

August 4, 2023
For Immediate Release

**Mr. Greg and Cass McCombs Present New Single,
[“Friends From Around the World \(Hello Version\),”](#)
Featuring Vocals from Michael Hurley**

New Album, *Mr. Greg & Cass McCombs Sing and Play New Folk Songs for Children*, Out August 18th on Smithsonian Folkways

Part of the 75th Anniversary of Folkways Records



“Friends From Around the World (Hello Version)” Single Artwork, Illustration by Greg Gardner

Today, singer-songwriter **Cass McCombs** and San Francisco-based preschool teacher **Mr. Greg** (aka **Greg Gardner**) present “**Friends From Around the World (Hello Version),**” the

final single/video from their forthcoming album, ***Mr. Greg & Cass McCombs Sing and Play New Folk Songs for Children***, out **August 18th on Smithsonian Folkways**. On “Friends From Around the World (Hello Version),” Gardner leads a morning singalong over a single electric guitar that wanders, but never far. Scattered throughout this song are additional vocal snippets from Folkways artist and legend **Michael Hurley**, Gardner’s daughter, and fellow teachers.

[Listen to Mr. Greg & Cass McComb’s “Friends From Around the World \(Hello Version\)”](#)

“Friends From All Around The World (Hello Version)” comes from the daily morning routine in Gardner’s preschool classroom where the morning message begins with a greeting in a different language each day. The song reflects the swathe of languages spoken by the students and families in Gardner’s school community as well as those of friends from other regions of the world. This simple teaching song includes greetings in Spanish, Mandarin, Hebrew, Malay, and English by friends, teachers, plus Hurley, whose beloved debut album *First Songs* was released by Folkways in 1964. Gardner explains, “In ‘Friends From All Around The World,’ my daughter returns each greeting (listeners are welcome to do the same) and sends a special hello to Boone and Jocko, characters that live in many of Michael Hurley’s songs and illustrations. There’s even a special hello from our family cat. Listen carefully for the meow.”

The companion song “**Friends From Around the World (Goodbye Version)**” includes friends saying goodbye in a handful of different languages. This one features Folkways artist **Peggy Seeger** and legendary skateboarder and musician **Tommy Guerrero**, as well as sampled clips of Woody Guthrie and Ella Jenkins saying “goodbye” and “so long.”

Inspired by beloved Folkways classics by Ella Jenkins, Lucinda Williams, Hurley, and Woody Guthrie, the album is made of songs written by Gardner, as arranged by McCombs, that were not only road tested in his classroom over the course of several years, but were also directly inspired by his young students. “What they were talking about, what we were learning about,” he says. “The songs were informed by the childrens’ conversations and interests.”

Mr. Greg & Cass McCombs Sing and Play New Folk Songs for Children is an album shaped by its community, featuring recordings of Gardner’s students through the years, plus contributions from **The Chapin Sisters**, drummer **Bongo Sidibe**, singer-songwriter **Chris Cohen**, the **San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus** plus childhood friends, family and even pets. In keeping with the progressive spirit of the Bay Area, Gardner and McCombs recorded tributes to the late **Ruth Bader-Ginsburg** and, on the lead single, local hero **Harvey Milk**. Other topics include exercise, recycling, and origami, as well as the importance of friendship and finding beauty in that which makes us different.

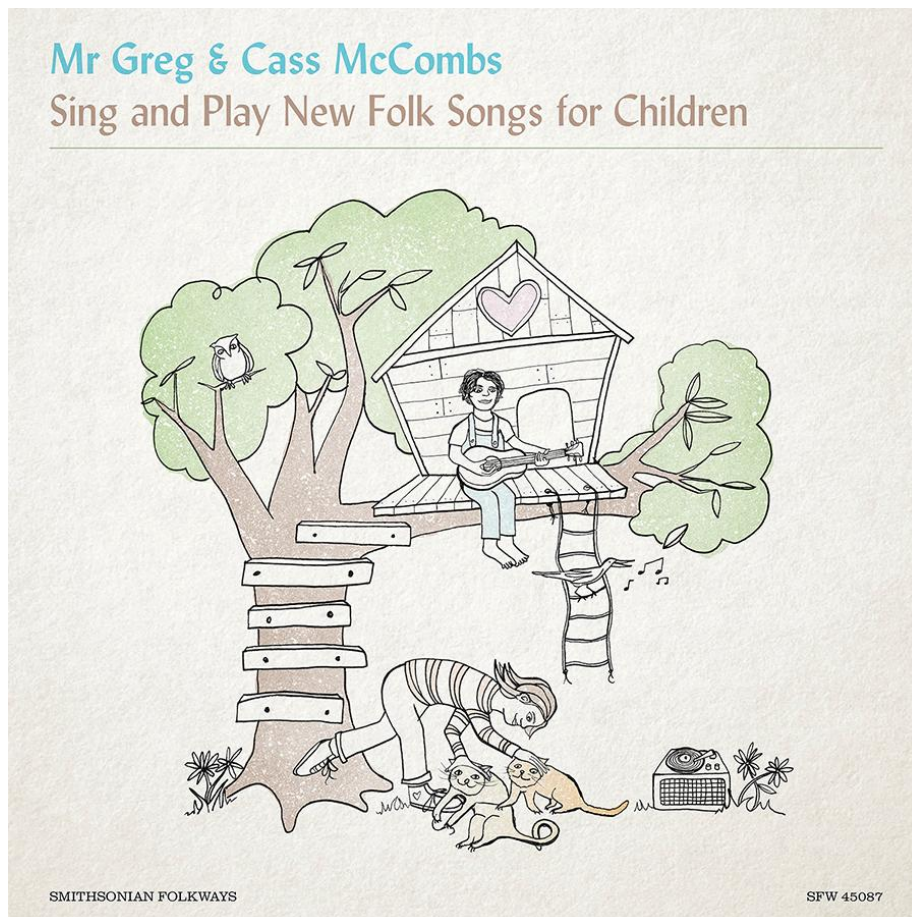
Part of the **75th Anniversary of Folkways Records**, this album will come packaged in old-school Folkways Records textured black tip-on jackets with wrap-around paste-on artwork. Limited edition yellow vinyl will be available only from Smithsonian Folkways mail-order. The release contains an illustrated booklet with liner notes by **Dublab's Mark "Frosty" McNeill**, as well as suggested activities for parents and teachers that correspond to each song.

[Pre-order Mr. Greg & Cass McCombs Sing and Play New Folk Songs for Children](#)

[Watch the "Wave a Flag for Harvey Milk" Video](#)

[Watch the "Little Wilma Wiggly Worm" Video](#)

[Download cover artwork & hi-res images of Mr. Greg & Cass McCombs](#)



(Mr. Greg & Cass McCombs Sing and Play New Folk Songs for Children Cover Artwork)

Smithsonian Folkways Online

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)

For more information, contact:

Yuri Kwon | Pitch Perfect PR – yuri@pitchperfectpr.com

Stephanie Mayers | Mayers Consulting - mayersconsulting@gmail.com