

Jenny Goodspeed



under the ash tree

It's not often a new artist emerges with a debut record completely formed and beautifully produced, full of tender and concise language, all executed in a gorgeous, mature voice. Singer-songwriter Jenny Goodspeed has achieved just that rare feat on ***Under the Ash Tree*** - a sparkling fusion of folk, pop, and Americana drawing on influences from 70s era singer-songwriters like Joni Mitchell, Bruce Cockburn, and Laura Nyro.

Well-crafted lyrics, exquisite vocals, and heart-breaking melodies abound as Goodspeed explores the intricacies of love and longing, all definitively steeped in her beloved New England landscape. "All but two of the songs were written when I returned to the Northeast after a 10-year detour in the Midwest and West," Goodspeed explains. "So more than anything, the record is a love letter to New England and its infinite kinds of trees, spring peepers, foggy mornings...everything I felt starved for while out West." ***Under the Ash Tree*** will take you all these places and more, and you're going to love the ride.

Engineered and co-produced by **Mark Thayer at Signature Sounds Studio** in Pomfret, CT Goodspeed is backed by an impressive group of musicians including **Jim Henry** (Tracy Grammer, Mark Erelli) on acoustic guitar, **Richard Gates** (Patty Larkin, Suzanne Vega) on electric bass, and **Duke Levine** (Mary Chapin-Carpenter, Jonatha Brooke) on electric guitar and mandolin. In August 2008, *Under the Ash Tree* debuted at **#12 on the Roots Music Report Folk Top 50**. Songs from the record have been added to over 100 folk and AAA radio stations in 31 states and have earned Goodspeed finalist slots in numerous contests including the 2009 Falcon Ridge Emerging Artist Showcase and the 2009 Mountain Stage NewSong Contest.

what the media are saying

"Goodspeed sings in a voice vaguely reminiscent of Joni Mitchell (she covers the Mitchell tune "The Arrangement" on the album), but the comparisons end there as her striking melodies and honest, insightful lyrics are every bit her own. The disc opens with the sweeping melody of the title track but then goes to a number of different styles, high-lighted by the country influenced "The Good Daughter," the lovely, wistful "With June Comes the Memory" and the rollicking "S-Curve Roads." We are fortunate to live in an area that is rich with talented singer-songwriters and we can now add Goodspeed to this esteemed group." - **Sheryl Hunter, *The Recorder (Greenfield, MA)***

"This is a sparkling folk-pop album guaranteed to brighten your day. Her wry comments about relationships seem personal but universal enough that you'll find yourself nodding your head and thinking, "How did she slip into my life?" Her creative melodies often go where you don't expect but without sounding incongruous. Standout cuts include "Compass," with its rolling finger picked guitar over a bed of cello and "The Good Daughter," about casting off expectations. The latter features a cool banjo played by Duke Levine (Mary Chapin Carpenter, Jonatha Brooke) who also offers electric guitar and mandolin." - **Jamie Anderson, *Minor 7th Acoustic Guitar Reviews***

"Jenny Goodspeed is just folk enough to sound authentic and just pop enough to keep the attention of the ever-shuffling iPod crowd. With a voice as soft as velvet (and almost as rich), Goodspeed sings slow-paced songs where soft vocals, lulling guitars and harrowing cellos are laid out gently, like jewels, each getting a chance to glimmer." - **Fairfield County Weekly (CT)**

"Once I looked at the credits on the CD liner notes, I was no longer surprised at the aural excellence surrounding Jenny Goodspeed's perfectly shaped, passionate vocals. There's Jim Henry and Duke Levine on guitars. Beth Amsel on backup vocal, Seth Glier on keyboards. There's a solidity to Goodspeed's lyrical poetry and more than a little bit of Joni Mitchell in her voice...What a pleasure. What a great find." - **Richard Cuccaro, *Acoustic Live! (NY)***

