

# Mp3 Slim Volume - From The Sound Chasm



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An utterly fresh mash-up of melodic retro-pop and classic rock -- remarkably hooky songs with lush vocals, sublime electric guitar and pithy lyrics -- virtuosity plus lyric depth will satisfy admirers of the Beatles, Marshall Crenshaw, Ron Sexsmith. 13 MP3 Songs POP: Quirky, ROCK: Classic Rock Details: My interview with Slim Volume: Q: You've just released two CDs simultaneously, "Hindsight" and "From the Sound Chasm." Are there differences between the two CDs? SV: "From The Sound Chasm" is really Greg's baby ... all music we've made together in his studio ... he recorded it, mixed it, played guitar all over it, produced it. It's an epic! "Hindsight" is my personal project; it's me producing songs that are musically a little quirkier with lyrics that are a little ... pithier? Neither disk is all light or all dark, and they're both killin,' rhythmically, which is important to me since I'm the drummer. Q: If you had to categorize your music, could you? SV: [thinks] 'Super-catchy, vocal-heavy songs with great lyrics, all riding atop just about any post-Elvis pop style.' The short answer is 'no.' Although it just hit me that on some tunes we're sort of a poor man's Steely Dan, conceptually, in that we have all this retro-pop on the top, oddball rock or funk on the bottom, and virtuoso guitar throughout. But on one tune we sound like the Young Rascals. We need to settle down, I guess. Q: What influences your songwriting? SV: It seems like I've had three major songwriting heroes in succession: Paul McCartney, then Marshall Crenshaw and now I'm obsessed with Ron Sexsmith. Those three are, to me, the absolute best and most prolific writers of "traditional" pop-rock who are still at it. Very hard stuff to do well. Q: Are you worried about being too eclectic, style-wise? SV: Kinda sorta! 'Variety bad!' says the biz. I'm double-screwed because my singing changes all around as well -- I do high and pretty, low and bluesy, loud and shout-y. The only elements common to most of my recordings are my big, layered backing vocals, my peculiar drumming and beat programming. My motto is 'I like a little bit of everything and not much of anything.' In music, I mean. Which is a fatal

attitude in a glutted business where a homogeneous 'sound' is mandatory. But I have to have variety in music and I'm not alone. And I have to make music, money or not. Q: Isn't Greg Bell, your long-time musical cohort, an element common to your songs? SV: Oh, hail yes! One thing you will find in many Slim Volume recordings is Greg's incredible guitar playing. He pushes me in a classic rock direction, and I pull back towards quirkier pop, and the tension created keeps it interesting. Also, Greg records a majority of my stuff at his own Soundchasm Studio. His ears and work ethic are ridiculous. Greg and I have been playing music together since the 70's. We've been best friends since the 3rd grade, before we picked up instruments. Then we gigged all over the universe for years, together and separately. We have a rich back-story and we mine it for all it's worth. Q: Your lyrics often mix light and dark subject matter, with an occasional pop-candy type of song as well... SV: I most often write from a sense of melancholy mixed with hope. I can't seem to go too 'dark' -- all my life I've needed songs to be a reminder of the good in our lives, a hint that there is good all around even when things are at their worst. So I try to write a song that will help other people feel better without being Pollyanna-ish. Although I have written impossibly happy songs with tongue-in-cheek. But I never write 'hey ya'll, just think positive like a happy robot and all your troubles will vaporize.' That doesn't work for most people, obviously, and it hurts more than it helps. If I ever write a song like that, kill me and drive a stake through my head.

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