

John Depew is an award-winning musician and songwriter with a knack for combining traditional sounds with thoughtful lyrics about philosophy, farming, adventure, and family. Growing up in the Kansas landscape has informed and shaped his musical style and his songwriting content. John is the 2022 Kansas Mandolin Champion, and a 2021 winner of Walnut Valley Festival's NewSong Showcase.





Ted Gioia ✓
@tedgioia

If you haven't heard John Depew—master of the lonesome Kansas sound—do yourself a favor, and listen to his music. One of the most inspired discoveries I've made listening to new music in 2021.

"The lyrics are often haunting and longing, guided by the Mastery of instruments. The beauty and hardship of life weave together in each piece. I really enjoyed listening on a poetic level, the writing, and story that carries the song, combined with the pleasure of the music itself."

- Jennifer Randall, Hutchinson News

- 2022 Kansas Mandolin Champion
- 2021 winner of Walnut Valley Festival's NewSong Showcase
- Ted Gioia's Top 100 Albums list, 2021 & 2023

"Excellent music. One of a kind."

-Flea, Red Hot Chili Peppers

"A fresh, unclichéé sound"

-Ted Gioia, musicologist



Born and raised in central Kansas, John Depew is a multi-instrumentalist songwriter with a background in bluegrass and old-time American music. Depew features mandolin, claw-hammer banjo, bouzouki, and acoustic guitar and is influenced by 'gypsy jazz,' swing, and a variety of folk styles.

Since he was too small to properly hold a mandolin, music has been a large part of John's life. His dad played in a bluegrass band, and John would spend time on the porch with him, trying to play along. Mandolin was John's first instrument, and remains a core part of his repertoire. John has picked up several more instruments since, always enjoying the new challenge and new ideas that a new instrument brings.

His music invites listeners to think seriously about topics from food production to mental health to parenthood, while embracing the beauty and wonder in both the natural world and the interior one.

Traveling and spending time with his family is important to John, and serves as inspiration for songs. His song, 'Pitamakin Pass' is a great example of these topics coming together. You can read more about John's songwriting process and inspiration in his Substack, "[Wind Songs.](#)"

John's newest album, *Bell of Hope* (2024 release) is his greatest work so far, and includes bassist Calvin Bennett and banjo player Peter Oviatt. *Bell of Hope* was recorded at Moonflower Sounds in Taos, NM.



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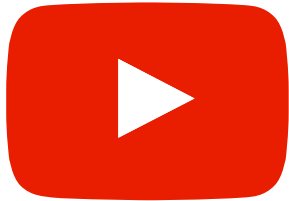
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