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## **Annie Sellick to Release Her First Christmas Album**

*Let's Make a Christmas Memory* Is Her Most Personal Project to Date

[NASHVILLE - OCTOBER 31, 2013] For almost twenty years, fans of acclaimed jazz vocalist Annie Sellick have been asking her, "When are you going to make a Christmas album?" Their long wait will be over when Sellick releases *Let's Make a Christmas Memory* on November 28. A special CD release show is being planned for December in Nashville.

Annie Sellick has garnered rave reviews and loyal fans around the world for her captivating renditions—sometimes playful, always sincere—from the jazz and standards repertoire (bio follows). With *Let's Make a Christmas Memory*, her sixth release on the Chalice Music label, Sellick has compiled a celebratory album bringing in influences from beyond the jazz realm so there is something for everyone—a timeless, classic collection, that will be played Christmas after Christmas for years to come.

This is Sellick's most personal project to date, wrapped up in the meaningful and memory-laden season of Christmas. In these thirteen songs, she collaborates with nearly 100 Nashville music pros, including friends and family. She shares internal reflections, holiday images—all creating a medley of, in Annie's words, "how-I-see-the-world-each-December" songs.

While Annie calls jazz her "passion genre," she soaked up music of all kinds growing up in Music City USA, and she has drawn on those influences throughout her career, especially now in *Let's Make a Christmas Memory*. From jazz adaptations of holiday classics to a symphonic arrangement of a 16th-century French carol to a call-and-response gospel romp to a family holiday jam—there are lots of surprises to unwrap under this CD's tree.

In addition to newly recorded holiday favorites (and a few off-the-beaten-holiday-path tunes), *Let's Make a Christmas Memory* includes a couple of Annie's favorite tracks from other projects she was asked to sing on—and is thrilled to be able to include on her own Christmas album.

A first for an Annie Sellick album, two of the songs were written by Annie and her husband, guitarist and harmonica player Pat Bergeson. The title track, "Let's Make a Christmas Memory" is a breezy taste of Christmas cheer. Annie scribbled it down on a cocktail napkin while she was sitting at her all-decorated-for-Christmas neighborhood pub. Pat proposed later that same month, and when they walked down the aisle, it was to a slower instrumental version of this song.

The lead track is an orchestral American songbook take on the traditional French carol "Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella," in which Annie's graceful vocals are accompanied by an entire symphony. Of the recording session for that song, Annie remembers: "Closing my eyes, I sent myself ice skating across a silver lake, and I sang."

In a swinging "Winter Wonderland," Annie's playful vocals conjure up a musical image of strutting (not just walking) through a park in winter, without a care in the world.

"The Christmas Waltz" features Annie's long-time musical collaborators and friends Joe Davidian on piano, Justin Varnes on drums, and Roger Spencer on bass for this lovely holiday standard.

"Baby It's Cold Outside" is a cold-night-steamy-love-affair duet with Matt Belsante, and their smooth, sensuous vocals and banter at the song's end leave no doubt that it's definitely hot *inside!*

The album's second writing collaboration between Annie and Pat is the lyrical, lilting "To Those Who Believe," a song for anyone who secretly needs a miracle to happen.

A lover of lyrics, especially those of the heart-wrenching sort, Annie chose the fine jazz ballad "That's What I Want for Christmas" to sing here, intimately accompanied by solo piano, played by Joe Davidian.

"Hurry Home for Christmas," a vocal duet with her husband Pat Bergeson, was recorded as a gift to his family who love this song. "They will die when they hear we recreated this Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme cult classic—a particularly precious surprise," says Annie.

Annie's inner child takes center stage in the swinging "A Marshmallow World"—and throws in a playful bit of scat singing as icing on top of the cake (angel food, of course).

"White Christmas" is a real family affair: Annie's mother was a folk singer in her youth, but the first time she and the whole family ever "jammed" together was on this song, sitting at Annie and Pat's kitchen table only *last Christmas!* Annie brought Mama back into the studio, along with her Dad on dobro and husband Pat on guitar, to record this beloved tune. Even the cello player is family: cousin Matt Slocum.

Joe Davidian again accompanies Annie on the wistful "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"—but that catch in Annie's voice makes you pause, and realize a "Merry Christmas" sometimes must be conjured from the inside.

Call-and-response gospel vocals behind Annie take us on a hallelujah-romp through "Where Was Baby Jesus Born," written by Rick Lang, a cut from his upcoming album *That's What I Love about Christmas*. The amazing back-up chorus vocals are by Vickie Carrico, Scat Springs, and Andrea Merritt.

"We Are One in the Spirit," a gypsy Christmas swing tune, features The Hot Club of Nashville with Richard Smith and Pat Bergeson on guitars, and guests Paul Kramer on fiddle and Dave Pomeroy on bass, on a live cut from Dave Christmas fundraiser for Room in the Inn.

*Let's Make a Christmas Memory* is Annie Sellick's gift to her favorite season, and to those fans, friends, and family who share it with her.

