

this or dinary thursday

The songs of Georgia Stitt

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I've been working on this album for six years. It's been one of those on-again, off-again projects, the kind of thing that calls to me when I'm in the middle of working on something else and reminds me that it's sitting quietly on my computer, in a desk drawer, scattered within hundreds of three-ring binders, waiting for me to return my attention to it. Every step of the recording process seems to have taken longer than I thought it would. In songs like these, which are complete stories in and of themselves, it's hard ever to admit they're done. I keep tweaking. I added the bridge to "Big Wings" nearly three years after the song was already out in the world. I dug through my archives and found alternate vocal takes to songs that had been recorded years before, and I added instruments and backup vocals to tracks that I

thought were finished. I kept writing new songs, recording them, and deciding they didn't fit on this record. The possibilities for your debut album are endless, and the pressure is on to get it absolutely right. But at a certain point, I'm learning, you just have to stop. You have to acknowledge that what you've got is a pretty apt representation of your work, your sentiments, your spirit, and, bravely, you have to let it go.

The oldest song here is "The Holy Secret," which was written for a never-finished show that dealt with religion and marriage and identity and the challenge of recovering from life's disappointments. The song was written in 1996, and Andréa Burns recorded it for me in 2000. A beautiful gift from my yet-to-be husband, that hour in the studio was the first time I'd had a professional singer in a professional studio with professional musicians playing my music, and it cracked open a new world for me. I include it here because, more than anything, it feels like the first real song I wrote in New York. I learned it in lots of keys and played it in piano bars and at parties, thinking it was the song that was going to tell the world I had arrived. And off I went. The first song I wrote for a benefit, "This Ordinary Thursday," was a celebration of my life at the time. I wrote about how wonderful it felt to go from being the person always outside looking in to becoming the leading lady of one's own life. While looking for something to write for my own wedding in 2003, I ran across Howard Schwartz's beautiful poem "These Two" and immediately heard its music. Keith

Byron Kirk sang for us on that special day, and I'm thrilled that you get to hear him, as well. Artistic Director Joel Fram commissioned several of these songs for his fantastic New Voices Collective concert series, including "She" and "Perfect Summer" and "Air." It's because of him and those concerts that I kept writing through some times when I wasn't sure anyone was listening.

After ten songs I was hoping the album was done, but I had just thought of the title "It Almost Felt Like Love" and knew it was going to be unlike anything else I'd ever written, so I raced to finish it. Finally, right around the time my deadline was approaching, my daughter Molly turned one, and I was on Cape Cod wondering how to document so momentous an occasion. I wrote her a song, "I Get to Show You the Ocean," called my friend Faith Prince to record it, and decided this album was finished.

But I've already started the next one.

Finally, I want to draw to your attention the striking photos included in this booklet, many of which were taken by my father. Most likely, it was John Stitt who first inspired me to look deeper at the things that seem ordinary and note how special they really are.

Thanks for listening.

Georgia Stitt
December 2006, Los Angeles



1. The Holy Secret

vocals: Andréa Burns music by Georgia Stitt, lyrics by Len Schiff arrangement by Jason Robert Brown

In the beginning there was you and there was me.
We fit perfectly together in harmony.
We were golden; we were fire,
Inspiration and desire from the start
Til the world cracked wide and fell apart.

In the beginning, did we ever disagree?
Did we ever break the stifling serenity?
We were quick to compromise,
Lived a thousand harmless lies, but now I know:
When the world cracked wide, it let us go.

And that's the holy secret, The thing you need to know. You've got to fall to pieces To let the pieces grow.

Strange how things accumulate.
One can only hope the stress'll
Tear the bond and break the vessel
Before the loving turns to hate.

I am beginning to recover who I am,
To discover what's ahead in the world for me.
I'm going somewhere; where it is, I couldn't say.
But I know that I'll be changing as I make my way.
If I feel a little sad
When I think what we once had, it's not a sin.
'Cause when the world cracked wide, it let me in.

And that's the holy secret, The thing you need to know. You've got to fall to pieces To let the pieces grow.

piano/conductor: Jason Robert Brown guitar: Rick Azim cello: Rebecca Evans Recorded October 10, 2000, Studio X, Seattle Sam Hofstedt, engineer

2. One Day More

vocals: Matthew Morrison music & lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Jason Robert Brown vocal arrangement by Georgia Stitt

There are days we want
Always to remember.
And there are days we try to forget.
And there are times they tell me
When the load gets too heavy,
But we haven't found one yet.
You are my life, my strength, my joy, my all.
What lask is small.

