

Mp3 Oh Susannah - Sing-song



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Sounds like a cross between Annie Lennox and Raffi-lively originals and familiar favorites with beautiful vocals in a variety of musical styles including pop, reggae, soca, beach 'n roll, cajun waltz and folk for children ages 2-8 and parents to enjoy. 10 MP3 Songs KIDS/FAMILY: General Children's Music, KIDS/FAMILY: Children's Pop Details: The popular Washington DC children's performer, Oh Susannah (singer/songwriter Susan McNelis) has released her second album, "Sing-Song." *School Library Journal August 2002 review: Singer-songwriter Susan Berg McNelis, better known as Oh Susannah!, brings new life to old favorites on this lively recording. From the pulsating rhythms of her "Wheels on the Bus" and "If You're Happy and You Know It," to the rock 'n roll style "Rockabye Baby," these are songs that the whole family can enjoy anew. The juxtaposition of old and new is often clever, as in "Oh My Dinos," which borrows its tune from "Clementine" ("In a cavern, in a canyon/ a paleontologist collects/ fossil bones of Stegosaurus/ and Tyrannosaurus Rex.") There are a few completely original tunes as well, including the title track, and "All Fall Down," a lovely ballad... children's librarians will be delighted to find these new versions of storytime favorites. A fun recording for the whole family.* "The Cats Go Marching" from this album has been nominated by Just Plain Folks for Best Children's Song. Move your feet to the beat! In response to appeals from the many fans of her debut recording, "Twinkle and Shine," Oh Susannah has recorded more familiar favorites and new original tunes. In keeping with her desire to expand children's experience, each song introduces a different style of music from soca and reggae to folk and rock. The project was recorded at Gizmo Recording Company in Silver Spring, Maryland and utilized the talents of some of the area's finest musicians including Mookie Siegel on keyboards and accordion, Wes Crawford on drum set and percussion, Steve Sachse on bass and Gantt Kushner on guitars. Susannah says: When the Kennedy Center called me asking for two completely different shows last summer, I said sure. Who

tells the Kennedy Center no? Then I thought, gee, better write some new tunes since I only have enough for one show. But as soon as I started working, the music just flowed right out of my guitar. While I'd been so busy performing, any ideas dancing around in my brain were pretty much ignored. However, in spite of my inattention, they were just waiting for me to hear them. And to record them.

Background: Susan McNelis has a BFA from Illinois Wesleyan University and 15 years professional experience as a singer. She has performed in dozens of venues, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the National Theatre, for thousands of delighted children and parents. The lively variety of her songs and styles and the beauty of her voice has captured the admiration of fans of all ages across the country.

Biography- "Blame it on Barney," says singer/songwriter Susan McNelis, leaning back in her chair and smiling. "Barney is not popular with parents and I found out why when my son was born. Children love to listen to songs again and again. There are developmental reasons why: it assures them certain things can be counted on to be the same and helps them feel safe in a world they don't yet understand. But it can be hard on parents. Recently my recording, "Twinkle and Shine," was listed on a children's resource website under "Kid-Friendly Recordings That Won't Make You Crazy." To me that's the highest compliment." McNelis, who becomes Oh Susannah for her children's performances, has a BFA in Theatre from Illinois Wesleyan University and began her career in musicals. Expanding her range as a lead vocalist for various bands, she has sung many styles from folk and country to jazz, rock and original alternative. After her son was born, she began exploring children's music. "It just became necessary," she laughs. "I felt less and less like driving up to showcases in New York. It was too hard to sing until 3 am, then get up early in the morning with my son. I needed some daytime gigs! Playing music for families was a completely natural progression for me." So McNelis began writing songs for children. "From the moment I picked up a pencil, I knew: this is what I am supposed to be doing. I've never felt that strongly before about the specific direction of my musical career. As if to anchor the feeling in my mind, that pencil exploded in my fingers. I kept the pieces in case I ever had any doubts." The song was "Twinkle and Shine" which would become the title of her first recording. "Then performing live, I began to get a real sense of my audience and what I wanted to do. I'd heard other artists arrange adult songs for children, but I wanted to turn that concept around using familiar songs and phrases to introduce different styles of music. I also wanted to get whole groups and families up and dancing together. So, I use a minor-key rendition of the song "Home on the Range" to dance the tango, a Cajun version of "She'll Be Comin'

"Round the Mountain" for the pong swing and a Dixieland version of "I've Been Workin' on the Railroad" to teach the Charleston. I get my audiences on their feet and children on stage to participate. Singing and dancing are not just for singers and dancers - they're for everyone. It's our birthright as human beings to express ourselves through music and movement. I strive to make my shows a joyful experience for all-children, adults and me, too!" Her latest release was sparked by a call from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC for a new show. "You don't say no to the Kennedy Center. I started writing immediately. My audition was a little intimidating, however. There were many classical musicians in formal dress. Then there was me waltzing with a life-size puppet and singing about dinosaurs. I'm glad they liked it, because performing on stage there was one of the highlights of my career. And I'm lucky to have been invited back again this year." Those songs became her second CD, "Sing-Song." McNelis performs for hundreds of delighted children and parents every week in the Mid-Atlantic region. She's a regular at community events, festivals, galas and dozens of venues.

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