

When All Our Hearts Are Reassembled - Love Will Connect Us Once Again

Written by Andy Owen



This is something a bit different.

But something I wanted to share, because it is so beautiful.

When you love animals and cherish the special relationships you have with your pets, when you lose one - it can be devastating.

It is like losing a family member and the grief and pain involved, is total.

We have lost many of our friends over the decades and it never gets any easier, when we have to say goodbye to them. In fact, quite the opposite.

I'm sure you will have felt the same pain. Probably many times.

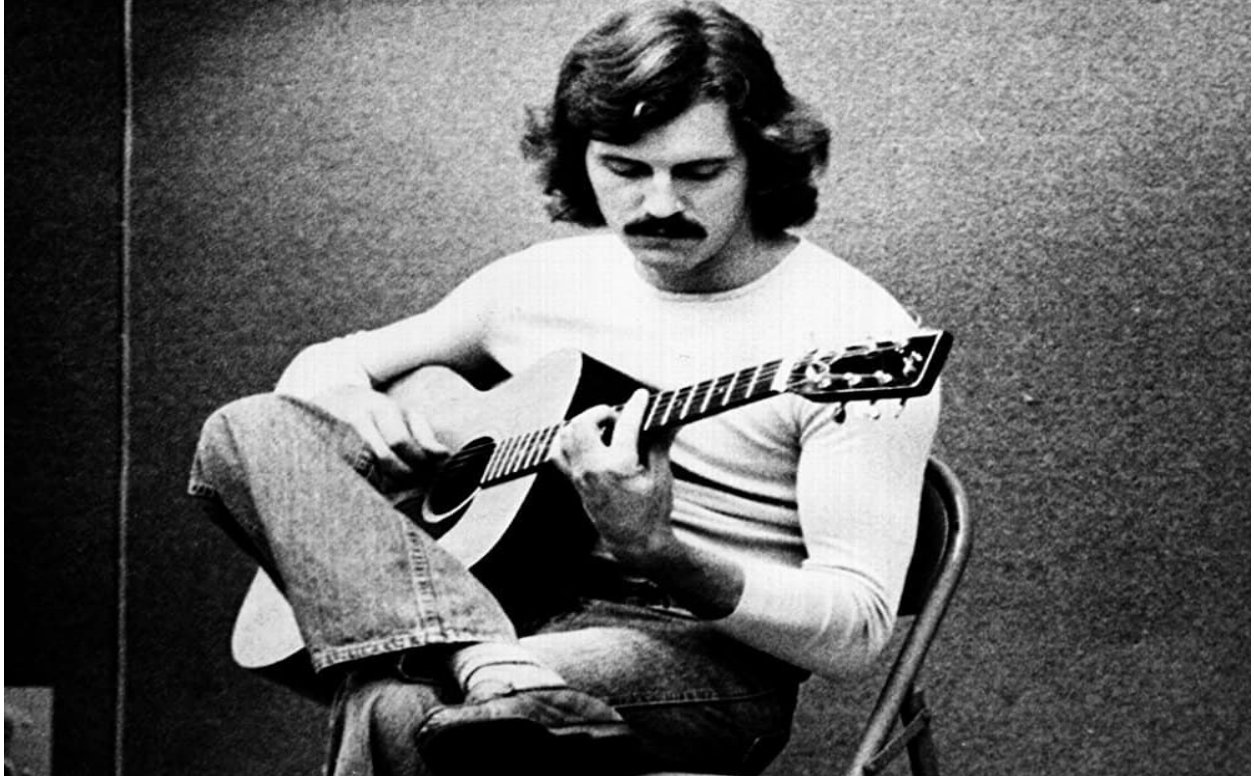
Anyway, this is a story about losing a furry friend, but with a personal musical and pictorial tribute that you can watch at the end.

It is very sad. But very, very beautiful.

Let me tell you the story.

Michael Franks is someone very special to me.

He is a singer/ songwriter, born in La Jolla California, 76 years ago.



He has been a recording artist since 1973 and has released 19 albums.

I am proud to have every one. Plus numerous DVD concerts, TV shows, Club performances, interviews and much more.

Some of those are official, some of them are not.

Michael's music is really difficult to categorise, as he is unique in delivery and content. His legion of fans worldwide, come from smooth jazz, adult contemporary, pop, contemporary jazz, folk - and even blues circles.

He has written many songs that have been lovingly covered by a wide range of artists that includes; Peggy Lee, Ringo Starr, Natalie Cole, The Carpenters, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Diana Krall, Lyle Lovett, Al Jarreau, Bonnie Raitt, Joe Sample, Carmen McRae, The Manhattan Transfer and Patti LaBelle, to name only a few.

Some of his most famous songs include: *"Popsicle Toes"*, *"Monkey See, Monkey Do"*, *"The Lady Wants to Know"*, *"When the Cookie Jar is Empty"*, *"Tiger in the Rain"*, *"Rainy Night in Tokyo"*, and *"Tell Me All About It"*.

His lyrics are wonderful (*"I write autobiographically, although I apply liberal amounts of poetic license."*) and his understated and laidback vocal delivery is truly unique.

His music is timeless and sublime. No one is like Michael Franks.

As someone said in a recent article I read about him, *"what James Taylor, Joni Mitchell and Paul Simon have contributed to pop-rock music in terms of singer/songwriter excellence, Michael Franks has accomplished as their iconic equivalent in the realms of contemporary jazz"*.

Michael lives in an idyllic wooded environ, in Woodstock, New York, with his wife, Claudia, seven cats and two dogs.

OK. Now you know a little bit about the man involved.

Michael and his wife lost their beloved dog Flora, during the recording of one of Michael's albums in 2011.

Michael wrote the track 'Time Together' as a tribute and celebration to Flora. It became the title track.

Here's Flora's story, described by Michael himself:

"In 1998 we adopted Flora, a two-year old dachshund who had just been rescued from a puppy mill in Kansas by Hearts United for Animals, a no-kill shelter located in the mid-West.

Flora had numbers crudely tattooed on her belly in green ink, a primitive and painful form of identification often used by mill owners to keep track of their inmates.

Despite the appalling circumstances of her first two years, which included food extended with sawdust, cages exposed to extreme weather (Flora's mother, Bahnie, lost the tips of her ears to frostbite), and puppy production in dogs as young as six months, Flora was one happy little girl.

During the first few months of her housebreaking training (she was an A student), I kept her with me in my studio, where she reclined under the piano, usually resting her head on one of my feet, while I wrote the material for the album which would eventually become "Barefoot on the Beach."

That year I sent my friends a picture of us posed at the piano with the title "Rodgers and Wienerstein," since she was my faithful collaborator on all those compositions, as she was for every record since then.

We've put together a slide show to remember her and these pictures will attest our time together was what you might call a montage of happiness.

Sorely missed, our once-in-a-lifetime girl,

Flora Franks. 1996-2010



The beautiful title track is Michael's reflection on he and his wife's time with Flora and a sense of appreciation for the time they had, sadness that the time has gone, but a hope that they will meet again.

Every emotion that accompanies grief comes through in the lyrics:

"Why must the present, turn to past so fast?"

"All we see everywhere is you, as we recall our time together"

"The disappearing now, I wish I had a golden bough, to bring you back somehow."

The instrumentation on this track is minimal – primarily guitar with some piano, bass and percussion backing. That puts the emphasis on Michael's vocals and the song's very emotional lyrics, which is where it needs to be.

Here's the track that Michael wrote and recorded.

[Time Together](#)



Michael Franks