

## Interview: Tor Hyams

I've been sitting on a bunch of interviews from my trips to Austin last September. With the music world once again congregating in Austin for SXSW, it's high time I transcribed and shared them with you.

Given the South By Southwest connection, I thought it appropriate to kick things off with [Tor Hyams](#), who will be speaking at a [kids music panel](#) at SXSW Friday.

Among the many roles that California-based Hyams has is producing the [Kidzapalooza](#) stage at Lollapalooza and the [Austin Kiddie Limits](#) stage at the Austin City Limits Festival, not to mention the [Little State](#) stage at the Big State Festival. It was backstage at ACL 2007 that I caught up with Hyams and talked about producing those events and his thoughts about the future of kids music festivals.

**Zoogobble: What's been the best part about the Austin Kiddie Limits stage?**

**Tor Hyams:** The best part about the Austin Kiddie Limits is, I have to say, Austin. People are really different. There's no airs about anybody, they're very open and honest and willing to have a good time, and that makes what we do a lot easier.

**You produce Kidzapalooza, Austin Kiddie Limits, and the kids stage at the Big State Festival. Big State is more country, while the other two are more rock. How did you decide who you would try to get for Kidzapalooza as opposed to Austin Kiddie Limits?**

In Kidzapalooza, we go a little harder-edged. It's just a different energy to that place than here. This is more of a roots-rock kind of energy, where Kidzapalooza is more of a hard-rock kind of energy. Some bands fit into both, like the Sippy Cups. Some bands don't work in both. For example, we had the Blisters, Jeff Tweedy's son's band, at Kidzapalooza, but they're from Chicago, and they're kids. It would've been hard to get them out here. I think they would've done well here, but it's just a different thing. So it's really who fits more the roots-rock mold or even country crossover acts do well, but Austin's such a dynamic city that I think you could any kind of act on stage here and it would work.

**I saw a quote from Charles Attal, the head of C3 Productions who sort of described the festival circuit as a land grab -- there are a lot of opportunities in a lot of other places to establish these festivals. Do you think a kids stage is something C3 or other entities would be looking towards doing?**

Yeah, it's something I'm looking towards doing right away, especially with the Kidzapalooza brand, if not both. Obviously, Kidzapalooza would be a little easier to transport because it doesn't have a city's name in it, but Austin Kiddie Limits is a great brand and it could easily travel. In fact, in a way the kids idea could move even faster than the grown-up idea. There's less at stake, the ticket prices aren't as high -- parents just like going out and seeing great music.

## Interview: Tor Hyams

The difference in what we do here and at Chicago is that we have legitimate recording acts on stage. Whether they're signed or not, it doesn't matter, but are they playing real music for the whole family as opposed to dumbing it down. So if you're dumbing it down, you're talking to the wrong people. We believe children are much more in tune and intelligent than grown-ups are because as grown-ups we forget a lot of this stuff, the purity of why we're here and what we're supposed to be doing.

**James Murphy from LCD Soundsystem at his set on Friday said Austin Kiddie Limits was great because nobody in the audience is reading the blogs saying, 'That guy is over.' They're either crying and asking mommy to go home or they love it.**  
Yeah, that's right, there's no hip factor to contend with. "Oh, they didn't play all their songs from their first album that we loved." It's really a pure place where it's really just about the music. The other thing about kids watching as opposed to teenagers or grown-ups watching is that you really have to be good. Kids don't care about who you are, what you're wearing, what the image is. They feel that stuff, the energy of the performer, and if you're not good, they'll walk away, they don't care. They get nothing out of it besides the purity of the music. Some of the main stage performers who come over here get a little nervous because they know that, just because they are whoever they are does not guarantee them an audience.

**Do you go out to solicit the special guests, or do they come to you?**

Both, really. This year, I went out to Big Sam's Funky Nation from New Orleans. I love them, and they agreed to play. But then you have Ziggy Marley, who asked us. It's really just got to be like that, because they're not getting extra money, we don't pay them. It's really got to be a labor of love. We're not as well funded as the other stages, obviously, and so if they want to do it, we let them do it, and we're happy to have them. It's wonderful for the kids and obviously it gives the parents something extra, too.

**Any future plans, anything you're looking forward to doing?**

I want to take Kidzapalooza on the road to several different cities, not the whole country, but several different major cities. This year is the biggest year we've done for Austin Kiddie Limits yet and I want next year to be better. Every year I think there's no way we can top that, but there's always a way. Whether it's just making parents more comfortable or whatever. Which is why I like working these things so much because it's always a challenge and that's what gets me going.



## Jam On It: The Disco Biscuits



FOR JULY'S CAMP BISCO — an annual music and camping festival run by The Disco Biscuits — the band will draw its biggest support act yet: the original D-o-double-g, Snoop Dogg.

And if guitarist Jon Gutwillig has his way, he'll be able to add: "Jammed with Snoop Dogg" to his resume after the Biscuits close Camp Bisco 7.

"We'll definitely try to set that up," Gutwillig said of a potential Snoop sit-in. "It might be something that is worth it. For me personally, it can help me get excited for the show. People would be like, 'You're in a jam band, man; you guys are in a lame jam band,' and I can be like, 'Hey, I jammed with Snoop.'"

As for what song the band would play with the Doggfather?

"I think Snoop would rip on [Biscuits' song] 'Trucker's Choice,'" Gutwillig said.

Asking Snoop Dogg to freestyle on a hip-hop inspired Biscuits song, rather than the Biscuits covering a Snoop original — like Phish did when Jay-Z sat in with the band on "99 Problems" and "Big Pimpin'" in 2004 — is a bold request, but for the Biscuits it's no surprise. After all, the Philly quartet did get the Boston Symphony Orchestra Choir to sit in for two Biscuits originals — "Svenghali" and "Digital Buddha" — during the

group's 2006 Halloween show. And the band's love for hip-hop runs deep: Slick Rick played with the Biscuits in 2004 and a series of shows in 2002 featured the group teasing bits of Jay-Z's "Izzo (H.O.V.A.)."

"We're the bad boys of the jam-band scene, you might say," Gutwillig said.

Maybe that's because The Disco Biscuits aren't afraid to tinker with new styles. Self-described as an "electronica-jam-fusion" rock band, The Disco Biscuits merge elements of those genres with bits of reggae, metal, hip-hop and anything else they feel like adding.

