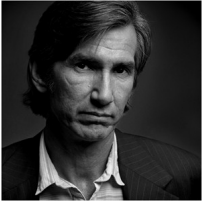


## All roads lead to Townes

Written by By TERRY MATHEWS, News-Telegram Arts Editor  
Tuesday, 02 November 2010 19:17

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I got the idea for the series "A Songwriter's Sojourn" from Nashville musician Darrell Scott. When I interviewed him in November of last year, we talked about songwriters he admired, and, of course, the late, great Townes Van Zandt's name came up.

"All roads lead to Townes," Scott said.

Indeed.

Townes (1944-1997) and Guy Clark were best friends. Clark puts a Townes song on all of his CDs. Enough said.

I was surfing the Internet tonight doing some research for my interview with singer/songwriter Robert Earl Keen. He's playing Linden in a couple of weeks.

Keen and Lyle Lovett were neighbors when they were students at Texas A&M. Keen's "Front Porch Song" revisits those carefree days.

His "The Road Goes On Forever" is the national anthem to pasture parties and all-night benders.

The two friends have gone on to have solid careers in the music business, but they've never forgotten the songwriters who influenced them - including Townes Van Zandt.

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Lovett recorded four of Townes' songs on his 1998 2-CD release "Step Into This House." On his most recent CD, "Natural Forces," Lovett laid down a great, upbeat version of Towne's "Loretta."

Imagine my surprise when I found clips of Keen and Lovett doing Van Zandt's heart-breaking "Flyin' Shoes."

Here ... listen to both artists ... and you'll understand why the best songwriters in the business continue to honor the ghost of Townes Van Zandt.