Leipzig, Prague,

Salzburg and Munich

July 14-25, 2008

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#### WE'RE TO EUROPE! GOING YOU TOO?

We invite new singers and former members of Sons of Orpheus to join us for our exciting 5th international concert tour! We also invite friends, relatives and music lovers to accompany us on our travels.

Our itinerary Includes three nights each in Leipzig and Prague, and two nights each in

Salzburg and Munich. Singers will participate in at least four performances during our sojourn, including a grand finale concert in Leipzig, with choruses from Mendelssohn's magnificent oratorio, Elijah, as the centerpiece.

We'll have plenty of free time for side trips, shopping, sightseeing, schmoozing, and fine dining, although most of the singers are the beer-and-bratwurst type.

Our flight will leave Tucson on

July 14, and we'll return on July

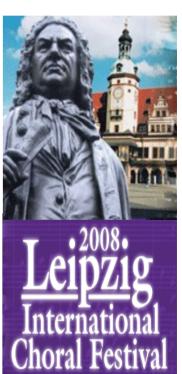
#### From TripAdvisor.com

"Although it is possible to travel to Leipzig year round, the summer is the best time to go. The aver-

age temperature during the hottest of the summer months (July and August) is just sixty five degrees,

making this an excellent getaway spot from hotter locations all throughout the world. Summer is also excellent in Leipzig because this is the time when a number of local events are going on there, including one of the most attended events of the year, the Street Music Festival." (More information on area events is available online at tripadvisor.com.)





# **Our Fall and Winter Concert Schedule**

Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 7650 N. Paseo del Norte. Tickets are \$15, \$10, and \$5, Call Pat Gibbons at 401-4369. The program includes the Brahms Rhapsodie with alto, Kaitlin Bertenshaw; Tchaikovsky Nocturne in D Minor, Andante Cantabile, Nancy Green, cello; and Beethoven Symphony no. 6. "Pastoral."

Oct. 14, 2 p.m. Utterback Middle Magnet School, 3233 S. Pinal Vista. Repeat of above. No charge.

Nov. 12, 2 p.m. Veteran's Dav Concert, Southern Arizona VA Hospital, 3601 S. 6th Avenue. No charge.

Dec. 1, 7:30 p.m. Holiday concert, DesertView Performing Arts Center, 39900, Clubhouse Dr., SaddleBrooke, Tickets: \$16. \$20 at the door. Contact Pat Beeks at 825-5318.

**Dec. 11, 12, 13**; 6 and 8 p.m. 11th annual Christmas concert with the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus at Mission San Xavier del Bac, 1950 W. San Xavier

Road, Tickets: \$80, 75% tax deductible. Call 407-6130 or email vlamplot at earthlink dot net.

Dec. 18, 7 p.m. 10th annual Holiday concert with the students from the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind, Berger Performing Arts Center, 1200 W. Speedway. Admission: nonperishable food items or donation benefiting the Tucson Community Food Bank.

Dec. 21, 7:30 p.m. Holiday concert, Heritage Highlands

Country Club, 4949 W. Heritage Club Blvd., Marana. Tickets: \$16. Call Aileen at 579-9574.

Jan. 13, Family Arts Festival. Tucson Convention Center. **TBA** 

Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m.; 27, 2 p.m. Guests of the Arizona Balalaika Orchestra at their Winter Concert, Proscenium Theater, PCC West Campus, 2202 W. Anklam. Tickets \$15, \$10 for students.





# Beverly Sills, 1929-2007, a Remembrance - by Grayson Hirst

The news of Beverly Sills' death truly saddened me. It was my great, good fortune to sing with her in the '70s. I had a chance to experience her warmth and generosity up close. She was kind and supportive to a young singer.

Beverly Sills was a homegrown diva who represented the best of America. She was an Icon of the American opera world. As a singer, she was a stellar representative of the richness of her art form. America has lost a tireless champion for the arts.

Beverly had soul in her singing. The "Big Redhead," as she liked to call herself, exuded dramatic presence and confidence in her technical ability. She possessed vocal beauty and sang with accuracy, clarity, and agility. What is more, she possessed that certain *je ne sais quoi* that makes one a star.

I remember her smiling face and hearing her infectious laughter. She radiated warmth and vitality with her lively wit and salty humor.