The group's forthcoming album, the long-awaited follow-up to 2002's "Senor Boombox," may feature the Biscuits' most diverse mix of sounds yet. The band worked with three different producers for its as-yet-untitled sixth studio CD, which still has no release date, Gutwillig said. Tor Hyams, (who previously worked with Perry Farrell and Joan Osborne), Simon Posford and Benji Vaughn (of Younger Brother) and Tom Hamilton (of American Babies and Brothers) all produced tracks on the album, which has taken more than two years to finish.

"And we need their help," Gutwillig said, "because being the studio without a producer is [bad] because we kind of need a general."

Gutwillig said he especially enjoyed working with Hyams because he shares the same ideology as the band.

"Most producers are trying to turn music into something that is mass producible and we need someone who understands that we're just making music for the sake of making music," he said. "A lot of producers don't feel that way. Tor was excited because he works with a lot of different people, and he was like, 'Hey, you want to do that? OK, let's do it,' so he was great."

For the Biscuits, working with Posford and Vaughn in the studio was a dream, too.

"That was unbelievable because they're just artists," he said. "They'll slow the song down and most people don't think about that but it becomes a whole different song. ... I've got to give props it was way better, way cooler. It was essentially the same song but it was just way cooler ... They changed absolutely everything by only doing two or three things."



A big focus of this album was to work on specific songs — a change of pace for the Biscuits — rather than long songs with multiple parts, such as a "Jigsaw Earth" or a "Basis for a Day."

"[The songs] are written, like they were ideas, and then we'd take the best ones and then stretch them out," he added "Because we were doing stuff over a long period of time it was hard to keep the idea somewhat consistent. One month you're really into reggae, so everything you write is reggae, then four months later you're into death metal, but you can't put metal into every song — but maybe some need it."

So instead, the Biscuits arrived at a diverse, distinctive collection of songs, one Gutwillig likens to the work of a couple of non-jam bands.

"You know when you listen to a Thievery Corporation or Gorillaz album and each track sounds like a different band?" he said. "This album isn't that extreme but it will have a little bit of that. It's going to be a very cool combination of stuff."

But don't expect to recognize anything on the new album.

"We did play some songs [at shows] that we thought were going to make the album and then we just decided that we liked other songs more," Gutwillig said. "So a lot of the songs we played and told people were going to be on the album aren't actually going on the album."

But Gutwillig promises fans won't be disappointed.

"We know its going to be great; it's the best thing we've ever put on wax," he said. "We're really psyched about it. It's the coolest f---ing thing ever."

Gutwillig also warns fans that they should catch the band now, before Camp Bisco, because he's not sure of the band's touring plans past that.

"We are definitely going to plan for us to do some shows out there," he said. "We're going to mix it up. It also might be a bit of a light summer for the band because after we do Camp Bisco we'll take a little break just from being crazy with the album and festivals and going to Europe. ... Unfortunately, that may occur in August and September, so people are going to want to come out and see the band until Camp Bisco."

And while Gutwillig said the band is playing at its best right now, he warned that you might not even recognize them when they resume touring later this fall.

"Right now the band is playing really raw stuff," he said. "We're feeling good and were playing new stuff even if it's not on the album. We may reemerge after the artistic break as another band completely after that."

» The State Theatre, 220 N. Washington St., Falls Church; Tue., 7 p.m. (doors), 9 p.m. (show), \$35; 703-237-0300. (East Falls Church)

Written by Express contributor Rudi Greenberg



**BARNES & NOBLE**  
BOOKSELLERS

November 21, 2005 10:47 AM US Eastern Timezone

## **Barnes & Noble Releases Exclusive Joan Osborne Holiday CD;**

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov. 21, 2005--Barnes & Noble, Inc. (NYSE:BKS), the world's largest bookseller, announced that it is releasing the holiday album, Christmas Means Love, by blues and soul singer Joan Osborne. The former eight-time Grammy nominee for Relish, which included the worldwide hit "One of Us," has recorded a collection of holiday songs exclusively for Barnes & Noble. This album can be found only in Barnes & Noble stores and online at Barnes & Noble.com ([www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)).

In her newest CD, Christmas Means Love, Joan Osborne adds a bluesy beauty to seasonal tunes like "Great Day in December" and "Santa Claus Baby." Her characteristic soulful style is brought to such classics as "Silent Night" and "Away in a Manger." The collection also includes the sassy new song she wrote especially for this Barnes & Noble album, "What Do Bad Girls Get?"

About Barnes & Noble, Inc.

Barnes & Noble, Inc. (NYSE: BKS), the world's largest bookseller and a Fortune 500 company, operates 824 bookstores in 50 states. For the fourth year in a row, the company is the nation's top retail brand for quality, according to the EquiTrend(R) Brand Study by Harris Interactive(R). Barnes & Noble conducts its online business through Barnes & Noble.com ([www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)), one of the Web's largest e-commerce sites and the number one online bookseller for quality among e-commerce companies, according to the latest EquiTrend survey.



It's hard to get excited about generic bar-band renditions of Christmas oldies. Fortunately, Joan Osborne's Christmas Means Love (Time Love) uses rock and soul rudiments in a more memorable way, particularly on "Christmas Must Be Tonight" and a saucy Osborne composition dubbed "What Do Bad Girls Get?" Be careful when sitting on Santa's lap —



# THE ASPEN TIMES A

In search of a Christmas album worth remembering  
CD Reviews



Stewart Oksenhorn  
Aspen, CO Colorado  
December 14, 2007

Joan Osborne, “Christmas Means Love” produced by Tor Hyams (Time/Life)

Joan Osborne’s got some experience mixing the religious and the secular — remember her hit “One of Us,” which pondered God as a regular guy? On “Christmas Means Love,” she does an even better job of it, blending the spiritually inclined — “Away in a Manger,” “Children Go Where I Send Thee” — with more earthbound tunes like “Santa Claus Baby,” which gets a wonderful retro-girl-rock spin here. Osborne’s soulful but sassy voice goes naturally with both kinds of material, and she also seems to have given plenty of thought to this project: There’s her original song, the slow blues “What Do Bad Girls Get?” and takes on such little-covered songs as Robbie Robertson’s “Christmas Must Be Tonight” and “Great Day in December.”

