

## BIOGRAPHY

**Richard Leschen** is originally from the Midwestern United States and grew up playing American music of all sorts, listening to “the old stuff that was original, earthy, poetic, and remains fresh every time it’s played.” Now a New Zealander, he classifies himself as a songwriter/guitar player. Regarding his lyrics, Leschen claims he is “still evolving and feeling more centered after two album releases, *Heavy Waters* and the fully acoustic *Black Horses*.” *Black Horses* was listed by *Americana Homeplace* among the Best of Americana Releases of 2008. *New Sun Rising*, his latest album which is also acoustic, highlights his unique improvisational cross-picking style guitar and cinematic lyrics that are well-informed by folk genres, including Latin American (he has kin in Mexico). Leschen has performed at festivals, folk clubs, and other venues as a solo artist, and in bluegrass, folk, and world music ensembles. He is founder of the Bunker Hill Folk Review which showcases Auckland singer/songwriters, has recorded with New Zealand artists such as Nigel Gavin and Carol Bean, and his song *Bed Monkey* was recorded by documentarian Costa Botes. His last two albums were brilliantly recorded by Robbie Duncan at Braeburn Studios.

*Leschen writes with his heart on his sleeve, and captures the moment with cynically crafted and surreal references to worldly ways, posturing by the undeserving and aloof in front of a backdrop of Americana.* - Andy Bramwell, Waikato Times

*A wonderful guitar picker, who sings a set of Dylan-like lyrics, heavily influenced by his American cowboy background. Maybe he can't ride a horse, but he certainly takes you there with his songs.* - Roger Giles, President of Devonport Folk Music Club & Auckland Folk Festival Inc



*Comfortable backporch music best suited at the end of a hard day and a cold beer. His easy going style belie a knack for literary detail and story telling that's way above the typical folk singer.* - Calvin Powers, Taproot Radio

*A strong set of songs, stormy folk music based around deft picking and strumming. His lyrics are worldly and transcend the sadly usual cliches that seem to come with the territory.* - Simon Sweetman, NZ Musician

*Leschen's use of language, metaphors and imagery is very much in the mould of Dylan, but he is no imitator and is quite original in his stringing of words together creating wonderful images in the mind of the listener. His playing of the different styles is just impeccable and I would place him as one of best guitarists in New Zealand.* - Rudy Sunde, Maritime Crew

*Many of Leschen's songs are timeless ... Along the way Leschen reminds us of the poetry of life – throwing in references to Kafka and Greek Mythology as well as numerous striking images of his own. Dreams do, in the end, come true: people do head out of their mediocre lives and into the sunset of their dreams.* - Renee Liang, poet and author of Chinglish

*Leschen is, on evidence of the album, a fine guitarist ... in fact, I would go as far as to say he is a very fine guitarist. The lyrics are pertinent and the playing flawless.* - Keith Redgrave, Americana UK