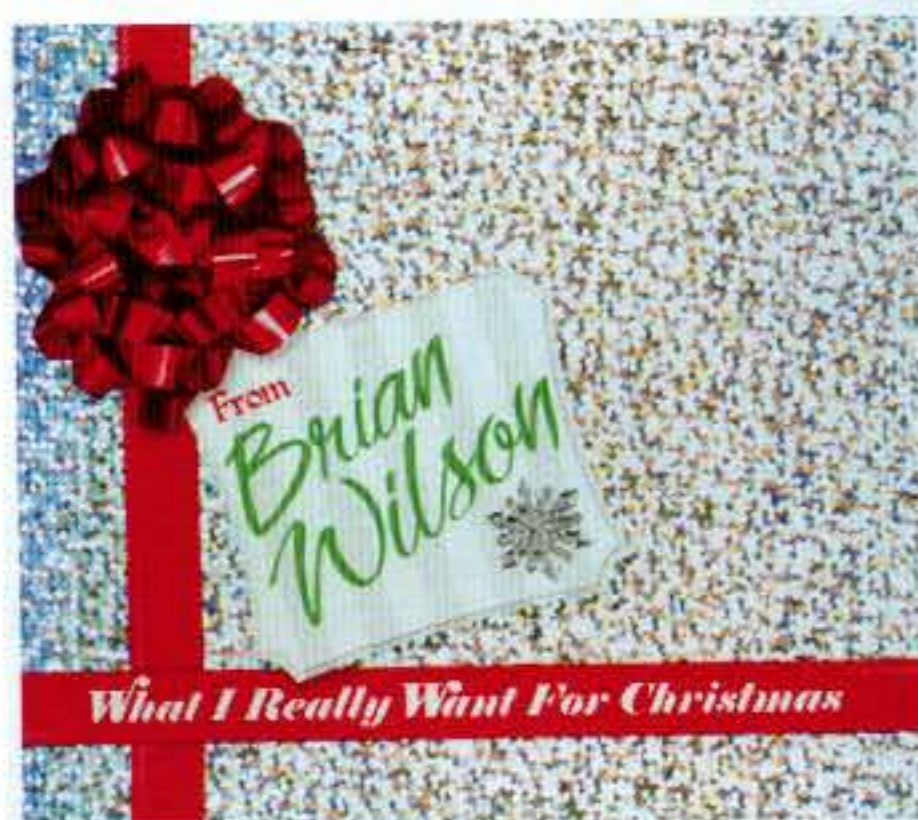




TCG RECORD REVIEWS

POP & ROCK BRIAN WILSON

What I Really Want For Christmas
(Arista)



Following the 2004 releases of *Gettin' In Over My Head* and his all time classic *Smile*, Brian returns in late 2005 with his first ever solo Christmas album. *What I Really Want For Christmas* is a festive 15 track foray exploring Wilson's love of holiday classics such as "O Holy Night," "The First Noel," "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," "Joy To The World" and other X-mas favorites. The best part of the CD though are the several new songs Wilson has co-written with songwriting giants **Bernie Taupin** and **Jimmy Webb** and an amazing reworking of the classic early Beach Boys X-mas song "The Man With All The Toys." Brian's upbeat, Beach Boys style harmonies have never sounded better than on these Yuletide classics and his brilliant band of merry men—including **Darian Sahanaja & The Wondermints**, **Jeffrey Foskett**, **Scott Bennett** and others—help him fully implement his jingle bell pop vision. www.brianwilson.com

CARAVAN

The 35th Anniversary Concert
(Chrome Dreams / MVD)

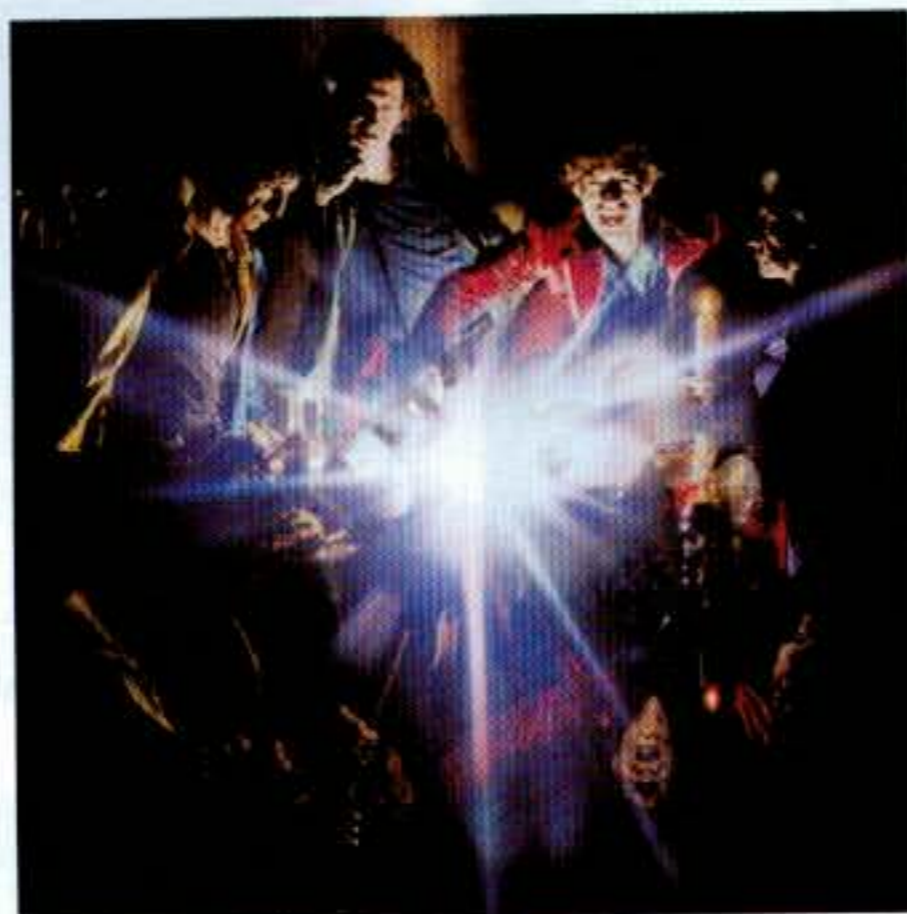
Having released their now classic album debut back in 1969, Caravan remains one of the greatest English progressive rock groups of the '70s. One part progressive and another part inspired by the great jazz-fusion group, Soft Machine, from their native Canterbury, Caravan were founded by singer-songwriters **Pye Hastings** (guitar) and **Richard Sinclair** (bass). One of the most interesting Caravan DVDs released thus far is *Caravan: The 35th Anniversary Concert*. Recorded and filmed live in concert at the Bloomsbury Theater in London on November 30th, 2003, the double DVD features Pye Hastings in top form backed by a band of notable players including founding Caravan drummer **Richard**

