

Joy Katzen-Guthrie

"Passages"

(13-track CD, recorded at Hitmakers Studios, Tampa, and Turn-Of-The-Century Music, Palm Harbor, produced by Bill Mason & Joy Katzen-Guthrie, Joy Katzen-Guthrie (vocals, keyboards), Tim Diehl (percussion), Brad Carlton (guitars, bass), 57:03)

Katzen-Guthrie is a very familiar entertainer around these parts, with nearly a decade of performing as a song stylist with four previous releases. As suggested by the title, Passages is a musical scrapbook of Katzen-Guthrie's songwriting, with a selection of previously penned tunes (some dating back to 1982) newly arranged and recorded for Passages in the supportive company of Diehl and Carlton. While some of her earlier work took on a feminist stance that was de rigueur for the period, her writing is relatively free of the syrupy, "Dear Diary" sharings that permeates other singer/songwriter's work mislabeled as introspective. Katzen-Guthrie uses simple, direct language and soothing melodies to describe the complex feelings of found love ("My Very First Love Song"), lost love ("Lora"), and the growth of spirituality (as in the album's title cut, perhaps her strongest work). Her playing and singing have never sounded stronger or more convincing, which should help capture the imagination of a few new fans. (contact: P.O. Box 1257, Palm Harbor, FL 34682-1257, (727) 785-4568, <http://www.JoyfulNoise.net>)