Grayson Hirst and Beverly Sills at Carnegie Hall, February 13, 1970 The American Opera Society Revival of Donizetti's La Fille du Régiment. Photo taken by Lois Kirschenbaum, the "Queen of the Standees."

She said she was "not a particularly happy woman, but a cheerful one."

Given the tragedy that afflicted her family, especially the struggles with her children's devastating disabilities, regardless of what life threw at her, Beverly Sills coped. She kept going and, with steely courage, she succeeded. For me, that was her magnificent life's greatest achievement and a lesson for us all.

Students of great singing will continue to study Beverly's recorded legacy. Listen to her gold-standard recordings of *Manon*, *Giulio Cesare*, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, and our *La Fille du Régiment*. Her performances will be an inspiration for generations to come.

Beverly Sills brought beauty into so many lives. She will be remembered not only as one of the best loved singers of her time, but as a seminal figure in 20th century American opera. I honor her memory and send my deepest sympathy to her loved ones. Thank you, Beverly, for many happy memories. Yours was a life well-lived. Brava, Beverly!

# **Our New Endowment Fund**



Our dapper fellow Orphean, Maurice Magee, doing what he loves most

# A Big "Thank You" to Maurice Magee

Not-for-profit organizations are always striving to get some real money in the bank upon which to build a future. Maurice Magee has given Orpheus just such a treasure: a Magee Family contribution of \$10,000 to begin the Sons of Orpheus Endowment Fund to be managed by the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona

Maurice grew up in Savannah, Georgia. In his gentle drawl, he says that Carol, his wife of 56 years and the mother of their three children, is "a Yankee from Atlanta." He met her at the University of Georgia in 1951, the year he received his degree in geology.

After a brief stint in geophysical exploration in the petroleum industry, Maurice went into mining, first with the Tennessee Copper Company in Ducktown, Tennessee. There he spent four days a week at a drafting table figuring out where the copper ore veins ought to be and one day underground checking his calculations and defining the direction for the next week's drilling and blasting. He recalls that his only really scary moment was the time the battery on his lamp failed and he had to find his way out of a remote section of the mine in total darkness by walking very slowly with his hand on a ventilation duct.

Subsequent employment took the Magees to Salt Lake City, Tulsa, and finally Tucson in 1980 where Maurice was a consulting geologist with Pincock, Allen, and Holt, a com-

pany that sent him to countries around the world until his retirement in 2001.

That's the underground story: "Maurice the Miner." Those of us in Orpheus know his other story better, for we have enjoyed him as "Maurice the Musician," a role that began in his youth when a private teacher named Georgia Word gave him a solid foundation in music theory and various instruments. But the instrument that has had the most use is Maurice's fine bass voice. He has made good use of it wherever he has gone in the years since he left his birthplace.

One of his fondest choral memories is having sung Orff's Carmina Burana with the Knoxville Symphony Choir. But one choir at a time was never enough for Maurice. In Salt Lake



# The Voice of Orpheus

#### Maurice Magee Continued

City, he sang with the Utah Oratorio Society and the Utah Chorale, as a member of which he made several recordings with Maurice Abravanel and the Utah Symphony Orchestra. In Tulsa, he sang with a chamber choir and with the Oklahoma Opera Company in their Aida, an experience that showed him he was more comfortable underground than standing, spear in hand, on the top row of a stage pyramid.

In Tucson Maurice could really get to singing! He sang

with the Tucson Masterworks Chorale for 25 years, the Arizona Repertory Singers, the Tucson Medical Center Choir and Hospice Choir, and with Orpheus, which he joined midyear during our first season in 1991-92. When he retired from geology in 2001, he had time to sing in all five choirs. He says he isn't a great reader, but once he gets a line in his head, it's there to stay. For those of us who struggle with the demands of a single choir, Maurice's prolific output is aston-

We thank Maurice Magee for his years with Orpheus



Maurice and Carol Magee

and for the generosity of his gift. A famous quotation says:

Large streams from little fountains flow, Tall oaks from little acorns grow.

To us it's a mighty big acorn, but regardless of what you call it, it is the seed that

has made the new Sons of Orpheus Endowment Fund possible. Maurice's vision and generosity will inspire us to keep the fund growing, not just through the wonders of compound interest, but, Maurice hopes, from the gifts of others who enjoy our music.

