

Sight and Sound

MUSIC

Thanking God for Second Chances 2nd Chance

By Karen Clark Sheard, Elektra

Vocalist extraordinaire Karen Clark Sheard returns from a five-year hiatus with her Elektra debut and second solo project. Made famous as a member of the legendary Clark Sisters and daughter of gospel pioneer, the late Mattie Moss Clark, Sheard has had the gospel music community waiting with bated breath for her new release, 2nd Chance.

The title, alluding to the health setback that brought her to death's door (she was given only a 2 percent chance to live), aptly describes the spiritual renewal that has taken place in her life. The revival is readily apparent in the inspirational tone of such songs as "I've Been Changed" and "Brand New Day."

"Be Sure," an R&B-flavored cut about being sure of your potential mate, will certainly be welcomed on mainstream radio. Other strong cuts include the funky "Only Call on Jesus," the emotive "If I Can't Say a Word" and the upbeat "So Good." Other highlights are the churchy, organ-tinged "It's Not Over," a reminder that God has the last say, and the beautifully penned "A Secret Place."

Not skimping on production, 2nd Chance brings in such notables as Richard Smallwood, Donald Lawrence, Paul D. Allen and Sheard's cousin J. Moss. Known as a riveting singer, Sheard

steps it up a notch with this project.

There's something about really going through that gives you a testimony you just can't hide. And Karen Clark Sheard isn't about to keep quiet about how the Lord healed her. You hear it in her music, and you hear it in her voice. She's grateful for her second chance.

Andrea R. Robinson

Worship Extreme

Saturate

By Jeff Deyo, Gotee Records.

Don't let the reference to water fool you. Jeff Deyo's *Saturate* is not tranquil, relaxing-by-the-brook worship. The one-time SonicFlood frontman draws from his former group's sound to create a passionate worship experience that will leave listeners longing for a more intense experience with God.

Produced by Deyo and former SonicFlood producers Bryan Lenox and Otto Price, *Saturate* follows a similar formula to previous SonicFlood releases: Take great worship songs and inject them with a punchy, pop-rock flavor. The opening "More Love, More Power," which features Gotee founder Toby McKeehan, is teeming with energy. The ensuing cuts, nine of which Deyo wrote, continue the fervor; standouts include the fun, passionate "I Give You My Heart" and the vulnerable plea "Satisfy."

Among Deyo's other guests are Rebecca St. James on the high-energy "Sing to You" and Selah's Nicol Smith on the ballad "All I Want." Throughout the album Deyo includes short

exhortations that blend poignant observations, insightful reflections and prayer, a distinctive that makes the album an even richer listening experience.

Fans of SonicFlood or modern worship will enjoy this recording. But Deyo distinguishes himself as an artist with a heart for God and a passion for worship. Those who long to be saturated with the presence of God will appreciate this recording, too.

Margaret Feinberg

Classic Gospel

Beautiful Stars

By Isaac Freeman and the Bluebloods, Lost Highway Records

Isaac Freeman, a 50-year veteran of the famed Fairfield Four gospel quartet, has given American music something priceless with the 73-year-old's first solo release, *Beautiful Stars*.

Following the surprising popularity of the Grammy-winning, bluegrass *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack, which featured the Fairfield Four (and Freeman in the film), Lost Highway Records has released a project that presents gospel music at its best; Freeman's rich, Barry White-like baritone will literally stir the soul. Backed by Tennessee blues band the Bluebloods, Freeman offers a collection of blues, Southern gospel and hymns, and features classics such as "Because He Lives," "Don't Drive Your Children Away" and "Jesus Is on the Mainline."

Beautiful Stars is "old school" gospel, like the kind Freeman grew up singing with his mother in Bethlehem Baptist Church in

Johns, Ala. The collective is as much a trek through history as a rich listening experience, which is well demonstrated in “You Must Come in at the Bottom,” written by Garrison Keillor.

Like the O Brother, Where Art Thou? soundtrack, Beautiful Stars should help revive appreciation for the foundational gospel and blues sounds that inspired a plethora of other genres. With pristine production, Beautiful Stars is as classic as the man at its helm.

Adrienne S. Gaines

More Than a Song

Beyond This Song

By Vicki Yohe, Aluminum Records

In her fifth album, Vicki Yohe moves her music beyond its previous limits. Blending pop rock with contemporary praise and worship, Beyond This Song features cuts such as the tender ballad “One That I Pursue” and the inspirational “Jehovah Jirah.” Yohe’s deep, passionate voice expresses an array of emotions. Songs such as “I Will Love You Forever” and the reflective “Undenying Love” will make this release a favorite among fans of adult-contemporary music.

Margaret Feinberg

BOOKS

Plugging In to God’s Power

Plugged In to God’s Power

By Doug Beacham, Charisma House,

246 pages, paperback, \$.

One of four Bible studies in the Journey of Faith series, *Plugged In to God's Power* provides 12 lessons for individuals and small groups that offer participants a nonreligious Holy Spirit encounter.

