

Band Room



"On the count of three, students, gimme some of that lowdown dirty funk!"



Andy Romanoff (class of 1972)

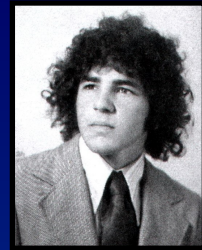
Scroll
Down to
Page 2

Shelley Block (class of 1975)

Scroll
Down to
Page 7

JHS Folk-Rock Festival
March 28, 1972

Scroll
Down to
Page 8



Andy Romanoff (class of 1972)

BIO

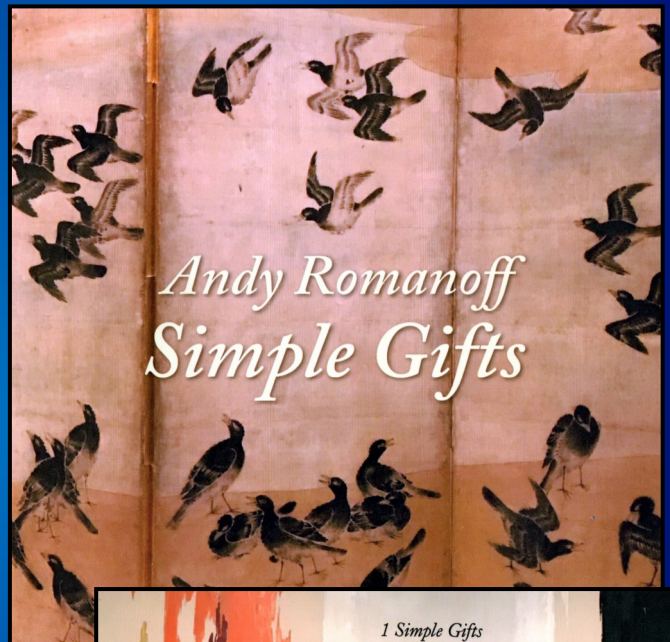
Anyone who attended Jericho High School in the late 1960s and early 1970s no doubt remembers Andy Romanoff as a guitar prodigy. (There must have been something in the water on Saratoga Drive, because his neighbor across the street was the class of 1973's keyboard whiz Mitchel Forman, who went on to a wildly successful career in jazz and jazz fusion.) Andy's rock band with bassist George Ploska and drummer Philip Bashe, later joined by Mitchel, played many junior high and high school dances and talent shows such as Sam's Jam.

Andy's musical interest soon turned more toward acoustic guitar and other stringed instruments. In fact, he says, "I haven't really played electric guitar since about 1973." A distinguished career in education and raising four children in West Hempstead demanded most of his time, but in recent years, he has been performing his original compositions around Long Island. "I also try to record a CD every year," he says, "to document what I've written during that time."

Here are seven selections from his most recent CD, *Simple Gifts* (2019). It goes without saying that the musicianship is stellar, with Andy playing multiple stringed instruments and multitracking his voice, but what also stands out are the songs. The title track encapsulates better than any Hallmark anniversary card what it means to have a strong marriage—something he has firsthand experience with, having been married for forty years to Janis Burket Romanoff. (At last count, the couple have six grandkids.)

"Long Island Rhapsody" might be the first song ever written *in praise of LI*, with fond references to the music club My Father's Place and other area landmarks. There's biting social commentary in "The Dow Jones Is Doing Well," while the CD's a cappella finale, "Al the Utility Infielder," pays tribute to one of the undersung heroes of the 1969 Miracle Mets: .219-career-hitting reserve infielder Al (the Pride of Franklin Square) Weis. The instrumental "Supermoon" rounds out this sampler from *Simple Gifts*.

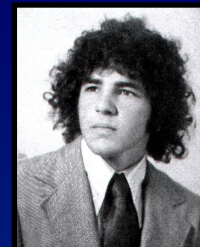
Email Andy at aromanoff268@gmail.com.



Sample Tracks

Click below

- Track 1 ["Simple Gifts"](#)
- Track 2 ["Long Island Rhapsody"](#)
- Track 3 ["The Dow Jones Is Doing Well"](#)
- Track 4 ["Late Summer Samba"](#)
- Track 5 ["Al the Utility Infielder"](#)
- Track 6 ["Always a Blessing"](#)
- Track 7 ["Supermoon" \(instrumental\)](#)



Andy Romanoff (class of 1972)

Another year, another album. And what a year to chronicle: 2020. “Nothing else to do but make music during the pandemic,” says Andy.