## W.

## Orpheus Brings You Brahms Saturday, October 13 at 7:30 p.m.

#### Johannes Brahms 1833-1897

Here's one version of the back-story of Johannes Brahms's Opus 53, *Alt-Rhapsodie*:

In 1869, Brahms composed a wedding gift for Julie Schumann, the daughter of his dear friend Clara. He chose a rather dark text: Goethe's "Harzreise im Winter" (Winter Journey to the Harz Mountains), a poem inspired by a young man who had written to Goethe expressing his feeling of alienation. In the opening lines of Brahms's rhapsody, an alto sings an aria describing a lonely place as a metaphor for the existence of a man who, having been scorned, is alone and consumed with rejection.

Some reports say that the odd choice for a wedding gift was simply that Brahms was moved by Goethe's poem because it spoke so fervently to his own innate sense of loneliness.

Another story casts quite a different light on Brahms's gift. Pick your favorite:

During the summer of 1869, Brahms fell in love with

Clara Schumann's 24-yearold daughter Julie. By September, he learned of Julie's engagement to another. He was crushed. Remembering a setting of Goethe's "Harzreise im Winter" by Johann Friedrich Reichardt, Brahms determined to write his own setting. He chose three stanzas from the Goethe poem about a man "who drank misanthropy from the fullness of love."

Brahms said about the piece: "It is the best thing I have done...and if worthy altos are not immediately eager to sing it, there are nevertheless enough people who do need this kind of prayer."

He found his alto in the famous Pauline Viardot-Garcia. She sang the first performance, March 3, 1870, in Thuringia. Included in her aria is the following text: But who stands there apart? In the thicket; lost is his path. Behind him the bushes Are closing together, The grass springs up again, The desert engulfs him. Ah, who will heal his afflict tions.

To whom balsam was poison. Who, from love's fullness, Drank in misanthropy only? First despised, and now a despiser, He in secret wastes All that he is worth, In a vain selfishness.

In response, a male chorus, that's us, offers a prayer: Ist auf deinem Psalter
If there be in your psalm book.

Vater der Liebe, ein Ton Father of love, but one note Seinem Ohre vernehmlich, That to his ear may be pleasing,

So erquicke sein Herz!
Oh, then quicken his heart!
Öffne den umwölkten Blick
Open his clouded gaze
Über die tausend Quellen
To the thousand springs
Neben den Durstenden
Near him who thirsts
In der Würste!
In the desert!

In 1939, the fabulous Marian Anderson made the piece famous in the wider world on an RCA recording with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. You can find it on "You Tube." The sound is a little thin because recording technology still had a long way to go. But it's well worth a listen, even if you think the chorus might have sung better. (We are certainly going



to try!)

Orpheus is pleased to continue our policy of spotlighting students from the University of Arizona School of Music. We think you'll agree that Brahms himself would have enjoyed hearing our alto, Kaitlin Bertenshaw.

Miss Bertenshaw is a graduate of the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy. Currently a Junior in the Vocal Performance program at the University of Arizona, she proudly studies with Dr. Kristin Dauphinais.

A "huge fan of German Lied," Miss Bertenshaw studied in Germany this past summer and visited the Harz Mountains, just to get into the mood.

Come hear us on Saturday, October 13 at 7:30 p.m. See schedule on page 1.



## The Voice of Orpheus

# **Profiling**

#### Mike Fraser

Top row middle, that's where you find Mike. Where else could we put him? He's 6' 6" without his Stetson. The mere six-footers on either side of him have taken to wearing lifts so they won't look like they've dropped in from the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus.

But Mike is a giant in our choir in more important ways. A fine musician, he has arranged a half dozen numbers in our repertoire and he leads the bass/baritone note -bashing sessions. He's also a central figure in sundry nonmusical operations of the organization: He has ramrodded the annual rummage sale, he keeps track of our money as our treasurer, and he represents the choir on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors—two places where his business experience and enthusiasm serve the choir well.

Mike grew up in Nelson, British Columbia. His formal music training began at the age of seven or eight when his mother began teaching him piano. He also played clarinet in his high school band and in the Vancouver Junior Symphony while at university.

His father was a campfire singer with a shower-stall voice and a repertoire of corny



songs that Mike says helped convince him, his sister, and two brothers not to be shy about singing. Today when they gather, the

music flows.

