

Mp3 Martin Shepard - On The Record



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A combination seven chapter hardcover book and seven song cd that elaborates upon each chapter. the music is not easily categorized but influenced strongly by island music and jazz. 7 MP3 Songs WORLD: Island, JAZZ: Jazz Vocals Details: PUBLISHERS WEEKLY review of ON THE RECORD April 18, 2005 Martin Shepard. Permanent Press, \$25 Shepard, cofounder of Permanent Press, began writing music last year, at age 68, and has fashioned a memoir and CD set with his insights on the world. Without irony, he gives readers an intimate, in-depth look at his own life with some very personal anecdotes involving his friends and experiences. The work stems from an idea many people have toyed with: putting one's thoughts down on paper and hoping they mean something to others. Shepard's highly opinionated commentary on such topics as religion, abortion, war, why people lie, politics, fear, death, education, sex and marriage are thought provoking; even a section on his "serendipitous encounter" with the woman who hatched the idea for him to start a publishing house teaches an important lesson in the unanticipated ways of the world. And while Shepard groups his topics haphazardly, there are nuggets, such as his suggestions for readers to embrace their own contradictions and not to be part of the herd. The accompanying CD offers inspirational songs with lines such as "Your time's too short for fears or sorrow/ Live as though there's no tomorrow/ And serenity will fill your life." The easygoing music offers a striking contrast to Shepard's always passionate and at times fervent commentary. (June) Trained originally as an artist, he became a physician and controversial psychiatrist who wrote several best-selling books about the field. He started the Dump Johnson movement in protest against the war in Vietnam (Citizens for Kennedy/Fulbright), and along with his wife, Judith, founded The Permanent Press 27 years ago, perhaps the most celebrated small press in America (see web site: thepermanentpress.com). KIRKUS review of ON THE RECORD April 1, 2005 Shepard, Martin ON THE RECORD Permanent Press; (142pp.) A set of

age penses-complete with a CD arranging them to music-covering politics, music and living fully, from polymath publisher Shepard (The Reluctant Exhibitionist, 1994, etc.). "What makes you think anyone would be interested in your opinions?" asks a friend of Shepard's, and that's a question that ought to be posed to any essayist. But there are a lot of things Shepard would like to get off his chest, and it's rare that the unburdening doesn't produce food for thought. Intimate, unrehearsed-Shepard recommends that readers take notice, asking them whether they've overstayed the interest and joy of their work, whether serenity-the ultimate prize of life, the Buddha state of mind-has gone begging? Shepard is here to tell them to take a risk, that money is no compensation for boredom, that one ought to pursue what's personally meaningful, checking ego at the door, giving self-consciousness a holiday, taking aim at exploration and discovery despite all the inevitable missed notes. He is a student of his own medicine: he has run an elevator and squired a UPS truck; been defrocked as a psychoanalyst; experimented with drugs to unmoor his conventional thinking (and also lost a son to heroin). Shepard is a man of progressive politics, easily picking apart the war on drugs and the fatuous ravings of the Bush administration. As a partisan of compassionate, enlightened governing, he couldn't have a better target than the war in Iraq and the flummery of the "Clean Skies," "Job Creation" and "Save Our Forests" bills. He is wary of words, since so rarely can they get at the thrum of the matter; yet they can also be like a burr in the boot, irritating but demanding attention. Shepard's mental energy is something to behold. He suggests more than once that "Those who know don't talk/ Those who talk don't know." His words have an import worth considering. Review in THEINDEPENDENT May 25, 2005 On the Record by Martin Shepard. The Permanent Press, 144 pp., \$25. CD included Reviewed by Joan Baum In a mellow mood, now that he's hit 70, but hardly abandoning the provocative, passionate, and playful take on life that has made him over the years one of The East End's most exuberant, if not controversial, free-wheeling radicals, Martin Shepard cleverly exploits the ambiguity in the title of his newest book. Not only has he put "On the Record" his latest musings on health care, education, music, publishing, politicians, sexual behavior, drugs, money, death and dying, he's also provided a CD of songs he's composed over the last couple of years (he sings on some tracks, plays a mean sax on all)-whose subjects match his seven chapters. The overall theme-it's not too late for self-expression, love, community, happiness, freedom-is hardly new for this celebrant of the anti-establishment sixties but seems now to take on a quiet urgency. No doubt Shepard hears time's winged chariot at his back, hurrying near, and there are a lot of things he

would "like to get off [his] chest." But he also feels that there are a lot of things any sane and humane individual should want to unload, such as the present administration, particularly for its prosecution of the war in Iraq. The implied connection is that a liberated body and soul can help create and sustain a liberal body politic. Dr. Shepard, the author of *The Do-It-Yourself Psychotherapy Book*, *DYING: A Guide for Helping and Coping*, and *Confessions Of A Defrocked Psychoanalyst* (reissued as *The Reluctant Exhibitionist*) has riffed on these motifs before, but he's got a smoother and more moving sound now, based on a deeper appreciation of love and friendship, especially for the support he always found in his father, his great teacher and friend. Conversational, discursive, filled with frankness, humor, fervor-not to overlook marketing savvy (is it mere coincidence that he wrote up these reflections when he was 69?)

