

ELIZA GILKYSON



A Woman's Woman



Eliza is a woman's woman - someone who has shared our struggles and who has the talent and creativity to express the confusion and heartaches of those struggles. She is often kidded about her 'dark' songs - dark in the sense of her willingness to look at the uglier aspects of the soul that some might just as soon keep buried. She takes that dark something and holds it out in the light - and says "Now, let's see what you are about - I'm not scared to look at you - I'm not scared to examine whatever fears put you in the dark in the first place." I particularly remember her singing "Twisted" from Hard Times in Babylon, she sang "I like the way the dark hangs off you like

a cloud around the sun...you're everything I've wanted in a man." Eliza stands in the light - the light of the stage and the light of her spirit. Eliza is a pixie - an angel with the purest of childlike energy in all her awe of life. And even when pixies have accumulated wisdom - they still keep this awe - they keep that twinkle in the eye.

Eliza has been very influenced by her father Terry Gilkyson and his career. He was a famous folk writer but he stayed away from performing and discussing controversial political folk songs (McCarthyism era) on his radio show for the Armed Forces Radio. He experienced commercial success with many of his songs. He wrote 'Bare Necessities' for the Jungle Book movie.

(<http://users.erols.com/drichard/gilkyson/gilkyson2.htm>). The artistic talent goes back farther than her father - her great-grandmother was a songwriter and her grandmother was a painter and a poet. The lyrics to the song "Solitary Singer" were written by her grandmother and the music written by her father. The musical tradition continues down the line with Eliza's son playing drums and her daughter singing.

Eliza has a tough legacy to live up to - to create music that would make her father proud. I watch her and I wish she could see through my eyes. Because what I see is a talent that hasn't received the level of recognition it deserves. Someday Eliza is going to be regarded as a folk legend on the level of Bob Dylan and Joan Baez. We are so lucky to have her live and play in our midst!

My journey to learn more about Eliza and to understand her music took me down some new roads - I ended up searching for information about Druidry, rainbow warriors, myth, Jungian psychology - her father's musical career, her own personal life history in synchronicity with her music - which led to many discoveries of other musicians Eliza has worked with on various projects.

Trying to get a handle on Eliza's creative output is like trying to cook a big holiday dinner - there are so many pots on the stove and in the oven - it's hard to keep track of it all! Here's what I've been able to stir up so far, 7 albums and numerous projects which are all listed below. But the highest honor of all -

beyond hitting #2AA chart with "Calling All Angels" or VH-1 air play or having "Through The Looking Glass" reach #12 on AAA radio charts or winning the John Lennon Song Writing Competition for "Bad Boy/Good Man" - beyond all that - is the honor of being an inspiration to another musician such as Selia Qynn (<http://selia.com/>) who says, "My music..the thing that I stay up latest at night for - the thing I do when I'm so tired I'd rather just go to sleep...the thing that I do because I wouldn't have a life if not for the joy it brings. I realized when I was so discouraged with the extra effort it takes that I tried to quit, that I don't have my music - it has me...I'd have to say the main influence on my music has been Eliza Gilkyson...her songs are like poems...she writes with a mythological flair and spiritual insight that I found an instant affinity with and aspired to do the same thing. That is when I began recording seriously."

Albums & Reviews

1. Pilgrims, 1987, <http://allmusic.com/>
2. Legends of a Rainmaker, 1989,
3. Through the Looking Glass, 1993, <http://elizagilkyson.com/>
? Song of Songs
4. Undressed, 1994, <http://tdrsmusic.com/eliza.html>
5. Redemption Road, 1997, www.silverwave.com/gilkyson.html
6. Misfits, 1999, <http://auschron.com/issues/>
7. Hard Times in Babylon, 2000, www.wvgazette.com

Projects

1. Fathers of Texas, by K.R. Wood, 21 songs that tell the story of the Texas Revolution. Eliza sings "Mother of the Alamo" <http://texanna.home.netcom.com/fathers.htm>
2. More Than A Song , with Iain Matthews <http://iainmatthews.com/>
3. Remember!, original songs by various artists illustrate a story written by Jan Bozart, a CD Plus program for children <http://teamsmart.com/>
4. Angel's Gift, 1996 album by Jenny Bird, Eliza sings on 3 songs, <http://www.jennybird.com/>
5. Hope: Mothers Helping Mothers, CD whose sell benefits a homeless shelter for women and children, <http://www.littlesisters.org/>
6. Homeland, CD by Michael Hoppe, Eliza sings title track, www.michaelhoppe.com/
7. <http://www.artistone.com/>, streaming radio show for Amnesty International
8. A Nod To Bob, Bob Dylan Tribute CD, Eliza sings "Love Minus Zero", (the link I used for this is currently not working)
9. Eolian Minstrel, 1993 CD by Andreas Vollenweider, some lyrics and vocals by Eliza, www.drwnet.com/wings/eolian.htm
10. The Spinning of the World, CD by Jeff Talmadge, Eliza sings background vocals on the title track, www.acousticlive.com/oct.2.cdrr.htm
11. Timeless Quest, 6 cassettes with exercises, talks, and meditation, music by Eliza <http://druidry.org/pcg/audio.html>