Just let me love you one day more. And then tomorrow night When the stars shine bright Iknow what I'll be wishing for. I'll want another one day more. That's all I'll ask you for.

People come and go. Prospects will surprise us. And then as fast, they'll all disappear. Whatever tricks we fall for.
We're immune to them all.
For we have our life right here.
As far as partners go,
I'm yours, although,
What I bring is small.

I want to love you one day more. And then tomorrow night When the stars shine bright I know what I'll be wishing for: I'll want another one day more. That's all I'll ask you for. Dawn into sunset. Year after year.

Just let me love you one day more.
And then tomorrow night
When the stars shine bright
I know what I'll be wishing for.
I'll want another and another and another And another day and another day
And another day and another day
How could I wish for more?
That's all I'll ask you for.

piano: Georgia Stitt
acoustic guitar, electric guitar, mandolin: Kevin Kuhn
electric bass: Randy Landau
drums, percussion: Norbert Goldberg
additional vocals: Julie Foldesi, Julie Stirman
Recorded Nov. 14, 2004 at Avatar Studios, NYC and
July 17, 2006 at Clinton Recording Studio, NYC
Justin Kessler, engineer

3. Big Wings

vocals: Jenn Colella music & lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Georgia Stitt

Twelve miles north of Mississippi.
Nothing but cotton and road outside of my window.
The sun beats down and the air is dry.
Ithink of him as the clouds roll by
And I watch the airplanes overhead,
And my soul feels dead.

Three or four weeks between each visit.

A phone call each morning saying, "Hon, it won't be that long."

I try to fake that I'm strong and tough

But I can't get to him soon enough.

And again those airplanes zoom right by

But where the hell am I?

Big wings, take me to where he is. I don't want to wait around anymore. Lift me up from this broken place into the sky. I want to fly.

All I ever wanted was to keep moving.
All I feel right now is trapped.
Just beyond those clouds, the light is improving.
Stuck beneath this sky, my spirit is sapped.
Idon't think it matters
How this stagnant cycle shatters,
But I can't just sit here staring at these walls.
Adventure calls!
Adventure calls!

No more waiting for the weekend.
I've packed my bags and I'm leaving nothing behind.
I can love his town. I can love his scene.
And I might love him,
But I'll mostly love the change of routine.

So big wings, take me to where he is. Idon't want to wait around anymore. Lift me up from this broken place into the sky. Let me soar. Let me fly.

piano: Georgia Stitt
electric bass: Mary Ann McSweeney
drums: Norbert Goldberg
acoustic guitar: Kevin Kuhn
violin: Christian Hebel
harmonica: Jeffrey Lesser
Recorded July 10 and 17, 2006 at Clinton Studios, NYC
Justin Kessler, engineer

4. I lay My Armor Down

vocals: Lauren Kennedy music by Georgia Stitt, lyrics by Faye Greenberg arrangement by Georgia Stitt

Hay my armor down I don't care who was right The choice is made I'm not afraid Hay my armor down

I haven't got the strength And I don't want to fight I know the cost Of what's been lost I lay my armor down Thave never known such sorrow In all my life

If I believed in God I'd fall on my knees and pray But here I stand No God on hand I lay my armor down

It won't be me who leaves No, I won't turn away Do what you will Go for the kill Hay my armor down

Look at me I'm not the enemy I lay my armor down

piano/conductor: Georgia Stitt
contrabass: Mary Ann McSweeney
acoustic guitar. Kevin Kuhn
violin: Christian Hebel
cello: Peter Sachon
French horn: Roger Wendt
Recorded July 10 and 17, 2006 at Clinton Studios, NYC
Justin Kessler, engineer

S. She

vocals: Cheyenne Jackson & Tituss Burgess music & lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Georgia Stitt

Like a breeze when you're asleep Or a promise you can't keep Is she. Like December on the beach. Always just beyond your reach Is she.
You want to claim her all for your own, But if you cling too hard,
You'll find that you are left alone.
As elusive as a year,
All you want forever here
Is she.

Give her room. Let her roam. Make her feel safe, but unconfined. Let her know that you're her home. That's how you love her.

Like a song with perfect rhymes

That you've sung a million times Is she.
(And now that song's your favorite.)
Ever-changing like the tide,
Always ready for the ride
Is she.
She grabs your hand and charges ahead,
And if you stall, another man
Might win her heart instead.
But remember what she needs.
Like a rose amid the weeds
Is she.