Contact

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www.jennygoodspeed.com

Jenny Goodspeed

recent highlights

- **Emerging Artist**, 2009 Falcon Ridge/Grassy Hill Emerging Artist Showcase
- **Regional Finalist**, 2009 Mountain Stage NewSong Contest
- **Showcase Artist**, 2009 Boston Area Coffeehouse Association Summer Meeting
- **Winner**, 2009 Ourstage.com Folk Channel out of 478 entries. 3rd place overall out of 33 different genres.
- **Winner**, 2009 Ourstage.com Americana Channel out of 410 entries. 3rd place overall out of 40 different genres.
- **Winner**, 2009 Honorable Mention American Songwriter Lyrics Contest
- **Winner**, 2008 Portland Songwriting Association Songwriting Contest (Folk/Acoustic)
- **Finalist**, 2008 Boston Folk Festival Songwriting Contest
- **Finalist**, 2008 Rose Garden Coffeehouse Performing Songwriter Competition
- **Showcase Finalist**, 2008 Plowshares Songwriting Contest
- **Finalist**, 2008 SolarFest Songwriter Competition Showcase
- **Finalist**, 2008 Susquehanna Music & Arts Festival Songwriting Contest
- **#12 debut on the Roots Music Report Folk Top 50**
- Added to **over 100 folk and AAA radio stations in 31 states**
- **Recommended new release** by John Schoenberger, Radio and Records AAA/Americana Editor
- **CDBaby Editor's pick**
- **New Music Weekly College Top 30**

selected openers & venues

Brooks Williams, support, Panzer House Concerts, Columbia, MD
Northern Lights, support, St. James Coffeehouse, Greenfield, MA
The Nameless Coffeehouse, Cambridge, MA
Swallow Hill Music Association, Denver, CO
The Vanilla Bean Cafe, Pomfret, CT
Pioneer Arts Center of Easthampton (P.A.C.E.), Easthampton, MA
Palmetto Acoustic Series, Charleston, SC
The Center for the Arts Natick, Natick, MA
Mocha Maya's Coffeehouse & Espresso Bar, Shelburne, MA
Kick Off Your Shoes Concerts, Topsfield, MA
Ritual Cafe, Des Moines, IA
Cafe Carpe, Fort Atkinson, WI
Octagon Center for the Arts, Ames, IA

tv & radio appearances

Low Country Live, ABC Channel 4 (Charleston, SC)
Over the Falls, Falls Cable (Shelburne, MA)
Night Rhythms, 100.7 FM WHUD (Westchester/Hudson Valley, NY)

selected airplay

WUMB (Boston, MA)
WBRS (Boston/Waltham, MA)
KUNC (Greeley, CO)
WSLR (Sarasota, FL)
KPR (Kansas Public Radio)
KOPN (Columbia, MO)
New Hampshire Public Radio
WSKG (Binghamton, NY)
WYEP (Pittsburgh, PA)
KNON (Dallas, TX)

WMUA (Amherst, MA)
Acoustic Accents (AK), Syndicated
WPKN (New Haven, CT)
KUNI (Eastern IA)
WMPG (Portland, ME)
KDHX (St. Louis, MO)
WFDU (Teaneck, NJ)
WRUW (Cleveland, OH)
WUSC (Columbia, SC)
Utah Public Radio

WMVY (Tisbury, MA)
KDVS (Davis, CA)
WVUD (Newark, DE)
WEFT (Champaign, IL)
WHFR (Dearborn, MI)
KZUM (Lincoln, NE)
WFUV (New York, NY)
WVIA (Scranton, PA)
High Plains Public Radio (TX)
KBCS (Bellevue, WA)

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Jenny Goodspeed

biography

Jenny Goodspeed's music career had auspicious beginnings. Her earliest memory is standing on the coffee table in her family's duplex in upstate New York performing along with Carole King's *Tapestry* and wondering how the musicians were able to fit into the tiny space of the turntable. This fascination with music translated into a self-described theater geek adolescence, a period when Goodspeed discovered her love and innate talent for both singing and acting. She taught herself guitar by studying the songs of folk-rock musicians like James Taylor and Crosby, Stills, and Nash and performed in lead roles in school and regional productions, including a 9-month run of *Godspell* performed across upstate New York.