Executive director of church education ministries for the International Pentecostal Holiness Church, author Doug Beacham begins the study by introducing readers to the Holy Spirit. The quest continues as Beacham covers such topics as the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, what it means to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues and the historic work of the Holy Spirit.

Each chapter offers exploration questions and a "Let's Talk About It" section designed to generate further discussion and meditation. It is followed by the closing "Time to Plug In to the Holy Spirit" section that always ends in prayer.

Those who complete the study learn that their encounter with the Holy Spirit begins with salvation and never ends. *Plugged In to God's Power* makes readers alive to the Current flowing in and around them.

Pamela Robinson

A Life's Adventure

Adventure of Faith

*By Michael Green, Harper Collins/Zondervan,
440 pages, hardcover, \$.*

Those who have been involved in ministry over the course of many years carry pearls of wisdom. Michael Green is no exception. He has shared those pearls in more than 40 best-selling books including *I Believe In the Holy Spirit*, *Runaway World*, *Why Bother With Jesus?* and *Who Is This Jesus?*

In his latest, *Adventure of Faith*, Green offers an overview of his more than 50 years in Christian service. He has served as a professor of evangelism at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia, rector of St. Aldate's Church in Oxford and adviser in evangelism to the archbishops of Canterbury.

Although it is partly autobiographical, the book offers insights on church growth, development and ministry. Green looks at the strengths and weaknesses of different movements, including those of evangelicals, charismatics, cell groups and various outreaches.

The 16 chapters provide an overview of where the church has been and where it is heading. This is a valuable resource to all those involved in ministry.

Margaret Feinberg

For Women Only

Sister Wit: Devotions for Women

By Jacqueline Jakes, Warner Books,

250 pages, hardcover, \$.

Jacqueline Jakes has walked through the valley of the shadow of death, and like the psalmist, she hopes to encourage others

facing similar trials in her short, inspirational devotional *Sister Wit. Jakes*, sister of Bishop T.D. Jakes, testifies to the mighty hand of God continually lifting her up as she struggled during a long recovery after surgery to remove a brain tumor. She has witnessed the Lord's faithfulness firsthand and inspires readers to seek Him despite their circumstances.

With more than 100 devotions under the headings of inspiration, struggles, virtues and encouragement, *Jakes* reaches out to every woman. She has "unstitched the words of this book from the cloth of my soul." It is a fine, richly textured, garment that will comfort readers' hearts.

Pamela Robinson

A Growing Church

Dog Training, Fly Fishing and Sharing Christ in the 21st Century

By Ted Haggard, Thomas Nelson,
224 pages, hardcover, \$.

Pastor Ted Haggard believes the secret to church growth is in mobilizing members to become "ministers" within their areas of interest. The paradigm has led to a small-group model that has become the basis of his latest book, *Dog Training, Fly Fishing and Sharing Christ in the 21st Century*.

Borrowing from long-held economic principles, Haggard of New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colo., embraces a "free market" vision for small groups that emphasizes meeting the felt needs and/or interests of people. He says many people, including himself, do not want to be tossed into a small group

composed of “friends” they have not chosen and topics that do not interest them.

To offset potential problems, New Life uses a screening and training process, and requires monthly leadership training. Haggard compares New Life’s model with three other small-group systems popular in U.S. churches—including that of his mentor Larry Stockstill, who endorses the more structured “G12” model, in which groups consist of 12 people who each lead a group of 12.

Dog Training is an intriguing look at small-group life and how people connect. Haggard encourages church leaders to break out of molds that may be hindering church growth.

John M. De Marco

MUSIC SPOTLIGHT

Enter the Worship Circus

Which comes first: rock or worship? For the members of Rock ‘n’ Roll Worship Circus, a new band on Integrity’s Vertical Music label, the answer is unequivocally worship. But they’re not planning to turn the music down.

The foursome have been doing their brand of rock ‘n’ roll-inspired worship for 10 years at Evangel Christian Fellowship in Longview, Wash., a church that came to be known as a “worship circus” because of the way its diverse attendees, which include the homeless, respond to the gospel.

Though rock 'n' roll is the group's means of expression, frontman Gabriel "Gabe" Wilson says music is "second or third on the agenda." At concerts, they set the boundaries: "This is not a rock 'n' roll show. Music is a backdrop to prayer and what God wants to do. If it took us laying down our instruments and holding a prayer 's what we'd do."

Resembling the sounds of David Bowie, Pink Floyd and the Beatles, Worship Circus' music may be a nontraditional backdrop for ministry, but the group has seen a "holy hush" descend on attendees as they played. Wilson says the crowd then broke out into celebration, with parents and youth alike jumping up and down.

Wilson hopes more concerts will go like this one in Alabama did, and when the music stops: "I want them to go home with a revelation of God that they didn't have before. That would be so rad.

Adrienne S. Gaines