

JOEL PELLETIER CHAMBER POP

The Way Home Media CD9801 (V. 2) - released 31 January 1999

Joel Pelletier is a musician, composer and multimedia artist living in Los Angeles, CA. A pop singer / songwriter with a unique, honest and sometimes humorous point of view on relationships and the world, his lyrics combine the personal with social, historical and ethical topics. His vision of personal pop with strong classical influences deserves a worldwide audience, and his skills as a composer, producer, performer and multimedia artist insure a creative and successful career.

Chamber Pop, his first commercial release, represents 6 years of writing, arranging, recording and producing his original pop/classical hybrid music. Many of these Beatlesque songs fall into the current **CHR/Pop-AAA-Hot AC** format (esp. *What Are You Now*, *Lie To Me*, *Same to You*, *Birthday Song* and *Not Afraid of the End*), with some of the more acoustic/classically arranged material walking the line between those formats and **NAC/Smooth Jazz-Classical Crossover** formats (*Rather Have You*, *Wall Inside*, *20th Century*, *Touch*, *Sword* and *Never Be the Same*). With stylistic influences including pop, rock, folk and classical music, Joel's accessible melodies and lyrics form a unique modern hybrid with some of his more adventurous arrangements. Besides the Beatles influences, many have mentioned *Crowded House*, *Sting*, *Paul Simon*, *Joe Jackson*, *Bruce Cockburn*, *Peter Gabriel*, *David Byrne* and *Leonard Cohen* as recording artists with similar stylistic approaches to writing and performing.

The 12-song **Chamber Pop** CD, recorded and mastered at some of Los Angeles top and legendary recording studios, is an *Enhanced CD* with an additional 10-language CD-ROM, playable on any MAC or Window computer. The CD-ROM section of the CD features Joel's original animations, videos, illustrations and music scores, as well as all lyrics and credits from **Chamber Pop** in 10 languages - *Chinese (Mandarin)*, *English*, *French*, *German*, *Italian*, *Japanese*, *Portuguese (Brazilian)*, *Russian*, *Spanish* and *Swedish*. The international style of the project, along with the multi-language presentations, enable Joel to offer his music to a worldwide audience. The CD is available worldwide from many websites, including his own extensive site, www.joelp.com (featured in November 1998 on *The CBS Evening News*). National and international distribution is pending, and the artist plans to be touring regionally and nationally by late 1999.

Raised in Massachusetts, Joel received a degree in Music Composition from **The Hartt School of Music at The University of Hartford**, while playing in bands at night. In Los Angeles since 1988, he has been a vocalist, bassist, guitarist, keyboardist/pianist, Chapman Stick player, composer, arranger and musical director for many bands and ensembles, including his own. He is also active as a "sideline musician," appearing in films and TV shows including *Star Trek Voyager*, *Jim Carey's "The Man In The Moon"*, *Family Matters*, *Celine Dion Special (CBS)*, *INK*, *Fame LA*, *Murphy Brown* and *Columbo*.

His band includes Chuck Crowe on guitars and backing vocals and Joe Lizama on drums and percussion (Joe has been the live drummer for Johnny Mathis for the last 15 years). He regularly performs with his band and a string quartet made up of some of LA's finest session and live performers, including Marci Dicterow, Eric Gorfain, Kristen Autry, and Jimbo and Nika Ross. Joel performs regularly in Southern California with his ensemble, consisting of his band and a string section. He is endorsed by or in artist's programs with *HARTKE SYSTEMS*, *STEINBERGER SOUND*, *THOMASTIC-INFELD* and *LABELLA STRINGS*, *QUINTUS COMPOSITE INSTRUMENTS*, *EASTERN ACOUSTIC WORKS*, *MONSTER CABLES* and *EMG PICKUPS*.

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Joel Pelletier
Common Grounds
Northridge

Contact: The Way Home Media:
818-787-8445

The Players: Joel Pelletier, vocals,
guitar; Joe Lazama, percussion;
Jeff Corwin, violin; Jana Jacoby,
violin; Arianna Zoppo, viola; J.,
cello.

