

Jim Ocean

Singer, Songwriter, Impresario, Cultural Activist

Jim Ocean was born Wolfgang Hans Jochim, in Stuttgart, Germany in 1952—an occupation brat taken to the wilds of Bismarck, North Dakota by a small-town air force sergeant father, and a beautiful German mother who scanned the ‘American Outback’ looking for civilization. Escaping endless sunflowers and wheat-fields, the restless family gasped for air a few years in Denver, Colorado, then moved on to Tulsa, Oklahoma where Jim developed a fascination with tornados and guitar. The family finally settled down just in time for the ‘Summer of Love’ in not-so-sunny Northern California. Jim went to Sonoma State, was part of a restaurant commune called ‘Our Small Planet’, and began gigging around the Sonoma folk scene, with his first concert appearing with Kate Wolf in the mid 1970’s.

Through a series of misadventures, Jim spent a year living, steeping, and performing in the East Coast’s prolific acoustic music scene. After saving enough gas money, Jim returned to the Bay Area, settling in the shadow of Mt. Diablo with an idea to create a concert series hosting original and traditional music.

That was 30 years ago. Since then, Jim has established an on-going music scene with his wife, KD Ocean. In addition to producing benefit concerts for non-profits, Jim and Kathy work with the City of Concord to produce the award-winning “Music and Market Series” (in its 23rd year). Other projects include ‘Summertime at the Maritime’ at the California Maritime Academy in Vallejo, OktoberFest—a fall festival in downtown Concord, and the Old Grove Festival at the Forest Theatre at Armstrong Woods State Reserve in Guerneville. (Check out the concert scene at www.communityconcerts.com)

Jim’s mission in life as an impresario and cultural activist is to produce seldom heard, widely eclectic music, and to create musical traditions that people can count on year after year. In this spirit Jim works on over 80 shows a year and was recently presented the highest cultural achievement award by the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County. Jim’s latest passion is to combine event production with environmental education. More on that as it develops, so stay tuned...

As a songwriter and performer Jim was the founder of the acclaimed, darkly satirical group Celtic Elvis. This crazy folk ‘n roll group released 3 recordings and toured the continent for over 10 years, setting album sale records in some venerable clubs. Many times Jim would have a show running in the Bay Area while he was onstage performing 3,000 miles away. Celtic Elvis disbanded in the late 90’s.

Jim briefly formed another group named ‘The Dogmatics’ that produced a CD called ‘Fear and Love’, which was recorded in Nashville with the house band for the Grand ‘Ol Opry. Some comments from that project: “A breath of fresh air, both challenging and pleasing, with great songs, performances and super production value.”

Jim has recently completed his first solo project, ‘Pop Tunes for Mystics’ to be released on Wildplum Records in January 2010. It’s a ‘rainy day’ record of original material with lyrics that explore the depths of the human experience. Full of thought-provoking material, beautiful & haunting melodies and a provocative, refreshing mix of instrumentation, his new project is a multi-layered gourmet feast for the ears and soul. “A secular ride through spiritual terrain.”

Jim lives in Guerneville, CA with his wife, two cats and Cha-warrior hamster-dog “Bella” (Chihuahua/Terrier), where in addition to drinking in the sea air and the mystery of the redwood forest, they operate a small vacation rental business. More information on that at www.riverseagetaways.com