

JUNE 11, 2007

People



IDOL'S JORDIN

Music

by Chuck Arnold

QUICK CUTS



JOAN OSBORNE

Breakfast in Bed

Osborne serves up '70s soul

nuggets such as "Kiss and Say Goodbye" along with R&B-flavored originals like "Baby Is a Butterfly." Good comfort music for staying in bed.



Billboard

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THE Billboard 200 JUN 9 2007



Singer graces the big chart for the first time since 2000 with 16-track album containing six new songs and 10 covers.

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS AGO	WEEKS ON CHART	ARTIST	IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL (PRICE)	Title	CERT.	PEAK POSITION
151	157	173	3	EMERSON DRIVE	MOTOWN 54988/WARNER (18.98)	Countrified	151	
152	140	172	10	SOUNDTRACK	WARNER SUNSET ATLANTIC 101537/AG (18.98)	Music And Lyrics	63	
153	129	85	6	CLAY WALKER	COLUMBIA 8903 (18.98)	Fall	15	
154	165	174	54	TOOL	TOOL DISSECTIONAL/VOLCANO 81991/ZOMBA (18.98)	10,000 Days	■ 1	
155	149	150	18	THE SHINS	SUB POP 707* (18.98)	Wincing The Night Away	■ 2	
156	139	137	32	DIDDY	BAD BOY 83864/AG (18.98)	Press Play	● 1	
157	87	26	3	DIPSET	DukeDaGod Presents Dipset: More Than Music, Vol. 2		26	
158	186	149	17	KATHARINE MCPHEE	RCA 87935/RMG (18.98)	Katharine McPhee	2	
159	161	152	60	BLUE OCTOBER	UNIVERSAL MOTOWN 006262/UMRG (9.98)	Foiled	■ 29	

160	NEW	1	JOAN OSBORNE	Breakfast In Bed	160			
			WOMANLY HIPS 19433/TIME LIFE (18.98)					
161	131	155	10	MARQUES HUSTON	TU/UNIVERSAL MOTOWN 007925/UMRG (18.98)	Veteran	5	
162	152	154	12	RELIENT K	GOTEFF 700925/CAPITOL (18.98) *	Five Score And Seven Years Ago	6	
163	145	104	15	GERALD LEVERT	ATLANTIC 100341/AG (18.98)	In My Songs	2	
164	197	—	9	ERIC CHURCH	CAPITOL NASHVILLE 80725 (18.98)	Sinners Like Me	29	
165	141	148	53	THE WRECKERS	MAVERICK/WARNER BROS. (NASHVILLE) 48980/WRN (18.98) *	Stand Still, Look Pretty	● 14	

POP

JOAN OSBORNE

Breakfast in Bed

Producers: various

Time Life

Release Date: May 22

For a powerful singer like Osborne, having "One of Us" be your one career hit must really stink. The 1995 single placed her squarely in the bland, folky Lilith Fair category. She's tried to correct that perception since then, ably covering Aretha Franklin, touring with Phil Lesh and performing in the award-winning documentary "Standing in the Shad-

ows of Motown." A VP at Time Life caught her virtuoso version of "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted" in the film and signed her to record "Breakfast in Bed," a combo of originals and similarly top-tier covers. The beauty of the album, though, is its small scope. Osborne tackles titles like "Ain't No Sunshine" and "Midnight Train to Georgia" with sparse accompaniment, slower tempos and schmaltz-free readings, using the inherent pathos of her voice to maximum, yet subdued effect.—KM



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17.



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~ Nine Inch Nails (Artist)

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18.



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19.



New Moon

~ Elliott Smith (Artist)

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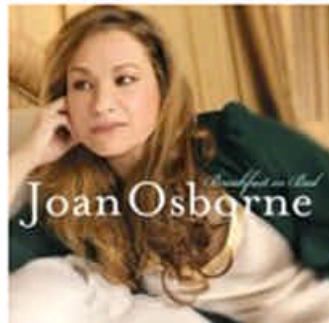
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20.



Breakfast in Bed

~ Joan Osborne (Artist)

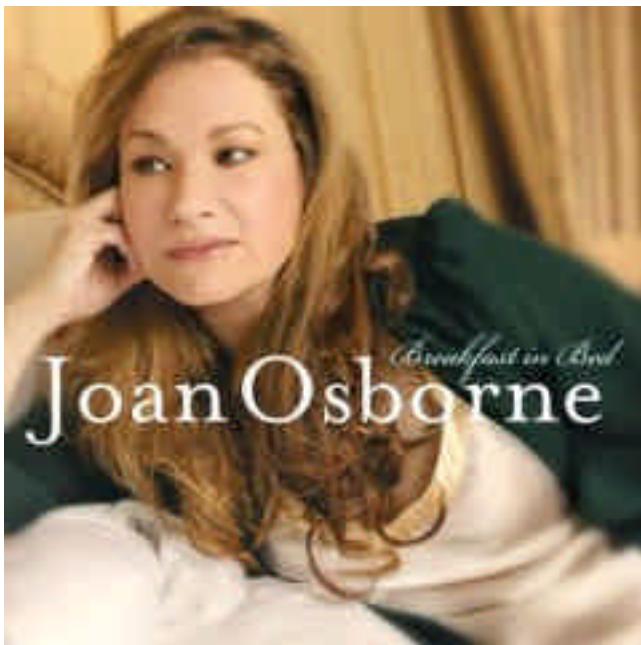
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Editorial Reviews
Amazon.com

On Breakfast in Bed, her first release on Time Life Records (yes, that Time Life) Joan Osborne tackles a crop of hand-picked soul and R&B favorites with equal parts sass and sensitivity. Long an underappreciated artist, Osborne is a performer with the wisdom to exercise vocal restraint for an effect that's more Dusty Springfield than Christina Aguilera. Her fine previous outing interpreting soul standards was aptly titled How Sweet It Is, and witness her contribution to the terrific 2002 film Standing in the Shadows of Motown, where Osborne's astute readings of "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted" and "Heatwave" outshone performers like Ben Harper and Gerald Levert (happily, both songs are included here). The title track and Hall and Oates' "Sara Smile" are both canny choices that play to her strengths in delivering credible blue-eyed soul, and six new Osborne-penned songs fit neatly into the record. If her compositions pale a bit next to the classics she covers (with the sultry and slithery exception of the excellent "Eliminate the Night"), give Osborne credit for bravely placing herself side-by-side with songwriting luminaries like Holland-Dozier-Holland and Bill Withers. Breakfast in Bed makes for a leisurely listen on a sunny Sunday morning, so put up your feet and stay awhile. --Ben Heege



CD Reviews

Upcoming music

Entertainment Staff, entertainment@bostonnow.com

Joan Osborne
Breakfast in Bed
4 stars

Welcome to the soundtrack to the summer of 2007.

As a follow-up to her country-influenced CD, *Pretty Little Stranger*, Joan Osborne has taken a sharp left turn, stylistically speaking, and put out a CD of soul classics and soul-inspired originals called *Breakfast in Bed*. Those familiar with the singer won't be too surprised at the switch; Osborne has covered songs of a similar sound for a while now, and doing it very well. Still, it takes guts - and a heck of a lot of talent - to take a song like "Midnight Train to Georgia" and not make listeners wish they were hearing the Gladys Knight version instead. Osborne pulls it off with style. The original songs she weaves into the mix work just as well, too. This disc will be spinning on many a warm night this summer and for many summers to come.



Boston Globe

May 22, 2007

R&B

Joan Osborne

Breakfast in Bed

(Time Life)

Essential: "Breakfast in Bed"

That "One of Us" -- a waif-like, pop rumination on God's existence -- became a mega hit for Joan Osborne in 1995 was a fluke of the charts. Osborne's honey-whiskey voice and bare-it-all style were more suited to the rock, blues, and folk filling the rest of "Relish," her first major-label studio album. Moreover, since then, Osborne has proved her versatility in handling everything from melodic pop to twangy country. On her new album, Osborne looks toward Motown, with worshipful, full-throated covers of R&B classics plus six original songs, each written with such R&B style that you first wonder if you've heard that tune before. With brassy confidence, Osborne covers "Midnight Train to Georgia" and "I've Got to Use My Imagination" (hits for Gladys Knight and the Pips) with spirit and verve. She nearly turns the schmaltzy chestnut "Break Up to Make Up" into a credibly heartrending ballad. Better is Osborne's fiery performances of "Heat Wave" and "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted." The best track, however, is "Breakfast in Bed," a Dusty Springfield tune that Osborne infuses with longing. As for Osborne's own tunes, see if you can pick them out. (Hint: check out tracks 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 13.) Osborne even seems to have her own equivalent of the Pips. [Stephanie Schorow]

Joan Osborne will perform at the Lowell Summer Music Series in Boarding House Park on June 29.

Billboard.com



Osborne Shifts To Time Life For New Album

Joan Osborne

March 23, 2007, 11:00 AM ET

Michael Paolella, N.Y.

"It's an interesting time to be in the music industry," Joan Osborne tells Billboard. "The old models are falling away. As an artist, you must be on the lookout for different opportunities."

For Osborne, that means signing with Time Life, which releases the singer's new studio album, "Breakfast in Bed," May 22. The set mixes R&B/soul chestnuts with new Osborne-penned originals inspired by classic Philly soul.

The Time Life label will follow Osborne's release with a compilation featuring country artists covering praise and worship songs. Additional artist signings are in the works, says Mike Jason, senior VP of audio and video retail at Time Life.

For a company better known for infomercials hawking themed, multi-artist compilations, signing a frontline artist like Osborne signals a shift in Time Life's business model. "We are taking a classic American brand and expanding it," Jason says. "This allows us to raise the company's profile in the archive and retail areas."

