

Sights and sounds

Have yourself a funky little Christmas

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Looking back on the 16 Christmas discs I got this year, it's actually not a bad crop; certainly nothing as screamingly awful as Jessica Simpson's offering two years ago (still haven't gotten the worst moments of that out of my head). And three local offerings, ranging from pretty good to very good.

What it's missing, however, is the purely bizarre. There's no *The American Song-Poem Christmas* in this year's bag; no personalized CDs for your dog. Everyone's gone earnest this year. With one exception.

Bootsy Collins
Christmas is 4 Ever
(Shout! Factory)

As I say almost every day,
thank God for Bootsy Collins.
Former Parliament/Funkadelic

SEE **CHRISTMAS, 16**

16 Sunday, December 3, 2006 The Providence Journal

Christmas CDs: Not a lot of turkeys this year

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Greg Bonin
Simply Christmas
(Self-released)

This is Rhode Islander Bonin's second release, and it's a collection of standards with a few more-religious numbers such as "Joseph's Song," as well as less-known stuff such as "The Gift" (in a duet with Jenifer Hamilton) and "Believe," perhaps best known for Josh Groban's version. There's also a duet with Mark Colozzi on "Littler Drummer Boy/Peace on Earth," David Bowie-Bing Crosby style.

It's mostly demo quality, with a small band and often just piano accompaniment (the swinging piano-and-bass version of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" is a highlight), the better to put the focus on Bonin's voice. Deep and strong, it's got real potential. Keep an eye out.