

JASON GRAAE

PERFECT HERMANY (THE SONGS OF JERRY HERMAN)

Jerry Herman is the reason I got into this Business. I don't know whether to hug him or to hit him. I will NEVER forget the first time I heard "Some Enchanted Evening" and my life was changed. Oh wait – that was Rodgers and Hammerstein! I knew that. I have always loved Jerry's scores, and come on – WHO DOESN'T?

I started piano lessons when I was 9 – my piano bench was filled with Grieg, Beethoven, Mozart, Claire de Lune and the vocal selections from *Mame*. Guess which one I practiced the most? "It's Today," "Open a New Window," "You're My Best Girl" were my hymns. I grew up in the Bible Belt so that was... interesting. I was definitely different than most of the other children.

I've been so lucky to have worked closely with Jerry over the last 10 years. When you're with him it's so easy to forget that he's Broadway royalty – he's quite unassuming, has twinkling eyes and a smile like the Cheshire Cat, and he's just plain fun to be around. He is also unbelievably generous, has an INCREDIBLE sense of humor, and has impeccable taste in just about everything. And to top it all off, he is so supportive of singers performing his material – as long as it still SOUNDS like his material! 😊

I couldn't be happier that you're listening to this CD, celebrating a Broadway Superstar. Oh, and also Jerry Herman.
— Jason Graae

I love Jason Graae. There, I've said it and I'm glad. I fell in love with him the first time I met him, when he recorded a track for *Unsung Sondheim*. We laughed and laughed, and just when we thought we could laugh no more, we laughed again. And so it has been, through a multitude of songs we've recorded over the years, as well as two previous solo albums. Jason has the uncanny ability to make you fall out of your seat screaming with laughter one minute, and the next to have you misty-eyed (and not because he's playing his oboe). He's a singer's singer and an actor's actor. And when he's matched with a songwriter's songwriter like Jerry Herman, well, magic happens, as you're about to hear on this CD. So, close your eyes, imagine you've just been seated in the first row of the Colony Theatre because it's show time.

— Bruce Kimmel

Special Thanks to Bruce Kimmel, who begged me, on his knees, to do this CD and for his extremely hands-on guidance and love and expertise, to Musical Director extraordinaire John Boswell who is a complete delight to work with, to my director Lee Tannen for his supreme passion, creativity, and loyal friendship, to the amazingly generous and enthusiastic Sir Michael Kerker and ASCAP for a really grand tour of *Hello, Jerry!*, to the incredible Don Pippin for his invaluable collaboration, stories, and tempi, to the wonderful Alex Rybeck for being Alex Rybeck, to the suave and deboner Michael Sterling and Vitello's, to my partner Glen Fretwell of Inside/Out Landscape Design – "if you need your bushes trimmed they're the guys to do it!" to my Momma, who encouraged me to play oboe over clarinet because I'd get more solos, and to everyone at the beautiful Colony Theatre, especially gorgeous, classy Barbara Beckley for her wonderful leadership and for bringing Jerry Herman, *The Grand Tour* and me to Burbank.

— Jason Graae

*Jason instinctively knows
how to find the smile
or the tug at the heart be-
hind my music and lyrics.
How I love Jason Graae
singing my songs!
— Jerry Herman*