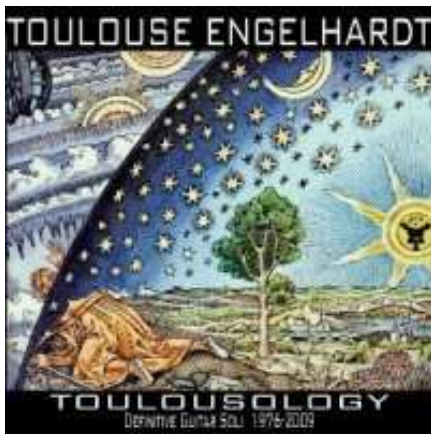


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Toulouse Engelhardt, "Toulossology: Definitive Guitar Soli, 1976-2009," 2012



Only the coolest of the cool are permitted to have Rick Griffin art (think the Grateful Dead's "Aoxomoxoa") grace the cover of one of their LPs. Toulouse Engelhardt is that cool, his 1976 LP "Toullusions" sporting a flying and foreshortened Felix the Cat lookalike custom-crafted by Griffin on the front. The tunes from his 2012 retrospective "Toulossology" compile his best fingerstyle solos from "Toullusions," but also from "Martian Lust" (2006) and "Perpendicular Worlds" (2009). Engelhardt is a living legend who was part of the original Takoma Seven with John Fahey and Leo Kottke. Somehow he flew under the radar of the public smitten with equally talented peers Kottke and Michael Hedges in the 1970s and 1980s, even though he slightly predated them as contemporaries. Listen to "Fire in O'Doodlee's Popcorn Factory" and "Young Goodman Brown Joined the Confederacy Today" on this compendium and tell me that Leo Kottke didn't get some of his inspiration for his famous "Driving of the Year Nail" from Engelhardt! The theme of "Blind

Watchmaker" partially recapitulates the theme of Promenade from Mussorgsky's (or ELP's... for the boomers among you) "Pictures at an Exhibition," but then takes off in a Toulousical direction all its own. The whimsical "Beavers in a Hot Tub" similarly flaunts his ability to co-opt a tune for his own unusual musical devices, in this case, the theme from "Leave it to Beaver." This Beaver tribute is part of a musical trilogy, "Mosrite Devotion," done on the solid body electric guitar that came to be associated with The Ventures, and which undoubtedly helped earn Engelhardt the moniker of "The Segovia of Surf." Obviously blessed with a keen sense of irony as well as virtuosity, Engelhardt has bestowed an alternate name for this CD collection -- "Definitive Guitar Soli 1976-2009." Run-of-the-mill solos will never do for Toulouse Engelhardt. I direct the reader to run to buy a copy of "Toulossology" and thereafter bask in the soli therein.