

Joan Armatrading – This Charming Life (2010)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 14 May 2011 21:15 - Last Updated Friday, 05 March 2021 13:55

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1. *This Charming Life* 3:54 [play](#) 2. *Love Love Love* 3:57 3. *People Who Win* 3:52 4. *Two Tears* 4:31 5. *Heading Back To New York City* 3:57 6. *Goddess Of Change* 3:30

[play](#)

7. *Diamond* 4:25 8. *Promises* 4:05 9. *Virtual Reality* 4:31 10. *Best Dress On* 4:13 11. *Cry* 4:08

Joan Armatrading (vocals, various instruments); Miles Bould (drums, percussion).

Three times Grammy nominated singer/songwriter, JOAN ARMATRADING has come a long way since her birth in the West Indies and her upbringing in Birmingham. With 19 stunning albums to her credit and a new album, THIS CHARMING LIFE, due for release on March 30,, 2010, Joan's subtle and sublime music has touched millions of people all over the world. Known as a true craftsman, her distinctive vocals and consummate musicianship – she has arranged as well as played every instrument, with the exception of drums on her forthcoming album – have led to unanimous, widespread and, perhaps most importantly, consistent critical acclaim. Effortlessly eclectic, her sound has ranged from true soul to sophisticated pop driven by her passionate guitar.

The first non-jazz artist to play at London's Ronnie Scott's in the main room, Joan has many distinctions to her credit. In musical terms Joan Armatrading has achieved far more than most performers even dream of - she has played with some of the finest musicians around, has received countless gold, platinum and silver sales awards, has been nominated for the Brit Award, has been the recipient of a highly coveted Ivor Novello Award in 1996 and figured large in VH1's "Top 100 Most Influential Women In Rock" poll. In addition, she has performed for Nelson Mandela. South Africa has always been close to Joan's heart. A huge admirer of Nelson Mandela, not only has she performed live for him at his 70th birthday at Wembley Stadium but, in 1999, she was invited to write a special tribute song. Entitled "The Messenger", Joan performed it to the former President of South Africa when he made a private visit to the UK in 2000....he smiled and danced throughout.

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Joan has been honoured by the Queen and is one of the few female artists ever to receive an MBE. She has been given the keys to Sydney, has presented and continues to present BBC Radio 4 and Radio 2 series. A long time Ambassador and performer for the Prince's Trust, she lends her support to various charities across the world. For five years (until 2009), Armatrading was president of the highly prestigious Women of the Year Lunch. This sees women from all walks of life honoured for their unique and often truly heroic contribution to modern day life, whether it be in art, science, politics, business or in the humanitarian arena. This was a role she took extremely seriously and one she is justly proud of her achievements in the organisation, during this period.

As well as the Honorary DLitt degree she was given by the John Moores University of Liverpool (2000), Joan has also received a Doctorate in Music from the University of Birmingham (12th December 2002), been made an Honorary Fellow of Northampton University (14th November 2003) received an Honorary degree from Aston University in 2006 and on the 25th of June 2008 Joan received an Honorary Degree from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. Moreover, after five years of committed studying, Joan achieved a goal she had held since childhood, she gained her BA Honours after 5 years of studying history from the Open University – a feat very few other working artists would attempt, let alone while on tour (she took her final exam the day after the last gig of her 2000 dates). Joan Armatrading's dedication to her studies while consistently producing wonderful uplifting music says much about the woman, her vision and her commitment to excellence. Born in St Kitts in the West Indies on December 9th 1950 and moving to England when she was seven, she took her first musical steps on her mother's piano. Although her father had a guitar it was strictly out of bounds so when Joan saw one for £3 in a pawn shop window she pestered her mother to barter two old prams they no longer used. She taught herself to play and began writing songs at the age of 14.

Her debut album, "Whatever's For Us", released on Cube Records in 1972 and produced by the late great Gus Dudgeon, was critically acclaimed and saw Joan voted as best newcomer. In 1974, Joan signed to A&M world-wide and the career that has followed has witnessed a string of classic albums and memorable songs – "Love and Affection", "Down To Zero", "Drop the Pilot", "Me Myself I"—to name but a few. Joan has worked with members of Little Feat, Fairport Convention, XTC, the Police and Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band. Musicians such as Darryl Jones (Rolling Stones), Mark Brzezicki (Big Country) Tony Levin (King Crimson), Manu Katche (Sting), Benmont Tench (Tom Petty), Mark Knopfler and stalwart Greg Phillinganes have all joined her in the studio while her list of producers is impressive – Glyn Johns, Gus Dudgeon, Steve Lillywhite, David Tickle to name but a few. In December 1998 she released a CD, "Lullabies With A Difference" in aid of PACES, a charity for children with Cerebral Palsy. March 2003 saw the release of the "Lovers Speak" album featuring 14 tracks written, arranged and produced by Joan. In addition, with the exception of drums and horns, she played every instrument herself. An exceptional CD that combined strong upbeat melodies, riffs that stuck in

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your head and passionate, stirring soulful ballads, it was the result of a long-held desire to make a truly solo album.

In 2007, the hugely influential and pioneering British singer-songwriter released "Into the Blues" the blues album that she had always wanted to write and record. The album debuted at #1 in The Billboard Blues Chart. Joan Armatrading was the first ever UK Female Artist, to do this. The CD remained at #1 for 12 consecutive weeks. She was nominated for a Grammy in this category. Again Joan Armatrading was the first ever UK Female Artist to do this. In 2007-2008 Joan toured the world with the success of "Into the Blues" which culminated in the release of the deluxe edition of "Into The Blues CD & DVD" which showed Joan at her best – live on stage, performing material that spanned her illustrious career. Now she releases her finest work to date. THIS CHARMING LIFE is a collection of eleven new compositions that will see Joan return to a more rock/pop format, both commercial yet also contemporary. From the anthemic opener and title track "This Charming Life," to the hard rocking "Heading Back To New York City" and the joyous "Best Dress On," Joan is back with an album that will appeal to fans old and new. A consummate performer, Joan Armatrading is indeed the whole package, an excellent song writer, a powerful vocalist and as a guitarist, she is certainly one of the best female players in the world.

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