All that time resulted in the eighteen songs of *Fleeting Moments*, nine of which are included here.

Not too surprisingly, two of the songs Andy composed last year concern Covid-related matters. There’s the self-explanatory “Zoom” and “I’m Not Thinkin’ About Covid 19,” the latter of which might have been penned by John Prine, famous for his droll sense of humor—had the disease not killed him last spring. (An irony that John Prine no doubt would have appreciated.)

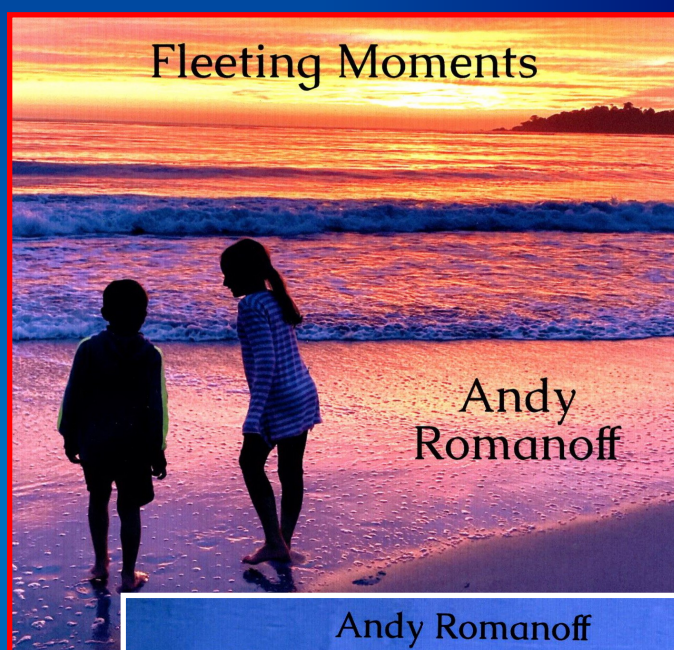
Another standout track, “Wrestling Night,” concerns Andy’s grandfather, who happened to be a fan of professional wrestling circa the mid-1960s.

“One of the few things I remember about my grandfather was that he loved the wrestling,” reflects Andy, who name-drops a few of the more popular wrestlers of the day, like Bruno Sammartino and Haystacks Calhoun. “The first draft of ‘Wrestling Night’ had a line about Gorilla Monsoon (rhyming with Haystacks Calhoun) and Sweet Daddy Seekee, who, it turns out, was one of the first black wrestlers.” With that song, Andy probably wins some kind of songwriting award for having worked in both the name Haystacks Calhoun and the word *kibbitzing* in the same lyric. Pretty sure that’s never been done before. Try topping *that*, Bob Dylan.

Being a masterful guitarist (and player of assorted exotic stringed instruments), naturally *Fleeting Moments* includes several evocative instrumentals, such as “Soar” and “Topton PA.” One of Andy’s strengths as a lyricist is his ability to find an uplifting and often lighthearted perspective on the vagaries of life—even during a year that pretty much everyone agrees sucked and sucked hard. That’s a lot more difficult to pull off successfully than delving into the darker side of things.

As for what he’ll write about in 2021, stay tuned. “I’ve got a lot more in progress,” he says. Again, lots of time! It could be a lot worse!”

Email Andy at aromanoff268@gmail.com.



Andy Romanoff *Fleeting Moments*

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. I See The Sun | 10. Soar |
| 2. Footprints In Cement | 11. Vermont Snowstorm* |
| 3. Funk Train | 12. Saving Grace |
| 4. Job's Case | 13. If Ever I Go |
| 5. Take A Chance | 14. Wrestling Night |
| 6. Contentment | 15. Waiting |
| 7. I'm Not Thinkin'
About Covid 19 | 16. Topton PA |
| 8. Oceanic Journey | 17. Lessons
(Not Yet) Learned |
| 9. Zoom | 18. Fleeting Moments |

