

Julie Shearer writes the kind of songs I like to listen to. Her melodies are eminently singable, and her lyrics evoke in familiar words situations and feelings we all recognize. She writes both music and words,\* as Cole Porter did and Stephen Sondheim does, but the combination of these talents in one person is rare among composers and lyricists for musical theater, which is the model Julie has looked to since she first dreamed of becoming a songwriter.

She tells me these songs are “written from life I experienced or people important to me,” and as a longtime neighbor and friend, I may even think I know the who, what, and when in connection with some of them, but of course these have been generalized, as they usually are. Love songs are typically about the first and second persons, less commonly the third, so you won’t find a map to these lovers’ doors. Everyone’s welcome to the comfort and nourishment of this Home Brew, and Julie is too good a friend to her friends to tell whose it was.

Inspired by or composed for specific occasions, her songs continue to attract and enrich us by addressing permanent elements of our human condition: our appetite, our transience, perhaps most of all our love of life and of the numberless “good things” of this world. We are invited to dwell on these in one song that recounts a number of them, and in another she celebrates a very bearable lightness of being and of song itself. In her ballads, in a more ruminative mood, time creates beauty and effaces it as lovers act and are acted upon, as “now” fades into “then.”

Her music, various and memorable, awakens expectation and satisfies it, each song in its own way fresh and inevitable and complete in itself. Worshipful or wishful, upbeat or lowdown, after a few hearings it remains in the mind, ready to rekindle for us the joy its author surely felt when it was completed.

—Martin B. Friedman

\*except for Rob Browning’s words to “Pretty Lies”

## Acknowledgments

I am deeply grateful to: Russell Ellis, who inspires my best efforts; City of Berkeley Arts Ambassador Susan D Felix, who made the call, and then made the call; Co-producers Libby McLaren and Robin Flower, for trustworthy guidance, awesome artistry, and midwifery crucial to this project; and Derek Bianchi, for committed, exacting, and creative sound engineering.

I so appreciate: Martin Friedman, who listened deeply and heard it all; Melanie Berzon, who passionately champions jazz—and all music—on the air; Dorothy Walker, a stimulating and discriminating devotee of cabaret; Elena Servi Burgess, who applied high standards of diction to the songs; Carolyn North, who made recording my music a condition of friendship; and Ellen Louise Hoffman, Caz Jazz tent mate and musical trailblazer.

For artistic excellence, I salute singers: Nicolas Bearde, Danny Carnahan, Robin Flower, Solas Burke-Lalgee, Anna de Leon,\* Libby McLaren, , SoVoSo (Sunshine Becker, Bryan S. Dyer, Zoë Ellis, and Dave Worm), T Sisters (Chloe, Erika, and Rachel Tietjen), and musicians: Robin Flower, Ellen Hoffman, \*\* Susie Laraine, Libby McLaren, and Brian Rice.

I thank SoVoSo’s engineer, Roland Fajilan, for his outstanding craft and kindness. I’m indebted to Jason Martineau, for rapid, intuitive typesetting and music insights, and to Ernie Mansfield, for ably resurrecting scores from software past.

I celebrate the wonderfully creative and supportive Amy Pesonen, Kyle Pesonen, and Lynn Pesonen who, with Zoë Ellis, made me “philanthropist for a day” to Cazadero Performing Arts Family Camp. Their idea started my journey to this album.

I’m honored by encouragement and support from those who made the gift to Caz possible: Mikey Baba, Adony and Rebecca Beniares, Dave Ellis, Russell Ellis, Zoë Ellis, Steve Falzon, Chelsi Falzon, Mark Fisher, Marcia Flannery, Kiki Heller, Ellen Hoffman, Diana Lee, Amy Pesonen, Kyle and Lynn Pesonen, David Pesonen and Mary Jane LaBelle, Flora Redd Schultz, and Alan MacDougall Shearer.

—Julie Gordon Shearer

\*Who permitted use of her recorded performance of “Home Brew” here.

\*\*Who permitted use of her recorded performance of “From Where I Stand” here.

Julie Shearer really knows how to tell a story. She's lived life fully, and her songs reflect it. There is wisdom in her lyrics. Take, for instance, the poignant "From Where I Stand," performed by the brilliant pairing of then 19-year-old Solas Burke-Lalgee with pianist Ellen Hoffman. I dare you to listen to this masterpiece without shedding a tear, no matter how often you hear it.