Mike is a graduate metallurgical engineer from the University of British Columbia, where he also played basketball. After graduate school, he and his bride, Eleanor, moved to Ontario where he worked in a steel plant. In 1966, they and their two children emigrated to San Francisco where Mike joined an international iron ore mining and shipping company.

Later assignments with other companies took the family to Los Angeles, Denver, Tucson (including Mike's stint in molybdenum operations at the Sierrita Mine in Green Valley), and elsewhere. Although they never lived overseas, Mike traveled the wide, wide world on sales and technical assignments... "Have passport, will travel," was his mantra! But when it came time for Mike and Eleanor to retire, two local grand-children were the trump cards that made Tucson the obvious choice.

Mike heard about Orpheus from baritone John Evans, whom he met through St. Philips Episcopal Church. The two men also worked together in Habitat for Humanity. As they were hammering away one day, John invited Mike to hear our Gala Spring Concert, thus nailing a most valuable beam into our structure.

Mike enjoys the wide range of our repertoire. That and the camaraderie of the group keep him on his tiptoes and singing.

#### Erratum

Longtime friend Phil Varney informs the editor that a paragraph in last spring's issue contains a fluff that any school child would sneer at. To wit:

"Baritone Van Honeman is an experienced whitewater guide who has turned over more than once in his day, but never where there were hippos sunning on the banks, licking their chops for a bite of Arizona baked man."

Varney, well-known author of several books on the Old West, is correct in noting that hippos are vegetarians. Mea Culpa. And picky, picky, picky.

# The Joy of Men's Choral Singing

Two kinds of singers make up men's

choirs: one kind is the guy who just wants to be part of the action. He's got a good ear and a good voice, but when the director calls for soloists, he starts looking under his chair, wondering where his pencil has got to. He'd commit hara-kiri in a karaoke bar before he'd sing in it. When the occasion calls for "Happy Birthday," he performs sotto voce.

The other kind is convinced that he belongs in front of a chorus rather than in one, that the fates have conspired for years to keep him in the background. He is boundlessly optimistic that he'll finally be discovered, perhaps even while warming up in a stairwell before a concert.

Something quite wonderful happens when these two types gather to sing: The truth of the music takes over, and nothing matters but the sound of the group.

Orpheus invites men of either persuasion to join us. Please call our director at 621-1649 to arrange for a simple audition. Or sit in with us some Wednesday night at the Arizona Boys Chorus Building, 5770 E. Pima, 7 p.m. If you like to sing, you'll like us!

### **Kudos from the Far North**

Orpheus Board President Larry Ross and his wife, Sonja Rath, received the following letter a few days after our Spring Concert at SaddleBrooke:

#### Dear Sonja and Larry,

We are still humming some of the tunes from the Sons of Orpheus concert. It was truly the best ever, and thanks to you, we hopefully can count on them to be a permanent part of the cultural life here in Saddle-Brooke. We thoroughly enjoy the great variety of music included in each performance, as well as the talent that each artist shares with the audience.

Thank you again for inviting us to share in this very special afternoon. You can be sure that December 1 is on our calendar. Larry, sing on!

We thank the writers of this letter and we look forward to another wonderful audience in SaddleBrooke's beautiful new auditorium.



# The Voice of Orpheus

# **Orpheus**

&

# **Bacchus**

After nearly every concert, someone comes up to ask "Who the heck is Orpheus?" We tell him he's the greatest poet and musician of Greek myth, the son of Apollo and the Muse of epic poetry, Calliope. The lyre given him by his father enabled him to charm audiences wherever he went, except for one time. He was accosted by a group of female revelers who were on their way home from a binge celebrating Bacchus, the god of wine and good times. Enraged by his vow of celibacy after the death of his wife, Eurydice, the Bacchantes drowned out his music with their screaming and murdered him. Moral of the story: No matter how well you play, keep a big stick in your instrument case.

The following image is Gertrude Degenhardt's etching "Mary's Gang II." The poem puts Orpheus and Bacchus together in a more benign way than the old story did.



## **Elevator Music**

Hard to tell if it's the Guinness or the music gives these Songbirds such rapturous flight.

Pub goers, rollicking in the undrawn darkness, smitten by Orpheus and Bacchus alike, vibrate a foot above their bar stools in the flock's emanations.

