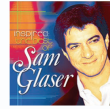


Rock On

with Sam Glaser



JE Magazine: Of all the singers in their catalog, Jewish Music Group calls you “the hardest working man in Jewish music.” How did you get that title?

Sam Glaser: Since 1992 I have been on tour to an average of fifty cities a year. I tend to be out of town every other weekend. When I’m not on the road I run a recording studio where I produce CDs for clients. Lots of clients! I also put out one of my own a year. Does that qualify?

JE Magazine: How do your wife and kids handle that?

SG: I’m a full time musician and I have to put food on the table! I individually take each of my three kids with me when I am on the road...it’s a wonderful bonding time for us. My wife and I have date night every Wednesday. That seems to maintain Shalom Bayis better than anything.

JE Magazine: Why don’t we see much of you in New York?

SG: I love New York! New York is a scene of its own...when the time is right, I guess. Although I’m an L.A. guy I am on the East Coast every other month...I play New Jersey, Philly, Boston, Florida, DC, Baltimore. Yes, most of my flights are five hours!

JE Magazine: I’ve spoken to some of your fans...some are so enthusiastic about your music they seem to be more like stalkers! Your website says you have a devoted following in all denominations. Is that just press release talk?

SG: I grew up in the Conservative movement, all my friends were Reform, I became Orthodox, my brothers became Chassidim, and my parents became Chabadniks. I’m all over the map. I play all the conferences...OU, GA, AJOP, cantorial, rabbinic, Hadassah, educators, for any Jew that moves. Shabbatons, chazzanut, teaching, whatever. I seem to have the personality of a “pleaser,” a unifier. My goal is to get people together. Close to each other and close to Hashem. It’s a real blessing when I play a gig where ALL the shuls in any given community collaborate on producing my concert.

JE Magazine: I know we hear your music all over the place but some of our readers probably don’t know it’s yours. Can you give us some ideas where we hear your stuff?

SG: Well, I have sold over 100,000 of my CDs and hopefully they are getting around. JM in the AM had two hour-long shows of my music in the past weeks. Thank G-d we have dozens of great Jewish radio/internet stations around the country. Aish.com uses a lot of my stuff. I produced the Voices for Israel CDs. I have cuts on Sameach’s latest releases...the new Veroba, A Capella Shabbos Treasury and the Best of Jewish A Capella. I’m on the Chabad Telethon every year. Are those enough shameless plugs?

JE Magazine: What about movie stuff? Are you still doing that?

SG: I spent much of the 80s and early 90s chasing that dream. Composing for commercials, TV movies, PBS, the WB Network, ESPN. Lots of sports music...for the Dodgers, Angels, Lakers, Clippers, World Cup of Surfing, Warren Miller Ski Films. But it was often heartbreaking...felt like everything I was writing was disposable. From that perspective, I don’t miss it. I still get a soundtrack project in the studio from time to time and I appreciate the challenge.

JE Magazine: What’s on the horizon for you?

SG: I’m marketing my new Chanukah release. JMG/Sony just picked it up and I’m shooting a one-hour TV special for it next month. It’s called Sam Glaser’s Rockin’ Chanukah Revue and features my eight-piece band and a kids choir. It’s my first attempt at doing parodies and it’s a lot of fun. I’m almost done with a new Hallel album. It’s close...really close...and I’m really excited about it. I’m writing a teen-oriented musical about Israel. At any given moment I’m producing about five artists at the same time. No rest for the weary.

JE Magazine: I think it’s safe to say that your CDs are among the best produced and most heartfelt that are out there. But you got so many of them...which ones would you recommend for newcomers?

SG: I’d start with Presence and The Bridge. I really proud of those two...one is about the themes of Tishrei and the other about unity and outreach. If you like niggunim, my Niggun/Voice of the Soul is really rich and features RebbeSoul and singers from Blue Fringe, Moshav and Soulfarm. For kids, the new Chanukah CD, Kol Bamidbar and Soap Soup should do the trick. I find that people get hooked and then start working their way backwards to my first release, Hineni. On my website you can buy 3 and get 1 free. Take a risk!

JE Magazine: Any final words for our readers?

SG: First of all, many thanks to JE Mag and to you for getting the word out about new Jewish music. For your readers: Welcome guests to your Shabbos table every chance you get. You can change lives for generations. Smile and say hello to everyone you see in the street and don’t worry if others think you are crazy for doing so. Have an attitude of gratitude. Daven hard for Mashiach. Don’t burn CDs for your friends. Buying downloads is cool but keep in mind that many artists like me intend to have their art taken in as a whole...you wouldn’t only buy 1/10th of a painting! Write to me at samglaser.com and let me know let me know what you think of my music. Keep on rockin’!

