE praised Hest as “*a prolific songwriter and a captivating live performer.*” Here is additional recent coverage:



**USA TODAY – Listen Up Music Picks
The Playlist - 3/9/09**

“USA TODAY’s music critic **Elysa Gardner** highlights 10 intriguing tracks found during the week’s listening:

#1) *One Two*, Ari Hest: The singer/songwriter’s new album of fan-chosen tunes, *Twelve Mondays*, kicks off with this grainy reverie.”



**ACOUSTIC GUITAR MAGAZINE
By Jeffrey Pepper Rodgers, 5/09 issue**

**Ari Hest Profile
*How the New York-based singer-songwriter released a song per week for a year***

How’s this for a musician’s weekly to-do list: On Tuesday, write a song from scratch or flesh out something from your idea tapes. On Wednesday and Thursday, polish the words and music until satisfied. On Friday and Saturday, record a full-fledged arrangement in your home studio. On Sunday, mix and master the track. Monday morning, release the finished song, take a day off . . . and on Tuesday, start all over again. And then repeat the whole cycle: 52 times in all. Such was the task that Ari Hest set out for himself with “52”—releasing one song a week for all of 2008 and offering subscriptions to the series through his website (arihest.com) as well as selling tracks and collections through iTunes and Amazon. A folk-rock singer-songwriter with a dusky voice, Hest launched this song-a-week experiment in the wake of the demise of a record deal with Columbia. He not only delivered the goods throughout the year but managed to gig and go on short tours at the same time.

On the phone from his New York apartment in the closing weeks of the “52” project, Hest shared these thoughts on his songwriting and recording experiment. In March, he released *Twelve Mondays*, a CD of subscribers’ picks for the best songs of the series (with some tracks redone and the whole set professionally mastered).

Were subscription music services like Rhapsody a model for the way you set up this project? I don’t think so. The greater source was my recent past being an artist on a major label and only being able to put out two albums. The first album was really rehashed material from before I got signed, so really we’re talking about two albums that were released over a six- or seven-year period. I noticed during that time that I was writing a lot of snippets of songs and not finishing them because they were either getting shot down by the label or I was shooting them down, and I just lost track of those ideas. When I parted ways with Columbia, I just thought I needed to put myself out there in a unique way, with the knowledge that I could write a lot of music.

My brother, Danny, who had been managing me my whole career, came up with the idea of a subscription model. So he was more the business end, and I had to write as much as I could in that time frame.

Did you have doubts that you could deliver on that kind of schedule? I didn’t have doubts that I could deliver 52 songs—I had doubts that I could deliver 52 good songs. I knew that I’d probably have a few clunkers, and I have. Honestly, that’s a risk that I took and that my fans took when they signed up for it. Obviously not everything is going to be great. Luckily the majority of it has been how I want it to be. I don’t have a lot of songs that I wish I could go back and redo completely.

You have to trust not only in your writing but in your ability to make quick decisions about arrangements and recording. You must have learned a lot about that too. I have. I mean I’ve made plenty of mistakes with that, too. There are ways I could have gone, arrangement-wise, that might have made more sense if I had the

time or had the idea that I developed two weeks after the song came out. Given the situation that I'm recording everything at home, using what's around the house, I knew that there was no way I'd find a different sound for every song. Primarily they are acoustic-guitar driven, but I did some piano songs. And I tried to take at least one big chance a month on a type of arrangement that I'd never done before, usually involving some sort of keyboard sound or rhythmic idea I'd never explored, and that's been fun.

To what degree have you worked with older song ideas as opposed to writing new songs? I would say 10 percent of it was basically finished before I started the year. I got a head start back in November. I said to everybody, I'm *releasing* 52 new songs, not writing a song a week—I think that would be tremendously hard. I did write 20 to 25 new songs over the year. I didn't really go back into ideas that I had a couple of years ago—I'd sit down in April and have an idea that I wouldn't finish until August.

A lot of musicians I know record their little 30-second idea and then never go back to it to see if there's potential. All I wanted to do was make sure that if I really thought any idea had a shot, I would try to finish it off in a way that was powerful.