The first stage of Time Life's expansion has occurred over the last couple years. The company has brought major label execs like A&R guru Bas Hartong (Polygram) into its fold, while also releasing high-end boxed sets from Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Louis Armstrong and others.

The second stage, happening now, involves signing known artists directly to Time Life. "Artists that can reinterpret classic material as well as deliver new, original songs is what interests us," Jason says.

"We've all seen the Time Life ads on late-night TV," Osborne says. "This is a great way to reach people who don't necessarily seek out new records."

Indeed, the TV component was a motivating factor in Osborne's signing with Time Life, says her manager David Sonenberg. "When you sell a record the traditional way, you don't know who the buyer is," he says. "With this model, we will. We'll be able to communicate directly with her fans, which is important in today's changed marketplace."



Myrtle Beach Online

.com

"BREAKFAST IN BED," Joan Osborne (Time Life)

"I've really got to use my imagination" Joan Osborne sings at the opening of her new "Breakfast in Bed."

Ironically, she goes on to unload three consecutive uninspiring and superfluous remakes of classic hits -- "I've Got To Use My Imagination" and "Midnight Train to Georgia" -- both originally by Gladys Knight & The Pips, and a cover of Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine" that lacks his pathos.

So much for using her imagination.

In 1995 Osborne looked to be a rising superstar. Her catchy pop hit "One of Us" was the Kentucky native's provocative introduction to America, while the starkly contrasting follow-up single "Right Hand Man" subsequently re-introduced her as gutsy rock belter.

Yet not much came of Osborne's passion and range, and her potential largely went by the wayside as she settled into the role of an also-ran.

The singer hasn't stopped working -- just last year she put out the quasi-country release "Pretty Little Stranger" -- she simply edged out of the general public's consciousness.

It seems like Osborne is barely trying to regain her stature with "Breakfast in Bed," instead opting to play on the emotions of impulsive music buyers by remaking tunes that have become karaoke cliches. To her credit, she also tosses in some original songs, though all of those only exude transient warmth.

However, while "Breakfast in Bed's" creativity is nil and Osborne sticks in a restrained area between the airy infection of "One of Us" and fiery emotion of "Right Hand Man," the new release is nonetheless moderately rewarding.

The arrangements are absorbing, many of them designed as jazz-kissed classic R&B with muted horns and/or soft strings. Also, Osborne's full-bodied voice is a powerful tool, even if she doesn't exploit it much, and, hey, these are still classic songs, no matter how worn they are.

At the end, the singer seems to truly feel the sentiments as she delivers the Manhattans' "Kiss and Say Goodbye," and her two live songs from the 2002 soundtrack for "Standing in the Shadows of Motown" -- "Heat Wave" and "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted" -- are tagged on to remind us of her explosiveness.

Too bad those dynamics didn't come into play elsewhere on "Breakfast in Bed."

Rating: 3



Music News

Album Review: Joan Osborne - 'Breakfast in Bed'
Jun 1, 2007

On Breakfast in Bed, her first release on Time Life Records (yes, that Time Life) Joan Osborne tackles a crop of hand-picked soul and R&B favorites with equal parts sass and sensitivity. Long an underappreciated artist, Osborne is a performer with the wisdom to exercise vocal restraint for an effect that's more Dusty Springfield than Christina Aguilera. Her fine previous outing interpreting soul standards was aptly titled How Sweet It ...more

For a powerful singer like Osborne, having "One of Us" be your one career hit must really stink. The 1995 single placed her squarely in the bland, folky Lilith Fair category.

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The beauty of the album, though, is its small scope. Osborne tackles titles like "Ain't No Sunshine" and "Midnight Train to Georgia" with sparse accompaniment, slower tempos and schmaltz-free readings, using the inherent pathos of her voice to maximum, yet subdued effect.

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From Breakfast in Bed to Becoming a Deadhead: An Interview With Joan Osborne
[30 May 2007]

Osborne talks with PopMatters about performing with the Funk Brothers, filling the shoes of Jerry Garcia, and the sidewalk inspiration for her latest album of R&B and soul songs.
by Colin McGuire

It has been said that prior to the 19th Century, what we now know as "bed and breakfasts" were widely known to be an informal occurrence that catered to two things: social rank and acquaintance. Or, in today's terms, if a dirty, old mechanic wanted to have his or her most important meal of the day delivered to him or her while in bed, he or she was only allowed to stay in the room with another dirty, old mechanic. Perhaps they weren't too worried about things such as romance prior to the 19th Century.

The notion of sitting in bed while having breakfast is also notorious for having inspired Eddie Hinton and Donnie Fritts to write the popular 1960's soulful classic "Breakfast in Bed". The song became popular when first performed by Baby Washington in 1969. It wasn't until later that year, when Dusty Springfield decided to turn the tune into a mega-hit with her oppressively seductive delivery, that it became noticeable. Though the song will go down in infamy along with Springfield's name, she wasn't even the first to cover it.

I'll give you one guess as to which of those bed and breakfast connotations inspired singer-songwriter Joan Osborne's title for her latest effort, Breakfast in Bed, featuring classic R&B and soul covers. Here's a hint: It's not the first one.

"["Breakfast in Bed"] is the model for a classic record," Osborne says. "[Springfield's] vocal technique is very subdued. It's soft and sensual. She isn't shouting, she's whispering, and that's what makes her and the record so great. It just felt right to name the entire album after that song. It's a classic."

Though naming the album may have come naturally, it could be a wonder as to why an artist widely regarded for her recent work within the world of country music would decide to release such a drastically different kind of album. For Osborne, the decision came as easy as walking down the street. Literally.

"I have had the idea to make a silly soul record for a while," she says. "But as I walked down my street every day in Brooklyn, a guy would be selling these mix CDs that he would make on his own. The CDs had a lot of different old R&B and soul groups on them. I would always see how the music would make people smile. There was always a lot of movement lyrically to the music."

After deciding to finally move forward with the project, Osborne went to Time Life and began discussions on how they could make such a record happen. From the beginning, she said, she didn't want to do a full-on covers album. She had some ideas for songs she wanted to do, and some ideas for songs that she could write to put alongside the covers. This led, according to her, to the album being almost an even split of covers and original material. "It's probably something like a 60/40 split of covers to originals, and I loved doing them all. But 'Kiss and Say Goodbye' was a blast. In the studio, I would drop to my knees just like Otis Redding near the end of the song. I had a lot of fun."



While Osborne's dive into R&B may seem surprising to some, it should come as no shock to anybody that has seen *Standing in the Shadows of Motown*, the 2002 film depicting the journey of Motown's legendary house band, the Funk Brothers. Throughout the movie's soundtrack, Osborne is heard at her possible best while performing Martha and the Vandellas' "(Love Is Like A) Heat Wave" and Jimmy Ruffin's "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted", two songs that the legendary group had a hand in producing. "The Funk Brothers are largely forgotten," Osborne says. "And the film was aimed at trying to rectify their situation and educate people on how important they were. It was such an honor to sing with them. They have played behind everybody from the Temptations to Stevie Wonder, and when I got to work with them, they played just like they used to play. Performing with them was just like falling backwards into a giant featherbed."

An additional legendary group Osborne has had the opportunity to work with, though they may not be rooted in R&B, is the Grateful Dead. In fact, in 2003, Osborne became a full member of the Dead, a band consisting of remaining living members of the Grateful Dead along with the Allman Brothers Band's Jimmy Herring and Ratdog's Jeff Chimenti. During her time with the Dead, Osborne was asked to tackle another intimidating musical task: to take the place of the late Jerry Garcia. And while the job may have been daunting, it was something Osborne says she won't soon forget.

"I certainly couldn't take his place," Osborne says concerning her duties taking over for Garcia. "Their fans took the whole thing in spirit and really helped make it happen. I don't think anyone could really fill his shoes but all of the fans seemed very gracious. They were wonderful to sing for."

And though singing for the Dead may have been an accomplishment in itself, Osborne has recently taken on what may be the biggest mission of her life. Recently, she became the proud mother of a baby girl. And while the singer-songwriter may have been thrilled to work with the plethora of artists she has been able to work with, there isn't an individual in this world that she would rather sing for than her daughter. "I love my daughter," she says. "I love singing lullabies for her. I don't do quite as much as I used to. I'm not really about to do a full-on tour anymore, but I still try to get out as much as I can."

So while one can't expect a full-fledged tour from Osborne, she does plan to occasionally perform in support of Breakfast in Bed. And though she may not be able to leave home for months at a time anymore, Osborne is still looking forward to performing many of the songs off of her latest release, along with what she likes to call "audience favorites". "I am looking forward to performing," she says. "Usually we make our setlists right before we hit the stage so I can't guarantee anything, but I can say that we will be doing some stuff off of Relish along with other songs we know the crowd will want to hear, like 'St. Teresa'. Not thinking about what's going to be on the set for the night really keeps it alive. We don't want to feel like we are on a treadmill every night. We try to always add in what we think we know the audience will want to hear, but each night is going to be different."

Regardless of the fan favorites she promises to dust off during her upcoming wave of shows, Osborne says she is still looking forward to playing a lot of the songs she recorded for Breakfast in Bed—one of them, in particular, being the old Springfield hit that shares the album's title. And while she is currently writing material for a follow-up album that may return her to the country twang she has become synonymous with, Osborne insists that she isn't quite sure as to how the finished product may come out.

"I am listening to a lot of blues right now," she says, stirring up the possibility of exploring yet another genre for her next record. "And I am really excited about the things I am trying to write."

Then, after pausing for a minute to think about which direction she would truly like to go, she comes back by making a precarious suggestion of her own. One of which can only be thought to be half of a joke.