This joins my list of personal favorites: The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band’s “The Christmas Album”; “A Winter’s Night: The Best of Nettwerk Christmas Albums,” featuring tracks by Jack Johnson, Barenaked Ladies and Sarah McLachlan; and Aimee Mann’s “One More Drifter in the Snow.”

## UV Entertainment

Thursday, December 13, 2007

'Tis the season for holiday-themed CDs

Joan Osborne: "Christmas Means Love" (Time/Life Records) -- The sassy and soulful Osborne breathes considerable life into this CD, as she puts a little bluesy swing into "Santa Claus Baby" and some smoky soul into "Away in a Manger" (it works better than one might expect). The theme of this CD may be all about Christmas, but the earthy joys of this album will sound good any time of year.

New City Chicago

Music to Knowell

A listen to this year's holiday music

Dennis Polkow

Joan Osborne, "Christmas Means Love" (Time Life): Singer-songwriter Joan Osborne offers a soulful and heartfelt holiday album that includes plenty of upbeat originals, including the title track and the Dixieland-inspired "Christmas in New Orleans" and the bluesy "What Do Bad Girls Get?" along with gospel-infused takes on sacred songs not usually found on holiday albums, such as the "Cherry Tree Carol."



**BARNES & NOBLE** .COM  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS

**POP**

## REVIEWS

### **Barnes & Noble**

For Joan Osborne, Christmas is a bluesy, soulful affair, uplifting but tinged with melancholy. And it makes for stirring music. *Christmas Means Love* follows in the tradition of [How Sweet It Is](#), Osborne's album of soul covers: Backed by a rootsy blues band and, on some songs, a female chorus, she sings her heart out. Or maybe she's just singing *with* her heart out, with direct emotion. Osborne's no show-off: She avoids superfluous pyrotechnics in favor of deep-pocket soul grooves that let these songs and carols simmer and smolder. On the airy "Christmas in New Orleans," Osborne is lighthearted and intimate, backed by acoustic guitars and a jazzy harmonica. On "Cherry Tree Carol" and "Children Go Where I Send Thee," she slips into gospel mode, the former song accented with slide guitar and organ, the latter with a slinky, swampy electric groove that nods to the Staple Singers. One minute, she's playing it straight and somber on the beautifully spare "Angels We Have Heard On High"; the next, she's sassy and sexy on the country blues of "What Do Bad Girls Get?" A mix of the secular ("Santa Claus Baby") and the sacred ("Away in a Manger"), Osborne's *Christmas Means Love* takes a wonderfully earthy approach to heavenly music.  
*Steve Klinge*





## THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON

### Joan Osborne Conjures a Soulful Mood on *Christmas Means Love*

Joan Osborne's roots come from soul and R&B music -- as evident on *How Sweet It Is*, her 2002 album of soul covers -- but she's also scored pop hits with "One of Us" and toured with the Grateful Dead's Phil Lesh. Now, on *Christmas Means Love*, she digs deeply into seasonal songs, from gospel classics such as "Children Go Where I Send Thee" to traditional carols like "Away in a Manger" to secular tunes like the Band's "Christmas Must Be Tonight." From her Brooklyn home, with her ten-month-old daughter playing in the background, Osborne spoke to Barnes & Noble.com's Steve Klinge about what motivated her to make a Christmas record, her penchant for songs about God, and her fear of "audio whiplash."

**Barnes & Noble.com:** How did you decide to do a Christmas album?

**Joan Osborne:** The producer, Tor Hyams, approached me about doing one. I'd always thought in the back of my mind that they were a little bit corny, and when he approached me at first I was like, Oh, I don't know if I want to do that. But then I started really thinking about it and thinking, there must be a way to do this where it is really satisfying artistically. You could probably find some really great Christmas music, and I just started to look at it as a challenge and ended up doing a bunch of research and digging to find some really cool songs, and I ended up getting really excited about it.

**B&N.com:** You chose some songs that are very traditional and others songs that fit the gospel tradition and some songs that aren't in a sacred vein at all.

**JO:** Yeah, the "Christmas in New Orleans" and the "Santa Claus Baby" kind of stuff. I wanted to dig into that blues/jump blues era and get some things that were a little bit lighter, but then also pick a few things that were more traditional -- "Silent Night" and things like that -- which have been done a million times, so you have license to do it any way you want to, because everyone knows the song, and you can try something totally new. Or what we did is strip it down completely and be very bare about it, barebones.

**B&N.com:** I have weakness for Christmas music. It has a built-in appeal because it can be lighthearted, silly, or serious while still seasonal and fun.

**JO:** I was definitely not trying to take it so seriously and make some grand artistic statement, but I did want to make it interesting, and I really wanted to bring something to the musicians that they would get excited about. We did this very, very quickly; it was kind of like an old-school production schedule where we made the entire record in like three days. So the musicians -- I wanted them to be excited by the material and be able to come up with a lot of ideas.... It was really, really fun.

**B&N.com:** Did you have a different approach in mind than you did on the last album of soul covers, *How Sweet It Is*?

**JO:** Well, I guess I wasn't trying to stay specifically within a soul vein, although I did draw a lot from that. In particular, the title track, "Christmas Means Love," comes from that background, but some of the stuff has more of a folk feel to it. But I think there are certain similarities. We chose the less-is-more approach on a lot of occasions and tried to just let the meaning of the song come through. That's one thing with these Christmas songs: You hear them a zillion times and they tend to lose their meaning unless you

can come up with a unique way to put them across.

**B&N.com:** What are some of your favorite Christmas records?

**JO:** I don't know if I can even say a title for it, but there was a compilation Christmas record that my parents had when I was growing up, and it had [Peggy Lee](#) singing "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town," and that's where I first heard "Children Go Where I Send Thee." It had [Dean Martin](#) singing "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" -- it was just this very '50s, cool pop-singer Christmas record, with a couple of more traditional and gospel things thrown in. So that was always a favorite. I was fascinated by Peggy Lee at that point; I just loved her. And then my mom had this [Fred Waring and His Pennsylvanians](#) chorale Christmas album that she would play to death. [Emmylou Harris's] *Light in the Stable* is a fantastic record, and of course the [Elvis](#) Christmas records are great. I used to sing English madrigal music when I was in junior high school, and I still have some recordings of that, like the [Anonymous 4](#): It's not necessarily Christmas music, but a lot of their music you could put on at Christmastime, and it has that sense of being old English, beautiful, what nuns would be singing in the nunnery up on the mountain in the Middle Ages, and it's very Christmas-y in that way.

