

KINKY FRIEDMAN
SATIRIST/MUSICIAN

Outrageous and irreverent, but nearly always thought-provoking, Kinky Friedman has created a larger-than-life persona as a humorist and satirical country songwriter who has been hailed as the Frank Zappa of country music. Along the way, he has become a best-selling author of crime fiction, an entrepreneur, and independent candidate in the race for Governor in Texas in 2006 where he pulled down good numbers with his campaign slogan “Kinky Friedman for Governor: How Hard Can It Be?”

Friedman’s newest venture is Kinky Friedman Cigars that unveiled the first five sizes to the tobacco world at the Retail Tobacco Dealers of America Trade Show in 2007 to an overwhelming success.

The son of a University of Texas professor who raised his children on the family ranch, Rio Duckworth, he was born Richard F. Friedman. He studied psychology at Texas and founded his first band while there. However, King Arthur & the Carrots -- a group that poked fun at surf music -- recorded only one single. After graduation, Friedman served three years in the Peace Corps where he was stationed in Borneo and was an agricultural extension worker.

In 1971, he founded Kinky Friedman & the Texas Jewboys and in keeping with the group's satirical songs, each member had a deliberately politically incorrect name. Friedman got his break in 1973 thanks to Commander Cody, who contacted Vanguard Music on behalf of the acerbic young performer. That was the year he and his group made their debut album, *Sold American*. The title track, a bitter tale of a forgotten country singer dying an alcoholic death, barely made it onto the charts, but Friedman did attract enough attention to be invited to the Grand Ole Opry.

In 1974, he recorded an eponymously titled album that dissolved whatever pure country listenership Friedman might have had, but delighted his growing hard core of fans with satirical pieces such as his response to anti-Semitism, "They Ain't Making Jews like Jesus Anymore" as well as quieter sketches of American hard luck such as "Rapid City, South Dakota." In the mid-'70s, Friedman and his band began touring with Bob Dylan & the Rolling Thunder Revue. In 1976 he made his third album, *Lasso from El Paso*, featuring Dylan and Eric Clapton. The Texas Jewboys disbanded three years later, and Friedman moved to New York, where he often appeared at the Lone Star Cafe. In 1983, he released *Under the Double Ego*.

After that, Friedman turned primarily toward writing, although he continued to make occasional nightclub appearances. He has written for *Rolling Stone* and *Texas Monthly* magazines and, most famously, has become a writer of unique and outrageous mystery novels such as *Greenwich Killing Time*,

A Case of Lone Star, and *The Mile High Club*. Equal parts whimsy and metaphysics, the books blur fiction and reality. They feature a Jewish country singer turned Greenwich Village private eye named Kinky Friedman, who sometimes returns to his native Texas; other characters are drawn from Friedman's friends in both New York and Texas.

Many of Friedman's songs of the 1970s and early '80s were collected on two CD compilations, *Old Testaments and New Revelations* and *From One Good American to Another*. In 1999, the likes of Willie Nelson, Tom Waits, and Lyle Lovett covered Friedman's music on the tribute album, *Pearls in the Snow: The Songs of Kinky Friedman*, and a second tribute volume was planned. In 2003 Friedman appeared in a nude, cigar-smoking triplicate on the cover of the *Dallas Observer* magazine, in a parody of the Dixie Chicks' nude *Entertainment Weekly* pose of that year.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Kinky Friedman: The Lone Star
 - A Dealer in Hope: Kinky Friedman, the Humorist and Humanist
 - The Independent Spirit: Blessed is the Match that Kindles the Flame in Today's Politics
- You Can Lead a Politician to Water, but You Can't Make 'Em Think