How did you do in terms of subscribers? We're at around 1,200 subscribers. My small goal was to get to 1,000, and I've reached that. It hasn't blown up in the way that I was hoping, but there are so many positives that have come out of this. I think a lot of people know about it even though they may not have signed up. I do get quite a bit of feedback from people all over the world, and it's great. I think a lot of people have trouble actually signing up when they hear the word *subscription*. So they go to iTunes every few months to get the songs, even though they are more expensive that way. And every three months or so, I've released 13 songs—the winter songs, the summer songs, the spring songs. I had artwork and made it look like an album, even though it's not really an album—it's just those 13 songs from that time—and then put it up on iTunes. And what I'm seeing is that a lot of people like to buy the music that way, too.

How will you keep up a relationship with your subscribers after the end of the year? I'm certainly not going to write that many songs next year. I have their e-mails now, so they'll be kept up-to-date on what I'm doing. I have to figure out some other way, next year or the year after, to stay as unique as possible. As you know, everybody's trying to do something inventive these days. Every day I hear a new story about someone who's been double-crossed by a label and something has gone wrong because they weren't in charge of their own thing. Lucky for me, I've done something successful and been in charge of it the whole way through.

Homegrown Studio Ari Hest recorded most of the "52" songs in his New York apartment, where he frequently had to redo tracks because of rumbling trucks and other street noise. His main recording axes were a 1960s Gibson J-50 and a Taylor 12-string. He recorded guitar and vocals with a Mojave MA-200 tube condenser mic, plugged in to an Apogee Duet audio interface and into a MacBook Pro running Apple's Logic recording software. For bass tracks he used an Avalon U5 direct box into the Duet.

Early in the project, Hest did some drum loops with Logic and used random-household-objects percussion (salt and pepper shakers, bottles, etc.). Some later songs include real drum parts—Hest would send basic tracks to drummer Doug Yowell early in the week and get back drum tracks in a few days. Sometimes Hest carted his recording gear to the house of a neighbor, Thad DeBrock, for overdubs of electric guitar, harmonium, banjo, or other instruments. Hest mixed the tracks in his living room using Logic plug-in effects, a power amp, and NHT Pro studio monitors; he then tested his mixes in the car, on the computer, and on friend's stereo systems. For mastering, Hest used the plug-in iZotope Ozone 3. Hest put together a handful of the "52" tracks while on tour—recording in hotel rooms with just a Shure SM57, the Apogee Duet, and the laptop.



KNOXVILLE NEWS SENTINEL:

By Wayne Bledsoe, 3/19/09

'52 Songs' turned Ari Hest into a songwriting machine

Knoxville — Ari Hest had no shortage of songs when he began his new album "Twelve Mondays." In fact, he had 52 new songs to choose from. In 2008, Hest challenged himself to write a song per week.

"It's a fan-centered idea," he says. "They're my A&R department now. I can't say every song was great, but I worked my tail off." Hest began the project in January 2008 after leaving his contract with Columbia Records.

"I decided that every Monday I would put up a new song for download," says Hest.

Fans subscribed to his Web site for \$20 to be able to download MP3s of each new song. When the process was over, fans voted for the 12 songs that should make up his new studio album. He re-recorded those songs and polished them up into what became "Twelve Mondays." Raised in New York, Hest had self-released three CDs independently before signing with Columbia in 2004. That same year he released "Someone to Tell" on Columbia, which was followed by two EPs and "The Break-In" in 2007. He says he has always been prolific and it