**B&N.com:** You've sung songs about saints and God before. Does this album fit a pattern now?

**JO:** *[laughs heartily]*

**B&N.com:** Why do you laugh?

**JO:** Oh, I don't know. I guess it does seem like I was trying to do that, but I don't really have much of an overarching design of what I'm doing with my work. I just sort of gravitate to whatever's interesting me at the moment. I think music has a very spiritual power; that's what it brings out in me. So, maybe that's why I keep going back to those images and those kind of songs, but I don't have that sort of idea about my career...it's much more random.

**B&N.com:** You combine a lot of different styles on the album, but it's still coherent. You can go from "Angels We Have Heard On High" to "What Do Bad Girls Get?" and it's not a jarring transition.

**JO:** Oh, that's good. That's the one thing I was worried about: giving people sort of audio whiplash or something, so I'm glad you feel that way.... It was really fun to do. I really like what it turned out to be. I know I'm going to be listening to it at Christmas, and I never listen to my own records. *[laughs]*

*November 2005*

# PREVIEW

YOUR DAILY GUIDE TO ENTERTAINMENT

# MUSIC

Which artists have been naughty and which have been nice?

Devin Grant  
Special to The Post and Courier  
Thursday, December 13, 2007

'Christmas Means Love'  
Joan Osborne

(TimeLife)

Miss 'What if God was One of Us?' has managed to keep her career going even after that one-hit wonder. Osborne's soulful vocals go well with the mostly R&B-sounding selections here, including 'Angels We Have Heard on High' and 'Silent Night.' Also great is 'What Do Bad Girls Get?' Pick out a tree, Joan.



## Sanity Claus

Separating holiday–music gifts from seasonal disorders.

By Michael Roberts

The new Sister Hazel entry, *Santa's Playlist* (Rock Ridge Music), proves easier to swallow if only because the recording's swaddled in guitar riffs and assorted rock packaging. Nevertheless, it's hard to get excited about generic bar–band renditions of Christmas oldies. Fortunately, Joan Osborne's *Christmas Means Love* (Time Love) uses rock and soul rudiments in a more memorable way, particularly on "Christmas Must Be Tonight" and a saucy Osborne composition dubbed "What Do Bad Girls Get?" Be careful when sitting on Santa's lap — or on Keith Sweat's. The veteran seducer's *A Christmas of Love* (Rhino) flips the script on naughty and nice via "Point of Christmas," which seems pretty anatomical despite ostensibly being about Jesus, and a "Party Christmas" that ain't about bobbing for apples.



DESERET  
Morning News

New CDs spark holiday spirit  
Deseret Morning News  
Friday, Dec. 14, 2007

C.W. JOAN OSBORNE; "Christmas Means Love" (Womanly Hips/Time Life) This is Osborne's first Christmas album, and while it was expected she'd take the songs down the ol' blues highway, this collection winds up a tad lackluster and sterile. "Christmas Means Love" is a gospel-blues work but is on the cheesy side with the spoken-narration cliches. "Santa Claus Baby" has some nice harmonies but, surprisingly, loses its soul. Attempts to get soulful with "Away in a Manger" and "Silent Night" fizzle. The stand-out tracks are the reverent acoustic solo on "Angels We Have Heard on High" and the back-alley blues of "What Do Bad Girls Get?" — S.I.

Thursday, December 13, 2007

MUSICAL SPIN ON THE HOLIDAYS

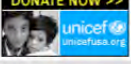
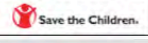
New seasonal discs are plentiful, diverse

By DAVID YONKE  
BLADE STAFF WRITER

“CHRISTMAS MEANS LOVE,” Joan Osborne (Time/Life). Osborne’s bluesy roots provide the earthy foundation for this set of 11 songs that veer from the typical holiday fare. Backed by a nimble band and an occasional choir, Osborne (best known for her multiplatinum 1995 single, “One of Us”) alternates between being naughty and nice as she tears it up on “What Do Bad Girls Get?,” then assumes a pious posture on “Away in a Manger” and “Silent Night.” This wonderfully original holiday collection is proof that Osborne has not lost her soulful touch even though she has not been on the charts in a long while.


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**More and Different**



**Joan Osborne's New Christmas CD**  
Joan Osborne's new CD, "Christmas Means Love," is available exclusively at all Barnes & Noble music locations and on its website.  
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- Do You Have Hurry Sickness?** Take this quiz to find out if your "hurry worries" are in check.

# allmusic



## All Music Guide

This was the last album recorded by Lou Rawls, who had just received word that he had cancer when these 2004 sessions were held, and that knowledge lends a bit of extra poignancy to some of these tracks, particularly the powerful version of "Silent Night" Rawls turns in here. No stranger to holiday albums (he released *Merry Christmas Ho! Ho! Ho!* in 1965 and *Christmas Is the Time* in 1993 and compilations combining the two show up nearly every year), Rawls stuck closer to jazz this time out, and it's nice to hear some of these holiday classics done up in a 21st century swing style, and Rawls' smooth, elegant baritone is always a welcome listen. The opener, "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" swings powerfully, and the aforementioned "Silent Night" is a show stopper, but the most intriguing track is a lightly funky and bluesy version of "Jingle Bells," which features an inspired piano arrangement from Mark Adam Watkins. Rawls loved singing holiday music, and it shows here. If he knew that this would be his last album (and he probably did), that knowledge still couldn't take the joy and hope out of his voice. [The album was reissued in 2006 by Time/Life with a different cover and a spoken word bonus track added.] Steve Leggett





## Music reviews

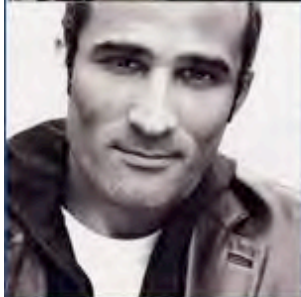
BY STEWART OKSENHORN  
Pitkin County correspondent  
December 14, 2006

Lou Rawls, "Christmas," produced by Tor Hyams (Time/Life)

This is the farewell from Lou Rawls, the last recording he made before dying last January. Fortunately, the singer who easily handled everything from gospel to jazz to disco to cartoon voices was in fine form. He covers all the usual bases – there are no rarities unearthed here – but he gives a muscular, playful swing to every last one. The album concludes with "Lou Rawls' Christmas Story," a short, sweet, spoken recollection of his grandmother's preparations for Christmas dinner – a nice way to remember a great singer.



