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Five records into his late-starting career Joe Fournier has refined - if you can actually say "refined" for a guy who sings with a voice that is as much a holler as it is singing - his style. He simply plays American roots music - country soul, folk, rockabilly and blues - with stories that will make you laugh, cry and cringe, sometimes all in the same verse.

"Seems like I've always been on the road. The family likely moved around 21 times before I hit the road with my first band. Went through at least as many schools. We did manage to settle down for a bit in Northern Ontario. My folks ran a beat up old hotel that featured live country music six nights a week. We lived upstairs - and that's where I got the notion to learn the guitar. I'd bug those road weary bastards to teach me the chords and words to all their tunes every chance I'd get."

His first appearance, at age 12, was filling in for the hired act who was too drunk to play. The people ate it up and Joe was hooked. He soon found himself making good money playing country and rock in local bands every weekend. The next 25 years were spent on and off the road.

" I spent a few years trying to 'make it' in the business, but at 30 - after a demo deal with a major label fell through and my manager quit to go work with Joan Rivers(of all people), I'd had enough. Instead I started writing and recording for other folks. I learned how to work a studio and found bits of production work along the way. Became a proper 'gig pig' too. Worked 3 to 6 nights a week playing anything that came along. Pop, polka, blues, rockabilly, new country, old country - hell, I even took a gig playing Ringo in a Beatles tribute act. Toured around for a bit in a limo with a Willie Nelson stand-in too. Saw my share of bar brawls and bad deals. Got divorced a few times as well."

After having exhausted his creativity and enthusiasm in Ontario, Joe and his girlfriend bought a little shack on the south shore of Nova Scotia and proceeded to rebuild it into a living/studio space. It was while bangin' and sawin' that he started getting ideas for the kind of songs he'd never written before. Songs that drew on his country roots, personal experiences and crazy characters met while gigging and traveling all those years. Soon there was enough material to fill two albums. By January 2002, at age 41, Joe had recorded his first CD and sent it out into the world.

" I set up this little 4 track, a drum box and a few mics and started banging off these little tunes just for the hell of it in my spare time. It sure wasn't any kind of pro setup. So, I get this thing mixed on my crappy board and speakers and start listening back. I mean, man! I didn't know what to call it but it was the first time I ever recorded anything that really made me feel like playing it for someone else."

Raw Sugar Shed (2002) received rave reviews and in no time flat he was fielding calls from publishers and managers from Nashville to Europe and beyond. The next two years were spent touring around Canada, England and Scandinavia to enthusiastic crowds. In Nova Scotia he received three MIANS nominations for best songwriter, best male vocalist and best country/roots album. Joe also appeared at Canada's National Arts Centre and was featured twice on CBC radio in concert. Since then, he's released four more critically acclaimed discs - Whiskey Stars (2003), Three Chord MacGyver (2005), Dirt Road Joyride (2008) and Truth & Twang (2009) - and has steadily built a following on the international festival and house concert circuit.