The image scintillates for us too, this other audience, elevated in ways even the artist might not understand.

-Ned Mackey

## **Beware the Duet**

by David Yetman

I have long assumed that vocal music is genetically tied to human evolution. I still believe this, but some recent bird behavior studies are making me squirm just a bit.

Australia has a genus of small birds known as Fairy Wrens. About the size of our wrens, they inhabit much of northern Australia and are celebrated for their vivid colors. Males of the avian species are usually more colorful than their drab mates, but among Fairy Wrens, the females are equally, although differently, brilliant.

While I was filming in northwestern Australia in 2005, a Dutch ornithologist pointed out a distinctive bird song. I marveled at its complexity and clarity. She smiled. "There's something that makes it even better," she said. "It's a duet."

As it turns out, the duet is part of courtship among the wrens, so instantly and remarkably simultaneous that the human ear cannot tell that more than one bird is singing. Only by digital audio analysis can scientists demonstrate that the song is actually a joint effort. The ornithologists hypothesize that the seasonal duet strengthens the bond between mates and affords protection to chicks. Apparently, the practice works because male Fairy Wrens become obsessively devoted to the family.

"What a marvelous parable for marriage," I thought. "Couples that sing together, stay together. Nature's blessing of our sacred covenant, a metaphor for monogamy, the heaven-inspired union of male and female, the way marriage was meant to be!"

The ornithologist, apparently reading my thoughts, interrupted irreverently. "Don't jump to any conclusions," she warned. There was something else she knew about Fairy Wrens.

She and her colleagues had used DNA testing to study the effect of "duetting" on avian fidelity by gathering numerous samples from chicks in a variety of Fairy Wrennests

The results: Only one in four of the hatchlings was the offspring of the attendant male. Three-fourths were "illegitimate." The males had become devoted, scripturally correct parents, but the females had been off, ahem, cavorting, flying high after tricking the males with song!

What is a fellow to do?

Be satisfied to

sing in an

all male

choir?



#### **Our Newsletter's New**

We hope you are enjoying the new look of the *Voice of Orpheus*. The 22 previous issues were produced by an editor who used his computer like a really nice typewriter. He still does, but Iván Berger, a technologically sophisticated chap in the bass section, has taken on the task of giving our newsletter some panache. He gets the pieces, arranges them nicely so you'll be more likely to stay awake as you read about us.

#### So's our Web site

Perhaps the vibrations that rumble through the skulls of basses somehow makes them more technologically adept than men with lighter voices. Bass John Fountain was our previous Web master. We thank him for the excellent leg he ran. He has handed the

baton to another bass, Tom Wentzel, who has dressed the site in new clothing and added some pockets. The address is still sonsoforpheus.org.

On the Home page you'll find information about prospective travel plans and see Gary Smyth's superb photograph of the choir in front of the Mahler Hall in Dobbiaco, Italy.

# Our Web address is still sonsoforpheus.org

On our CDs and Audio page you can listen to a variety of sound clips from several CDs including our two most recent ones: "Christmas at Mission San Xavier del Bac," and "Cowboy Classics of the Old West,"

with the Bill Ganz Western Band. Also on that page is a printable order form.

The Repertoire page is an amazing list of the music we have sung in our 16-year history. Nearly 400 numbers in length, it'll give you a good idea of the scope of the music Orpheus performs.

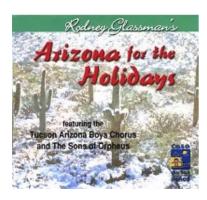
### **Additions**

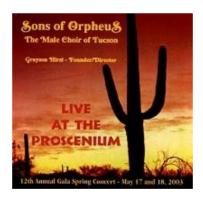
The choir celebrates the return of Mike Bezusco, Leo DiCurti, David Harrington, Jack Hughes and Jerry Villano after some time off. Our "Sons" weren't the least bit prodigal during their absence, but if we had the stomach for it, we'd kill the fatted calf in their honor. Maybe we'll just buy them a burger.

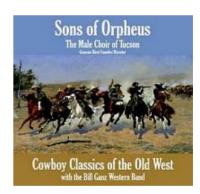
We also welcome baritone Jim Filipek and second tenor Allen Petersen, newcomers with extensive musical training and choral experience.