was frustrating to not be able to release as much as he would've liked on the major label. While Hest has little negative to say about Columbia he says, "It's better to be the dictator than the dictated to." The company, for instance, probably would not have been enthusiastic about the "52 Songs" project. Hest says the undertaking was definitely a challenge, but it was exciting. "Some musicians have obsessions with numbers — with me it's lists," he says. "For some reason, knowing this was the 13th song or the 45th song was exciting to me. Self-imposed deadlines are important." Hest says the project stretched him as a songwriter — something he hoped it would do. "There's very little material earlier than 2004 or '05 that I can listen to," says Hest. "It's a struggle to play them. I definitely have fans who have more of an appreciation for those songs than I do. Part of the reason for this project was to wipe away the past ... In the last few years I got grouped in with other typical singer-songwriters, so I made a conscious effort to write more meaningful songs. I want to be more respected as a songwriter." He's also working on better matching his songwriting style with the way he performs the songs. He looks to Ron Sexsmith, Josh Rouse and Damien Rice as singer-songwriters who manage to write great songs and perform them in a way that seems appropriate. With Hest's fans actively making judgments on his work, the artist was hit with a few surprises. "Some things I came in with and thought, 'This is going to knock 'em dead' and it didn't," he says. "But there wasn't something that I put out that wasn't a decent idea." Still, Hest has a lot of songs to choose from when he makes his next album. Some of the tunes from the "52 Songs" project may be included, but Hest doesn't know. After all, he's still writing and he's still accessing his year of work. "Some of these songs will never be played again. Others will. I don't know yet. It's a nice problem to have."



THE ALBUM PROJECT

CD review, 3/09 (excerpts)

'Twelve Mondays' hits a sweet spot for Ari Hest as well as the perfect time to bring his singer/songwriter style to the mainstream. Full of melodies and light rhythm, the record is a natural

soundtrack for most people's daily lives. Picking on the acoustic guitar is perfectly mirrored in the vocal melody and makes "One Two" a great introduction for those still new to Hest. A rather monotone verse is off set by a quick but vibrant chorus in which the hook is almost gone before you realized what it was, and why you enjoy the song so much. The album is filled with tracks that play up subtleties but it also contains a fair amount of 'in your face' catchy tunes. "I'll Be There" is a great example of the type of track which gets stuck in your head right from the start. The burst in energy from the beginning of the song continues through the entire track and gives the short song that something extra to stick out. "Cranberry Lake" was one of the first to really jump out and grab my attention which is a bit weird considering it is one of the tracks that plays up it's subtleties to hook the listener. The guest female vocalist which sings the whole second verse is a bit unexpected but fits and feels very natural. After a few times through the album I started to notice that I couldn't seem to get enough of some of the tracks and then looking closer I realized that over half of the songs were under 3 minutes long and some of the better ones came in at just two and a half minutes..."Reason To Believe" ends the record in an almost U2 feel and is a powerful ending to a full and complete album. Even though there are a few songs which drag down parts, the record as a whole shines so bright that those spots get forgotten quickly and do little to hurt the overall greatness contained on 'Twelve Mondays'. Ari Hest may have been doing this for awhile but one things for sure, he has a long future ahead still. (excerpts)

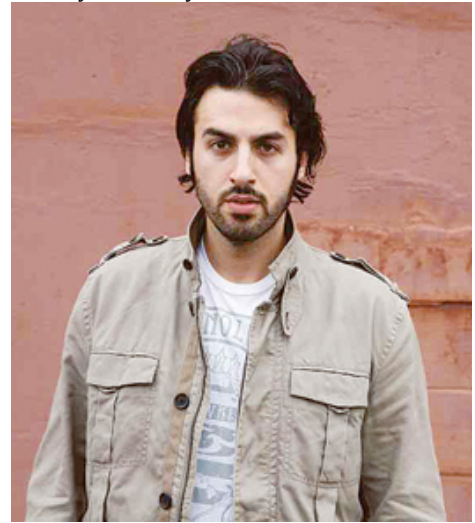
TOLEDO
FREE★PRESS TOLEDO FREE PRESS
By Vicki Kroll, 3/6/09

Artist's desire for creative control leads to '52' project, new disc

Call it cool, crazy, stressful, inventive. Ari Hest was on a creative streak in 2008. He wrote, recorded, mixed and released one song each week on his Web site, arihest.com.