During college, Goodspeed continued to act in and direct theater productions and began to develop the exacting harmony skills she displays today as vocal arranger for Binghamton University's first co-ed a cappella group. Upon graduation, she did what was expected of the daughter of a doctor and entered a doctoral program in psychology at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. It was here that a whole new and unexpected education began, that of the contemporary singer-songwriter.

In Lawrence, Goodspeed stumbled upon Bob McWilliam's longstanding folk radio program *Trail Mix* on Kansas Public Radio and was exposed to artists like Patty Larkin, Shawn Colvin, and John Gorka for the first time. "I was hooked," Goodspeed explains, "They were writing music I was really hungry for - songs you needed to hear more than once in order to grasp." It wasn't long before she was writing her own music and performing in local venues. Three years into her doctoral program, she realized she wasn't cut out for psychology and left Kansas with a Masters degree and a new direction.

Goodspeed bloomed as a young singer-songwriter in the rich Boulder/Denver music scene of the mid-90s. She played local venues and festivals including the renowned Swallow Hill Music Association. In 1997, she recorded her first demo with respected producer/engineer Patrick Brickel (Greg Brown). And then she stepped away from her music career entirely. Goodspeed moved to Massachusetts to begin a new life in the landscape that felt most like home. Here, she unexpectedly rediscovered her love of theater and spent the next decade acting with theater companies in glowingly reviewed shows including *Flowers For Algernon* for which she won the 2004 CTA Drama Festival Award for Best Featured Performer. All the while, she continued to write songs and quietly hone her craft.

Who can accurately describe the subtle shifts in life that occur and nudge one to change course? In April of 2007, a concert presenter heard Goodspeed singing at a music festival and knew there was a wider audience for her music. She offered to finance a CD and over the course of 12 days that summer, Jenny Goodspeed did what she had set out to do in 1997 - she recorded her debut CD ***Under the Ash Tree***. Shortly after singer and songwriter Beth Amsel (Voices on the Verge) invited Goodspeed to open for her during a fall tour of the Midwest. For the first time in years, Goodspeed stepped up on stage with her guitar in hand for rooms full of strangers, performing for audiences in Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas, and Nebraska to an overwhelmingly positive response.

With ***Under the Ash Tree***, Jenny Goodspeed has returned to the acoustic music scene with a stunning debut CD full of verve and honesty ten years in the waiting. In August 2008, *Under the Ash Tree* debuted at #12 on the *Roots Music Report Folk Top 50*. Songs from the record have been added to over 100 folk and AAA radio stations in 31 states and have earned Goodspeed finalist slots in numerous, including the 2009 Falcon Ridge Emerging Artist Showcase and the 2009 Mountain Stage NewSong Contest. With such a talent, one might assume she'd been at it all along.

other buzz

"Ye gawdz, I'm just LOVING this album! It's just SO perfect for my show, and totally appropriate for these slightly-crisp almost-fall evenings! This is a truly special album" - **Johnny Black, Music Director High Plains Public Radio**

"Jenny Goodspeed has an angelic voice and writes, hands down, the best melodies you'll hear. I think you're going to love her." - **Beth Amsel, Voices on the Verge**

"Just when you think you know where she's going, musically or lyrically, she makes a hard turn in another direction. Her voice is a wonderful combination of strength and fragility." - **Bob Muller, The Joni Mitchell Covers Project**

"Thank you so much for doing such a great set for us at the Nameless last night! I just love your voice and your material." - **Maureen LeBlanc, The Nameless Coffeehouse**

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Jenny Goodspeed back on track

Once detoured by theater's allure, Ashfield resident tunes back into her musical side with a new CD

In the mid-1990s, Jenny Goodspeed was an aspiring singer-songwriter who was fast making a name for herself in the music scene around Boulder and Denver, Colo. She became a fixture of local venues and was soon playing festivals, including the renowned Swallow Hill Music Association. In 1997, she recorded her first demo with producer Patrick Brickel, who is known for his work with Greg Brown.