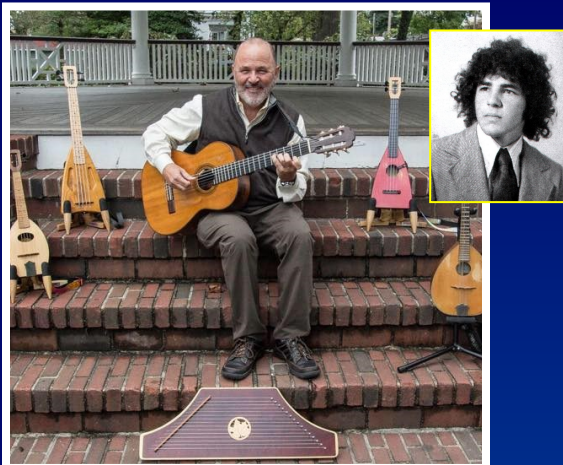
*Words by Charles Gammage Eastman

©2020 Andy Romanoff

Sample Tracks

Click below

- Track 1 ["I See the Sun"](#)
- Track 2 ["Funk Train"](#)
- Track 3 ["Job's Case"](#)
- Track 4 ["I'm Not Thinkin' About Covid-19"](#)
- Track 5 ["Zoom"](#)
- Track 6 ["Soar"](#)
- Track 7 ["Wrestling Night"](#)
- Track 8 ["Topton PA"](#)
- Track 9 ["Fleeting Moments"](#)



Andy Romanoff (class of 1972)

4

About the only positive aspect of the 2020–21 pandemic was, in lieu of any sort of social life, ample time for self-reflection. Or, if you're a songwriter, for composing.

Sedona at Sunset is Andy Romanoff's second CD in less than a year. "Hopefully," he says, "this is my last collection of songs with Covid references." Actually, the theme of many of its eighteen tracks (nine of which are included here) involves travel—specifically, two road trips in the family Jeep Wrangler between Long Island and Arizona, as Andy, a father of four, was helping his oldest son, Matt, move to Sedona. Matt, a physical therapist, and his wife, Daphna, have two young children.

Fittingly, the first cut, "Satellite Radio Saved Me," is a propulsive road song that pays homage to the artists who kept him alert and grooving "as I bounded down the interstate." There's the Beatles and Bruce, Mozart and Beethoven, and Miles Davis and John Coltrane, to name a few.

The title track, an evocative picture postcard that captures the tranquility of Sedona, features Andy's multitracked harmonies over his always engaging, almost conversational lead vocals.

"The Power of Love," an exuberant, almost giddy, love song, is propelled by an electric (!) bass, while "When You're in Hell" provides constructive advice for making the best of a shitty situation: "When you're in hell / just find a little piece of heaven to hold on to . . . Give up the fight / Go fly a kite / Let your anger go."

The instrumental "Sonata, Bourée, Café," one of five on the CD, opens with Spanish guitar that would make an ideal spaghetti Western soundtrack for a scene in a Mexican cantina. Then it metamorphoses into "Bourée" (which you're probably familiar with, either from its composer, Johann Sebastian Bach, or Jethro Tull) before ending with a third movement, "Café," all in less than three and a half minutes.

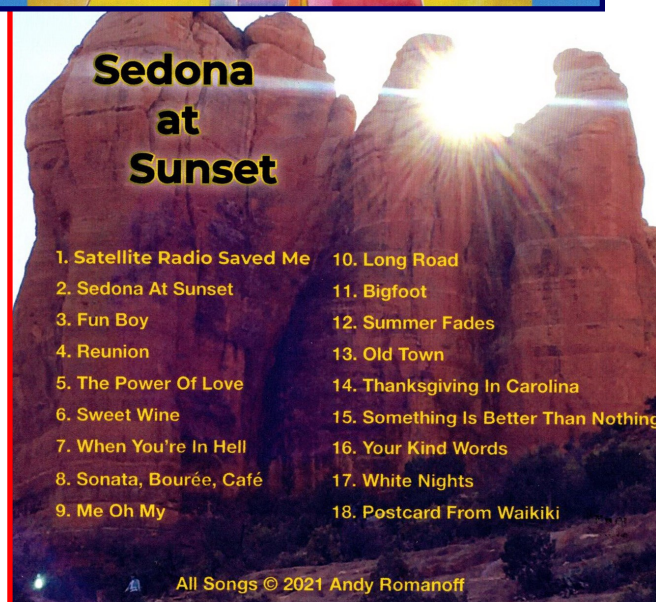
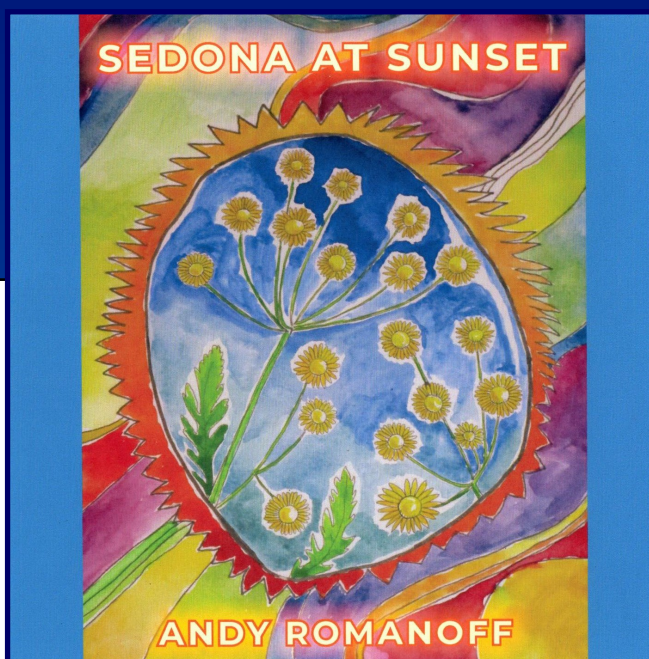
The melancholy "Summer Fades" reflects wistfully on the days becoming shorter as well as the growing anticipation (anxiety?) over the "changes fall will bring."