Give her room.
Let her roam.
Make her feel safe, but unconfined.
Let her know that you're her home.
That's how you love her.

Every helium balloon Needs a string to keep it grounded. Hold her with extra long arms, And she will reach for a life With love compounded. You don't have to match her pace. Just be sure you're in the race.

Like a sixteen letter word Is she.
As complex as any graph, As enticing as a laugh Is she.
She is impossible to contain, And yet you need her Just as the flowers need the rain. All that madness will allow. All you want forever, now. Is she.

Like a whisper never heard,

piano: Georgia Stitt acoustic bass: Mary Ann McSweeney acoustic guitar: Kevin Kuhn percussion: Norbert Goldberg Recorded July 10 and 17, 2006 at Clinton Studios, NYC Justin Kessler, engineer

6. life Is Not A Camera

vocals: Carolee Carmello music & lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Don Sebesky

My husband's a painter of light Snapping at faces and capturing souls In black and white. He sees the whole world through a glass, Composing an image and letting time pass him by As he's watching the sky.

My husband gets lost in his scenes.
Locked in the basement, his photos are born
Through chemical screens.
He tends his babies, lets them bloom.
Instructing the pictures that in the darkroom,
they're free.
But he never sees me.

And if he'd ask me, I would tell him That life is not a camera And sometimes there's more than a sky As he's searching for the filter Or focusing the lens at his eye. Moments are passing him by

He'd tell me I've misunderstood.
That having to focus, he sees things as well
As anyone could.
But in the hours he's at play.
The house lies in silence
'Til morning gives way to night
And he's missed all the light.

I cook dinner. He reheats it,
And he's surprised that it got cold.
He swears tomorrow he'll eat with his wife,
But first he shows me the most desolate farm
Or the most angular tree,
Or how the light shapes the hill
And I'm supposed to agree
That this is really life.

And if he'd listen. I would tell him That life is not a camera And sometimes there's more that you feel. If our lives were just a picture, Then may be I would have more appeal. But he loves a woman who's real.

My husband gets older each day.
I worry soon he'll discover
He's snapped our lives away.
He looks for moments that are still
Instead of the moments that let him fill up his soul
And be half of a whole.

And if he'd listen, I would tell him That life is not a camera.

conductor: Georgia Stitt piano: Ron Melrose acoustic guitar: Gary Sieger drums: Norbert Goldberg flute: Brian Miller oboe/English horn: Lynne Cohen clarinet: Steve Williamson bass clarinet: Roger Rosenberg bassoon: Mark Thrasher French horn: Roger Wendt trumpet: Dave Rogers trombone: Keith O'Ouinn percussion: Dean Thomas violin: Todd Reynolds (concertmaster), Mary Rowell, Christian Hebel, Ashley Horne viola: Ralph Farris, Debra Shufelt cello: Dorothy Lawson, Peter Sachon contrabass: Randy Landau Recorded July 10 and 17, 2006 at Clinton Studios, NYC Justin Kessler, engineer

7. These Two

vocals: Keith Byron Kirk music by Georgia Stitt, text by Howard Schwartz

Forty days before the formation of a child a voice goes forth out of Heaven to announce that this one will marry that one. And each match is as difficult for the Holy One to arrange as was the dividing of the Red Sea.

—Sota 2a

The question is How to overhear The angels As they whisper Among themselves:

Forty days
Before they were born
It was revealed
That these two
Whose souls are like twin stars
Shall meet
And be married
In a city that is itself
A bride.

Itell you I have heard them And I have heard the spirits Of sons and daughters Still unborn Begging me to take care Take care that the nest does not Burn down. Somehow We must learn how to read The letters written In the stars that circle Our souls.

violins: Todd Reynolds, Mary Rowell viola: Ralph Farris cello: Dorothy Lawson Recorded Nov. 14, 2004 at Avatar Studios, NYC Wade Collin, engineer

8. I Get To Show You The Ocean

vocals: Faith Prince music & lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Georgia Stitt

for MCB on her first birthday

If you need an escape
There's a smell on the Cape
That's just magic.
It's the salt in the breeze
And the flowering trees
And the towels that dry in the sun.
It's nostalgia and music
And homemade ice cream
All rolled into one.
And you don't even know.
'Cuz your life has
Just begun. But

I'm gonna show you the ocean. You're gonna play in the sand.



