

## **I've got the music in me ©**

By Connie J. Schlosberg

I'm fortunate enough to have been born into a musical family. My father's mother is a descendant of the opera composer, Giuseppe Verdi. My mother loves Broadway and opera tunes and is always singing around the house. My grandfather was a musician and had his own band. My father tells me that he would perform every Friday night. He also taught piano lessons and even had a stint teaching at Julliard. He was supposed to write songs for Tony Bennett but Bennett changed managers and that was the end of that. I took piano lessons from him when I was a young girl. Unfortunately, I was a stubborn know-it-all who didn't want to listen to my "old" grandfather. I regret my actions and wish I had embraced his wonderful musicianship.

I didn't realize how talented he was until I was a teenager. I liked popular "Top 40" music, circa mid-1980s. By then I was active in the choir and took voice lessons, which probably suited me better anyway. I went to his house for dinner one time and brought a few song sheets from some of the popular singers at the time. One of them was a song from Lionel Richie called "Hello." I asked if he would play the song for me so that I may practice singing. He started playing a few bars of it and grimaced. He told me it was absolute garbage and turned the sheet over. He finished the song adding in his own style, and it actually sounded better his way. He never heard the song before yet he could play it after only hearing the first couple of bars. To me, that's just incredible. I gained a greater appreciation for my grandfather and even more appreciation for music that day.

My siblings also influenced my taste for music. I remember borrowing Carole King's "Tapestry" album from my sister Amy. I listened to that album every day as a kid singing off the top of my lungs. My brother liked rock music so I gained an appreciation for the darker side of music with bands such as Led Zeppelin, King Crimson, and Black Sabbath. My mother encouraged my love for the theatre, and I participated in all the school musicals. After high school, I started dating a guy who was a guitar player and he introduced me to different types of rock music, particularly progressive rock. He didn't stay for long but my love for the music certainly did. (It's funny how people come and go yet the affects they have on you are everlasting!) Now, one of my favorite art-rock groups is Renaissance, and living in Colorado, I don't get to Annie Haslam's shows anymore since she usually performs in the Mid-Atlantic region.

I went on to study at the Theatre of Arts in Los Angeles, but grew frustrated of the lifestyle and became home sick. While I was there, I got exposed to the metal side of music and started listening to Guns & Roses and others like them. After I got married, I took guitar lessons and actually thought about joining a band. However, my husband thought the guys at the music store had other intentions so I stopped. I actually regret doing it and have started tinkering with my guitars again.

I'm always humming or singing a tune. I feel free when I listen to songs. My mind wanders and I can be anyone, anywhere. Living in Colorado provides me the opportunity to attend concerts at Red Rocks Amphitheatre, which is one of the nicest

places to see/hear a concert. Just being out there among the stars and the monoliths listening to my favorite music is awesome!