On Andy's previous CD, 2020's *Fleeting Moments*, the song "Wrestling Nights" contained the word *kibbitzing*. In a similar vein, "Something Is Better Than Nothing" boasts this unusual couplet: "If I can't get all of your love/ I won't take a sliver/ Do I look like chopped liver? I must have it all or nothing at all." What next, a song about kugel?

On the CD's whimsical finale, "Postcard from Waikiki," which brims with the good vibes of, say, the Lovin' Spoonful, the vacationing writer's descriptions of his days spent soaking up the sun border on gloating. But then, few will argue his point that "'Yes, doing nothing here in Waikiki / Is better than vegging out in Nassau County."

The bluesy shuffle "Reunion," the last track presented here, addresses a subject near and dear to our hearts: the joys of reuniting with old friends after decades. "He dressed like a hippie / Now he wears a silk suit and speaks in smooth, diplomatic ways / She was in the drama club / Now she's a lawyer, watches every single word she says . . . / We're missing a few / It could have been me or you / but for the grace / Let's remember the old times / When I look into your eyes / I step right into that time and place."

Sedona at Sunset combines wonderful storytelling with the instrumental virtuosity you would expect from Andy. You can email him at aromanoff268@gmail.com.



Sample Tracks (Click below)

- Track 1 "Satellite Radio Saved Me"
- Track 2 "Sedona at Sunset"
- Track 3 "The Power of Love"
- Track 4 "When You're in Hell"
- Track 5 "Sonata, Bourée, Café"
- Track 6 "Summer Fades"
- Track 7 "Something Is Better Than Nothing"
- Track 8 "Postcard from Waikiki"
- Track 9 "Reunion"

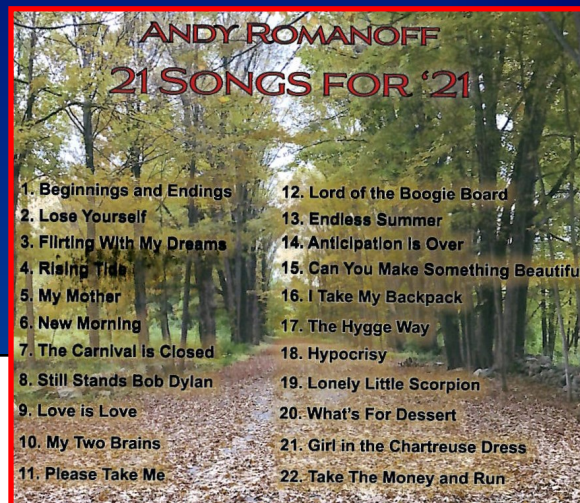
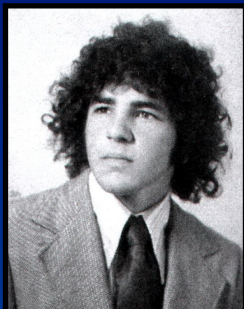
21 SONGS FOR '21



ANDY ROMANOFF

Andy Romanoff (class of 1972)

5



Since 2010, Andy Romanoff has recorded a CD of brand-new self-penned songs every year. The downtime afforded him by the Covid-19 pandemic brought two CDs within months of each other in a particularly prolific period in 2020–21.

His most recent release, with the self-explanatory title *21 Songs for '21*, marks a bit of a departure for Andy, who can basically wring music out of anything with strings on it. For starters, on his previous CDs, instrumentals typically made up about one-third of the tracks, which is to be expected when you're a musician of Andy's caliber. But on the ambitious *21* every track features music and lyrics.

