

Sight & Sound

MUSIC

Capturing the Songs of Angels

Song of Angels

*By Freddy Hayler, Crystal Sea Records;
Whitaker House, 103 pages, hardcover, \$.*

Classically trained vocalist Freddy Hayler offers a worship experience that will appeal to many spiritual seekers who are looking for a closer touch from God. A mixture of opera and prophetic psalms based on visions of heaven that Hayler received, *Song of Angels* combines prophetic utterance, narration, Scripture, orchestral arrangements and ethereal effects.

Stylistically, many of the selections would be fitting in a theatrical production, but the words have a solid and reverberating spiritual theme. The title cut is a 16-minute account of a heavenly visitation Hayler says he experienced.

In a book by the same title released by Whitaker House, which includes a copy of the CD, Hayler organizes a thorough collection of essays, Scripture verses and prophecies. Reminiscent of teachings from ministers such as Benny Hinn, this book combines many of the spiritual elements associated with the Brownsville Revival and Toronto Blessing.

Those desiring to bring this atmosphere home with them will

undoubtedly welcome both works. The book also poses some serious topics to consider that would be ideal for Bible study groups.

Because of Hayler's musical style, *Song of Angels* is not for everyone. However, this project will be prized, enjoyed and discussed by many. With messages of God's love, providence and grace, as well as challenges calling Christians to repent and prepare for the spiritual battle ahead, *Angels* is unquestionably appropriate for this day.

—Doug Joseph

Holiday Memories

Just Remember

Fred Hammond, Verity.

Award-winning artist Fred Hammond uses his trademark style of songwriting and production to create a 12-song set that resonates with a theme that lasts all year: that "heaven put on human clothes" and sent a child to save the world.

Just Remember opens with "His Name Is Jesus," an energetic praise song celebrating the various attributes of God: "wonderful," "counselor," "mighty God," "everlasting Father." The release also features uplifting tracks such as "Suddenly," "It Took a Child to Save the World" and the worship ballad "We Sing Glory," in which Hammond tells the story of Jesus' birth, life and purpose.

Hammond also puts his unique touch to such holiday classics as

“Go Tell It on the Mountain” and the 4HIM hit “A Strange Way to Save the World.” Fans of Verity’s Christmas volumes *The Real Meaning of Christmas* also will recognize “Glory to the Lamb.”

Yet the musical gem of *Just Remember* is its title track, in which Hammond fuses “Carol of the Bells” with “My Favorite Things” from *The Sound of Music* to create a memorable song that masterfully conveys the heart of Christmastime. “If there is no tree / And if tears fill your eyes / Just remember / God sent His son / so that we could live.”

Hammond’s first solo Christmas release, *Just Remember* has the makings of a holiday classic to be appreciated for years to come.

—Twanna Powell

Christmas Shoes

The Christmas Shoes

NewSong, Reunion Records.

Last year NewSong received an unexpected present when their song, “The Christmas Shoes,” became a No. 1 mainstream radio hit. The success inspired the group’s first Christmas album and a book by Donna Van Liere (St. Martin’s Press) that share the same name.

The recording features a number of holiday standards, including “O Holy Night” and “The First Noel,” as well as several new compositions, including “Sing Noel” and “As the World Slept.” The heartbeat of the album, though, is still the title song, which recounts a poor boy’s effort to buy his

dying mother a pair of shoes for Christmas. Its tender sound and heart-tugging lyrics are reminiscent of “Butterfly Kisses,” and if enough ears catch the melody, it has the potential to be another blockbuster success.

Even with lighthearted tunes such as “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch” and “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree,” NewSong manages to pull off a Christmas album that is Christ-centered.

—Margaret Feinberg

BOOKS

Inspiration for Spirit-Led Living

Stories for the Spirit-Filled Believer

*Edited by Cristine Bolley, Starburst Publishers,
336 pages, paperback, \$.*

Keep this book by your nightstand and use these bite-sized stories to jump-start your morning devotions. Words such as “inspirational,” “heartwarming” and “miraculous” only scratch the surface of describing this treat. Including well-known contributors such as T.D. Jakes and Oral Roberts, along with less prominent individuals, the work brings to life God’s activity in the earth.