-On the Record dilates upon and slightly revises what might still be called The Shepard Credo: don't be afraid to take risks, a modest amount of dope, strong exception to Bush's domestic and foreign policies, and love in whatever form and wherever it can be found. The book is dedicated to his long-time second wife and business partner, Judy ("who suffered through great embarrassment when I first started playing my saxophone in public") and also expresses gratitude to his managing editor, Maureen D'Haene and to Elise D'Haene, who "encouraged him to proceed," despite his doubts. In an overflow of thanksgiving, a key motif throughout, Shepard allows how he feels "blessed" not only to love these women, but-vintage Shepard-to be loved by them. He surely seems to have achieved equanimity where others would have succumbed to despair, considering attacks on him by professional peers, loss of a son to heroin, dissolution of a marriage, rejection of a safe and solvent career in medicine, and a sudden uprooting, when he decided to move his family from Rockland County to the Hamptons and start a new life. More reflective than angry, Martin Shepard says that the words that mean the most to him these days are "serenity" and "serendipity." The first he values as the "ultimate prize" for his having taken charge of his own life and acting on deep-felt desires. The second reflects his belief that much of his good fortune-or anyone's for that matter-is attributable to happenstance, not genes or will. Behind this generous acknowledgment of chance lies a healthy impatience with a politics of doom. On the Record may quarrel with joyless education and "mumbo jumbo" government policies and practices, but it also expresses a wonderful, even joyous, exhortation to keep up the good fight. The book's repetitions and self-references, Shepard might say, are really musical phrases that require reiteration, and its discordant intervals, inevitable laments on the sad state of civic and cultural affairs, including the death of independent

publishing. The mix of sunshine and shade, however, suggests that while the world is not all right, the good doctor most certainly seems to be. An eye-catching photo cover shows him smiling (a bit mischievously?), hand on cheek, a fabric hat pulled close around his head, a saxophone harness pulling taut against his short-sleeve shirt-Marty Shepard is geared to jump . . . into anything . . . ready to fly.

Review in WHAT'S UP MAGAZINE June, 2005 (and LIVELY-ARTS.COM May/June 2005) Reviewed by Willard Manus

ON THE RECORD is an unusual book by an unusual man. Martin Shepard was an art major at New York City's High School of Music Art but went on to become a doctor, then a psychiatrist. Very much a product of the 60s, he experimented with psychedelic drugs, demonstrated against the Vietnam war, entered into an open marriage, battled the medical establishment (when they took exception to his sexual beliefs and practices), was disbarred as a "Sex Doc" but later won his license back, wrote books, designed and built houses, became a publisher. Shepard and his wife Judith founded The Permanent Press thirty years ago and built it into one of the finest independent publishing houses in the USA. "Over the years we've published, and still have in print, over 300 books which have garnered over 50 literary honors," Shepard writes. The company itself has been cited three times for its achievements, including a 1998 award from Literary Market Place--the publishing equivalent of an Oscar--for "Editorial Excellence." "Because we operate a 'low overhead' press, we can afford to publish what we like to read, not what the largest common denominator likes to read," Shepard adds. "It costs us approximately \$10,000 to launch a book, and we can break even by selling a thousand copies. Publishers who have big staffs and pay bigger advances (all of our contracts and advances are the same: a \$1,000 advance against royalties) have to sell 10 times that number in order to cover costs." In addition to running TPP, Shepard experienced the joys and sorrows of family life (one son died of a drug overdose), continued as a political activist, studied various religions, and returned to his first love, music. He picked up the saxophone again, took lessons and dared to begin playing in public, at parties and jam sessions, just for the sheer hell of it. "If infants were embarrassed because their initial attempts to talk came out wrong, they would stop trying and never learn to speak," Shepard states. "Should not the same tolerance hold for musical expression as it does for verbal expression? Music after all, at its best, is a way to converse with people without speaking, and in many instances, to converse on a deeper level. People who speak different languages or whose intellectual preoccupations vary tremendously can experience the joy of harmonious and creative interaction by 'talking' to one another through their instruments,

creating a non-verbal dialogue that expresses and shares emotion simply through playing with one another." In ON THE RECORD Shepard puts his horn where his mouth is. Not only does the book contain a free-flowing memoir of his colorful, always questing and questioning life, it comes with a CD containing seven of his original songs. Three are instrumentals, the others have lyrics, all penned by Shepard (who not only sings but plays sax, backed up by Marcus Mark and others). Does he have a great voice or play great sax? Of course not--but that's not really the issue. The important thing is, he's making music, expressing himself, communicating in an open, free, unpretentious way his thoughts on life, love, politics, falsity, hypocrisy, serendipity and home. When a friend commented that she felt ON THE RECORD was a "spiritual book without the traditional trappings," Shepard quipped that he saw it as "the literary equivalent of an off-off-Broadway musical in seven acts." Both Shepard and his friend are right. ON THE RECORD is at once spiritual and wise, lighthearted and entertaining. The mixture is what makes it so unusual and enjoyable. (142 pages, \$25 hardcover, thepermanentpressor call 631-725-1101. Mailing address: 4170 Noyac Rd, Sag Harbor, NY 11963) and further notes from the book publisher.... An anti-authoritarian type, he's taken on the medical and political establishments, prison officials, and drug policies. He's lived communally, explored the world of psychedelic drugs, has known fatherhood and stepfatherhood, and the grief of having one of his sons die of a heroin overdose. A bitter opponent of President Bush and the Iraq war (he campaigned for Howard Dean), his anti-war song, MUMBO JUMBO, received several radio plays (you can listen to that song and SERENITY in their entirety by logging on to thecompatriots.com), and while not particularly optimistic about the direction in which the world is heading, he nonetheless finds solace in his belief that it marks the beginning of the end of the Anglo-American Empire. A Taoist/Buddhist/Anarchist/Socialist, he began playing the saxophone 30 years ago at communal music-making/covered dish dinners with friends, under the influence of wine and marijuana, but with persistence has taught himself to play cold-sober. All the songs on the CD were written and recorded in the past two years. His musical gods are John Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Bill Evans. If only he could play like them!

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