



'The Pilgrim' Marks Kristofferson B'day

By MICHAEL McCALL, For The Associated Press

Monday, June 26, 2006

(06-26) 12:04 PDT , (AP) —

Various Artists, "The Pilgrim: A Celebration of Kris Kristofferson"
(American Roots Publishing)

Kris Kristofferson has enjoyed a celebratory run of late, his from induction to the Country Music Hall of Fame to performing at the Kennedy Center to releasing his best album in decades, "This Old Road." He's also acted in seven new films in 2006 and 2005, including "The Jacket," "Dreamer" and "Fast Food Nation."

Not bad for a guy who turned 70 on June 22.

"The Pilgrim" marks his landmark birthday with a tribute album featuring newly recorded versions of Kristofferson's songs by contributors who span genres, ages and culture divides. Several of the singer-songwriter's longtime colleagues participate, including Willie Nelson, Jessi Colter and Emmylou Harris. Also joining in are two of his best friends' children, Rosanne Cash and Shooter Jennings.

From there, styles fan out widely: there's R&B singer Brian McKnight; country star Gretchen Wilson; singing actor Russell Crowe; Columbian folk singer Marta Gomez; Americana power couple Bruce Robison and Kelly Willis; and art-rockers Lloyd Cole and Jill Sobule.

The artistic breadth is fitting; after all, Kristofferson's provided hits to such disparate stylists as Janis Joplin, Johnny Cash, Al Green and Bob Dylan. But, more than its diversity, what makes the album work is the distinctive personal voice each artist gives to these earthy, poetic tunes.