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**4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SEA LEVEL SINGER/SONGWRITER FESTIVAL APRIL 7 – 9**  
***Justin Townes Earle kicks off festival at the Naro on April 7***

NORFOLK, Va. – (January 2011) – Tidewater Arts Outreach is pleased to present the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Sea Level Singer/Songwriter Festival April 7-9, 2011. This year, Justin Townes Earle will headline the kick-off concert at Naro Expanded Cinema, 1507 Colley Avenue, Norfolk on April 7.

Earle won Best New and Emerging Artist at the 2009 Americana Music Awards. His record, *Midnight at the Movies*, was named one of the best records in 2009 by Amazon, received four stars in *Rolling Stone* and found a sweet spot in the hearts of fans and critics alike. *GQ* magazine named him one of the 25 best dressed men in the world in 2010. He also appeared on HBO's *Treme* with his dad, troubadour Steve Earle, on whose Grammy Award-winning record Justin Earle also guests. His newest album, *Harlem River Blues*, has also been included on the Best Music of 2010 by Amazon and is currently receiving rave reviews and significant attention on the radio. Gina Dalmas, winner of the Best Americana Artist at the 2009 Port Folio Music Awards, will open the show. It will be a heart-stirring, foot-tapping and stylish evening of music.

Tickets for the kick-off concert are \$30 in advance and \$35 the day of the show. Tickets can be purchased at [TWartsoutreach.org](http://TWartsoutreach.org). The weekend of events includes other local venue concerts, street musicians, arts and music workshops, and more in Ghent and beyond.

**EMERGING ARTIST SHOWCASE**

The Emerging Artist Showcase features the top 10 winners of the Sea Level Singer/Songwriter Festival songwriting competition. The Showcase is a popular event that has played to capacity crowds each year. This year's Showcase will be held at the Kaufman Theatre in the Chrysler Museum of Art on Saturday, April 9. Area songwriters will perform their songs live, and the winners receive media attention, local radio airtime and more. Musicians must upload two songs and lyrics by March 15. Entry details can be found at [TWartsoutreach.org](http://TWartsoutreach.org).

**INSTRUMENTS OF ART SILENT AUCTION**

Regional visual artists of note will create works of art on musical instruments for sale during a silent auction. Most artwork will be median \$250 value, but a range of work is available for purchase. The silent auction kicks off with a reception, and the Instruments of Art are on display at NYFO Boutique in Norfolk for several weeks prior to the festival.

**MERRILL GUITAR GIVEAWAY**

Merrill & Company, known worldwide for fine handmade vintage-quality guitars, is creating a work of art for the Sea Level Singer/Songwriter Festival. This custom-built guitar is made of rare Brazilian rosewood on the back and sides, a Port Orford cedar top, Adirondack spruce braces, hand-carved mahogany neck and an ebony fingerboard with specially designed inlays. All of this on top of the "tone to the bone" sound that has made Merrill Guitars famous. This one-of-a-kind instrument would retail for \$10,095, but your opportunity to own it is a \$10 donation to Tidewater Arts Outreach. The winner will be announced during the festival in April. Get details at [TWartsoutreach.org](http://TWartsoutreach.org).

Tidewater Arts Outreach is a nonprofit organization founded in 2003 to bring music and arts to hospitals, retirement homes, rehabilitation centers, homeless shelters and other facilities throughout Hampton Roads. These performances and programs promote human interaction, happiness and healing for people who have limited access to the arts due to health, economic or social circumstances. In 2010, more than 7,700 people were reached through 230 Tidewater Arts Outreach programs at 67 hospitals, shelters, nursing homes and other facilities. For more info, visit [TWartsoutreach.org](http://TWartsoutreach.org).

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