

STEVE SMITH AND CHRIS SANDERS IN PERFORMANCE AND RECORDINGS

A superbly, star-studded performance...the duet delivers a divine offering of profound lyrics, passionate instrumentalism, silky harmonies, and witty stage banter. Whether on a large stage or in a small setting, the same intimacy and grace of human expression through music always shine through. Julie Sullivan. Talent Director, Pickin' in the Pines Bluegrass & Acoustic Music Festival

Steve Smith is undoubtedly among the best mandolin pickers in the known universe, and combined with Chris Sanders marvelous vocals and steady rhythm guitar, they light up a room like the New Mexico sun. From original gospel songs, old standards, bluegrass and folk, Steve and Chris will take you on a journey you don't want to end. If you have a chance to have them play, jump right on it, don't hesitate, it'll be a time to remember. And besides being exceptionally multi-talented, they're just a whole lot of fun. You'll have a great time and so will your audience. Mike Shirkey, GoodFolk Productions, Fayetteville, AR

Reviews for *Signs Along the Road* (2010)

...What has not changed is Smith's and Sanders' vision and their dedication to presenting a wide variety of musical styles offered in packages that often swirl and change and break free from the usual pattern of verse, chorus, solo, and which are liberally punctuated with rhythmic interjections and interesting chord colorings. Contemporary bluegrass, country, country rock, jazz, folk, and gospel—each gets its moment in the sun. "The Same For You" and Smith's mandolin instrumental, "Jon Seivert's Blues" are both straight bluegrass, perhaps even traditional bluegrass in feel. From there it gets further out, culminating in the jazz inflected instrumental "Mice On The Stove.... *Signs Along The Road* refuses any one label, except perhaps that of good, evocative music. *Bluegrass Unlimited*, June 2010

Signs Along the Road is the best work yet from Smith, Sanders and Hard Road. The band's veteran and fluid pickers breathe life into 11 strong originals. Above it all soar two impassioned singers whose individual vocal gifts are periodically transformed into choruses of alchemical harmony. Bruce Bergethon, Host, Acousticity, WGLT, Normal, IL

Reviews for *Only so Fast* (2008)

What happens when a Virginia musician adopts Las Cruces as his home? Give a listen to Steve Smith and Hard Road's *Only So Fast*, a brilliant mix of old-time bluegrass melodies and Americana tunes peppered with lyrics infused with years of desert living. Emily Drabanski, *New Mexico Magazine*

That darned seal across the top edge of a new CD that's usually such a pain to remove just popped right off and took the cellophane wrapper with it. It was a sign. Everything about this album wants to be enjoyed without effort....From the colorful graphic design to the last note, I'm enjoying this album thoroughly. Monica Gomez, KTEP FM

...Since relocating to New Mexico, Smith has assembled a six piece band that harnesses his eclectic influences into a truly talented and original ensemble sound....Sanders' singing is a prime selling point for the band, and it's interesting to hear how it changes in different contexts. On Eden Prairie, the jagged nature of the chorus's crooked timing keeps the tune and the listener's ear on edge and off balance throughout. However, on the sultry Dry Spell and the band's cover of the celtic tinged Kim McGee song "One Lone Rowan Tree", the warmth, depth, and expressiveness of Sanders' voice shine and show how impressive this band can be when at the top of its game. HK, *Bluegrass Unlimited*

Review: *Meet Me by the River* (2005)

...Three particular highlights are Chris Sanders' lead vocals on Joan Baez's "I'm With You", the Steve Spurgin composition "I Owe My Soul", and the band's energetic treatment of the traditional "The Boatman". *Meet Me By The River* is an exciting bit of music that defies being placed into a single musical genre.

Bluegrass Unlimited Aug. 2007

Desert Night (2000) and *Distant Lands* (2002) – Steve Smith solo

Desert Night, a superb piece of artistry, is a worthwhile addition to most any music library. Steve Smith has an uncommon mastery of the mandolin and other similar instruments and fans of acoustic variety will enjoy this fine CD."

Bluegrass Now

Smith, through his guitar and mandolin, paints visions of the deserts of the Southwest. Tunes such as "Wind Dance", "As the Crow Flies", and "Pastel Fantasy" all contain images of the openness and beauty of the desert.... Many of the tunes reflect his bluegrass background while others have touches of Celtic and new age. Though primarily known for his mandolin work, he's an extremely lyrical guitarist."

Jim Lee, *Dirty Linen*