Beth Moore’s story of obedience opening an evangelistic door is instructive, as is Joyce Meyer’s when she compares preparing her husband’s fruit salad with service to God. Yet equally moving are stories from the “unknowns”—the woman who wrote “I Love You Lord” at a time of desperation, the prayer

that saved a pilot's life, the burned hand healed by a Christmas prayer.

Some of these testimonies are more dramatic than others, but that doesn't diminish the quiet ways in which the evidence piles up of a loving Lord at work in our world. He is the reason for stories that last.

-Ken Walker

The Passion of Paul

To Live Is Christ

*By Beth Moore with Dale McCleskey,
Broadman & Holman, 319 pages,
hardcover, \$.*

In her latest work, *To Live Is Christ*, Bible teacher Beth Moore reminds Christians that God can use anyone in His service, regardless of his or her past.

Chronicling the life of Paul, Moore writes that just as God turned the misdirected zeal of the Pharisee Saul into "the unparalleled passion for Christ" exhibited by the self-sacrificing apostle Paul, so He can redirect Christians' flawed personalities to work His will and build His kingdom. This equips believers for victory in spite of themselves and the inevitable hardships they will face.

Moore focuses on "Dr. Luke's" account of Paul's conversion and three missionary journeys found in the book of Acts. She closes with a brief look at the books Paul wrote at the end of his life: Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, Philippians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus.

Bible study groups will appreciate her discussion questions and her treatment of controversial topics, such as Paul's split with Barnabas and his views on women in the church and family. Those familiar with Moore likely will want this study to place alongside her previous works.

-Pamela Robinson

Freedom's Burden

The Burden of Freedom

By Myles Munroe, Charisma House,

261 pages, hardcover, \$.

Once again Bahamian pastor Myles Munroe brings new understanding to familiar concepts. In *The Burden of Freedom*, he examines the concept of slavery of nations and individuals, and discusses deliverance as a tool of freedom. Using the biblical lesson of the Hebrews' bondage to Egypt, Munroe teaches that freedom is more difficult than slavery because there is no greater burden than gaining and maintaining freedom. Freedom, Munroe writes, requires responsibility.

This is an important book to read to contextualize oppression in history and in individuals, and to develop a game plan for gaining personal freedom. Munroe tackles topics such as mental oppression, letting go of the past, irresponsibility as the enemy of freedom, managing freedom and breaking free of the spirit of oppression.

The book also notes a difference between deliverance and freedom. Deliverance provides the opportunity for freedom, not

the fulfillment of freedom.

Drawing from Scripture and historic leaders such as Thomas Jefferson and Martin Luther King Jr., Munroe provides a compelling outline to set individuals and nations free.

-Tracee N. Mason

Celebrating the Heart of Christmas

As shoppers scurry from store to store filling their Christmas lists, singer and songwriter Candi Staton has taken a step back from the hustle and bustle to reflect on the real reason for the season: the birth of Christ. "That was the beginning of everything," she says. "If He had not been born, He couldn't have died. We wouldn't have this freedom and joy in our Christian faith that we have today."

Staton shares that message with the world through her latest recording, *Christmas in My Heart*. She says she drew inspiration from her painful journey through a 1999 divorce from former husband John Sussewell, who has since remarried and become a Jehovah's Witness, and her challenges with a son who was a compulsive thief.

Through her music, Staton expresses her heartfelt adoration for a savior who understands pain and sacrifice. She encourages listeners to retreat from the Christmas rush long enough to worship the One who gives purpose to the season. "When you hear 'Silent Night,' it takes you into worship," she says. "I just wanted people to sing along and worship with me."

In August, Staton released a book, What to Do When Your Child Turns to Crime, for parents whose children are involved in criminal activity. Staton says she hopes her music and ministry will help motivate others to seek God for victory over life's challenges. Says Staton: "I believe if I can make it in my life, anybody can."

-Twanna Powell