

# Mp3 The Special Interest Group - Bright Occasion



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Sweet, sad, silly and serious folk-pop. 10 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Pop, POP: Delicate Details: Meeting Annesley Black was the best thing that happened to Joellen Housego in music school. The two neophyte singer-songwriters immediately recognized each other as kindred spirits and formed The Special Interest Group in 2001. (A point of interest: the band was almost called "Plump Nun"!) They were soon joined in their folk-pop endeavor by some stellar local musicians: multi-instrumentalist Randy Peters (Church of Harvey Christ, Dante's Flaming Uterus), Mike Makhan (Lake of Stew) and jazz bassist Mike Schulein. The Special Interest Group has performed in Montreal and Ottawa with Jordi Rosen, Iz Cox, Elizabeth Powell, Annabelle Chvostek, Clark and Fog. Audiences claim to be alternately cracked up and choked up by the band's live performances, especially when they sing four-part harmony wearing witches' hats. Their first album "Bright Occasion" (2003) has been embraced warmly by listeners from Montreal's musical community and beyond. Since releasing the album, things have changed a lot. Mike Makhan became the manager of a very successful vegan restaurant, Mike Schulein moved back to the Maritimes and Annesley moved to Germany. She was last seen riding her bike through a field of asparagus. Randy and Joellen remain the Special Interest Group's core members. Local luminaries Gord Hashimoto (Hashimoto) and Andrea Revel were recently recruited to play bass and sing. Hooray! Joellen has been writing songs madly for the past year and is preparing to record a second album. Help her choose a name for it: 1. It Doesn't Martyr 2. Fuzzy Someone 3. Brain Brain Go Away! 4. Birds Don't Pee Here are a couple of reviews of Joellen's live performances at the Pharmacie Esperanza and the Casa del Popolo: The real show began when Joellen Housego took to the microphone to play a few songs. Her ukulele gave the music a very unique sound from the beginning of the set. While her soft and resonant voice worked well on its own, it was a perfect anchor to Randy and Andrea's harmonies on many of her tunes.

Joellen's writing is great. Aidan Nulman, wetlabel.com Her voice is a mix of cigarettes and honey. Her lyrics are crisp. With tapping brown leather shoes and an unpretentious presence, she brings a quirky beauty to the stage that is truly original. Her songs are catchy and you'll find yourself humming them in the shower the next morning. Joellen, originally from Vancouver has called Montreal home for many years now and is truly a gem of the local music scene. Don't pass by the opportunity to check her out in the future. Sara Tonin, subsonic.ca

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