BT & Thom Russo



Bryan Carlstrom & Tor Hyams

## LIQUID MIX – AN INDUSTRY STANDARD.

The world's musical luminaries are adopting Liquid technology in their droves. Focusrite took time out to talk to a selection and get their initial thoughts regarding this revolutionary technology

*'The Liquid Mix has become an essential tool in my studio. The EQ and compressor emulations are unparalleled in their warmth and clarity. Its just un-real, man!'*

## BT – Producer/Composer/Performer

Hear what BT had to say about liquid Mix at the AES show 2006, by clicking [here](#)

*'I'm using it everyday. This is it - FINALLY a plug-in environment that not only achieves sonic greatness and versatility, but doesn't bog my system DSP down whatsoever. This is what the future is all about.'*

## Thom Russo – Engineer/Mixer

**Arists include: Audioslave, Jay-Z, Prince, System of a Down, Macey Gray, Johnny Cash, Sum 41 and more**

*'This is so hip! I have racks of outboard gear, but the Liquid Mix brings all of the vintage sounds I need right to my fingertips in Pro Tools - right when I need them. And, the sounds are right on.'*

## Bryan Carlstrom – Engineer/Mixer

**Alice in Chains, The Offspring, Social Distortion, Anthrax, Rob Zombie, and more.**

*'I couldn't be more excited about the Liquid Mix. The compressors and EQs sound just as good as the vintage gear they emulate, but it is just so much easier to work with. What a great mixing solution - over 60 pieces of gear all rolled up into one.'*

## Tor Hyams – Producer/Composer

**Joan Oxborne, Vivian Cambell, Rachel York. Movie Credits incl.Club Dread and more.**

*'I absolutely love the Liquid Mix! The sound is fabulous. It's transparent and offers unparalleled flexibility. I can build my own custom EQs from some of the best sounding hardware emulations available. Great design. How come no one thought of this sooner?'*

## SEARCH

(e.g. saffire, firewire)

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SAFFIRE LE  
SAFFIRE PRO 10 I/O  
SAFFIRE PRO 26 I/O

### PLATINUM

COMPOUNDER  
OCTOPRE  
OCTOPRE LE  
TRAKMASTER PRO  
TWINTRAK PRO  
VOICEMASTER PRO

### ISA

ISA 220, ISA 428,  
ISA 430 MKII

### RED

RED 1  
RED 3  
RED 7  
RED 8

### SOFTWARE

SAFFIRE PLUGINS  
FORTE SUITE

### OPTIONAL

### CONVERTERS

ISA 220/ISA430 (MK 1) ADC  
ISA 428 ADC  
ISA 430MKII ADC  
OCTOPRE ADC  
OCTOPRE LE CODEC  
PLATINUM PRO ADC

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# backstage blog

Broadway and REPRISE! veteran Rachel York (*Victor/Victoria*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and REPRISE!'s *Anything Goes*) has the kind of voice that a song standard would gladly thank, if it could. With her soaring, pure tones, perfect diction, and boundless energy, York brings class, elegance, and, above all, spirit to a lovingly expressed program of first-class tunes including “My Funny Valentine,” “All The Things You Are,” and “My One and Only Love.” York also knows how to spice things up with a few unexpected choices, such as the Rosemary Clooney hit “My House,” Stephen Sondheim's “Sooner or Later” (from the film *Dick Tracy*), and the Paris Sisters' early-'60s pop hit “I Love how You Love Me,” as well as producer Tor Hyams's “Too Good to Be True.” It's obvious that York's as comfortable swinging an up-tempo performance as she is bathing a ballad in honeyed warmth. In short, a welcome debut from a gifted vocalist who's here to



stay.

# TALKING BROADWAY

## Sound Advice

Also focusing on romance was one of 2005's earliest releases. This is her debut solo album, but Rachel York is no stranger to cast albums and theater singing. Titled *Let's Fall in Love* and available exclusively at Barnes and Noble on a label called Hylo, it's a romantic Rachel all the way. The album does not make use of her skill for drama and expression of complex emotions, as the song selections are basically about being content and comfortable in love. No struggle or torch here, it's all perky and plucky pronouncements or warm and cozy time with material like "My Funny Valentine," "Let's Do It (Let's Fall In Love)," "All The Things You Are," and "Someone To Watch Over Me" (all from Broadway shows). Her voice is strong with a great energetic belt on a few cuts, but it's more often lustrous and luscious. The arrangements on the ballads give her room to stretch out and cuddle up to the lyrics and relish the melodic lines. The upbeat numbers kick into pretty high gear and lend variety to contrast to the make-out sessions. In good voice and sounding comfortable, she presents an attitude that love can be relaxed and quietly satisfying (the gratitude of "I Love How You Love Me") or playful (revisiting Sondheim's "Sooner or Later" which she sang in the first New York version of the revue *Putting It Together*). No angst here. Her love songs are all happy ones and happily ever after is fine by me with this pro with a gorgeous sound.







## Featured Artist: Rachel York

CD Title: Let's Fall in Love

**Year:** 2005

**Record Label:** HyLo Productions

**Style:** Jazz Vocals

**Musicians:** Eli Brueggemann (piano), Jeff Novack (bass), Tim Davies (drums), Bob McChesney (trombones), Ron King (trumpets), Michael Nelson and Michael Acosta (saxophones), Charlie Adelfia (oboe, English horn, clarinet and flute), Cameron Stone (cellos), Ozzie Stern (violins)

**Review:** If you think you've heard these songs before, think again!

"Let's Fall in Love" is a brilliant entrée into the solo recording world for Rachel York. This beautiful and jazzy retro CD is a real breakout for the gifted Broadway, film and television actress/singer. Known for her stage roles Norma Cassidy in "Victor/Victoria" and Lili Vanessi in "Kiss Me, Kate," as well as playing Lucille Ball in the CBS biopic "Lucy," Rachel sets herself free on this CD, singing from her own heart, without character restraints.