The method by which he went about putting together the material for the new CD is also unique. During Covid, Andy became involved with a group of songwriters who challenge one another online to compose songs using one-word prompts, such as "carnival," "mother," "color," "Dylan," and "sequel." Not only that, but, according to Andy, "The songs had to be written within a week, in most cases, and then performed on Zoom for the rest of the group."

The opening track, one of seven presented here, the bluesy "Beginnings and Endings," reflects fondly on growing up and contains the wonderful baseball metaphor "Of beginnings and endings / I just didn't understand / I was in the first inning / expecting to hit that grand slam"—which may be as close as we get to enjoying the national pastime in 2022.

"My Mother," a touching tribute to Andy's mom, who passed away in 2016 at the age of ninety-four, continues this reflective vein. "Family was always her priority, number one," he sings. "She kept us all in mind, connected on the vine / In the ways we carry on, may her spirit shine on."

"Still Stands Bob Dylan" pays homage to a certain troubadour from Hibbing, Minnesota. "He's coming for you / climbing in your head / Planting surreal images that haunt you in your bed." What earns Andy's praise the most isn't Dylan's momentous past but rather the fact that even at age eighty, he remains artistically uncompromising and adventurous. As Andy sings, "He's a sage, he's a savage, his voice has been ravaged, tempered by time, celebrated, berated." But he remains "the restless one, seeking new frontiers."

On the playful "My Two Brains," Andy addresses the conundrums we all face being both left-brained and right-brained. Sometimes the two hemispheres operate harmoniously, and other times, well, not so much. He relates this to the art of songwriting: "My right brain writes the music / My left brain raps the words / The first time they collaborated, that song was for the birds." But thankfully, "Now they're synchronized / behind the scenes / When they're done / I got to a song to sing." Twenty-one of 'em, in fact.

Andy writes often about his forty-plus-year marriage to his wife, Janis. "Anticipation Is Over," which, although acoustic, like all the numbers here, really drives and features some dexterous soling throughout, takes a realistic look at how, in any long-running romantic relationship, some of the initial passion stems from the mere fact that there is so much new to explore about each other. But even though "the thirst has been quenched, the drought has been drenched," he reports, a deeper kind of love emerges. "Now we're swimming in the sea of glee / taking our time so leisurely / smelling the roses, gazing at stars above / dancing in the key of love."

Songwriters don't write only about themselves, of course. Sometimes they assume a role, play a character. Or, in the case of "Lonely Little Scorpion," an unusually self-aware arachnid, "hairy and black," meditating on how while he's "an ordinary, sedentary guy," his presence triggers fear. "Once I had a doting mother just like you / She raised me on her back, there was nothing that I lacked / I had a dozen siblings, now they're scattered to the sand / and I'm hiding in a crevice in this empty dessert land." If the Grammy Awards had a category for "Most Unusual First-Person Perspective in a Song," this one would win hands down. Fittingly, the sprightly melody, played finger-style on a travel-sized mandolin, recalls "The Itsy-Bitsy Spider." "I wrote that one in Arizona," Andy says. "There was a scorpion in my grandson Tal's classroom, and the teacher dealt with it like it was just another day at the beach."

Andy says he plans on taking a break from songwriting for a while. Part of the reason might be that by the 2072, he'll have to come up with seventy-two new compositions, so it's probably wise to conserve, not to mention train vigorously.

But the other reason is contained in the CD's final song, "Take the Money and Run."

After so many years of living on the island, empty nesters Andy and Janis are moving this June to Beacon, New York, up in Dutchess County. "Take the Money and Run" lists the reasons why: "Long Island taxes are high, traffic's always backed up / So after twenty-seven years, baby, it's time to pack up . . . Say goodbye to Long Island, we're no fools / Our kids are grown up, so we don't need the schools!" He and Janis are trading all that for Beacon's "funky art and music venues / vintage store and vegan menus." As for relocating to the Sunshine State, forget about it: "Yeah it's a little cooler in the Northeast corridor / better than dying a slow death in swampy, hot Florida."

Visit Andy's web page at <https://www.andyromanoffmusic.com>; and his YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUgNI55IOyA1xk3QM8X8hBg>.