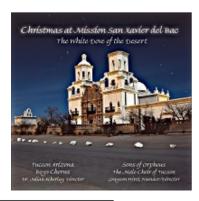
# **Our line-up of CDs**







## You can order these on our Website







#### **Concert Tour** Continued

#### **Details**

The cost per person for the European tour will be approximately \$3,250, with a first installment of \$800 due before November 14. Those who indicate interest by October 31 will receive priority status if our trip overfills.

For an information packet, write Sons of Orpheus, PO Box 31552, Tucson, AZ 86751, or call Dr. Larry Ross, 520-818-0480. Prospective singers call Grayson Hirst, 520-621-1649.

The total cost includes round trip air fare, 3-star hotel accommodations, breakfasts, and ground transportation in moderns motor coaches. The costs of lunches, dinners, and other sundry items are not included. Payments are to be made to Sons of Orpheus, PO Box 31552, Tucson, AZ 86751. A portion of the travel costs could be considered a charitable deduction to a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization. (Consult with your tax advisor.)

Trip cancellation insurance, if you choose to buy it, is \$129 for those 31 years of age or older; \$99 for those who are younger. It must be paid with the first payment.

At www.sonsoforpheus.org, you'll see a link to Grayson Hirst's "Message to singers." It's not only informative about the history of music in the sites we'll visit, it's an impassioned plea that got us revved up to commit ourselves to this tour. It worked! It might convince prospective "roadies" too. We hope you'll take a look.

# **Our Scholarship Fund**

We have established a scholarship fund to help our University of Arizona student singers make the European concert tour with us. Dr. Larry Ross, our Board president, asked those who attended our concerts last spring to chip in, and we received generous support. So far the fund has our young singers well over the North Sea, approaching the German coast. If you would like to help them get the rest of the way and back, please send a check to Sons of Orpheus, PO Box 31552, Tucson, AZ 85751. Please write Scholarship Fund in the memo space. We thank you, and our young singers thank you also.

#### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

#### LEIPZIG

International Choral Festival: Performances with other choral groups

#### **PRAGUE**

Walking Tour, Charles Bridge, Town Square, Town Hall, Tyn Church, Wenceslas Square, Hradcany Castle, St. Vitus Cathedral, Smetana Museum

#### **SALZBURG**

Walking Tour, Hohensalzburg Castle, Mozart's Birthplace

#### MUNICH

Walking Tour, Frauenkirche, Marienplatz, Victualien Markt,a Neue Pinakothek, Alte Pinakothek, where the 25,000 year-old Venus of Willendorf is displayed, the Nymphemburg Palace with its collection of Old Masters, und naturalich, viele wunderbar biergarten.

#### AT LEAST 4 CONCERT PERFORMANCES

We will aim for the most prestigious venues and a balance of secular and sacred settings as our repertoire permits.

# Earl Wettstein's "Tucson Icons"

Twenty original oil paintings capture some of our city's most familiar and funky places.

On view and selling at the Northern Trust Bank Community Room, 6444 E. Tanque Verde Rd. September 4–October 31

Ekphrastic poems by Ned Mackey accompany a dozen of the paintings.

Greeting cards with the images and poems are available at Mardon Frost Gallery in Plaza Palomino, and the Tucson Museum of Art.

## Jim Hogan, Singer/Songwriter

We thank Jim for giving us several copies of his CDs to enrich our coffers. He wrote all the songs on his first CD, *Home in Arizona*, except for "3:10 to Yuma," one he says he *wishes* he had written! His new CD, *When I Pick Up My Guitar*, includes 16 titles, all written by Jim. He sings them all too, expertly backed by the Bill Ganz Western Band and a great lineup of studio musicians.

In the liner notes for When I Pick Up My Guitar, Jim writes, "Some of the lyrics I've lived, some I've not. But I've felt love lost ('Nowhere, All Around,' 'Long Walk Off a Short Pier,' 'Blue Sundown Over Baja'); and love found ('Sweet Thing, You' and 'A Guy like Me.') Luckily, every time I look at my 'PhD in L.O.V.E,' Esther, 'I Fall in Love Once Again."

This is tasty music, beautifully recorded. We are proud to call Jim a member of Sons of Orpheus.

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Supported by the <u>Tucson Pima Arts Council</u> and the <u>Arizona Commission on the Arts</u> with funding from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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