"The idea grew out of coming off a major label experience that was less than stellar and knowing that I can write a lot of music and thinking I'd have to do something unique to really get people's attention now that I'm independent again and there's less financial backing," the singer-songwriter said. "I came up with the idea to do 52 songs in 52 weeks." For a \$20 subscription fee, Hest fans found instant gratification each Monday. And they

offered feedback and voted on their favorite tracks. The result: "Twelve Mondays," which will be released March 10. "Along the way, [fans] were allowed to comment on the Web site; they could say what they liked and what they didn't like," Hest explained during a phone interview from New York City. "My picks were not exactly those [12], but they were close." Columbia Records signed Hest in 2004. The 29-year-old left the label last year after his fifth disc, "The Break-In." "I'm a bit of a control freak," he said of the decision to be on his own. "These songs are like my kids or something; I don't want to have them doctored in any way." For "52," still available online, he found inspiration everywhere. "I tried to look outside myself more than any album I had done before," Hest said. "I would look to my friends, I would look to people that I didn't even know that I would see — I used the experience that they had to fill out some of the lyrical material because it was too difficult to write just about myself." "Dead End Driving" is likely to be the first single from "Twelve Mondays," he said. "That is really a song about trying to do things yourself. It's sort of the story of my musical career, but also I think in times like this when things are very troublesome with the economy and people are losing their jobs, then you start relying on yourself more and that's a good thing."



Medleyville Interview

By Chris Junior, 3/09 Q&A: ARI HEST

Throughout 2008, New York-based singer/guitarist **Ari Hest** was a songwriting machine, composing and recording a song per week as part of his 52 project. He reworked a dozen of those songs for his latest album, *Twelve Mondays*, which was released March 10. Hest recently spoke about his challenging and productive '08, shaping up the material for the album and whether he'd work with a major label again.

Medleyville.us: On your blog, you recently wrote that you are officially in denial now that your 52 project is over. What life and artistic lessons did you learn last year as you fulfilled your song-per-week commitment? Ari Hest: "As far as life lessons, I don't think it was a particularly good thing for my social life to be doing a song a week. I narrowed down my life to just do work for such a long period of time, and the rest of my life I just pushed aside. If I would do something like this again, I don't think I could completely ignore the rest of my life. I feel that after a year, I'm a year behind everybody else.

"As far as artistic lessons, it's kind of the opposite. I got into a really good routine, and kind of naturally got better with figuring out melodies, what instrumentation I should use and how to arrange things — everything clicked after a while. The hardest thing about it was finding lyrics that were meaningful. But aside from that, getting the musical parts down got easier. I knew where to go next a lot quicker than I used to because I was using that part of my brain so much.

"So artistically, it was great, but for the rest of my life, it was pretty difficult."

How much reworking was done to the fan-selected songs from 52 that make up your new album? Hest:

"Not a whole lot. I tried to keep as much of the character of those songs as I could while still adding something to them. There are very few songs that I recut the vocals on; there are a few that I put drums on that didn't have drums before because I didn't have time [during 2008] to do them with drums, but I always intended them to [have drums]. They're very much the same — it's really just a better mix and a slightly better arrangement on most of the material."

Do you plan on reworking other songs from your 52 project for future albums? Hest: "Maybe a handful. I don't want these songs to go to waste — not that they're really going to waste. They're still available through the project, and people can still sign up for 52. I do think that there will be a few that I want to do more with, but I also expect to be writing new material pretty soon. I have started doing that; I just haven't started writing lyrics. I have quite a bit of music that I've written this year; I just don't know what to write [lyrically] yet."

Will the tour supporting *Twelve Mondays* be with a backing band, and if so, who are the other

players? Hest: "The *12 Mondays* tour is going to be about five weeks long — so far, at least — and I have a band for about half of it. The band is the same guys who helped me make the record: [drummer] **Doug Yowell**, [bassist] **Rob Calder** and [guitarist] **Thad DeBrock**. All of those guys contributed majorly to the [52] project and to the album, and they co-produced the album with me. I can't say enough about how much they helped me get through [2008]. There were some rough moments where I felt overwhelmed with how much I had to do, and they really stepped up and helped me out, so and I'm very excited to hit the road with them.