A score of wonderful standard tunes shows off her magnificent, pure, silky-smooth and richly textured voice that has hints of Ella Fitzgerald, Rosemary Clooney, Peggy Lee, and Barbara Streisand in it. Yet Rachel interprets a song like no other performer I've ever heard. Every time you listen to her sing, it's like hearing a song for the first time. She adds unexpected twists of emotion to her vocals that bring new meaning to old standards. She has a distinct, deliciously sultry, honest and uninhibited quality that is absolutely penetrating.

On this CD Rachel York has brought back the Big Band sound with her own special contemporary flair. There's humor in "My House," sass in "Let's Do It," longing in "My Funny Valentine," seduction in "Sooner or Later," and love in every single note. If you don't melt when you hear this incredibly talented woman sing, you need serious medical attention. She's amazing. The orchestra backing her really swings, too! "Let's Fall in Love" will leave you breathless.

"Let's Fall in Love" is currently available exclusively through Barnes & Noble, in stores and on the Web. Sample clips may be heard at [music.barnesandnoble.com/search/product.asp?userid=U04kWDoAtk&cids2Pid=5533&ean=603777800325](http://music.barnesandnoble.com/search/product.asp?userid=U04kWDoAtk&cids2Pid=5533&ean=603777800325)



## RACHEL YORK, LET'S FALL IN LOVE REVIEW



### Average Ratings from 1 review

[Write Review](#)

Value for money	10/10	
Overall value	10/10	
Recommended	100%	

Courtesy of  
jrnpub.jnargi

### Good Points:

Great song list of romantic standards, wonderful vocals by actress/singer Rachel York, dynamite arrangements and swinging band.

[Overview](#) | [Reviews](#) | [Resources](#)

Review of Rachel York, Let's Fall in Love by jrnargi

On 20th Jan 2005

#### User Ratings

Other Artists Listed To Not Listed

Value for money	10/10	
Overall rating	10/10	
Recommended	100%	

### Bad Points:

None

### General Comments:

CD Review: "Let's Fall in Love" by Rachel York  
Available exclusively through Barnes and Noble

#### Track List:

My House	Sooner or Later
Let's Do It (Let's Fall in Love)	The Best Is Yet to Come
My Funny Valentine	Someone to Watch Over Me
All the Things You Are	Time after Time
Fly Me to the Moon	Too Good to Be True
My One and Only Love	I Love How You Love Me

If you think you've heard these songs before, think again!

"Let's Fall in Love" is a brilliant entrée into the solo recording world for Rachel York. This beautiful and jazzy retro CD is a real breakout for the gifted Broadway, film and television actress/singer. Known for her stage roles Norma Cassidy in "Victor/Victoria" and Lili Vanessi in "Kiss Me, Kate," as well as playing Lucille Ball in the CBS biopic "Lucy," Rachel sets herself free on this CD, singing from her own heart, without character restraints. A score of wonderful standard tunes shows off her magnificent, pure, silky-smooth and richly textured voice that has hints of Ella Fitzgerald, Rosemary Clooney, Peggy Lee, and Barbra Streisand in it. Yet Rachel interprets a song like no other performer I've ever heard. Every time you listen to her sing, it's like hearing a song for the first time. She adds unexpected twists of emotion to her vocals that bring new meaning to old standards. She has a distinct, deliciously sultry, honest and uninhibited quality that is absolutely penetrating. On this CD Rachel York has brought back the Big Band sound with her own special contemporary flair. There's humor in "My House," sass in "Let's Do It," longing in "My Funny Valentine," seduction in "Sooner or Later," and love in every single note. If you don't melt when you hear this incredibly talented woman sing, you need serious medical attention. She's amazing. The orchestra backing her really swings, too! "Let's Fall in Love" will leave you breathless.





## CD Review: Rachel York - Let's Fall in Love

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March 11, 2005 - by [Jose' M. Valdez](#)

### Rachel York Let's Fall In Love

Rachel York, Vocals  
Arrangements by: Tim Davies  
Executive Producers: Tor Hyams and Steven Scott

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"Come on-a  
My house,  
My house  
I'm-a gonn-a give you candy."



So swings Rachel York at the opening of her new recording, **Let's Fall In Love**. And once she opens the door to her house, I dare any listener not to do just that.

Supported by a group of musicians that include trumpets, trombones, violins, drums, cellos along with piano, bass, oboe, English horn, clarinet, flutes and saxophone, Ms. York makes it very clear why she is gift to the musical theatre. Ms York debuted on Broadway as a replacement in LES MIZ; she then went on to CITY OF ANGELES, VICTOR/VICTORIA, THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL, SLY FOX and is soon to open in Aherns and Flaherty's DESSA ROSE at Lincoln Center. She also starred in London as Kate/Lilli Vanessi in KISS ME, KATE, which was filmed and is available on DVD.

Ms. York is somewhat reminiscent of Rosemary Clooney on her version of Clooney's recording hit from 1951, "Come On-A My House." Written on a lark by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright William Saroyan, and his cousin, Ross Bagdasarian, this silly song was interpolated into Saroyan's off-Broadway play, SON. At the urging of Mitch Miller, Clooney recorded it against her instincts, and had her first hit recording. Ms. York makes this song her own and makes it sound fresh and fun all over again.

On "Let's Do It" she shares solo lines with trumpeter Ron King, and each is a knock-out. Rodgers' and Hart's "My Funny Valentine" is smoothly and sincerely performed. Ms. York's voice is like a glass of warm red wine; a bouquet of sounds that range from high notes to low vibrato that envelops the listener. "All The Things You Are" is given a full jazz arrangement, and starts with Ms. York singing the first refrain accompanied by Eli Brueggemann on the piano, then she moves to the verse and the bass and drums join in. Beginning with the second chorus of the refrain, the group expands and a mellow swing takes over but gradually builds to a swinging big band sound on this Kern and Hammerstein classic.

Sondheim is surprisingly represented by "Sooner or Later" from the film DICK TRACY, which avoids the ubiquitous songs vocalists often include to represent the musical theatre's living legend. Ms. York and her producers were intelligent enough to load the recording with songs from the Great American Songbook. One song, "Too Good To Be True," written by producer Tor Hyams is so well written and performed that it fits smoothly among the songs of the Gershwins, Cahn and Styne, Coleman and Leigh and the aforementioned.

