

4-15-2002

Your song

(the writer asks to remain anonymous)

*It's a little bit funny, this feeling inside,
I'm not one of those who can easily hide.
I don't have much money, but boy if I did...
My gift is my song and, this one's for you.*

Here we are coming to the end of another year of performances and teaching. Recently I heard Bernie Taupin's words. They made me begin to think about all of us as a family of artists, both in our gifts and in our weaknesses.

As we read this in the month of June, most of us are at the end of a long year, most of us are tired, tired of giving, worn out from the endless days, and drained by the many thankless jobs we all endure to create our art. Yet, at this moment I am awestruck at the amount of giving that I have witnessed this year. I have been beneficiary of some of this giving. With some of it, I merely sat by in admiration. Nevertheless, it makes me think of the great lake of art of which we all are a part! We share that strange "feeling inside" that demands to be heard and expressed, and we all give so much in order to give it its voice.

At this moment of fatigue, boredom, frustration, and lack of something new to say, I find great inspiration in taking pause to reflect and enjoy gifts given and to then feed on the energy of the collective beauty which we create together.

Thanks to all those who brought a piece of music to life.

Thanks to all those who introduced a new culture to our students.

Thanks Marco, and to all those who programmed music to serve a purpose.

Thanks Paul, Steve, and all those who selflessly give to students for just this year, knowing you will never enjoy the long-term fruits of your expertise.

Thanks to all those who kept teaching even after students said "I know this song."

Thanks to Karen, Twyla and all those who put together formats for us all to come together to fellowship and grow.

Thanks Wallace, Lori, and to those who create workshops and places for students and teachers to learn and expand their vision.

Thanks to all who hugged a child in need of an intimate bond.

Thanks Eric, Stu and to all who “color outside the lines” to free up our thinking of what is possible.

Thanks to Dick and Bruce and all those who set the standard for professional excellence.

Thanks to George, Henry, Judith and all those who prove that great art is a measure of the heart, not the age of the singer.

Thanks to Jason and all those who give music to the elderly and dying.

Thanks Don and Kathryn, and to all those who are new in their positions this year, for keeping steadfast to the truth in the face of all the reasons to fail.

Thanks to all who prepare choruses to conduct and enjoy.

Thanks Richard, Donna and all who listen to the muse and give us new beauty to enjoy.

Thanks, Tom, and all those who create beauty in the face of darkness.

Thanks to all of you who lifted up a heart.

Thanks to all of you who programmed a piece of history.

Thanks to all of you who premiered new music.

Thanks to every singer who made the experience “not about them,” but about those we sing about.

Thanks to Carl and Kathy and all administrators that both demand excellence yet show that even the process of administration can be “artistic.”

Thanks to all who uplift worship.

Thanks Rene, Anton, Andre, and all who we admire from afar, and from whom we gain so much.

Thanks Diane and all those who define “leader” as “humble servant.”

Thanks Rich, Dinah, Rod, and all who tirelessly give to countless singers and teachers, with no choir of their own to “fill them up.”

Thanks, Leslie, and all who quietly and anonymously gave support to colleagues.

Thanks Robin, Weston, and all those who are eternally childlike in their unabashed daily joy.

Thanks to Rod, Katie, Kelley, and all those who hosted festivals for the first time, for recreating the wheel, and being willing to share your ideas.

Thanks to all the students you said “yes” through their eyes.

Thanks, Howard, and all those who give written voice to and document our heritage.

Thanks Ben, and to all who bring texts to life to touch our souls in need of nourishment.

Thanks, Bryan, Tom and all who are leaving a position this year, for seeds sewn and for the knowledge that these seeds will bring forth beauty long after you.

Thanks Larry, Bruce, and all those who make their bands “sing.”

Thanks to all of you who gave a singer something to enjoy for the rest of their life, long after they forget the pieces you were working on.

Thanks to all who offered good words to a colleague in need.

Thanks to everyone who cried this year, who “sweat bullets,” who felt alone, who became fed up, for the measure of your pain is the measure of your passion.

Thanks to all who are already planning to find some way to grow this summer.

Thanks to all of you who are already thinking about how to make next year the best ever.

*...And you can tell everybody, this is your song, it may be quite simple but,
now that it's done,
I hope you don't mind that I put down in words how wonderful life is while
you're in the world.*

Thank you all. Take a moment to look at the beauty surrounding us in one another. Take a moment to express thanks.

And if, at this moment you are indeed tired of giving, and hanging on until the year is done and summer's promise comes, “this one's for you:”

*Lord, make me an instrument...where there is hatred let me sow love,
where there is injury – pardon, where there is fear – hope, where there is
darkness – light...
Let me not so much seek to be consoled, as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
For it is in giving that we receive,
and it is in dying that we are born.*

Thanks!

Editor's note: This was submitted to NW Notes in the spring of 2003. At the time, I knew who wrote it, though this person asked to remain anonymous. It's now 2017 and I can honestly say it must remain anonymous, for I cannot remember who wrote it!