"Who knows," Osborne says lightly. "Maybe I'll make a record full of lullabies for my daughter."



CD Reviews

Entertainment Staff, entertainment@bostonnow.com

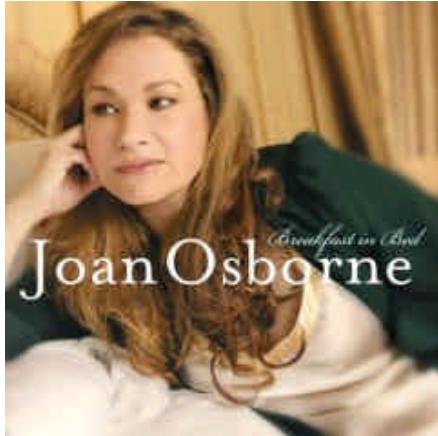
Joan Osborne

Breakfast in Bed

4 stars

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BREAKFAST IN BED - JOAN OSBORNE

Breakfast in Bed For a powerful singer like Osborne, having "One of Us" be your one career hit must really stink. The 1995 single placed her squarely in the bland, folky Lilith Fair category. She's tried to correct that perception since then, ably covering Aretha Franklin, touring with Phil Lesh and performing in the award-winning documentary "Standing in the Shadows of Motown." A VP at Time Life caught her virtuoso version of "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted" in the film and signed her to record "Breakfast in Bed," a combo of originals and similarly top-tier covers. The beauty of the album, though, is its small scope. Osborne tackles titles like "Ain't No Sunshine" and "Midnight Train to Georgia" with sparse accompaniment, slower tempos and schmaltz-free readings, using the inherent pathos of her voice to maximum yet subdued effect.



Where's the beat? Listless R&B covers from Joan Osborne on new CD

Steven Wine

The Associated Press

May 25, 2007 - 10:22AM

Breakfast in Bed is an apt title for Joan Osborne's latest release, because she sounds barely awake. The album is supposedly an homage to the soul and R&B of the late '60s and '70s, but the irresistible groove common to such songs is absent.

Instead, there's often barely a pulse. "Sara Smile," "Ain't No Sunshine," "Midnight Train to Georgia" — Osborne delivers them all politely at midtempo over the sort of faithful, soulless arrangements provided by a karaoke machine.

A singer capable of generating considerable heat, Osborne sounds more engaged and energetic on the songs she wrote, and one of them — "I Know What's Goin' On" — even musters a dance beat. The best covers are the closing "Heat Wave" and "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted," both renditions from her appearance in the documentary "Standing in the Shadows of Motown."

But they seem tacked on, because they are, and they're too late to salvage the set. After Breakfast in Bed, listeners may need a nap.

CHECK THIS OUT: "I Know What's Goin' On." Some 45 minutes into the album, Osborne rewards her audience's persistence by humming, and she's one of the great hummers.



Joan Osborne has a new album out on Time Life Records. Breakfast in Bed shows her covering classics like "Midnight Train to Georgia" and "Ain't No Sunshine." On the one hand, an album of covers doesn't sound all that scintillating. On the other hand, Joan Osborne is an outstanding singer. She's a powerhouse singer who understands the virtues of restraint.



Joan Osborne
Breakfast in Bed
Time Life
2007
C

joan Osborne's Breakfast in Bed feels a bit like an "American Idol" display, without any negative connotations. The point seems to be to give Osborne a chance to show just how good her voice is, most immediately through covers of soul songs, without letting anything else get in the way. For the most part, it's an idea that works. With her performances from Standing in the Shadows of Motown (included here as bonus tracks), Osborne showed that she has a surprisingly rich voice and wonderful control. Over the course of the album, however, the arrangements can't consistently match her quality, revealing how even a great voice can't save a track.

The album's early covers—"I've Got to Use My Imagination," "Ain't No Sunshine," and "Midnight Train to Georgia"—state her case most effectively. On "Ain't No Sunshine" (which should get an annual appearance on "Idol"), Osborne develops phrasing similar to the original Bill Withers version, but keeps her own vocal mark on it with her alto's open tone and emotional fortitude. For "Midnight Train," she provides a more understated delivery than we'd expect; not only does this change the mood of the song, but it opens up a more ambiguous meaning to the song (if not the lyric) than we usually hear. Why should a vocalist render "I'd rather live in his world than live without him in mine" in the triumphant manner we so often get? Osborne's level approach keeps the song matter-of-fact without utterly disavowing either the desperation or hope of the piece.

The vocals are nearly infallible throughout the disc, but it doesn't add up to a fully successful album. Osborne's songwriting compares favorably with her covers—songs like "Baby Is a Butterfly" and "Heart of Stone" fit in perfectly—but the arrangements, never unusual, wear out their welcome. For what's essentially a soul disc, there's too little use of rhythm and too many strings. Where she could have been influenced by something like "Walk on By," Osborne seems to have only watered-down some Motown roots to fit into a lounge (Simon would reference hotel music when discussing the heavy-handed leisure-schmaltz of "Alone With You"). It's an extremely safe approach, and on a commercial front it swings her audience away from R&B fans and toward older general fans in need of easy comfort.

Even Osborne falters once, on the dull "Natural High." The dreamy arrangement doesn't help, but Osborne would have been wise to discard it before the album's release because her voice oddly thins out in the higher ranges. On a singing competition, earlier performances might have garnered her enough votes to keep going, but there's no reason to keep this performance when multiple takes or trashcans are available. This song's placement after "Breakfast in Bed" and "Cream Dream" (whose titles aptly suggest the somnambulistic arrangements) nearly grinds the album to a halt. "Heart of Stone" barely provides enough energy to recover. These arrangements and the consistent use of mid-tempo turn potentially good songs into forgettable recordings.

The argument could be made that a great singer should be able to overcome her backing band's faults, but that's only true to a point. To some extent we even see it here; Osborne's vocals are capable of carrying mediocre performances to better levels. Unfortunately, talent and technical skill aren't the only parts of a recording, and Breakfast in Bed reminds us the other parts can not only highlight a great vocal, they can also drag one down.

The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

Joan Osborne is 'one of us'
By Christopher Varmus for The Brooklyn Paper



She might have lost the nose ring and moved off of the pop charts and into Cobble Hill, but singer-songwriter Joan Osborne, who will be performing on June 16 at the Prospect Park Bandshell as part of Celebrate Brooklyn, is still singing. GO Brooklyn's Chris Varmus caught up with Osborne, who dished on Celebrate Brooklyn, being a mom and life after "One of Us," the God-themed tune that put her on the charts (and in the Religious Right's crosshairs). Since that 1995 album went triple-platinum, she's put out only two more discs of original material (the 2000 follow-up "Righteous Love" and "Pretty Little Stranger," which came out last year), plus two CDs of R&B covers.

GO Brooklyn: What was your introduction to New York, and how did your music career get started?

Joan Osborne: I first came to New York to go to film school and fell into the roots blues music scene that was happening in the late '80s and early '90s. Growing up in Kentucky, I wasn't exposed to a lot of the music that would end up having the biggest influence on me — people like Etta James, Helen Wolfe and Otis Redding. I sang at my first open mic kind of by accident after a friend dared me. After that, I was hooked. I started performing more and put a band together; we'd do four one-hour sets at all kinds of places. The first recordings I did were live. We made a CD to sell at shows. That's how we got from place to place; it was gas money or maybe a meal.

GO: You're best known for your hit song "One of Us." How did that early exposure change the course of your career?

JO: That song was actually written by Eric Bazillion as something he wanted to do himself, and he brought a sort of dirge-like, Nick Cave-ish version of it into the studio where we were making "Relish" [Osborne's first album]. Rick Chertoff, the producer, had the idea to do it as a pop song, and so I did this really innocent version, like a question asked by a child. The success of that song has been kind of a double-edged sword,

obviously, ultimately positive because it's enabled people to get to know me, but there's been a bit of pressure to recreate that level of success. I'm not in the pop mainstream anymore and that's freed me up to do more of what I like. The new album is very much a Philly Soul/early '70s sound. There are personal songs as well as covers, and it's all integrated seamlessly.

GO: Was it a challenge to fit your new songs into that older style?

JO: It's actually kind of liberating. You know, it's a satisfyingly simple problem to solve. Songwriting is about taking the personal and making it universal, so that doesn't change, even over time.

Naomi Village: In the heart of the Poconos

GO: How has being a mother changed your perspective in terms of songwriting?

JO: She's 2 1/2 — they grow up fast! But yes, I've written songs for her and about her. Motherhood is a profound emotional experience. You can't avoid your feelings anymore after going through something like it. It's definitely made me look at my own experiences more honestly, whether it was romantic entanglements or whatever else. Songwriting is a process of remembering details and truths.

GO: Will your "Celebrate Brooklyn" performance be your first at Prospect Park?

JO: I actually can't remember if I've ever performed in Prospect Park; if I did it was a long time ago. I used to live in Park Slope, then moved away for some years, and now I'm [in] Cobble Hill. I'm a Bandshell regular, though. I go with my friends all the time. I can't wait to perform there — I know it's going to be a ton of fun.

Joan Osborne and the Jazz Passengers will perform at "Celebrate Brooklyn" on June 16 at 7:30 pm at the Prospect Park Bandshell (enter at Ninth Street and Prospect Park West). Free. For information, visit www.celebratebrooklyn....

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DAILY NEWS

Music

Music Review
Osborne offers heart & soul

Friday, May 18th 2007, 4:00 AM

Joan Osborne's new disc shines a worthy new light on the structure of classic songs.

