

## PETER HIMMELMAN



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Peter Himmelman is an acclaimed creator of children’s music, an Emmy-nominated composer, and a critically lauded rock troubadour.

His new family music release *My Green Kite* (Rounder Records), offers his unique on the world. Not content to let the ordinary things of daily life slip by unnoticed, Himmelman directs our attention to the wonders of feet, eggs and red rubber boots rain. “I like to divest the mundane from its mundanity,” explains Himmelman. though we may have experienced something a million times, it doesn’t make it known to us. I try to find the wondrous and magical elements of everyday life.”

This childlike celebration of innocence and wonder appeals to a range of ages, sparked with a wit that has made Himmelman a favorite family pop artist for at least the last decade. While the songs on *My Green Kite* are written for kids, the issues raised provoke thought in listeners of any age. The humor and slice-of-life vignettes found in each song are inspired by Himmelman’s own experiences as a father of four children. “Kids are never too young to think about what’s important in life,” he says.

Himmelman says *My Green Kite* came together quickly. “When songs come to you, you gotta get them down while you can.” After several “all-night crazy songwriting sessions,” he gathered a group of accomplished musicians, including co-producer/multi-instrumentalist Willie Aron (who was a member of the Balancing Act and has played with Rickie Lee Jones and Phoebe Snow), bassist Brett Simmons (who performs with Minnie Driver) and Brendan Buckley (who accompanies Shakira among others) and quickly laid down the tracks. “Recording this was great fun, with no one trying to be overly cool, worrying about the critics or feeling angsty, as often happens when you’re recording pop music. This album really allowed us to stretch as musicians.”

Music has been an integral part of Himmelman’s life since he was a kid growing up in the Minneapolis suburb of St. Louis Park. “I heard a lot of good music coming from behind my older sibling’s doors,” the artist recalls. Himmelman’s family’s eclectic taste in music helped him form his own style. At one time his father owned an 8-track music store and would bring home Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin tapes; his mother’s eclectic musical tastes included Ahmad Jamal and Thelonious Monk, while his uncle introduced him to John Lee Hooker’s *Endless Boogie*, which a young Himmelman played over and over again.

After getting his first electric guitar – a red Fender Duo Sonic – when he was 12, Himmelman soon started a rock band and began writing songs. He continued his Twin Cities musical career with the Trinidadian reggae/calypso band Shangoya and a new wave rock group known as Sussman Lawrence. His pop-rock efforts continue to draw audiences around the nation, with his most recent solo effort *Imperfect World* (2005) finding widespread critical acclaim. He is busy recording another adult album for release in 2007.

During the ‘90s, Himmelman, now living in Los Angeles, expanded his musical horizons by scoring a number of television shows and films, including the Disney series *Bug Juice*, NBC’s *American Embassy* and Touchstone Pictures’ *Crossing the Bridge*. In 2002, he earned an Emmy nomination for his work on *Judging Amy*, a show he scored during 1999-2005. He’s currently composing music for the hit television series *Bones* (Fox) and *Men in Trees* (ABC). Exploring different musical opportunities has long intrigued Himmelman. While living in New York in the early ‘80s, he wrote music for Swatch watches, Jordache jeans, and runway music for top fashion designer Issey Miyake. He’s also created music for national PSAs for drug awareness and written a series of songs for “Spinoza Bear,” a singing toy that’s currently being used to aid autistic children and rape victims.

Himmelman’s children’s music has met with considerable success. He has made three children’s albums: *My Best Friend Is A Salamander* (1997), *My Fabulous Plum* (2000) and *My Lemonade Stand* (2004), with both *Plum* and *Salamander* being recognized with a Parents’ Choice Award and the Family Channel Seal Of Quality. Himmelman doesn’t compartmentalize his children’s music from his work for grownups. “If there’s a truth that I know well, I’ll try to communicate it. I may use different words with kids, but the idea is the same.”

Himmelman plans a tour to support *My Green Kite*, his first release on Rounder Records. Other future projects for the ever-busy Himmelman include another children’s album and a television pilot. For updates, visit [www.rounder.com](http://www.rounder.com) and [www.peterhimmelman.com](http://www.peterhimmelman.com).

(by Michael Berick and Beth Blenz-Clucas)