



## Trace Bundy

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### Elephant King

For his fifth album, former University of Colorado at Boulder engineering-professor-turned-fingerstyle-phenom Trace Bundy pays homage to the elephant, an animal that has long fascinated the guitarist. The title track is joyful and rollicking with syncopated rhythms that incorporate strumming, tapping, and an easy-paced melody distributed magically between harmonics and percussive effects. The beautiful “Joy and Sorrow” floats a repeated motif of ascending harmonics between a thumped soundboard, which is sampled and looped as Bundy performs another complementary melody layered over the top. “Adventures in Sawyerland” is a delicately strummed, pleasing melody accompanied by woodwinds and a whimsical chime. The pièce de résistance of the album is “Overtime,” which lays out a simple minor-key melody and walking rhythm before it picks up tempo and morphs into a stunning, minimalist architecture of hammer-on notes and arpeggios. Bundy closes the album with “Anchor,” which features mournful siren tones that melt into a hopeful major-key melody plucked between strums. *Elephant King* is a fine example of how rhythmical effects can be incorporated with a natural fluency and ease on the guitar. (United Interests)

—JULIA CROWE