You've never been to the ocean
Or stood on the turf where the surf meets the land.
I get to show you the ocean.
Your eyes will widen with glee.
You'll watch the fishies that tan in the tide pools.
I'll watch my love fall in love with the sea.

And when summer is through There's a lot we can do In the winter You'll have snowflakes to catch. We'll make cookies from scratch, Get a parrot and teach him to sing. Who could guess that so quickly I'm filled with joy that Only you can bring? And if one day you're blue, Trust me, I've got Just the thing. See,

I'm gonna show you the ocean.
You're gonna ride on a boat.
You've never been to the ocean
Or sat near the spot where the dottybacks float.
I get to show you the ocean.
Kid, you've got so much in store.
I'll be your teacher, your guide and protector.
You'll be my muse, always asking for more.

I'm sure one day you'll want to go out on your own.
You'll think I'm limited at best.
Though intellectually I know the day will come,
I can't imagine how I'll handle all the rest.
What if you don't like the water?
What if you won't learn to swim?
What if one day someone steals your heart
And breaks it open,
And you think no one loves you but him?
I promise you, my little mermaid,
The ocean tides will still sing their tune.
And Momma's love will always be here,
Constant as the moon

So

Go chase your dreams to the ocean.
You take as long as you need.
I'll wait for you by the ocean
Content in my nook with a book I can read.
I get to show you the ocean.
Tomorrow morning we'll start.
Let's wake up early and search for a starfish.
I've got your swimsuit
And you've got my heart.

piano: Georgia Stitt acoustic bass: Randy Landau acoustic guitar: Gary Sieger drums: Shannon Ford Recorded October 15, 2006, at Clinton Studios, NYC, Justin Kessler, engineer and January 10, 2007 at Westlake Studios, Los Angeles Brent Cambre, engineer

9. It Almost Felt like love

vocals: Sara Ramirez music & lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Georgia Stitt

We sat at the ocean.
We talked in the dark.
The wind made it chilly, but I felt a spark.
The night wasn't perfect.
These things never are,
But it almost felt like love.

You laughed and I flirted.
We walked hand in hand.
My hair was a mess, all entangled with sand.
It wasn't romantic.
Not a moon nor a star,
But it almost felt like love.

Tell me again how you long to touch my skin. Dangle your heart before my eyes. Thear your voice, and I haven't any choice But to believe your lies.

I try to be normal, Get back to my life. I smile at my husband; you wink at your wife. I can't help but wonder. I can't shake the thought. If only we'd dared. If only we'd not ...
It wouldn't be perfect.
These things never are,
But it might have felt like love.

It almost felt like love.

piano: Georgia Stitt
electric bass: Randy Landau
electric guitar, EBO: Ira Siegel
drums: Shannon Ford
B 3 organ: Jason Robert Brown
Recorded October 15, 2006, at Clinton Studios, NYC
Justin Kessler, engineer
and December 12, 2006, Westlake Studios, Los Angeles
Brent Cambre, engineer

10. Ai

vocals: Will Chase music by Sam Davis, lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Sam Davis

Closing my eyes and holding them tight. Feeling my pulse as it races through me. Taking a step and hoping it's right. Praying momentum will not undo me. How many things do we know for certain? How many times can we fly this blind? I can pretend that I've never hurt. In Time I'll forget, and perhaps I'll find Air.

Everything good must come with a cost.
This I believe, as I live to prove it.
That which is found must once have been lost.
If there's a wall, it takes work to move it.
Here comes a chance, and I'm lunging forward—

Making a vow that I will not fail.

Thousands of men have approached this point Without ever venturing to inhale

Air.

Here's what they call a crossroads.
Here is where life can start.
If I choose right, it's fortune.
If I choose wrong, it's my broken heart.
Some people call this panic.
Funny how I don't care!
All I can think is how much I need the air!
This air!

Filling my lungs, I'm filling with might.
Facing the facts, I know what my choice is.
Inside my head I hear what is right.
How can I lose if I trust these voices?
This is the vision I must have guide me.
This is the courage that makes men grow.
I am aware of the breath inside me:
Take it or leave it, I finally know it's there.
Life will provide the air.

piano/conductor: Sam Davis electric bass: Brad Russell drums: James Mack guitar. Andrew Schwartz flute: Ed Matthew cello: Peter Sachon

Recorded November 28, 2005 at Uptime Studios, NYC Will Pena, engineer

11. Perfect Summer

vocals: Kelli O'Hara music by Sam Davis, lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Sam Davis

When I am very old And start to lose my head, Remind me of this perfect summer. No matter where the years of Life and love have led. Speak to me, instead, of summer When time was open-ended, Melodies were sung. You and I were newly wed And blissfully young. Don't let me forget how Happy we once were. Don't let me forget this summer When all we had was love To get us through the day, Strangely that was just enough, And the bills somehow got paid. Let me please remember how. Remind me of the dreams we made... Memories we're living now.