"For the second half of the tour, I go farther out West, so that will be a solo tour, but equally as exciting to me. Some of these songs I haven't had the chance to just play solo acoustic, and I think it will be interesting to see the result."

After your experience with Columbia, which released your albums *Someone to Tell* and *The Break-In*, are you an indie guy now and forever, or would you entertain the thought of working with a major label again? Hest: "I'm an indie guy now, and I think if I see some change in direction as far as the bigger labels go in how they plan to market music, how they plan to treat artists and [if they] break out of their past ways of doing things – if they're able to change, I don't see why not. They have steadfastly stuck to certain principles that have put them in a real bind, and I was in the majority of the people who felt like they were getting the shaft. "I'm so glad I'm out, but at the same time, if a [major label] decides that it wants to be with the times a little more, I don't see why [working together] would be such a bad thing. I'd love to have people really helping me out and pushing the material."



TIME OUT CHICAGO – 3/09

*Ari Hest rarely lets a year pass without a new release. Last year, the prolific songwriter kept busy with his "52" project, writing a new song each week as a means of coping with his newly independent status. He headlines two sets promoting his new *Twelve Mondays* collection, featuring a dozen reworkings of fan-selected favorites.*

Detroit Free Press

DETROIT FREE PRESS – 3/09

You can't accuse Ari Hest of laziness: Since landing on the national radar with his Columbia Records debut in 2004, the New York singer-songwriter has cranked out a multitude of music -- including the recent "52," which compiled songs written weekly through the course of one year. The raspy voiced romantic is on the road promoting the new "Twelve Mondays," featuring a dozen, fan-chosen tunes from that project.



The Daily Times

By Steve Wildsmith, 3/19/09

Ari Hest strikes out on his own with 'Twelve Mondays'

Someone apparently forgot to tell singer-songwriter Ari Hest that he was doing things backwards.

Most singer-songwriters struggle for years for one good demo album's worth of songs, hoping against hope to get signed to a major label.

Hest, on the other hand, fought to get out of his major label contract, then spent a year writing, recording, polishing and releasing a song per week. The ambitious project resulted in a new album -- "Twelve Mondays," which is a collection of 12 of those 52 songs as selected by fans -- for which he's hitting the club circuit, a tour that includes a stop on Monday at Preservation Pub in downtown Knoxville.

Those struggling songwriters who covet a major-label deal might shake their heads at Hest's unorthodox approach to making music. Hest, on the other hand,

couldn't be happier. "I asked out only a month after Columbia put out 'The Break-In' (his seventh album), and I just happened to ask the right guy -- the president at the time," Hest told The Daily Times during a recent interview. "It was just a general vibe I got after a few years there, just realizing that the people who work there may be great and they may be your friends, but in the end, they want to keep their jobs first and foremost, and that makes them very reluctant to take a chance.

"Even if they like your music and believe in it, they're too afraid to take that extra step and put some financial backing into it, and I felt like that for the two albums I made with them, they turned their backs. The president was very accepting of my asking to leave, and he admitted they had done me wrong; he was also nice enough to give me the rights to that album.

"So I felt feeling like I had to kind of start over and start doing this independently again," he added. "I wanted to do something unique that would make me stand out."

Hest has been something of a stand-out since childhood, when he first started taking piano lessons and taught himself to play his mom's nylon-string guitar. His father wrote jingles for toy commercials and occasionally recruited his son to

sing; Hest formed a band called Synapse that played around the New York City music scene for a couple of years before attending college.

For a while, he juggled his studies (he graduated from New York University in 2002) with his music; after a 2003 performance at New York's Bowery Ballroom, Columbia expressed an interest in signing him. While under contract, he put out two full-length albums, two EPs and a download-only single; still, he said, it was only a fraction of the prolific amount of work he produced during that time period.

"I had been writing for years, but when you're with a major label, they don't let you put much of it out," he said. "After I left Columbia, I decided to put it out, to have control of it all and to do it in an interesting way."