In "Light as Song," Julie invokes the natural beauty of the world we live in and takes us there through the breathtaking harmonies of The T Sisters. Vocalist Nicolas Bearde adds his luster to the revealing "Pretty Lies." And if you're not in love already, "Draw Me A Map" (Libby McLaren, vocal, piano; Robin Flower, guitar) will make you wish you were.

Every story--and every life--must end one day. For those we love, the end comes way too soon. Julie chronicles the life of the late Tom Alexander in "Tom Ever After" with such reverence and respect, that we almost feel we knew him, too, and wish we did! In these hard times, I must mention the all-important "Five Good Things"—Julie's valuable reminder to practice gratitude regularly by appreciating five good things every day. After listening to Julie Shearer's CD, *When Now Is Then*, I'm putting HER and IT on MY list of five.

**—Melanie Berzon, Program Director, KCSM Radio**

What an eclectic and original selection of songs by Julie Shearer! There is something here for everyone—songs of love, hope, joy, pain, sorrow; a song for children and a sexy blues; a folk song, a hymn, and even a samba. Turn up the temperature with "Home Brew," dance with your lover to "Dance with Me," have a quiet moment with the poetry of the elegiac "Light as Song," and enjoy!

**—Dorothy Walker, Afficionado of American song and cabaret**



# WHEN NOW IS THEN

Words and Music by Julie Gordon Shearer

1. From Where I Stand
2. Pretty Lies
3. Draw Me a Map
4. Didn't I Tell You?
5. Home Brew
6. Light as Song
7. When Now Is Then
8. Dance with Me
9. Five Good Things
10. Back to You
11. Tom Ever After
12. Tom's March



Beyond Measures™

All words and music are by Julie Gordon Shearer ©2011

• All original songs published by Beyond Measures, ASCAP ©2011

[www.JulieGordonShearerMusic.com](http://www.JulieGordonShearerMusic.com)

# WHEN NOW IS THEN

1. From Where I Stand 3.59  
Solias Burke-Lalgee, vocal; Ellen Hoffman, piano.  
Recorded and mixed at Bay Records, Michael Cogan, engineer.
2. Pretty Lies 3.21  
Nicolas Bearde, vocal; Ellen Hoffman, piano.
3. Draw Me a Map 3.53  
Libby McLaren, vocal, piano; Robin Flower, guitar.
4. Didn't I Tell You? 2.17  
Ellen Hoffman, piano; Brian Rice, cajon.
5. Home Brew 3.21  
Anna de Leon, vocal; Ellen Hoffman, piano; Susie Laraine, sax.  
Recorded and mixed at Bay Records, Michael Cogan, engineer
6. Light as Song 4.57  
The T Sisters (Rachel, Chloe, and Erika Tietjen),  
vocals; Libby McLaren, piano.
7. When Now Is Then 5.00  
Libby McLaren, vocal; Ellen Hoffman, piano.
8. Dance with Me 3.13  
Nicolas Bearde, vocal; Libby McLaren, piano.
9. Five Good Things 2.44  
Danny Carnahan, Robin Flower, Libby McLaren, vocals;  
Libby McLaren, piano
10. Back to You 4.24  
Libby McLaren, vocal; Ellen Hoffman, piano.
11. Tom Ever After 5.00  
Libby McLaren, vocal, piano; Robin Flower, mandolin, fiddle.
12. Tom's March 4.00  
Libby McLaren, vocal, piano, accordion; Robin Flower, fiddles.

Produced by  
Robin Flower & Libby McLaren:  
[www.flowerandmclaren.com](http://www.flowerandmclaren.com).  
[flower2mclaren@earthlink.net](mailto:flower2mclaren@earthlink.net).

Except as noted, all songs were  
recorded, mixed, and mastered  
at MuscleTone Studios,  
Derek Bianchi, engineer:  
[www.muscletonestudios.com](http://www.muscletonestudios.com)  
Total time@47 mins music +  
Piano photos by Sibila Savage  
Graphic design by Mai Kong

All words and music are by  
Julie Gordon Shearer ©2011,  
except words to Pretty Lies by Rob Browning.  
All original songs published by  
Beyond Measures, ASCAP ©2011.  
All rights reserved.  
[www.JulieGordonShearermusic.com](http://www.JulieGordonShearermusic.com)

*When Now Is Then* is juliemuseCD #2.