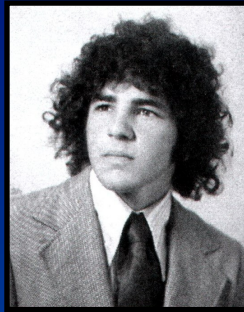
Sample Tracks (Click below)

- Track 1 "Beginnings and Endings"
- Track 2 "My Mother"
- Track 3 "Still Stands Bob Dylan"
- Track 4 "My Two Brains"
- Track 5 "Anticipation Is Over"
- Track 6 "Lonely Little Scorpion"
- Track 7 "Take the Money and Run"



Andy Romanoff (class of 1972)

6



Andy Romanoff

Blue Horizon

Attitude of Gratitude
Fire on the Mountain
Celebrate Today
Stories and Songs
Poor Man's Bread
Incidental Music
Invocation
Naomi and Ruth
Water Colors
Happy Birthday
Everyman's a Weatherman Now
Blue Horizon
Sunshine On Our Faces
Don't Stop Believing
French Press
That's How Seeds Are Sown

Andy Stack, Sound Engineer and Bass
aromanoff268@gmail.com 2024

After recording thirteen CDs of original material since 2010, the prolific multi-instrumentalist-vocalist Andy Romanoff took 2022 off. Not coincidentally, that was the year that he and his wife, Janis Burket Romanoff, sold their longtime home in West Hempstead and left Long Island for Beacon, New York, about an hour north of Manhattan.

When Andy still lived in West Hempstead, he'd frequently debut new material at weekly open jams at a funky little joint called Creative Corner, on Hempstead Avenue. It didn't take him long to find a similar venue up in Beacon: the Town Crier Café, a local landmark since 1972. (See photo at right.)

His newest collection, *Blue Horizon*, contains sixteen songs, seven of which can be sampled by clicking on the links below. For those who don't compose music, the process must seem mysterious—even magical. How does a songwriter turn everything from intense emotions to the most mundane observations about everyday life into words and music? How do you determine the suitable musical setting for lyrics, or vice versa? Why do some songs form in the mind almost instantaneously, as if being channeled from the ether, while others take what must seem like an eternity to shape?

Here Andy provides the backstory for each track:

"Attitude of Gratitude" was written in my son Danny's house in Palm Springs, California, on a sweet-sounding guitarlele that I keep there." (Andy and Janis have four grown children and spend much of their time traveling around the country, from one to another.) "I was thinking about how I didn't fully appreciate all that my parents did for me, including settling in the little oasis of Jericho.

"Fire on the Mountain" was written during the month of Elul on the Jewish calendar, when the shofar is blown each day leading up to Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

"Stories and Songs" is definitely about generational transmission. since I've got two sons with sons of their own. Coming to terms with our own mortality is part of that.

"Naomi and Ruth" follows closely to the book of Ruth, the Megillat that is read on the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, which takes place in spring around the harvest.

Sample Tracks (Click below)

- Track 1 ["Attitude of Gratitude"](#)
- Track 2 ["Fire on the Mountain"](#)
- Track 3 ["Stories and Songs"](#)
- Track 4 ["Naomi and Ruth"](#)
- Track 5 ["Water Colors"](#)
- Track 6 ["Everyone's a Weatherman These Days"](#)
- Track 7 ["French Press"](#)

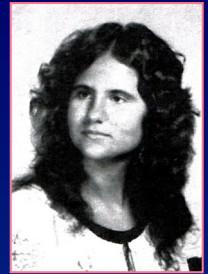


"I'm not exactly sure where the song **'Water Colors'** came from, but we do go to art museums at Vassar, Bard, and SUNY New Paltz up here.

"Everyone's a Weatherman These Days" was a response to the hazy skies caused by the wildfires in Canada last summer.

"As for **'French Press,'** I wrote it just because it makes the best damn coffee, which I'm drinking right now!"

Visit Andy's web page at <https://www.andyromanoffmusic.com>, and his YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUgNI5510yA1xk3QM8X8hBg>.



At far left: Shelley and husband Alan Gerber.

Left: Shelley at fifteen.

Sample Tracks and Videos

Click below

Track 1 ["We Can't Take It Back"](#)

Track 2 ["Lotus Land"](#)

Video 1 ["I Knew What I Was After"](#)

Video 2 ["Not Much Left for Me to Say"](#)

Shelley Block (class of 1975)

Since graduating from SUNY Oswego, Shelley Block spent about fifteen years as a performer, then roughly a dozen years being a mover and shaker in corporate America, followed by ten years of combining the two: she's a business consultant and also a much-sought-after vocal coach.