Coughlan and **Geoff Richardson** (violin, flute). Clocking in at 160 minutes, the double DVD covers a wide range of favorites along with interviews, an acoustic set and an all too brief 1973 Caravan performance on the BBC's *Old Grey Whistle Test*—a classic clip that defines Caravan as being among the most innovative of all the U.K. prog-rock pioneers. www.caravan-info.co.uk

THE ROLLING STONES

A Bigger Bang
(Virgin)

For their first new studio album since the



'97 *Bridges To Babylon* CD, the Stones have made their longest studio album since their '72 double Lp set *Exile On Main Street*. Produced by **Don Was** and **The Glimmer Twins**, *A Bigger Bang* features 16 hard rockin' Stones tracks. **Mick Jagger** is as dynamic as ever while the stinging guitars of **Keith Richards** and **Ron Wood** still shoot sparks. What would the Stones' sound be without drumming legend **Charlie Watts**, who keeps the big beat here. Writing some unusually pointed lyrics, Jagger—as someone befitting his rock legacy—pulls it all off with some great vocal finesse. In the spirit of both *Exile* and it's predecessor, *Sticky Fingers*, this 2005 Stones album cuts a wide swath of progressive, bluesy rock with stinging metallic rock guitar touches. Recorded in France and the West Indies and downloaded in L.A., *A Bigger Bang* is ample confirmation that The Rolling Stones do indeed, still roll on. www.rollingstones.com

GUITAR-BASED INSTRUMENTAL ALBUMS

EDGAR FROESE

Ages
(Voiceprint)

Best known for his Teutonic electronics

in Tangerine Dream, Edgar W. Froese has also recorded a wealth of instrumental solo albums over the past 30 years that display his unique approach to keyboard electronics, overdubbing electric guitar often as the key instrument. In 1979, Froese recorded what may be his all time solo masterpiece, *Ages*. In a twist of fate, Froese went back into the studio and rerecorded the entire *Ages* album again in 2004—performing, producing and engineering the entire album himself. A foreboding look into the mind of one of the key German musical figures of the late '60s and '70s, this 2004 rerecording of *Ages* is simply stunning and glistens with fresh depth and clarity. There's also another 2004 album from Froese, an electronic music opus dedicated to **Salvador Dali** entitled *Dalinetopia*. Recorded in Vienna in '04, the CD art features intriguing photos of Froese with Salvador Dali in Spain sometime during 1967. The incredible cover artwork makes one yearn for the time, 20+ years ago, when record covers were considered a true pop art form. www.edgarfroese.com

ERIC ROBERTS

In A Silent Place
(Music Magic Productions)

The '90s was a great time to discover the magic of therapeutic instrumental music. Guitarist Eric Roberts carries on the spirit of healing musical vibes with the CD release of *In A Silent Place*. Much of the album is solo jazz and modern classical, expertly performed on nylon string guitar. Roberts peppers the sound with his own work on steel string, guitar synth, fretless bass and midi percussion. Another key factor here is virtuoso cellist **David Darling**, who appears on several tracks. Roberts describes his music as 'jazzy, noncommercial New Age', and as such, is a perfect choice for relaxation, meditation and quiet contemplation. His resume includes gigs with icons like The 5th Dimension, The Smothers Brothers and Anthony Newley and with the release of *In A Silent Place*, Roberts has recorded an album of sublime instrumental guitar sounds. www.dmamusic.org

GARETH D. KEAR

Bucks County Guitar
(GDK)

On his 2005 CD, *Bucks County Guitar*, Gareth Kear sounds clearly inspired by the rural landscapes north of Philadelphia. A well rounded player influenced by Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughan, as well as acoustic masters like Jorma Kaukonen and Leo Kottke, Kear generates an impressive Americana fingerstyle folk guitar sound yet he also