He revived his own label, Project 4 Records, and set up a subscription service through his Web site. By signing up, fans would take part in his ambitious "52" project, receiving a song each week and helping Hest arrange the best of them into his next studio album. Because he lived a frugal lifestyle while on Columbia, he didn't have to pound the club circuit to make ends meet after leaving the label, allowing him to focus on crafting solid songs despite the self-imposed timetable.

"I wasn't really in some bind where I had to take another job to survive; I could really put some time into this, so I sat up in my apartment and pounded these out," he said. "Sure, there was a little bit of fear that I wouldn't be able to keep it up, but my manager is my brother, and anybody else who's under him understood that I had a lot of drive to do it."

"I don't think that they were super fearful that I couldn't accomplish his goal; they thought it was going to be a huge undertaking, but in the end, they were willing to support it and make it work for me."

Over the course of the next year, he uploaded his new songs to his Web site, keeping track of fan commentary and putting in painstaking hours to make sure that every song, while not unique, had something different to offer than the one he released seven days prior.

"I think I came in with a certain number of musical ideas before the year started, and I tried to space out the songs I knew were going to go far for me," he said. "But, there were also a ton of songs I just wrote in a particular week, and most of them turned out well. I didn't want the song I did one week to sound like the one before, and while it's impossible to be completely different, I tried to add things here and there to make each song unique."

The end result -- "Twelve Mondays," released earlier this month -- is at turns sunny and meditative, from the wistful-sounding "Dead End Driving" to the resonating hope on "Cranberry Lake. There are no throwaways here; despite the quick turnaround of all of the songs over the course of 2008, each song on "Twelve Mondays" is solid.

In addition, each song resonated differently with fans, Hest added, and while not every song is worthy of a Grammy nomination, there isn't one to which he holds his nose when he listens.

"It wasn't like, 'Oh, this is a bad decision; I'm not proud of that song,'" he said. "The best thing about this project is that even though some weeks were better than others, I never threw in the towel for the week. Everything was the best I could do for that week, and everything on this album is something I'm proud of."

PERFORMING SONGWRITER Magazine characterized '52' as "*a daunting, almost impossible task*," as they profiled Ari Hest in their Year-End special on Independent Artists who have taken creative control over their careers.



In addition to their interview feature, Performing Songwriter Editors have selected songs from '52' as among their BEST RELEASES OF 2008, praising: "*Ari Hest achieved the extraordinary in 2008 by writing a song every week that listeners could download from his website. The best part: His songs are high-caliber and deeply heartfelt.*"

On 'Twelve Mondays', Ari Hest finally has the luxury to re-visit the fans' favorite tracks, and re-work, re-sing and/or re-mix them in the form of a studio album that captures a more defined sound. Regardless, his ambitious '52' project was an artistic and entrepreneurial triumph, stretching the boundaries of his past work, and delivering him to a new terrain frequented by the likes of **Patty Griffin, Marc Cohn, Aimee Mann** and **Damien Rice**. In fact, under constant pressure to create, Hest delivered a surprisingly strong body of music, finding a home somewhere on the path where **Elliot Smith** meets **Peter Gabriel**.

UPCOMING TOUR DATES INCLUDE:

April 3	Dallas, TX	Rock House Films
April 4	Huntsville, AL	Ave L
April 5	Houston, TX	Mucky Duck

April 9	Las Vegas, NV	Acoustic Strip
April 10	San Diego, CA	Y-1
April 11	Los Angeles, CA	Hotel Café
April 12	San Francisco, CA	Café DuNord
April 13	Monterey, CA	Monterey Live
April 15	Sacramento, CA	Marilyn's on K
April 18	Bellingham, WA	Green Frog
April 19	Portland, OR	Alberta Street Pub
April 21	Eugene, OR	Cosmic Pizza
April 22	Seattle, WA	The Triple Door
April 24	Teaneck, NJ	Mexicali
April 25	Vienna, VA	Jammin Java
April 26	Easton, PA	Coffee East
April 28	Larchmont, NY	Watercolor Café
May 22	Des Moines, IA	Vaudeville Mews
May 23	Ellston, IA	Farmers Song Fest

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