

Fats Kaplin

“Kaplin’s that rare master instrumentalist who doesn’t need to show off his ability, preferring instead to add spice so that it blends into the musical mix.”

-The Nashville Scene-

Born and raised in New York City, influenced by jazz, gypsy, and traditional string band music, Fats Kaplin had already been featured on legendary recordings and extensive tours by the time he was 18 years old.

Now, living in Nashville, TN, he is one of the music industry’s leading multi-instrumentalists (fiddle, steel, accordion, mandolin, guitar and so on).

Fats grew up in an apartment in Manhattan and remembers falling asleep to the sound of salsa music rising up the airshaft, Johnny Pineapple’s Hawaiian Revue seeping through the steam pipes from the apartment below, and Cantor Ackerman practicing next door. It was in this melting pot that Fats’ musical tastes were formed.

Though Fats was raised in a family of artists he lay down his sketch pad at an early age and picked up a banjo. Then a fiddle. Then a whole assortment of instruments quickly followed. Intrigued by the folk scene that was developing in New York in the 1960s, Fats grew up learning to play by listening to old recordings of string bands, early jazz and other world music.

At age 17 Fats went on the road and recorded two duo albums with country blues guitarist Roy Bookbinder for the Blue Goose label. After playing for several years in numerous New York early jazz and old timey outfits (and a stint as a craps dealer at the age of 21 in Las Vegas), Fats joined the Tom Russell band in the mid 1980s. They recorded and toured extensively.

In 1992 Fats moved to Nashville at the urging of Kevin Welch. He joined Kevin’s band The Overtones which also included Mike Henderson, Glenn Worf, Harry Stinson and Kieran Kane. Fats was quickly sought out by artists as diverse as The Tractors, The Manhattan Transfer, Pure Prairie League, Mark Knopfler, Nanci Griffith, The Mavericks, Suzy Boggus, Buddy Miller, Waylon Jennings, Garth Brooks, Bad Company, Jason and the Scorchers, Peter Rowan, Paul Burch, Kelly Willis, The Dead Reckoners and many others to record and tour. He has received recognition including nominations as instrumentalist of the year by both the Nashville and Austin Music Awards.

Fats and his wife Kristi Rose, who he also writes and records with, have created the musical genre known as Pulp Country and have recently released two critically acclaimed albums, *“This Is Pulp Country!”* and *“Kristi Rose, Live In Holland”*. They live in a rambling old bungalow in the heart of Nashville, where visitors are met by the aroma of great Italian cooking, the strains of old 78s, rooms filled with musical instruments from around the world, and what they like to think of as congenial wit. They continue to compose, record and tour.