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## **ABOUT ANNIE SELLICK**

For many, Annie Sellick's best quality as a singer is her ability to make audiences happy. An unusually engaging performer, she has won a large, devoted following and earned rave reviews, including numerous "Best of Jazz" awards in the Nashville media. A Nashville native, she has toured extensively across the country (favorite stops include Los Angeles, Atlanta, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Hilton Head, New York, and Indianapolis) and around the world, with numerous performances in Japan, Korea, Germany, Peru, Mexico, Holland, and Russia—along with festivals such as the Montreal Jazz Festival, the West Coast Jazz Festival, and the Newport Beach Jazz Party.

Sellick's jazz journey began auspiciously when she sat in with guitarist Roland Gresham's group at a club near the college she attended. After her performance, the crowd rose to their feet cheering, and it was clear she had found her calling. After working a year with that trio, she expanded and moved back to her hometown of Nashville, Tennessee. Annie immediately caught Nashville's attention with her regular jazz gigs, her ability to entertain, and her striking appearance—waist-length dread-locks swinging against an elegant evening gown.

She honed her skills at the Nashville Jazz Workshop, where she was offered the first-ever NJW work/study grant. Within a few years of her Nashville debut, she had become a mainstay at the major jazz venues, had worked with all of her favorite jazz artists there (including Beegie Adair, Jeff Coffin, Bela Fleck and Rod McGaha), was voted as the Nashville Scene's "Best Jazz Artist" five years in a row, and gave a celebrated sold-out performance backed by the Nashville Symphony. She is a regular member of and vocalist for the Nashville Jazz Orchestra, with whom she has also recorded.

Annie Sellick's career in jazz has taken her through four CDs on her own label, Chalice Music (one with renowned jazz organist Joey DeFrancesco), and guest appearances on several other artists' projects. In 2006, she toured briefly with Mark O'Connor's Hot Swing. Sellick also has a devoted fan base in Japan, where she went twice a year to tour the jazz clubs in the major cities, and worked with artists such as John DiMartino, David Hazeltine, Grant Stewart, and Eddie Higgins.

Appreciation for her Nashville roots lead to another musical incarnation she calls "Annie and the Hot Club." In 2007, she and the Hot Club of Nashville (led by master picker Richard Smith) released a guitar-driven swing album of all-original material by local songwriter Tom Sturdevant. *Annie and the Hot Club* has been a favorite at European guitar festivals, including Tommy Emmanuel's, with whom she has also performed.

Annie Sellick's fans stay with her on the musical turns she takes from album to album. Whether it's straight-ahead piano trio, organ jazz or "Nashville" jazz, the common thread they love is her upbeat personality ... not to mention collaborations with the finest musicians around.

In addition to her busy performance and recording schedule, Sellick leads regular "Soul & Song" improvisational retreats for singers in historic, beautiful Monteagle, Tennessee. She also enjoys working with the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee and Act Like A Grrrl in various performing arts programs as well as facilitating outdoor adventure.

#### FROM ANNIE SELLICK'S REVIEWS

"... utterly unique musical personality ... Sellick's most attractive quality may be the manner in which she has transformed her influences into her own, immediately identifiable style. She's a comer." —**Don Heckman, *Los Angeles Times***

"Perky vocalist Annie Sellick, an original with her own way of phrasing that allows her tongue-in-cheek personality to emerge ... boasts remarkable range ... keep your ears on Annie." —**Harvey Siders, *Jazz Times***

"[She's] destined to perform ... tracks that alternately burn, sizzle and steam ... away from the nest and out into the bigger leagues." —**Bob Doerschuk, *Downbeat***

"Ella's playfulness, Carmen's attitude, Betty's instincts and Anita's flair—what singer possesses such gifts yet has her own distinct sound? Annie Sellick. She touches everyone." —**Greg Lee, program director WMOT Jazz Radio**

## **ANNIE SELLICK DISCOGRAPHY**

### **On Chalice Music Inc.**

*Let's Make a Christmas Memory* (2013)

*Street of Dreams* (2010)

*Annie and the Hot Club* (2008)

*A Little Piece of Heaven* - Featuring Gerald Clayton Trio and Bruce Forman (2004)

*No Greater Thrill* - Featuring Joey DeFrancesco (2002)

*Stardust on My Sleeve* (2000)

### **As a Guest:**

*The Nashville Jazz Orchestra: Live at B.B. King's* (NJO)

*Low Standards* (Steve Shapiro and Pat Bergeson)

*Backward Compatible* (Steve Shapiro and Pat Bergeson)

*Street Expressionism* (Paradigm Shift)

*"Kiss Kiss Bang Bang"* (Akira Tana and the Secret Agent Men play the music of James Bond, Sons of Sound)

*Christmas Winterlude* (Chris McDonald, The CD Guys)

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## ***Let's Make a Christmas Memory*** ***ANNIE SELLICK***

(Chalice Music, Releases November 28, 2013)

1. Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella
2. Let's Make a Christmas Memory
3. Winter Wonderland
4. The Christmas Waltz
5. Baby It's Cold Outside
6. To Those Who Believe
7. That's What I Want for Christmas
8. Hurry Home for Christmas
9. A Marshmallow World
10. White Christmas
12. Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
13. We Are One in the Spirit

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