Soul stars like to sing big. But since they hit the notes so hard, or cherish them so sweetly, listeners tend to think of their performance more often than the craft behind the song.

Joan Osborne seems determined to reverse that order. On her embraceable new disk "Breakfast in Bed," she covers a wide range of classic soul hits, from Gladys Knight's "Midnight Train to Georgia" to The Spinners' "Break Up to Make Up." But she treats them with the understatement and intimacy of a '70s singer-songwriter rather than the bluster or cry of soul greats.

It's not the first time Osborne has done so. In 2002, she followed a similar strategy for her excellent CD "How Sweet It Is." Because the new one appears on the nostalgia-driven Time-Life label, many may accuse her of boomer-baiting. But Osborne is shining a worthy new light on the structure of classic songs.

Her "I've Got to Use My Imagination" may lack Knight's girth, but it has its own sense of rumination. Her take on "Kiss and Say Goodbye" can't match the Manhattans' grandeur, but it has a closeup poignance. Osborne also wrote some worthy neo-soul songs for the disk, like the pretty "Baby Is a Butterfly." In each of these songs, Osborne sings soul simply, letting lyrics, tunes - and listeners' memories - all upstage her.

Jim Farber

LIVE JOURNAL™

Joan Osborne, Breakfast in Bed

Joan Osborne's new CD, "Breakfast in Bed", intends to be a return to 70s soul. It's not bad, it's just not great.

Osborne wrote a few new songs for the CD meant to blend in with the covers she performs of such standards as "Midnight Train to Georgia" and other familiar oldies, Hall and Oates' "Sara Smile" and The Manhattans' "Kiss and Say Goodbye". That last is well worth the revisit. I do enjoy her take on "Sara" too.

I hate to say anything bad about the CD because I enjoy Joan so much, but this doesn't seem like something I'm likely to listen to as much as the stellar "Early Recordings", long a favorite CD.

I found "Breakfast in Bed" already on sale at EM downtown. It seems like only yesterday I got her other recent CD, "Pretty Little Stranger", which is Joan in high country mode. She's sure prolific of late. I'll have to hope that "Breakfast in Bed" and "Pretty Little Stranger" are the soul and country parts of a trilogy that will rock soon.

Article published Sunday, June 3, 2007

Sounds: Osborne successfully covers soul and R&B

BREAKFAST IN BED Joan Osborne (Time Life)

Joan Osborne grabbed the music world's attention in the mid-'90s with her single "(What If God Was) One of Us," and since then she has been a bit of a musical gadfly, making a country record, working on a children's CD, and now releasing a disc of R&B/soul covers and originals that pay tribute to the genre.

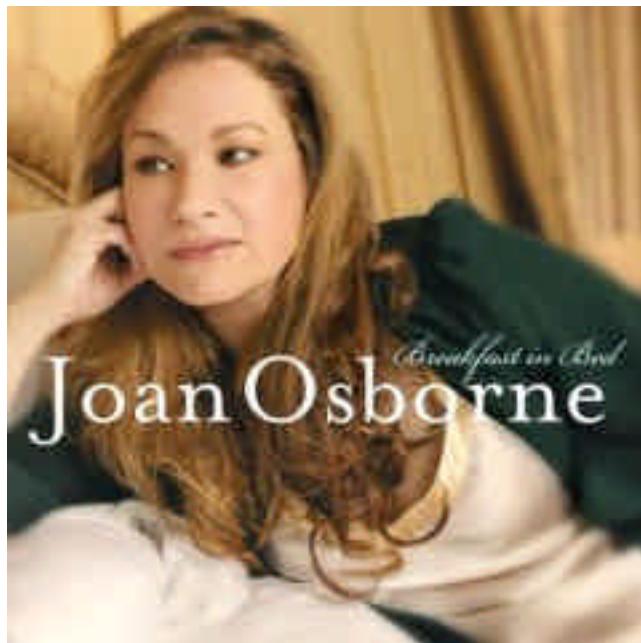
Though consistently enjoyable, as so often is the case with covers, some are distinctly more successful than others. While her version of "Sara Smile" isn't a patch on the original, her rather low-key vocals and the empathetic arrangement work well on a soulful and understated reading of "Midnight Train To Georgia," and a fine version of "Ain't No Sunshine" with a smooth and cool arrangement.

The originals mesh well with the covers - a good sign that Osborne is in synch with the sound to which she is paying homage. Highlights are the soulful "Eliminate The Night" and orchestrated "I Know What's Goin' On."

The disc ends with a couple of cuts from the movie Standing In The Shadows of Motown - a fitting conclusion to a disc that is respectful of the past while at the same time giving it a modern sheen.

- RICHARD PATON

The Music Box



Joan Osborne
Breakfast in Bed

(Time Life)
Written by Douglas Heselgrave
Tue June 12, 2007, 06:30 AM CDT

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Since storming out of the gate with a #1 hit (*One of Us*) more than 10 years ago, Joan Osborne has been struggling to regain her momentum. While she is a skilled artist and a gifted interpreter of other writers' songs, it, nonetheless, is tempting to wonder whether she curses her early success. After all, the pressure implied by mass exposure and expectation has ruined the careers of performers who are greater than she. Consequently, Osborne deserves respect not only for her perseverance, but also for continuing to toil away in an effort to find her own place on the map of popular music. Having spent the better part of the last decade switching styles and searching for direction, her new album *Breakfast in Bed* goes a long way toward establishing a suitable venue for her considerable talent.

After losing her major label recording contract when subsequent releases failed to live up to the sales potential of *Relish*, her debut, Osborne spent several years exploring different musical forms by working with top artists in genres as diverse as Qawaali, R&B, and country. She obviously learned a lot from her exposure to these performers, which I was lucky to discover while teaching in Dharamsala, India in 1998. That year Osborne gave a concert for Tibetan Refugees in the city that serves as the Dalai Lama's residence-in-exile. Fresh from studying with Pakistani Qawaali master Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Osborne sang her hits and other standards in a powerful, swooping voice that recalled the Sufi master's hypnotic vocal style. At that moment, I realized that Osborne was an interpretive force to be reckoned with, and her magnificent performance before the assembled crowd of Tibetan monks and nuns stands as a highlight among the hundreds of concerts that I have attended in the last 30 years. Unfortunately, the planned release of this show on CD and DVD was never realized.

Since then, Osborne has worked, most notably, on *Standing in the Shadows of Motown*, though she also has logged time on high-profile tours with The Dead and Phil Lesh & Friends. Her two performances from the Motown film (*Heatwave* and *What Becomes of the Broken Hearted*) are collected as bonus tracks on *Breakfast in Bed*, and they serve to put her new recording into context. They also confirm her mastery of the R&B form, which, for the record, she also demonstrated when she toured with The Dead in 2003. Her energy and power helped to resurrect The Dead's stage show — which had become somewhat tired and routine — and the versions of *China Doll*, *Hard to Handle*, and *Sugaree* that she belted during the group's run at Red Rocks were revelatory. She brought The Dead's tired veterans outside themselves, which was made evident by her ability to get Phil Lesh to smile as she bumped and grinded her way into each performer's sacrosanct corner, upsetting their well-worn routines and protected spaces. In short, she acted as a perfect foil for them. However, regardless of how enjoyable these appearances were (and may still be) for her, she obviously realized that this, in itself, wasn't enough to resurrect her career, let alone to redefine it in a way that had some meaning.

Following her tour with The Dead in 2003, Osborne released *How Sweet It Is*, a collection of R&B-flavored cuts that confirmed the power of her voice but did little either to increase the breadth of her artistry or to advance her career. She followed this release with a country album *Pretty Little Stranger*, which was issued last year. As a nod to the Deadheads who have become an increasingly important part of her new audience, the collection contained a lovely, though unremarkable, version of the Grateful Dead's *Brokedown Palace*. Otherwise, the outing was overproduced, and it totally lacked songs and performances that were interesting.

Given the up and down nature of her recent career arc, there is a lot riding on *Breakfast in Bed*, Osborne's newest release. Thankfully, it is at least a step in the right direction, and it does manage to rectify some of her recent missteps. Returning to the R&B orientation that she previously had embraced on both *Standing in the Shadows of Motown* and *How Sweet It Is*, Osborne has put together a classic-sounding album. In fact, on several of *Breakfast in Bed*'s tracks, she employed some of the great original musicians from the Muscle Shoals, Stax, and Motown eras to perform with her. Boasting a mixture of originals and classics, the outing makes it easy to hear where Osborne's shortcomings lie. She is in possession of an extremely supple and powerful voice — one that could transform her from a good singer into a powerful performer, if only she could find material that was well suited to her talent. This is most evident when listening to the cover songs on *Breakfast in Bed*.

When Osborne takes on old chestnuts like Bill Withers' *Ain't No Sunshine* and Hall and Oates' *Sara Smile*, both of which have been heard and played a million times before, she manages to put not just heart and soul but also some muscle and erotic oomph into them, creating a new listening experience out of tired, old standards. In the same way that Aretha Franklin was able to take any song — even tunes as rampantly performed as *Bridge over Troubled Water* — and turn the most wan and insipid lyrics into vocal tours de force, Osborne has learned how to get inside a lyric in order to bring the soul of a composition into her interpretation of it. With *Breakfast in Bed*, Osborne has learned to control and direct her voice. She has no hesitation in going down on a lyric and coaxing every bit of authentic emotion out of it. She has learned to do this without over-emoting, and throughout the endeavor, she delivers every lyric not only with commitment but also with an increasingly personal voice. Indeed, her version of Gladys Knight and the Pips' *Midnight Train to Georgia* is, all by itself, worth the price of the disc.