Rachel York's **Let's Fall In Love** is in limited distribution and only available from Barnes and Noble. Waste no time seeking it out. It is a fine recording of great songs by a superb performer. Believe me, you're gonna want that candy.



**BARNES & NOBLE**.com  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS



## Reviews

### Barnes & Noble

Julie Silver, a Boston-born folk singer, has a laid-back voice that's equally at home in Hebrew and English, delivering both in an easy groove that at times recalls Carly Simon. On the title track to this holiday collection especially, Silver finds an earthy, mellow way to liven up a festival that's not exactly known for stirring songs. Delivering the holiday's one chestnut, "Ma'Oz Tsur / Rock of Ages," Silver turns to some '60s-style folk revival, with passionate new lyrics of her own that charge listeners to make a difference in the world around them with "a peaceful revolution." "Tired of battles fierce and long, we yearn for resolution." It's a message that's in keeping with Chanukah's revolutionary roots -- and one that's welcome in any season. If there's any doubt as to where Silver's sympathies lie, she ends this uplifting set with a standard from another tradition, "This Little Light of Mine." Delivered in a folksy reggae lilt, it's an engaging sing-along for the whole family, the kind that could start a few traditions on its own. *Mark Schwartz*



## Julie Silver Shines with New Holiday CD

PACIFIC PALISADES Calif. — Nationally beloved contemporary Jewish composer, Julie Silver, will perform a Chanukah concert for the entire family on December 3rd at 5PM at Temple Ahavat Shalom in Northridge, California.

Julie Silver is a shining star in contemporary Jewish music and beyond, with an eclectic recorded catalog that also embraces secular folk-rock, children's music, and her newest CD, the Barnes & Noble exclusive *It's Chanukah Time*, hit stores nationwide Oct. 31.

*It's Chanukah Time*, Julie's Barnes & Noble CD is the first Jewish CD produced exclusively for the bookstore chain, which has offered its own Christmas CDs for several years by artists such as Joan Osborne and Lou Rawls. *It's Chanukah Time* is now available in Barnes & Noble bookstores nationwide, and Julie will be performing a ten-city tour throughout the holiday season. Her only Los Angeles area Barnes and Noble performance will be at The Grove on December 2 at 2PM.

Julie's children's CD, *For Love to Grow*, was released in spring 2006 and quickly honored as a Parents' Choice Blue Ribbon Recommended work. The honor is especially sweet for Julie, who



Julie Silver

recorded the CD of songs written by her beloved childhood music teacher, the well-known and prolific writer Aline Shader.

Previously Julie released her secular CD, *Notes from Montana*, featuring a duet with the Academy Award-winning actress Helen Hunt—who also figures in an interesting career development for Julie. Hunt wrote, directed and stars in the upcoming film, *Then She Found Me*, which also stars Bette Midler. Julie appears in a pivotal scene in the film with Midler, slated for a

2007 release.

Julie has just received her first celebrity artist endorsement from Taylor Guitars, which she has played for ten years. She believes that the simultaneous milestones of turning 40 and welcoming her daughter Sarah have recharged her life, generating much of the positive energy and creativity that have made her one of the brightest stars in today's Jewish music—and placed her on the edge of even broader stardom.

To learn more about Julie

Silver, including a schedule of her upcoming appearances please visit her website at [www.juliesilver.com](http://www.juliesilver.com)

or contact her booking representative, Golden Land Concerts, at 212-683-7816.

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#### Reviews

##### Barnes & Noble

This truly wide-ranging selection of Chanukah-inspired songs draws from some of the best Jewish music of recent vintage. There's indeed something for everyone: alternative rock (the Levees and Barenaked Ladies), big band swing (Kenny Ellis), Sephardic folk songs (Judy Frankel and Alisa Fineman), choral melodies (Sue Fink's Angel City Chorale), and even a nugget from everyone's favorite philo-Semite, Woody Guthrie. And anyone interested in the somewhat drippy Judaic folksongs familiar from summer camp will find that, too. The mood runs the gamut, from the joy of gift giving (and receiving) amid cozy firelight and food to reverent retellings of the martial story of Judah Maccabee -- Peter Himmelman and David Broza are especially true to the Torah's imperative to "light up the world" with righteous actions, a poignant reminder during a season of rampant consumerism. Thoughtfully complete with contact information for many of the artists, this *Chanukah Celebration* promises to be just the beginning of an engagement with Jewish song for the whole family. *Mark Schwartz*



**BARNES & NOBLE**  
BOOKSELLERS

#### Reviews

##### Barnes & Noble

Classic Chanukah songs are given rock 'n' roll makeovers by an excited group of studio musicians on a set that's liable to get kids dancing for eight nights straight. Guitars, Hammond organs, and drums are set to songs in Hebrew and English, the perfect vehicle for capturing children's attention through the Festival of Lights. While this gang's version of the Woody Guthrie song "Happy Joyous Chanukah" has nothing on the Klezmatics' recording, their spirited "Dreidel Song," set to a galloping Johnny Cash beat, is a keeper. *Mark Schwartz*



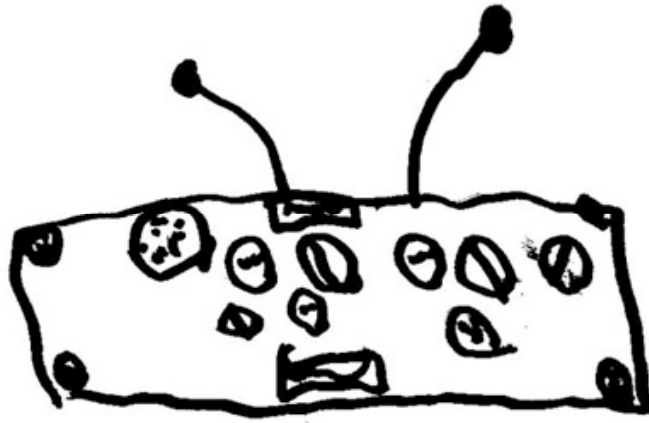
In this day of hyphenates, Tor Hyams might just win the prize. Get this: He's a singer/ songwriter/jazz musician/web guru entrepreneur/author/film and television composer/television personality. Whew! Hyam's excellent multimedia adventure began in the early 90s when he supported his music career as an Internet consultant for several top online companies. He then created his own website, [www.fierce.com](http://www.fierce.com), with his cousin, David Scharff. The site, which irreverently reviewed other websites, was a smash success in the online community, and Hyams and Scharff wrote a book about it (Fierce.com, published by Four Walls Eight Windows).

