

**Plain-Spoken, Emotive Rock, with Unexpected Instrumentation, as Robins Crafts a Personal Collection with a Russian Twist**

**Debut CD, Dedicated to Singer-Songwriter's Three Daughters, is, Literally, "Everything That Matters"**

**Underlying Patriotism of an American Abroad Fuels a Pair of Tracks; Album Out October 25<sup>th</sup>**

With plain-spoken, emotive lyrics and unexpected instrumentation, singer-songwriter **Gregg Robins** crafts a heartfelt debut CD dedicated to his three daughters. Robins, a Bronx transplant living in Russia, builds engaging songs that are direct and conversational in tone, many driven by the pain of a broken marriage, the estrangement from and ultimate reconciliation with his daughters, and the hope of finding new love. On the October 25<sup>th</sup> release 'Everything That Matters', Robins' understated delivery is often juxtaposed by lush instrumentation, ranging from strings to klezmer-infused solos to songs that suggest a Native American rhythmic undertone, and more. Visit

[www.greggrobins.com](http://www.greggrobins.com) for audio samples and additional information. Listen to Robins discussing the evolution of the CD, via this expansive podcast: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDgWTc58Rjc>.

There's an emotional integrity to the music that is reflective of the subject matter, as Robins suggests in his song notes, below. Highlights include the rich and winning track 'If I Could Be There,' the ironically



titled 'Angel', and a Russian-language version of the song 'Pages of My Life'. There is also a pair of tracks, 'Morning in America' and 'Heroes', which convey Robins' patriotism from abroad. 'Morning in America' focuses on the 2008 presidential election, and 'Heroes' shines a light on our men and women in the military. Robins comments:

*"Everything that Matters" is a journey for me across the spectrum of human emotion and experience: from heartbreak to love, separation to reuniting, to the euphoria of an historic election and the spirit and saga of our soldiers far away. Drawing on a range of musical styles and influences from classical to jazz, and Russian and American folk-rock, the songs range from ballads to sing-out-loud, clap-along tunes. While the songs vary musically, for me the common thread is the lyrics that I try to make honest, forthright, and hopeful."*

*"I began as a classical clarinetist, performing a broad classical repertoire at an early age. As a teenager, I added alto saxophone and ventured beyond the classical stage into jazz improvisation, a passion extended more recently to klezmer, which harks back to my East European roots. My roots have led me to spend decades traveling in and working with Russia. I am a native of the Bronx, New York, who has traveled a journey from high school dropout to Oxford Phd."*

The Production Team for the album includes:

**David Hadzis** of Arthanor is the Producer, with Gregg Robins as co-Producer. Since the mid-80's, Hadzis has been involved in the production of over one hundred record releases in Europe, the U.S., Canada and Australia. **Yvan Bing** of Kitchen Studio is the Mixing Engineer. He studied audio engineering at Berklee Music College in New York and was the main engineer at Dinemec Studios in Geneva. He has worked with **Phil Collins**, including on his last album. **Greg Calbi** of Sterling Sound is the Mastering Engineer. He has mastered at the highest level for decades, including **Bruce Springsteen's** "Born to Run" and **Paul Simon's** "Graceland."

### **Song Notes, by Gregg Robins:**

**Goodbye & Hello:** This song is sentimental, and was written with travel and family in mind. It is meant to convey a sense of perspective, and to take some of the perceived luster off traveling around for business. It deals, too, with the difficulties that arise in families that have to juggle different places and time zones.

**Sounds of the Day:** Written during difficult times, in the middle of the night, when it became clear to me that my marriage was ending. The images of the song reflect the contrast between the heaviness of life and

the beauty of nature. The song conveys hope and beauty in the midst of suffering and anguish.

**Just What I Needed:** Written for a new love, as a message to send across the miles. It is all about perspective and recognizing the importance in relationships, romance, and life.

**Walk Away:** Written as a reaction to people who have demonstrated that it is impossible to expect to change them. The concept of walking away is important as a way to preserve oneself and cope with certain people. The song was originally conceived after a rather disastrous phone call...

**So Many Ways:** Written for my three girls after I moved out of our home. The lyrics speak for themselves, and reflect my love and frustration at being unable to communicate with them, in any way. The song was written on guitar but with the idea in mind that the piano would play the lead role.

**Angel:** Written during what was clearly a difficult time. The song reflects frustration with a person who had become completely intransigent and destructive. The use of the word "angel" is meant to be ironic, and is a word that carries meaning from the personal crisis that was raging at the time...

**Morning in America:** Written two days before the November 2008 election in the United States, Morning in America reflected the hope and promise surrounding Barack Obama as he stood on the threshold of becoming president. It was written on Sunday in our Geneva living room, recorded late Monday night in Arthanor Studio, very late, and then played for the first time publicly at the Hotel Richmond in Geneva at a Democrats Abroad party, shortly following the announcement of Barack Obama's historic victory. The song was then placed on You Tube where it has gathered more than 2,000 hits (and another 1,000 on Myspace), and was played by the DJ at the Campaign Staff Ball at the 2008 Inauguration.

**Heroes:** Written in December 2009 for the wounded warriors returning from Iraq and Afghanistan in preparation for a visit to the U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. The song is being used to raise money to help soldiers returning to the US. It looks at the heroic and dangerous aspects of war, also highlighting the personal desire to get home to one's family and loved ones.

**If I Could Be There:** Written just when my new partner was far away in the U.S., and this was a way of communicating with her... for me. I wrote the song with a simple, classical acoustic guitar while sitting on the balcony, literally staring into the sky and the stars of Geneva.

**Pages of My Life:** Written when I became very aware of the extent to which loved ones were leaving my life and that generations were changing. The structure of the song derives from Russian "bard" music and oscillates between reality and fantasy. Indeed, there is a Russian

language version of the song, and its flavor and feel are distinct from the original English version.

**Memories & Yesterdays:** Written on the one-year anniversary of my losing contact with my daughters. I also lost photographs, videos, and other sentimental things that reflected my past. The song reflects my sadness at the length and extent of the separation, and also my hope and firm belief that we would be reunited and not lose our past.

**Everything that Matters:** Written while my new partner was in the hospital for emergency surgery and during her ten-day recovery period. It is a song I wrote late each night after a day in the hospital. I played it for her as soon as she was released -- another song about perspective and not losing sight of what is most important.

For more information about Gregg Robins, to set an interview, or for a review copy of his debut CD, contact [sethcohenpr@earthlink.net](mailto:sethcohenpr@earthlink.net)