The problems with *Breakfast in Bed* lie completely in the inadequacy of the original compositions. In an attempt to emulate the lyrical sensibilities of '60s-imbued R&B, without acknowledging that the world has changed since the heyday of Stax and Motown, Osborne unwittingly has written songs that are filled with clichéd lyrics, truisms, and pat phrases. Like many other classic forms of music — such as the blues and country — R&B's musical aesthetics are beautiful and timeless, but this old-school lyrical approach and attitude have become dated. As a result, a lot of Osborne's newly penned tunes fall into the trap of sounding awkward and forced. Even though they are beautifully crafted and arranged with wonderful vocal and musical performances, the songs often go nowhere, and they do not hold the interest of the listener. Ironically, given the strained lyrical structures, they often sound as if they are lacking in soul and emotion.

These criticisms aside, *Breakfast in Bed* is an enjoyable disc from an artist who just now is starting to hit her stride. Once she is in possession of a better collection of original songs — or, for that matter, a sympathetic writing partner — Osborne will be in a position to demonstrate the subtlety and maturity of her vocal development. It's only then that she will succeed in surpassing her groundbreaking early work and show the world the music she is capable of creating and performing. starstarstar



Joan Osborne: from Breakfast in Bed to joining the Dead

By COLIN McGUIRE

It has been said that before the 19th century, what we now know as "bed and breakfasts" were widely known to be an informal occurrence that catered to two things: social rank and acquaintance. Or, in today's terms, if a dirty, old mechanic wanted to have his or her most important meal of the day delivered to him or her while in bed, he or she was only allowed to stay in the room with another dirty, old mechanic. Perhaps they weren't too worried about things such as romance prior to the 19th century.

The notion of sitting in bed while having breakfast is also notorious for having inspired Eddie Hinton and Donnie Fritts to write the popular 60s soulful classic Breakfast in Bed. The song became popular when first performed by Baby Washington in 1969. Later that year, when Dusty Springfield turned the tune into a mega-hit with her seductive delivery.

Guess which of those bed-and-breakfast connotations inspired singer-songwriter Joan Osborne's title for her latest effort, "Breakfast in Bed, featuring classic R&B and soul covers? Here's a hint: It's not the first one.

"(Breakfast in Bed) is the model for a classic record, Osborne says. "(Springfield's) vocal technique is very subdued. It's soft and sensual. She isn't shouting, she's whispering, and that's what makes her and the record so great. It just felt right to name the entire album after that song. It's a classic."

Though naming the album may have come naturally, it could be a wonder as to why an artist widely regarded for her recent work within the world of country music (with her 2006 release, *Pretty Little Stranger*) would decide to release such a drastically different kind of album. For Osborne, the decision came as easy as walking down the street. Literally.

"I have had the idea to make a silly soul record for a while," she says. "But as I walked down my street every day in Brooklyn, a guy would be selling these mix CDs that he would make on his own. The CDs had a lot of different old R&B and soul groups on them. I would always see how the music would make people smile. There was always a lot of movement lyrically to the music."

After deciding to finally move forward with the project, Osborne went to Time Life and began discussions on how they could make such a record happen. From the beginning, she said, she didn't want to do a full-on covers album. She had some ideas for songs she wanted to do, and some ideas for songs that she could write to put alongside the covers. This led, according to her, to the album being almost an even split of covers and original material.

"It's probably something like a 60/40 split of covers to originals, and I loved doing them all. But Kiss and Say Goodbye was a blast. In the studio, I would drop to my knees just like Otis Redding near the end of the song. I had a lot of fun."

While Osborne's dive into R&B may seem surprising to some, it should come as no shock to anybody that has seen "Standing in the Shadows of Motown," the 2002 film depicting the journey of Motown's legendary house band, the Funk Brothers. Throughout the movie's soundtrack, Osborne is heard at her possible best while performing Martha and the Vandellas' (Love Is Like A) Heat Wave and Jimmy Ruffin's What Becomes of the Brokenhearted, two songs that the legendary group had a hand in producing.

"The Funk Brothers are largely forgotten," Osborne says. "And the film was aimed at trying to rectify their situation and educate people on how important they were. It was such an honor to sing with them. They have played behind everybody from the Temptations to Stevie Wonder, and when I got to work with them, they played just like they used to play. Performing with them was just like falling backwards into a giant featherbed."

An additional legendary group Osborne has had the opportunity to work with, though they may not be rooted in R&B, is the Grateful Dead. In fact, in 2003, Osborne became a full member of the Dead, a band consisting of remaining living members of the Grateful Dead along with Jimmy Herring (formerly with the Allman Brothers Band) and Ratdog's Jeff Chimenti.

During her time with the Dead, Osborne was asked to tackle another intimidating musical task: to take the vocal place of the late Jerry Garcia. And while the job may have been daunting, it was something Osborne says she won't soon forget.

"I certainly couldn't take his place," Osborne says concerning her duties taking over for Garcia. "Their fans took the whole thing in spirit and really helped make it happen. I don't think anyone could really fill his shoes but all of the fans seemed very gracious. They were wonderful to sing for."

And though singing for the Dead may have been an accomplishment in itself, Osborne has recently taken on what may be the biggest mission of her life. Recently, she became the proud mother of a baby girl. And while the singer-songwriter may have been thrilled to work with the plethora of artists she has been able to work with, there isn't an individual in this world that she would rather sing for than her daughter.

"I love my daughter," she says. "I love singing lullabies for her. I don't do quite as much as I used to. I'm not really about to do a full-on tour anymore, but I still try to get out as much as I can."

So while one can't expect a full-fledged tour from Osborne, she does plan to occasionally perform in support of "Breakfast in Bed." And though she may not be able to leave home for months at a time anymore, Osborne is still looking forward to performing many of the songs off of her latest release, along with what she likes to call "audience favourites."

"I am looking forward to performing," she says. "Usually we make our set lists right before we hit the stage so I can't guarantee anything, but I can say that we will be doing some stuff off of 'Relish' along with other songs we know the crowd will want to hear, like St. Teresa. Not thinking about what's going to be on the set for the night really keeps it alive. We don't want to feel like we are on a treadmill every night. We try to always add in what we think we know the audience will want to hear, but each night is going to be different."

Regardless of the fan favourites she promises to dust off during her upcoming wave of shows, Osborne says she is still looking forward to playing a lot of the songs she recorded for Breakfast in Bed - one of them, in particular, being the old Springfield hit that shares the album's title. And while she is currently writing material for a follow-up album that may return her to country twang, Osborne insists that she isn't quite sure as to how the finished product may come out.

"I am listening to a lot of blues right now," she says, stirring up the possibility of exploring yet another genre for her next record. "And I am really excited about the things I am trying to write."

Then, after pausing for a minute to think about which direction she would truly like to go, she comes back by making a precarious suggestion of her own. One of which can only be thought to be half of a joke.

"Who knows," Osborne says lightly. "Maybe I'll make a record full of lullabies for my daughter."

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FRIDAY, JUNE 29, 2007

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Joan Osborne is exploring new forms of music.
Joan Osborne mixes her own compositions into the new disc.

INTERVIEW

Osborne Follows Her Musical Muse

By Jeff Miers

Updated: 06/28/07 8:12 AM

Joan Osborne's career to date reveals a proclivity toward sampling various and varied flavors, in an effort to come up with a recipe all her own. So far, it's working. Among the peer group that is her musical generation, Osborne stands out as an artist on a musical quest, rather than a fame-hungry, niche-friendly pop star.

"It's not some preconceived plan, I swear," laughs Osborne, speaking to The News from her home in Brooklyn earlier this week, just prior to beginning a road trip that brings her to the Thursday at the Square stage this evening. "I really am just following my muse, and sort of discovering what that muse is as I go along. Learning about music more and more all the time means that I stay hungry and eager to explore different aspects of it."

Those "different aspects" have so far included pop, rock, blues, Motown, country and, with her latest effort, the soulstirring "Breakfast in Bed," the shimmering R&B of the late '60s and early '70s. Along the way, she's also snuck in some work-study — beginning an apprenticeship with the great Pakistani Quali vocalist Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, a tenure that was cut short only when the legendary singer passed away suddenly; or bringing down the house with legendary Motown session band the Funk Brothers in the award-winning film "Standing in the Shadows of Motown."

Though Osborne's breakthrough came in the mid-'90s, on the wings of the mega-hit "One of Us," from her platinum album "Relish," the singer had no intention of staying the pop course in the interest of career security.

"I'm just not that kind of musician," she says. "That particular song represents one part of what I do, and it's an important part. There's so much more I'm interested in, though. When I met the Funk Brothers to do that concert for the ("Standing in the Shadows of Motown") film, I walked into the room, and they had no idea who I was. They thought I was the makeup girl! But by the end of the whole thing, they treated me like I had proven I could do it, you know? And I guess that gave me confidence to go back to doing what I was doing before I became a known name, which was essentially singing R&B and soul in clubs."

The result of this realization is "Breakfast in Bed," for which Osborne cherry-picked a bunch of her favorite tunes from primarily '70s soul and R&B artists, and composed a handful of her own in their image. The record may be her crowning achievement to date.

"I didn't know this music firsthand, but came to it later, after I'd already started singing," she says, referring to tunes from groups like the Stylistics, Delfonics, and Gladys Knight and the Pips, whose "Midnight Train to Georgia" is one of many hair-raising moments on the album. "Maybe that made me appreciate it more; I don't know."

Remarkably, considering the first-rate tunes Osborne picked for the album, her own compositions fit seamlessly into the fabric of the record, alongside classics associated with the likes of Bill Withers, ("Ain't No Sunshine") Hall & Oates, ("Sara Smile") Jimmy Ruffin, ("What Becomes of the Brokenhearted") and Dusty Springfield ("Breakfast in Bed").

