



On 2 February, 2021, Richard Weize was awarded with the CROSS OF THE ORDER OF MERIT of the Federal Republic of Germany on proposal of Federal President Steinmeier.

Richard Weize was born in summer 1945 in Bad Gandersheim, Lower Saxony. As a youth he became enthralled with the music of the early 50s. He had a special liking for country, rock 'n' roll and jazz from the USA and consequently started collecting records excessively.

In 1975 he founded the **BEAR FAMILY** label in Bremen (followed more recently by his imprints ...AND MORE BEARS and **RWA RICHARD WEIZE ARCHIVES**). **BEAR FAMILY** soon established themselves with elaborate re-releases and compilations, especially with music from the 1950s to the 1970s. Their extensive box-sets – produced in co-operation with artists, specialists and music historians worldwide – enjoy cult status. In 2009 Weize

was awarded with the German ECHO for "Special merits in the field of music." Various **BEAR FAMILY** productions were nominated for the Grammy Awards eleven times altogether.

BEAR FAMILY has released more than 400 multi-disc box-sets, anthologies and compilation series which are highly regarded by fans, critics, collectors and historians. The accompanying coffee table books are legendary – illustrated with often rare or unpublished pictures, they contain biographies and essays by renowned historians and experts, and always feature Richard Weize's meticulously researched discographies (with detailed musician and producer credits – even listing the exact time of the lunch break in a recording session!).

In these releases artists as diverse as Bluegrass pioneer **Bill Monroe**, singer and actress **Doris Day**, country icon **Johnny Cash**, songwriter **Woody Guthrie** and German entertainers like **Caterina Valente** or **Gunter Gabriel** are acknowledged with the loving care and eye for detail they truly deserve.

"Everything this singular company puts out is superlative and packaged with arts, smarts, and love."

.....
Michael Simmons (Mojo, L.A. Weekly)



BEAR FAMILY has always made great quality records. I'm glad they're here.

.....
Willie Nelson • musician

Richard Weize and the **BEAR FAMILY** experience has enriched this world immeasurably.

.....
Marty Stuart • musician

For the **BEAR FAMILY** folk, we're saying 'dankeschön'.

.....
Bob Dylan on "Theme Time Radio Hour"

BEAR FAMILY RECORDS and Richard Weize have collected and presented a huge portion of my recordings in the most tasteful, thorough and honoring way I could ever have imagined. There is no other record company like BEAR FAMILY.

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Pat Boone • musician

BEAR FAMILY has always taken great care to preserve the music of many of my heroes, which is an important part of keeping great music alive for future generations. The attention to detail they put into everything they work on means a lot to me.

BEAR FAMILY is doing important work, and I hope they keep doing it for a long time to come.

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Merle Haggard • musician

For four decades, BEAR FAMILY has devoted itself to celebrating and saluting musical artists in all their many facets. In so doing, they provide a multi-dimensional portrait of the emotional components of song, and the complex, often contradictory personalities behind the muse of music. This mission of preservation is as much about illuminating the future as well as the past, capturing a moment of time for all time.

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Lenny Kaye • musician

BEAR FAMILY has always made great quality records. I'm glad they're here.

.....
Willie Nelson • musician

The history of American music is one of the greatest stories of the 20th century: you can hear it on BEAR FAMILY!

.....
Jon Savage • author

Richard Weize and the Bear Family experience has enriched this world immeasurably. The BEAR FAMILY catalog is simply unparalleled. Each boxed set, DVD and compilation is a treasure unto itself that entertains, educates and bears witness to the highest musical and visual standards that have cast their shadows over the ages. Richard, I thank you for your forty years of pure inspiration. Keep going.

.....
Marty Stuart • musician, photographer

For the Bear Family folk, we're saying 'dankeschön'.

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Bob Dylan on "Theme Time Radio Hour"