Then, her life took a bit of a detour. Goodspeed and her husband ended up leaving Colorado and heading east, where they settled in Ashfield. Once she was living here in the Pioneer Valley, her music career was put aside as she enjoyed a renewed love affair with a previous passion — the theater. But her life has once again shifted and she has now refocused her energies on singing and writing her own songs. Goodspeed has a new CD out called "Under the Ash Tree" and will perform at Mocha Maya's in Shelburne Falls on Saturday, Aug. 9, at 7:30 p.m.

Soon after moving here, Goodspeed discovered that the Arena Civic Theatre in Greenfield was putting on a production of her favorite musical, "Godspell." She auditioned, won a part, and kept on going from there.

"I also started studying voice and composition privately and sang in an early music ensemble for several years," Goodspeed said. "So, in a nutshell, I immersed myself in other kinds of artistic opportunities that I didn't have in Colorado."

Goodspeed loves living in Ashfield and finds the area a constant source of artistic inspiration.

"I love that in such a beautiful, rural area of the Northeast, there is an abundance of music," she said. "Since we moved to western Mass., we've befriended

Sheryl Hunter

Sounds Local



Show notes

■ **Jenny Goodspeed**, Saturday, 7:30 p.m., Mocha Maya's, 47 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls. Free but tips for the musicians welcomed.

■ **Turners Falls Block Party**: Saturday, downtown Turners Falls. Music starts at 3 p.m.

■ **Eight bands celebrate 08.08.08**: Friday, 8 p.m. The Elevens, 140 Pleasant St., Northampton. \$8.

sculptors, authors, photographers, craftspeople, actors, as well as musicians — and it is really inspiring to be in that kind of environment."

While she immersed herself in the local world of theater, Goodspeed continued to write and record songs, more for her own enjoyment than anything else.

During a performance at a music festival last year, a concert promoter heard Goodspeed sing and felt strongly that she should be getting her music out to a wider audience. This individual offered to finance the making of a CD and that sparked Goodspeed's return to the singer-songwriter world. Last August, she went to the Signature Sounds studio in Pomfret, Conn., to record "Under the Ash Tree."

The album was engineered and co-produced by Mark Thayer and features Jim



Jenny Goodspeed's "Under the Ash Tree" is a collection of folk-pop tunes whose striking melodies and honest, insightful lyrics are every bit her own.

Henry on acoustic guitar, Richard Gates on electric bass, Eric Platz on drums, Duke Levine on electric guitar, Seth Glier on keyboards and Beth Amsel on vocals.

"I finished recording 'Under the Ash Tree' last August and I got the opportunity to open for singer/songwriter Beth Amsel during her tour of the Midwest that September and October," said Goodspeed. "That was the first time I had played out in almost 10 years and it was my first time on the road ever and it was perfect — like singer-songwriter boot camp. And Beth is one of the best singers, songwriters and performers I know, so I learned a lot."

"Under the Ash Tree" is a collection of folk-pop tunes with personal lyrics that deal with love and heartbreak. Goodspeed sings in a voice vaguely reminiscent of Joni

Mitchell (she covers the Mitchell tune "The Arrangement" on the album), but the comparisons end there as her striking melodies and honest, insightful lyrics are every bit her own.

The disc opens with the sweeping melody of the title track but then goes to a number of different styles, highlighted by the country influenced "The Good Daughter," the lovely, wistful "With June Comes the Memory" and the rollicking "S-Curve Roads" with Duke Levine's subtle mandolin work in the background.

Goodspeed admits that her work in theater greatly informs her work as a songwriter and that she often treats the protagonist of a song as she would a character in a play.

"For me, the purpose of performing — whether as an actor in a play or as a singer-

songwriter in a coffeehouse — is to make people feel something, and in order to do that, I want to express myself in the most genuine and immediate voice I can. That's what I strive for anyway. I guess you could say I'm a 'method' singer-songwriter!"

We are fortunate to live in an area that is rich with talented singer-songwriters and we can now add Goodspeed to the esteemed group.

Don't miss this chance to see her live.

www.jennygoodspeed.com

Mocha Maya's is located at 47 Bridge St. in Shelburne Falls. Admission is free but tips for the performers are strongly encouraged.

The Recorder
Greenfield, MA
August 7, 2008