While Hyams continued to write, play and record his original music on the New York scene, one of his songs was selected to be used in an episode of the hit television show "Homicide," and a new line of work opened up for him -- film and television composing. Transplanting himself to Los Angeles, Hyams began to compose for such independent films as *The Substitute 3*, *The Minus Man*, *Niagara Niagara* and others. He also got a gig as a television commentator for CBS's "The Wild Web" and for "The Rosie O'Donnell Show."

But wait, there's more. As Hyam's first love was writing and performing his own songs, he made sure that everything that he had accomplished so far would lead back to that main goal. As an artist who had always embraced the Internet, Hyams turned to it for help. Earlier this year, Hyams became the first musical artist to fully fund the recording of an album online. Through [www.idealive.com](http://www.idealive.com), Hyams was able to find investors willing to back him. With the money he raised, he recorded an album, *Eye to Eye*, produced by Jeffrey Wood at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley, California, featuring eleven of Hyam's well-crafted, punchy pop/rock songs. He hopes to continue to use the Internet to market and distribute the album, first with his own website, [www.tor.net](http://www.tor.net), and then, hopefully, with the support of "the right label."

Hyams has complete faith in the Internet and what it can do for an independent artist. "For a lot of people just getting into the Internet, it might feel funny. But for me, it is home," he says. "When I go online, I finally feel like I know what is going on. I know who to talk to. I know where to put stuff to get some kind of buzz going. Without the Internet, I don't think I would have achieved everything that I have so far. It's been everything to me." His advice for other independent artists is "to saturate every single venue that you don't have to pay for, where someone has opened the door for artists, whether it's IUMA, icast, riffage, UBL, whatever. Put your name up there, upload your photo and some audio. Use the Internet as your playground and kick butt."





Spare the Rock, Spoil the Child



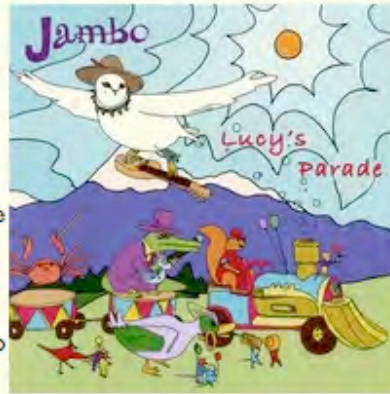
I didn't know anything from Jambo before, but enjoyed the set a lot – fun straight-up poppy stuff.

(Incidentally, yes, the same guy is playing keyboard for both Jambo and the Bummkins, and he's in neither band. It's Tor Hyams, who produced AKL and Kidzapalooza, as well as Jambo's new album.)

# HILLTOWN FAMILIES

## JAMBO

We then saw *Jambo*. I hadn't heard anything by this band – led by Steve Pierson and inspired by his adorable daughter, who is the subject of their best song, "Lucy's Parade" – but his rootsy rock (with a hint of blues) is catchy and instantly accessible. Maybe more than most, this is a band – they bounce stuff off of each other and are tight without being robotic. Their new record is produced by Tor Hyams, who also booked the festival (and Kidzapalooza) and sat in on keyboards with several bands; he knows a good band when he hears it. Jambo is one.



# synthesis



*Independent, uncompromising, optimistic. Tor Hyams, the first artist to be funded exclusively by online investors, has had his share of near misses whilst flirting with success. Although an accomplished film and TV composer, online marketing consultant, and published writer, his true passion lies in music. Hyams made some waves upon releasing Eye to Eye, his third and most recent album, and has done so without the aid of a major label, but the seas of the music industry are choppy to say the least*



salon.com

...One such project comes from Tor Hyams, a veteran jazz-funk musician with a handful of self-produced albums under his belt. He's trying to raise a modest sum to produce his next album. On the Idealive site, you can read about his background, listen to his previous work and peruse his prospectus. Then, if you are an accredited investor -- the Securities and Exchange Commission mandates that to participate in high-risk investments you must be worth more than \$1 million, or boast a yearly income of \$200,000 or more -- who has registered with the site, you can buy shares in the project. If the album is successful, you'll reap some of the rewards.

Why did Hyams choose this route rather than go to a record label for funding? The record industry, he says, isn't interested in anything with a real artistic sensibility: "They just say, 'We need another Hootie.' It's antithetical to creating art." After years of frustration and disillusionment, he was thrilled to come across Idealive.



Tor • Eye To Eye • self-released • Tor is a singer-songwriter who divides his time between NYC and LA. His music is radio-friendly pop rock with an emphasis on catchy hooks and kick-ass vocals. Tor plays all the keys on this album and handles all the vocal duties. The rest is played by other musicians (which includes Counting Crows drummer Steve Bowman). Comparisons could be made to such artists as Billy Joel, Elvis Costello (pre Burt Bacharach material), Too Much Joy and numerous others. But Tor's songs come together in a unique way that sets him apart. The 11-track album features mostly mid-tempo, super melodic songs with a couple slower tunes that will warm your heart. (Visit [tor.net](http://tor.net) to buy it)



When not contributing music to film soundtracks and television programs, Tor Hyams creates his own brand of energetic folk rock that is both lyrically inspired and deserving of his own spot on VH1's Storytellers.

-Jon P.



Idealive has secured financing for its first musician, Tor Hyams, a musician/composer who plans to use the money raised from five private investors to record, manufacture and promote a CD.

In a way, that's a ton of money. PC technology and competition among pressing plants means that a perfectly professional CD release may be produced and distributed for well under \$10,000.



Tor is a songwriter/performer from New York who plays a gentle blend of folk lounge rock, occasionally tinged with elements of jazz. Musically the songs had the feel of early Billy Joel meeting Ben Folds Five...Strong in structure and cool in delivery, the material was easy on the ears. — Bernard Baur, Music Connection