The songs "We Can't Take It Back" and "Lotus Land" are both from 1983, the year that Shelley met musician Alan Gerber when the two of them happened to attend a Thursday-night songwriters' workshop in Manhattan. Alan was—and is—a full-time professional keyboardist. The keyboardist and the singer hit it off immediately.

"That Sunday night, I went over to Alan's house, and we wrote this really great song together called 'We Can't Take It Back,'" Shelley remembers. "We fell madly in love, and by Monday night, he told me that he wanted to marry me. I told him the same. And ... that was it."

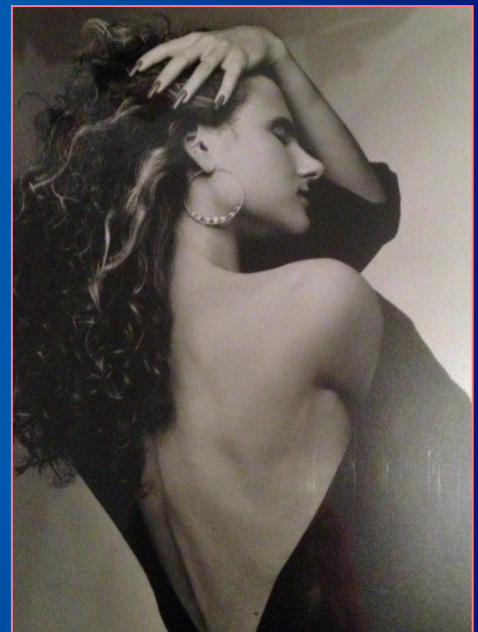
The two live video performances, "I Knew What I Was After" and "Not Much Left for Me to Say," are of more recent material, both Shelley's own compositions, with accompaniment by her husband.

"Alan got me into singing more jazz and expanded my horizons. He's a world-class pianist and synthesist, and if I'm to be honest, he's more talented than I am. That's why he's been able to make music his full-time career, which is remarkable. He's never done anything else.

"I can understand why musicians, and actors, and artists often fall in love. Creating together is a very intimate act. Alan and I speak the same language; we don't have to explain anything to each other. We get it." The couple has two grown children, Jazlana, and Jess, both graduates of Rutgers University.

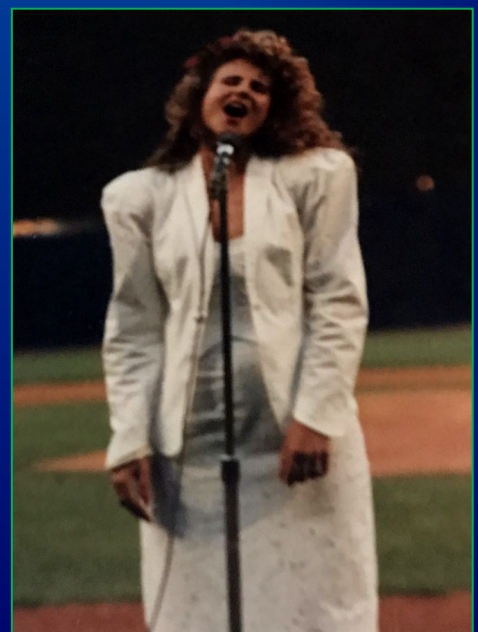
If you'd like to read Shelley's complete story, [click here](#) for the fall 2017 issue of the *Jericho High School Online Magazine* (issue no. 31).

Email Shelley at shelley.block@hotmail.com.



Above: 1988 publicity still.

Below: Belting out the national anthem at Shea Stadium before a Mets game.



JHS Folk-Rock Concert

Daytime Assembly, March 28, 1972

8

A FREE CONCERT!
(BECAUSE MUSIC BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE, MAN!)

JHS Folk-Rock Festival

Tuesday, March 28, 1972, 2:00 P.M.
In the Jericho High School Auditorium

Featuring

Ken Kraus ('72)
Karen McBride ('73)

Karen Bunin ('72)
Doo-Wacka-Duo
George Ploska ('72) and Andy Romanoff ('72)

The Ramblin' Rumblin' Ramblers
Mitchell Forman ('73) - George Ploska ('72) - Andy Romanoff ('72) - Lynne Rosenbaum ('74)

Little A.C. Ducey & His Fabulous Flamin' Farina Eaters
Barry Asrelsky ('72) - Philip Bashe ('72) - Ken Kraus ('72) - Mark Paris ('72)

Tubas in the Moonlight
Philip Bashe ('72) - Mitchell Forman ('73) - Mark Paris ('72) - George Ploska ('72)

Please Leave All Illicit Drugs in Your Lockers!
(It's an Assembly. Dammit! Show Some Respect!)