Too often we cave to the pressures
And stresses of daily demands.
Too often we slip through the seasons
Without holding earth in our hands.
Forgive me if one day we realize
The children we've not yet conceived
Are fully grown.
And after all the springs we've known
We spend our summers once again alone.



I hope you'll recollect
These sentiments of mine
And you'll bring up this perfect summer.
The lazy afternoons,
The rich Italian wine,
The promise of eternal summer.
I'm sure I'll chalk it up

To innocence and youth. You must pin me down

And tell me the truth.

Don't let me forget how

Happy we once were.

Don't let me forget this summer When all we had was love To get us through the day.

Strangely that was just enough.

So whatever we accrue Let it simply disappear.

All I need in life is you

Spending all your summers here.

If all we ever have Is all that we have now, I'd say it was a perfect summer.

piano: Georgia Stitt & Joel Fram Recorded July 10, 2006 at Clinton Studios, NYC Justin Kessler, engineer

12 This Ordinary Thursday

vocals: Susan Egan music & lyrics by Georgia Stitt arrangement by Jason Robert Brown

In a room on the third floor
Of a brownstone in the Village,
Someone's practicing Bach.
And at a desk in an office
Lined with cubicles and screens,
A man re-evaluates his stock.
There's a mother holding dinner
For her son who's due home late,
And the burners on her stove are set to low.
A girl gets undressed.
A child gets some rest,
And the summer traffic is slow.

As the sun disappears behind New Jersey's gray horizon, People wrap up their days. But tonight, if you peeked in through The walls of this apartment, You'd see the beginning Of a life-changing phase — For at nine in the evening On this ordinary Thursday, While the country watches TV, Jason says he's in love with me!

And I can't hear the sirens.
I don't feel the heat.
All of a sudden there's an earthquake in my stomach,
So the tremors of the city can't compete.
Let this day linger on.
There are still hours before night should fall.

Let me live in this one spectacular evening On this ordinary Thursday Which isn't ordinary at all.

Most days by now
I have run all my errands,
I have read all my e-mail,
I have talked on the phone.
Most days by now
I have dealt with the laundry.
I have nuked up my dinner
And I've done it alone.
Most nights I catch myself
Gazing through curtains
Into worlds that are richer
And fuller and fine.
But tonight, for once,
The riches are mine!
All mine!

So I will raise all the shades
And then I'll fill the room with candles.
Let them see what they will.
We'll just sit,
And with wonder in my eyes
I'll let him hold me.
All is quiet and still.
Then at nine at the evening
On this ordinary Thursday
While the neighbors tuck themselves in,
lason says it again and again!

And if the moment is fleeting, I will save what I can. I can live in this one spectacular evening On this ordinary Thursday With this extraordinary man. Watch me fall— On this one spectacular evening On this ordinary Thursday Which isn't ordinary at all.

piano/conductor: Georgia Stitt
clarinet: Steve Williamson
violins: Todd Reynolds, Mary Rowell
viola: Ralph Farris
cello: Dorothy Lawson
acoustic guitar: Kevin Kuhn
fretless electric bass: Randy Landau
drums: Norbert Goldberg
Recorded Nov. 14, 2004 at Avatar Studios, NYC and
December 11, 2004 at Knoop Studios, River Edge, NJ
Manfred Knoop, engineer





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From the first song to the last, THIS ORDINARY THURSDAY is the perfect way to meet its extraordinary author.

Georgia Stitt is a songwriter with a truly distinctive writing voice—a voice that blends theatre, pop and classical flavors into a sound all her own, one that I've been moved and surprised by each time I've heard her beautiful songs over the past few years.

Whether she is acting as composer-lyricist (as she did on seven of the twelve songs here), or splitting the two jobs with a select group of collaborators, Georgia's mark is unmistakable, and it's carried over into the brilliant arrangements and world-class vocals you'll find on this recording.

Clarity and depth. Simplicity and resonance. Georgia Stitt, waiting to be heard.

Craig Carnelia