

Romeo's Back: The Return of Steve Forbert
By Clifford Meth
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He was only the most exciting new singer/songwriter to arrive on New York City's still-hip folk scene in 1977. And 33 years later he's still the most relevant. Whether you've heard him recently or not.

Steve Forbert is currently touring his just-released studio LP "Down in Flames," 39 new studio and live recordings that open with the 13-track, refurb'd version of his until-now unreleased 5th LP. Those never-heard tracks—historical monuments for diehard Forbert fans—were originally produced for Columbia Records in 1983. But Columbia didn't like the record and asked for another one. Steve said no. Then Columbia sat on the album, refusing to release it, and refusing to let Steve release it, locking this important 28-year-musician into a nightmarish legal entanglement that prohibited recording, then setting our boy from Meridian, Mississippi loose on an unexpected path: the one less travelled by. As Hunter Thompson observed, it was the dead-end loneliness of a man who makes his own rules.

Steve Forbert is to folk rock what Alan Moore is to comics, what Charles Bukowski was to poetry, what Harlan Ellison was to science fiction. He is unique. He is uncompromising. He is a very stubborn man. And his music—that always cogent songwriting and those emotive, mesmerizing live performances—are simply wonders to behold.

Do yourself a favor, Jack: pay attention to this kind of guy.

Click [here](#) to see Steve Forbert's current tour dates, or [here](#) to visit his new website... or [here](#) to read a piece that I wrote about Steve six years ago. If you're too young to recall "Romeo's Tune" and the like, you're about to strike gold; and if you're a middle-ager like me, it's time to fall in love all over again. You can thank me later.