"Actually, trying to work within the parameters of those great songs ended up being very liberating," Osborne says. "Once I knew what it was I wanted to do, once I'd moved beyond that whole blank slate idea of 'Gee, I can go anywhere at all with the writing,' it just sort of flowed out very naturally. I was then able to bring some

personal, experience-based lyrics to the songs, and I think that feeling of the singer having experienced the things they're singing about is part of what makes someone like Gladys Knight or Dusty Springfield so great."

In fact, Springfield's seminal white-soul masterpiece "Dusty in Memphis" is in many ways a progenitor of Osborne's "Breakfast" — like the late British soul singer, Osborne's singing is soulful but restrained, graceful and sophisticated. This trait identifies her with an earlier strain of R&B, one in opposition to the current one, which tends to favor technically adventurous singing plagued by overemoting.

"That's one way to do it, and sure, it works," says Osborne in reference to singers in the Beyonce and Mariah Carey mode. "But for me, the real tension and soulfulness of the music comes out when you approach the songs a bit more subtly, with a bit more attention to nuance."

"The thing about this kind of music that I think really moves people, and sticks with them afterwards, is the sensuality and beauty of it. That's what needs to come through when you sing it."

*** Concert Preview

Thursday at the Square: Joan Osborne with guest Will Hoge

When: 5 tonight

Where: Lafayette Square, downtown Buffalo

Tickets: Admission is free

Info: www.BuffaloPlace.com



Joan Osborne - Breakfast In Bed Review
A few more originals to snack on would be nice.
by Chad Grischow

July 9, 2007 - A decent cover album happens when the artist puts their own spin on classic tunes and makes them their own. It becomes downright impressive when the same album contains original songs that blend in flawlessly with the cover songs; such is the case with Joan Osborne's latest album of classic soul covers and originals.

Osborne has always had a rich jazzy tone to her vocals, and puts it to good use throughout the album. The jazzy blues vibe that the backing band gives the '60s and '70s soul covers allows Osborne's sultry voice to put her own fingerprint on them. Her last album was a country-tinged effort, and it may sound like a disaster for an artist to jump from country to soul in just one album, but it goes to show just how talented Osborne really is. While many artists would be too careful with classics like "Ain't No Sunshine", delivering bland retreads, Osborne bravely turns in a sexy performance that makes the lonesome song sound fresh again.

Osborne gracefully finds the soul in a couple of '80s songs with Hall & Oates' "Sara Smile" and UB40's "Breakfast In Bed", carefully melding them into old school soul tunes. As startlingly beautiful as covers like her restrained take on "Natural High", Osborne's real talent shines in the six originals on the album. Sultry horn-infused "Eliminate The Night", about the other side of infidelity, stands up nicely against soulful classic "Break Up To Make Up". The mellow chill of "Baby Is A Butterfly" and harmonica laced "Cream Dream" (think Stevie Wonder) have as much soul and raw emotion as any of the classics. Listeners too young or sonically inexperienced to know which songs are covers and which are originals would find it difficult to separate the classics from Osborne's originals; high praise, considering the strength of material she selected.

If there is one complaint of Breakfast In Bed, the blending of originals and classics goes a bit too far; as the album ends up sounding a bit monotonous from start to finish, never really changing up the mellow vibe. Osborne has a fantastic voice, so it is a bit of a shame to hear her spending most of her time here updating classic songs; but at least her passion for the material turns it into more than a typically unadventurous cover album.

Definitely Download:

1. "Ain't No Sunshine"
 2. "Cream Dream"
 3. "Baby Is A Butterfly"
 4. "Eliminate The Night"
- IGN's Ratings for Breakfast In Bed



Monday, July 16, 2007

Earth, Wind & Fire throws a positivity party at Pacific Review: The funk-soul brothers once again prove how to do live nostalgia right.

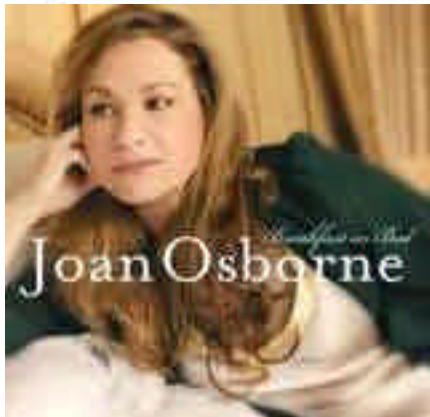
Joan Osborne was a fine choice for opening act: Though she made her name with the ingratiating what-if hit "One of Us," through recent stints with the Grateful Dead and Motown's Funk Brothers she has found her milieu as a covers chanteuse. Her appealingly husky voice, laced with Janis-like rasp, sounds just great on classics like "Kiss and Say Goodbye" and "Only You Know and I Know," easily the highlights of her 45-minute turn.

She has revived lots more like those that suit her lately, including the Dusty Springfield-associated title track of her latest album, "Breakfast in Bed," an assortment that also finds her ably (if not exceptionally) tackling "Sara Smile," "Ain't No Sunshine" and "Midnight Train to Georgia." Given the time trip this evening clearly represented, she'd have done well to include more of those in her set. Instead, Osborne (who at times seemed to be breaking in a new drummer) tended to saunter passively through less familiar material – singing competently, sometimes strongly, but never really catching fire.

Alter-review: Joan Osborne, Breakfast in Bed

I keep listening to this damn CD over and over. It's just Joan signing some originals and soul classics, including "Ain't No Sunshine" and "Break Up to Make Up." She even covers "Midnight Train to Georgia," a ballsy thing to do since she does them pretty straight, and succeeds wonderfully. Her own songs hold up pretty well, especially one called "I Know what's Goin' On". Also included are her versions of "Heat Wave" and "What Becomes of the Broken-Hearted," taken from the documentary "Standing in the Shadow of Motown" about the Funk Brothers. They, too, are terrific, though to my mind, not quite as terrific as "Kiss and Say Goodbye," one of the greatest songs of all time.

St. Thomas Source



What's Up Next on the Doug Lewis Show
by Source staff

Joan Osborne's 'Breakfast in Bed'

July 24, 2007 - Tune into the Doug Lewis Show on WVGN 107.3 FM from 1 to 3 p.m., Sunday, July 29. This Sunday we will feature music by Joan Osborne, Chris Klein and the Boulevard, Sheryl Crow, Johnny Cash, Terri Hendrix, Dar Williams and more.

The Modern Music Feature CD is "Breakfast in Bed" from Joan Osborne. Joan has released a terrific CD that features her renditions of some great soul and r&b classics.

The Indie Spotlight CD is "Tales from the Money Jungle" by New Orleans artists Chris Klein and the Boulevard. The band has been playing some dates in the Virgin Islands and Chris's CD includes some fine original numbers. The band has a funky, jazzy sound.

What's Up Next on the Doug Lewis Show
Joan Osborne's 'Breakfast in Bed'

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Joan Osborne

Breakfast in Bed

American singer/songwriter Joan Osborn became famous thanks to the song "One of Us" from her debut album "Relish," released in 1995, which became a huge hit at the time. The successful debut was followed-up by an album of earlier recordings, and a few albums of new material, but the success of "Relish" and, respectively, "One of Us," remained Osborne's highest achievement. The singer joined a rather numerous 'club' of artists who have a strong, but not very large fan base. Osborn's abilities as a songwriter seem to have never matched those as a singer and, as a result, most of the songs she writes are standard pop stuff. The same applies to the recent album, on which Osborne returns to the soul music she covered on 2002's How Sweet It Is, adding several of her own songs to those by other authors.



Music Review: Joan Osborne - Breakfast in Bed

Written by El Bicho

Published August 01, 2007

Joan Osborne continues on her musical journey by looking back as she moves forward. *Breakfast in Bed* combines her influences of soul music and R&B, which she predominantly explored with her 2002 covers album *How Sweet It Is*, with songs of yearning and heartbreak, which she gave the Nashville treatment on last year's *Pretty Little Strangers*. She is a bold, gifted singer not afraid to tackle classics or mix her own songs alongside.

The album's title brings to mind a sweet Sunday morning with a loved one, but the title song is emotionally brutal. Previously recorded by Baby Washington and Dusty Springfield, it's about a woman whose former beau has left for someone else. The narrator loves him and is there to comfort him with "a kiss or three" when he shows up at her door crying. Unfortunately, she can't see he just uses her to get through the night. In the morning he's off to go back to his love, while the narrator tries to stop hers from running out the door. She pleads, "What's your hurry?/ Please don't eat and run," but it's no avail.

Breakfast in Bed contains songs about the struggles of making a relationship work. They deal with a lover not wanting to stay whether in a location, like Gladys Knight & the Pips "Midnight Train to Georgia," or, as is usually the case, with a person. On Bill Withers all-time classic "Ain't No Sunshine," the narrator wonders and hopes her man comes back this time because the "house just ain't a home/any time he goes away." "The song has a great organ solo. Hall & Oates "Sara Smile" finds the narrator okay with the break-up, just looking for one more night, "If you feel like leaving you know you can go/ But why don't you stay until tomorrow?"

Two originals find her as different sides of a love triangle.

On "Eliminate the Night" her intense passion finds her willing to be the other woman even though she knows it's wrong. "No other man in this room tonight/ no other man in this town/ make me say these wicked words/ make me lay my conscience down./ Oh, honey, when it comes to you/ I ain't got no shame/ you can have me anyway you like/ you can call me by her name."