Material: Joel Pelletier's material borders on being folk music, but it also carries with it some rock sensibilities and even gives a nod to chamber music. The title of his album is, after all, *Chamber Pop*, and while the lyrics are true stories—or at least Pelletier claims they are—the music is something a little different. With these kinds of hard-hitting lyrics, one might think that they might not mesh with a string quartet, but guess again. This seemed to be the perfect marriage of eclectic sounds. The stark sound of the guitar and percussion melded very well with the lush sound of the string quartet, which provided sweet interludes when they were called for, while also bringing to light some very sincere pathos when needed.

Musicianship: Joel Pelletier is a very engaging singer. While his voice may not be technically perfect, it is the kind of voice that captures the listener's imagination and brings the lyrics to life. Also, Pelletier makes sure that the lyrics, which are a big part of this music, are clearly vocalized so that the audience does not have to wonder what the last sentence meant, except when he is being enigmatic on purpose. He is also a good guitar player, solid enough to carry through this music and to create the sounds he has to have. Joe Lazama is also a good match for Pelletier's muse, creating a percussion atmosphere that fits the whole scene and never overpowers either the music or the lyrics, which could be very easy to do. And the string quartet played this music as if they were born to it. They sounded full and bright when necessary, and sat back when not needed. Overall, they provided a great counterpoint to Pelletier's stark vocal style and guitar work.

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Performance: Each of these musicians put on a textbook performance of the way a show should go. It did not matter whether there were two people listening or 200. The band played as if every note counted and as if they were professionals who were willing to entertain any crowd. The band also had great chemistry with everyone seeming to find the right places. This is difficult with arrangements such as these, but Pelletier and his crew pulled it off. They made what could have been a very uneven show look simple.

Summary: Pelletier plays this music in many different configurations, but if you can see him with the string quartet, they are a big plus. This is not to take anything away from Pelletier and his material, as it is superlative. Definitely seek this artist out. —*Jon Pepper*



Joel Pelletier: Folk-rock songs with chamber music touches.



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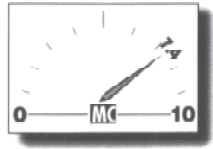


Joel Pelletier

Contact: Artist Hotline
818-980-8304
Seeking: Label/Dist. Deal
Style: Pop

The artist's ambitious "chamber pop" concept — complete with string quartet — is very well-realized on this enhanced 3-song CD. Arrangements are well thought out and never overbearing — not to mention well-recorded. With echoes of singer-songwriter Bruce Cockburn sans the politics, Pelletier's lyrics are intelligent without being intellectual. A little too heavy a mix on the electric bass, but all in all, a tight package that any open-minded A&R rep should take a serious listen to.

Production.....8
Lyrics.....7
Music.....7
Vocals.....7
Musicianship.....8



"Joel Pelletier, CHAMBER POP: Joel's catchy, McCartney-esque lines (on acoustic, electric and upright bass) form the heart of these dynamic pop confections."
(Bass Player Magazine's Indie City)

"Very interesting... Bassist Joel Pelletier has invested 5 years of his life into the making of this album. Chamber Pop has definitely got a "pop" edge, though the presence of his chamber orchestra (including violinists, viola, cello, and Joel on double bass) make this album unique. It is refreshing to hear a chamber orchestra, with its pizzicato passages and singing crescendos into choruses, playing pop changes and melodies."
(Bass Frontiers)

"Drawing in influences from pop and classical sources, "Chamber Pop" is a real lesson in experimentation. There is strong use of a string quartet throughout the album but the electric side of the creation always creeps up and rears its head. Lyrically it's pretty haunting but I definitely stake my claim that the classical side of the "experiment" is where it wins me over. The whole project is a real multimedia experiment, the CD is serious enhanced and only available over the Net."
(Sampler Magazine)

"Joel is a local singer-songwriter with a very special talent for choosing the exact words necessary to make his lyrical points. The opening track of his tape, "Without Me," is a perfect example of biting humor, melody and poignant lyrics. This tape is as bare as can be - simple acoustic guitar and voice on the first two songs. But the songs are strong enough to carry the feelings through. When track three kicks in with an entire band, the same feeling for melody pervades the song. Pelletier has definitely studied the craft of songwriting. "Shades of Grey" is top-notch! The closer, "Everytime I Lie," opts for a bit of a classical touch yet the singer's style still shines through. Joel Pelletier is a singer-songwriter capable of writing many different kinds of songs but he performs them in the same style. That's artistry. That's what makes you remember him."
(Music Connection DEMO REVIEW)