BACKSTORY

I wanted to play on the auditorium stage one more time before we graduated, so sometime in February 1972 I went to Principal Paul McKee with the idea of a Folk-Rock Festival that would be put on in the middle of the school day. Somewhat to my surprise, he said yes immediately. Most of the kids in school seemed reasonably enthusiastic: even if they didn't like any of the music, at least they were getting out of class for a solid *hour and a half*. So, a win-win, by anybody's standard.

Jericho's own Woodstock Festival—or, in this case, Woodshop Festival—took place on Tuesday, March 28, 1972, in the early afternoon, a time of day when most musicians haven't even gotten out of bed to puke yet. The music fans came from all over the school, with foot traffic so heavy that some left their books by the side of the hallway and trekked through the mud the rest of the way to the assembly.

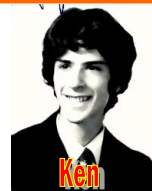
I recorded the show for posterity on a Wollensak reel-to-reel tape recorder about the size and weight of a mini-fridge. The sound quality's not bad at all, despite the fact that the school didn't own a P.A. system, or if they did, they never told us, so, as was the style back then, you plugged the vocal mikes into one of the guitar amps. And the mike placement is a bit off, so you hear A LITTLE BIT MORE FROM ONE SIDE OF THE STAGE and a little bit less from the other.

At right, here's who performed on that Tuesday morning forty-nine (*forty-nine?!?!?!?!?*) years ago:

Part 1: Click Here to Hear

0:24 KEN KRAUS ('72), guitar, vocals

1. "If I Laugh" (Cat Stevens) (2:34)
2. "Four and Twenty" (CSN&Y) (1:45)



Ken

5:19 KAREN BUNIN ('72), guitar, vocals

1. "All My Sons" (Karen Bunin) (1:40)
2. "Fifty Years of Age" (Elton John) (2:34)
3. "Happiness Runs" (Donovan) (1:46)
4. "Jimmy Newman" (Tom Paxton) (2:21)



Karen Bunin

15:15 KAREN MCBRIDE ('73), guitar, vocals

1. "April Come She Will" (Simon & Garfunkel) (1:24)
2. "Conversation" (Joni Mitchell) (2:53)



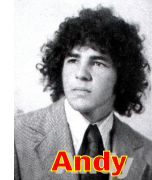
Karen McBride

19:44 RAMBLIN' RUMBLIN' RAMBLERS

(They didn't have a group name, so I just gave them one about fifty years too late.)

Mitchel Forman ('73), George Ploska ('72), Andy Romanoff ('72), Lynne Rosenbaum ('74), guitars, banjo, vocals

1. "You Ain't Goin' Nowhere" (Bob Dylan) (2:25)



Andy

22:45 LITTLE A. C. DUCEY AND HIS FABULOUS FLAMIN' FARINA EATERS

(greasy '50s-type thrills for all you swingin' Jills 'n' Jacks)

Barry Asrelsky ('72), vocals • Philip Bashe ('72), lead vocals • Ken Kraus ('72), vocals, guitar • Mark Paris ('72), guitar, vocals

1. "In the Still of the Night" (The Five Satins) (4:50)
2. "Teenager in Love (A Girl, A Car, A High School Ring, A Speeding Train—Do the Math)" (Little A. C. Ducey) (7:03)
3. "Kama Sutra" (Bonzo Dog Band) (1:10)



George



Mitchel



Lynne

42:35 THE DOO-WACKA-DUO

George Ploska ('72), banjo • Andy Romanoff ('72) acoustic guitar

1. "Bye-Bye Blues" (Les Paul and Mary Ford) (1:37)
2. "Pick a Little" (2:31) (*continued on part 2*)



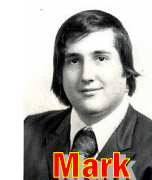
Barry

Part 2: Click Here to Hear

1:05 TUBAS IN THE MOONLIGHT

Philip Bashe ('72), drums, lead vocals • Mitchell Forman ('73), organ, guitar • Mark Paris, lead guitar • George Ploska ('72), bass, backing vocals

1. "Ohio" (CSN&Y) (5:02)
2. "Crying to Be Heard" (Traffic) (4:11)
3. "Let It Rain" (Eric Clapton) (4:47)



Mark



Phil

Bell Rings: School's Over, Kids!