Damn, it would be tough to be faithful hearing those words, but Osborne reminds you of the woman you would hurt with the self-explanatory "I Know What's Going On." The moment the relationship ends is captured, from the smack in the face when the guy tells her she's not the one, "Heart of Stone," to hearing a guy end an affair on *The Manhattans* "Kiss and Say Goodbye." He explains, "I won't be able to see you anymore/ Because of my obligations, and the ties that you have."

The album concludes with two songs from *Standing in the Shadows of Motown*, a documentary about the session musicians known as The Funk Brothers, who played on the backing tracks to most Motown Records until 1972, when the company moved to Los Angeles. Osborne performs live with the band on Martha and the Vandellas "Heat Wave" and Jimmy Ruffin's "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted," both of which have been previously released on the film's soundtrack album.

Discussing her creative process for this album, Osborne explains, "When writing songs in soul and R&B, a lot of it is about love and relationships and you have to go into your own relationship to make the writing ring true. I drew on a lot of personal experience for *Breakfast in Bed*, probably more than ever before."

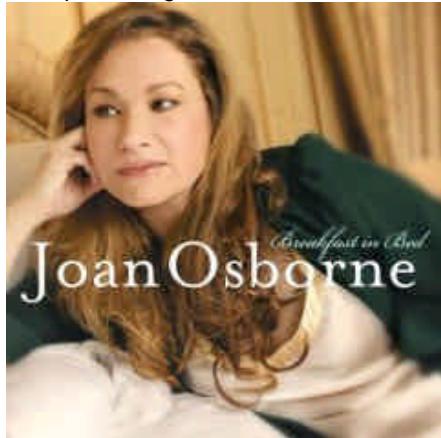
It's too bad for her that she's gone through all this, but lucky for all of us that we have this album to help us when we do.

MURÚCH

Monday, August 20, 2007

Joan Osborne: Breakfast In Bed

Now this is almost the Joan Osborne that I know and have loved since her studio debut over a decade ago. Soulful, classy, and effortlessly flowing from the deepest gravel into soaring smoothness. The unchanged arrangements, like those on Marc Broussard's S.O.S., are a little lackluster at times. But Joan's voice is enough to carry them through, and I get the impression she was going for a mellow coffeehouse kind of vibe. With the exception of a few songs, this is not quite the wailing return of the old bluesy Joan that I've been hoping for. But it's definitely a step in the right direction.



I own all of Joan's albums - the best of which are Relish, Early Recordings, and her previous soul covers collection How Sweet It Is - and I've seen her perform live at Mountain Stage. So I can honestly and enthusiastically attest that such a rare gem of a voice like hers does not need any kind of polish, such as was unfortunately applied to her previous release. Even here I wish there was a little less production, because I think the more grit in her voice the better. But at least her natural tone wasn't watered down for the duration of the entire album.

The best of the café lot are her smooth renditions of Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine", Hall & Oates' "Sara Smile", and Osborne's own "Eliminate The Night". I was surprised to learn that the latter track was a new song, because it stays true to the retro sound of the rest of the album.

It's the final two tracks, though, that really make the album worth purchasing. Joan's covers of "Heat Wave" and "What Becomes Of The Brokenhearted" were originally featured in the film Standing In The Shadows Of Motown, and these live performances finally showcase the full power of her voice.

LIVE JOURNAL™

2007-07-29 15:49:00

Joan Osborne, Breakfast In Bed

Joan Osborne is on a roll. Less than a year after her previous album, 2006's alt-country outing Pretty Little Stranger, the Kentucky-born singer-songwriter (who first broke through with the 1995 single "One of Us") has followed up with Breakfast In Bed, a collection of 10 covers and a half-dozen originals all in the style of old-school R&B. While her album before PLS, 2002's How Sweet It Is (which simply consisted of 12 soul covers) was the aural equivalent of comfort food, BIB for the most part aims for a more sensual feel. Whether she's interpreting well-known hits like Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine," Gladys Knight & the Pips' "Midnight Train to Georgia," and Hall & Oates' "Sara Smile," or showcasing her own compositions written credibly in that style ("Cream Dream," "Eliminate the Night," and "Alone With You" are standouts), she's never sounded more relaxed and at home. (It's telling that the only two numbers where her signature rasp really gets to cut loose -- "Heat Wave" and "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted?" -- were not recorded for this CD, but were taken from her appearance in the 2002 concert film Standing in the Shadows of Motown.)



Smooth Jazz ®

Week Of: October 22, 2007

Carol Archer

Imagine This

Want to be blown away? Check out Joan Osborne's soulful, funky version of Gladys Knight and the Pips' "I've Got to Use My Imagination" (Time Life), which was added out of the box -- ear-picked, even before the track's designation as a single -- on

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Joan Osborne Breakfast In Bed Pop Music CD Review by Clyde Dennis

The extremely talented Pop artist Joan Osborne has released her latest CD on the Time / Life Music recording label, entitled Breakfast In Bed.

It's a rare day indeed that I get a CD from an artist that I can truthfully say does not have a bad track in the bunch. I'm more than happy to announce that's exactly what I must say about this one. There simply is NOT a bad one in the bunch. No fillers here at all, with each song standing tall on it's own.

Breakfast In Bed has a nicely varied, mix of 16 tracks that are very well written songs by this clearly talented artist. With many of the songs displaying a lot of the kind emotion that makes for a really great listen.

Seemingly drawing from what I can only imagine are her own personal experiences. At different points touching on the most real emotions like love, and the pain of failed relationships can certainly be heard.

If you're a Joan Osborne fan, or just a fan of Pop music this is a CD your collection simply should not be without.

While the entire album is really very good some of my favorites are track 1 - I've Got To Use My Imagination, track 3 - Midnight Train To Georgia, and track 16 - What Becomes Of The Brokenhearted

My Bonus Pick, and the one that got Sore [...as in "Stuck On REpeat"] is track 14 - Kiss And Say Goodbye. This is a great track!

Breakfast In Bed Release Notes:

Joan Osborne originally released Breakfast In Bed on May 22, 2007 on the Time / Life Music label.

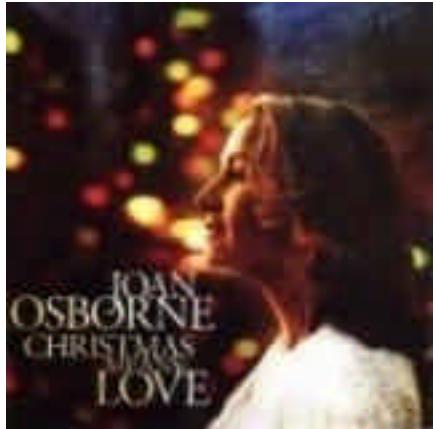
a library staple for most smooth jazz stations? (In my imagination, WVMV/Detroit PD Tom Sleeker is dancing like a man possessed while he listens to the track in his office. It could happen.)

Books Music and Movies Portal



How Sweet It Is

October 21, 2007 | By admin In Music |



Christmas Means Love When it comes to yuletide albums, an artist has maybe three choices as to how to proceed: 1) You can write your own new songs. 2) You can try really hard to put your own spin on these popular chestnuts by doing radically different arrangements or recording them all in a death-metal polka style because no one else has made a death-metal polka holiday release. 3) Or you can just do the songs straight-ahead already, as best you can, and hope that you measure up to the greats who've done those songs before you. For Joan Osborne's first holiday record, the full-throated singer-songwriter admirably (and smartly) uses all three approaches at once. Osborne uses a wide variety of arrangements and styles to tackle these tunes. There are ribald, bluesy arrangements ("What Do Bad Girls Get?"), songs with gospel elements (the title track), and stripped-down, piano-driven numbers ("Silent Night") that really showcase her vocal strengths. Note: This 2007 re-issue of Osborne's 2005

album of the same name has all the same songs; it simply omits the spoken word introduction. —Mike McGonigal



Friday, November 9, 2007

Critically acclaimed singer/songwriter Joan Osborne captures the essence of the holidays on *Christmas Means Love* with her versatile voice that easily goes from delicate and evocative to jazzy and glorious. Following in the tradition of *Breakfast in Bed* (Osborne's May 2007 album of soul covers and original R&B-styled songs), here Osborne sings her heart out on 11 holiday songs backed by a rootsy blues band and, at times, a choir. This intimate seasonal album is a perfect balance of the secular (*Santa Claus Baby*) and the sacred (*Away in the Manger*), both sassy (*What Do Bad Girls Get?*) and somber (*Angels We Have Heard On High*). In all, Osborne's *Christmas Means Love* is a wonderfully earthy approach to heavenly holiday music.

Daily Record.com



A Kentucky girl turns her talents to Philly soul

BY ROBERT HICKS
SPECIAL TO THE DAILY RECORD

Friday, November 16, 2007

Post Comment

Joan Osborne is primarily known as a singer-songwriter in a pop-rock vein. Her latest project took her back to a distant era when Philly soul rocked the airwaves and found a national television audience on Dick Clark's "American Bandstand."

"I tried to imagine myself back in that world. I listened to a lot of Philly soul stuff and steeped myself in it," she said.

She found the experience liberating. Normally, she is faced with a blank piece of paper and must call upon her muse to create a brilliant song. For this project, she felt comforted by the framework of Philly soul in which she had to compose her own original soul songs.

"I just said to myself, 'All right, I'm going to do something in this style. A lot of the songs were about relationships, romance and heartbreak.' At this point in my life, I don't mind using material from my own life for songs. I used not to want to do that. It was actually quite fun to write these songs."

Outpost in the Burbs will present Osborne in concert at Montclair High School Nov. 16.

The Kentucky native is performing in support of her 2006 CD, "Pretty Little Strangers," and her new CD, "Breakfast in Bed." On the former, she retraced her steps to the country music era of Patsy Cline, Hank Williams and Willie Nelson and Southern California country-rock. On the new recording, she revisits Philly '70s soul and classic '60s soul, as well as penning her own original soul songs.

"I've always been a big fan of soul music. I've always loved the Gamble and Huff Philly soul style and Thom Bell, who was a great writer," she said.

TimeLife record producers approached her about doing a '70s soul tribute CD after hearing her performances on the movie soundtrack for "Standing in the Shadows of Motown," which documented the Funk Brothers, the backup band on Motown hits.

She reinterpreted Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine," Hall and Oates' "Sara Smile," Martha Reeves and the Vandellas' "Heat Wave" and Dusty Springfield's "Breakfast in Bed," among others, on her new CD.

In her Brooklyn neighborhood, a street vendor regularly sold mix CDs featuring the Chi-Lites, Stylistics and Delfonics.

"It just cast a beautiful spell over the street," she said. "Everybody who walked by was singing along to these songs or they had a big smile on their faces."

Osborne grew up in Anchorage, Ky., near Louisville, an environment far removed from Philly soul. As a child, she remembers talking to birds and singing to them in hopes of their singing back to her. For her, observation of her surroundings became important.

During the mid-'80s, she arrived in New York to study film at New York University. At that point, she had no ambitions to pursue a music career.

"I had the good fortune of falling into this great scene that was happening in the clubs in New York. I got a little taste of it and just kept coming back for more. I learned a lot by singing blues, country and R&B songs. I got a real education that way," she said.

Life in New York has sparked her imagination in many new ways. She has encountered new kinds of people. She has overheard conversations. And she has seen how vibrant street life can be in the Big Apple.

"There's just a wealth of information that's around you all the time. As an artist, you really thrive on that," she said.

Future plans include a forthcoming DVD and a new CD slated for release in spring 2008.



**SHARON JONES
& THE DAP-KINGS**

100 Days, 100 Nights

(Daptone)

JOAN OSBORNE

Breakfast In Bed

(Time-Life)

JILL SCOTT

The Real Thing: Words And Sounds, Vol. 3

(Hidden Beach)

ALICE SMITH

For Lovers, Dreamers, & Me

(Epic)

ANGIE STONE

The Art Of Love And War

(Stax)

WILSON Pickett liked to tell his audiences about the time a white journalist asked him: "What is 'soul'?" "You know what I told him?" Pickett would preach. "I said, 'So-oh-oh-ul. Soul! Ain't nothin'... but a feelin'!"

No need to dispute such a generous, arms-open-wide definition. But we can pin it down a tad more. In the musical sense of which Pickett was speaking — the Wicked One shared the story to introduce "Sweet Soul Music" — soul is not just a feeling but a very particular feeling, expressed in a particular way.

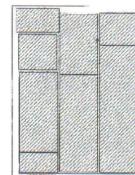
First of all, this soul feeling involves a clear-eyed sense of just how thrilling and how painful it is to be alive, and of how those conditions are inevitable and inseparable. And the greatest soul singers — Aretha Franklin, say, or Ray Charles or James Brown, or Pickett — convey all of that complexity. They sing in a voice that is at once playfully ironic and deathly in earnest; they understand themselves both as an utterly alone individual and as belonging to a beloved community.

This way of singing was born in the black church and is most concretely realized in its call-and-response performance style; in the intense, improvised melismas of its vocalists; and in its house-rocking, body-and-spirit-propelling rhythms. More than rock 'n' roll, even more than the blues, the feelings and sounds of the soul tradition have provided the foundation of American popular music for half a century. It is difficult,

not to mention depressing, to imagine what the future might sound like without it.

For the moment, however, we're enjoying a soul revival that crosses genres. We've seen welcome second acts for legends such as Al Green, Mavis Staples and Solomon Burke as well as legends-in-the-making Candi Staton and Bettye LaVette (all of whom, save Green, have produced work that can stand with their best). We've seen continued if varying levels of interest in British soul imports Joss Stone, James Hunter, Corinne Bailey Rae and Amy Winehouse. Hip-hop artists continue to mine old soul records to find the ornamentation and the superstructure for their own recordings. Even some rock acts — Reigning Sound, the Detroit Cobras, JJ Grey — are playing a kind of soul music, as rock 'n' soul torch bearers such as the Rolling Stones, the Rascals, the Sonics, the Detroit Wheels and countless others did before them.

And then there are the survivors of soul's last notable resurgence. The "neo-soul" movement of the mid-'90s has proved a marketing tag only slightly more enticing to the masses than "alternative country." Erykah Badu, Maxwell, Musiq and other neo-soul acts seek to update the soul tradition for the hip-hop generation. But, as R&B acts from Mary J. Blige to Justin Timberlake have been steadily achieving that goal just fine, neo-soul too often comes off as a modernization movement focused more upon what and whom it's against — the mainstream competition and its work-



Page 1 of 2



ing-class fans (again, the alt-country comparison is apropos) — than what it is for.

To approach this class bias from the other direction, neo-soul has valued presumably more sophisticated endeavors such as spoken-word poetry, lite jazz, and so-called conscious rap, all to the exclusion of soul's street-level roots in the black church. As a whole, neo-soul is too much Quiet Storm, Minnie Riperton, and *The Secret Life Of Plants*, with not enough "Soul Train", Gladys Knight, and *Talking Book*.

Like all genres, though, neo-soul has memorable moments. A disproportionate number of these have come from Angie Stone and Jill Scott. Both singers have strong new albums, each of which rehearses neo-soul's limitations, then regularly transcends them.

Stone's *The Art Of Love And War* (on a reconstituted Stax Records) and Scott's *The Real Thing* feature dramatic first singles that provide appealing answers to the question, "What is soul...in the 21st century?" Stone's shimmering and resilient "Baby" is a "tag-team" with old-school star Betty Wright, and Scott's "Hate On Me" is a thunderous anthem of self-liberation. *The Real Thing* may well collect the literate Scott's finest work to date, especially the acoustic smoke of "Celibacy Blues" and her smooth seduction-via-product-placement, "Crown Royal On Ice".

Stone is, this time out, just a bit too prone to that perennial neo-soul pitfall — long songs with hook-less melodies. But, particularly when she pushes herself out of midtempo, as on the potential hit "Play With It", Stone reminds, as does Scott, of what has been most valuable in their work all along: These are grown-ass women with grown-ass women's bodies and grown-ass women's concerns. That last matter includes, but is mercifully not limited to, getting their freaks on.

So neo-soul persists. Its most popular recent practitioners, however — John Legend, Adrian, Anthony Hamilton — have learned, like "liberals" and "insurgent country bands," to call themselves something else. That's true of Alice Smith, too. Her *For Lovers, Dreamers, & Me* was one of last year's best albums and one of the best soul albums in recent memory, but as it was on the smallish BBE label, few people heard it. Now Epic has picked it up for re-release, apparently impressed by smart and slinky tracks such as "Dreams" and the preposterously catchy "Fake Is The New Real".

Smith's brand of soul music is as neo- as any in the last decade, but without the label.

The current soul revival, then, has been building for awhile. Something seemed to shift in the zeitgeist, though, with the 2002 documentary *Standing In The Shadows Of Motown* — a tribute to that label's incomparable studio band, the Funk Brothers. And it did so at the precise moment Joan Osborne reached her crescendo climax to "What Becomes Of The Brokenhearted". Since then, Osborne, formerly best known as the hippy-trippy singer of the mid-'90s smash "One Of Us", has moved increasingly to place herself in that marvelous queue of blue-eyed soul divas that includes Lisa Stansfield, Teena Marie and Dusty Springfield.

The Springfield catalogue provides the title track to Osborne's latest, *Breakfast In Bed*. Her previous effort in the soul vein, 2002's *How Sweet It Is*, was better — its covers, including a dirge-like "War", were more daringly re-imagined; the soul feeling in her voice was more obviously inspired by Motown and her frequent collaborators the Holmes Brothers — but *Breakfast* is a fine successor nonetheless. The album is ripe with savvy picks (Bloodstone's "Natural High", the Stylistics' "Break Up To Make Up") and a trio of soulful Osborne originals that all but hold their own with the works of her soul music predecessors.

All the women discussed above are worthy of your time. But it falls to Sharon Jones to be, if not the Queen of Soul (that's still Aretha), then the Queen of the Soul Revival. Jones' new album *100 Days, 100 Nights* is admittedly soul of the most derivative and retro variety. But Jones and the Dap-Kings reproduce the sounds and the soul feeling of Motown and James Brown so flawlessly, with such funky ease and gospel fervor and emotional complexity, that it really doesn't matter. And as the Dap-Kings, who are to soul now what Marty Stuart's band the Superlatives are to country — the best in the business — have recently made the most of Amy Winehouse's thin talents on single-of-the-year candidate "Rehab", who's to say what is and isn't retro right now anyway?

"Oh, the lies you tell to get your taste," Jones cries, worrying every bitter note. She's alone and hurting, but she has her Dap-Kings, too. And that is a wonderful, soulful feeling.

— DAVID CANTWELL

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Monday December 3, 2007

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Monday, December 3

"Christmas Means Love," Joan Osborne (Time Life) 3.5 stars
CD ratings

- 4 stars - Buy it
- 3 stars - Maybe buy it
- 2 stars - Borrow it
- 1 star - Break it

Originally released in 2005 for exclusive sale at a chain bookstore, Joan Osborne's Christmas CD is now widely available. The woman who brought us the '90s hit about God, "One of Us," puts her earthy R&B spin on "Away in a Manger" and "Silent Night." She also shakes things up with an Andrews Sisters-style version of "Santa Claus Baby" and a funny original, "What Do Bad Girls Get?"