

Information about the songs on the LUNAR TUNES CD by Jenny Evans

1. On The Moon

music: Dusko Goykovich (2000), lyrics: Jenny Evans (2007)

Since Neil Armstrong, to be on the moon may now be possible but the very thought is still a thing of fantasy. And this gave me the idea of a dream world. I've been writing lyrics to compositions by trumpet-player, Dusko Goykovich for many years now; his tunes are so lyrical the words just fall into place.

2. Sister Moon

music & lyrics: Sting (1987)

I have been a great Sting fan for many years and have followed his progress to a highly intellectual song-writer and musician. The song contains the first lines of Shakspeare's 130th Sonnet in which the poet ridicules the way his contemporaries compared their loves to divine entities: "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun" he writes. And the moon is nothing like the sun as well; you can gaze at the moon.

3. Moonlight Serenade

music: Glenn Miller, lyrics: Mitchell Parish (1939)

In 1940 this song was the theme tune to a radio series of the same name broadcast three times a week for Chesterfield cigarettes so Glenn Miller received a great deal of airplay. As a lyric fanatic, I think maybe the lyricist, Mitchell Parish, should have kept to songs beginning with an "S"; after all he is famous for writing the lyrics to *Sweet Lorraine*, *Stardust*, *Sophisticated Lady* and even the winter favourite *Sleigh Ride*, among many others. Yet again, there aren't that many words that rhyme stylishly with "moonlight" apart from Parish's choice "June light" and "June night".

4. The Moon and Stars

music: Peter Kreuder (1933), lyrics: Jenny Evans (2005)

Peter Kreuder was a musical child prodigy, becoming musical director of the Deutsche Theater in Munich when he was only seventeen. In 1933 he landed his first record breaking hit with the the film musical "Mazurka" starring Polish silent-film actress, Pola Negri. In 1922, Negri was the first European actress to sign a film contract in Hollywood and soon became the personification of a *femme fatale*. Her recording of the original *Ich spür in mir* is still unsurpassed.

5. Moonlight In Vermont

music: Karl Suessdorf, lyrics: John Blackburn (1943)

The lyrics to this ballad can be described as minimalistic, the melody also hardly goes anywhere – yet still they simply conjure up the atmosphere of a snow bound Vermont. That is why it is regarded as the unofficial state song of Vermont and is frequently played as the first dance song at Vermont wedding receptions.

6. “Hymn to Selene”

music: Erik Satie’s 3rd Gnossienne (1890), lyrics: anonymous from the 32nd Homeric Hymn to Selene (700 or 600 BC)

Satie called his music *furniture music*, meant to be in the background rather than listened to. Maybe this is why his compositions have become popular not just with contemporary musicians and fans, but with film and commercial-makers as well. *Gnossienne* means from Knossos and that led me to look for a poem about the moon in Ancient Greek. the anonymous 32nd Homeric Hymn written to celebrate Selene, the Greek goddess of the moon, “she of the lovely hair”.

*From her immortal head a heaven-sent glow
envelops the earth and great beauty arises
under its radiance...*

Her great orbit is full

and as she waxes

a most brilliant light appears in the sky.

Thus to mortals she is a sign and a token. (translation Dr. Markus Dubischar)

7. Silly Boy, ‘Tis Full Moon

music & lyrics: Thomas Campion (1617)

Thomas Campion was first published as a poet in 1591. But like all true Elizabethan gentlemen he was also a skilled musician and composer. He wrote treatises on poetry, composition and over a hundred lute songs. This one is from his Third Booke of Ayres published in 1617 and is a warning to all young lovers that being hurt is part of being in love – too much love is folly.

8. Old Devil Moon

**music: Burton Lane, words: E.Y. Harburg
from the musical Finian’s Rainbow (1947)**

This haunting melody by Burton Lane is definitely one of the great Lunar Tunes. In the film version of the musical “Finian’s Rainbow” directed by Francis Ford Coppola, starring Fred Astaire and Petula Clarke (of *Down Town* fame) it stands out like a gold coin in a cow pat. Lyricist E. Yip Harburg’s love of wit and poetry

matches that of Ira Gershwin, a lifelong friend. Harburg penned many other well-known standards like *Over the Rainbow*, *April in Paris* and *It's Only a Paper Moon*

9. Moonlight On The Ganges

music: Montague Ewing, lyrics: Chester Wallace (1926)

The composer of this piece is an Englishman named Herbert Carrington, a.k.a Sherman Myers or Montague Ewing, who came to the USA in 1934 with the British bandleader of Cherokee-fame, Ray Noble, and obviously introduced the song to the States. By April 1935 it had become so popular that Glenn Miller recorded it for Columbia, for the first time under his own name. I decided, though, to minimize the harmonies and use the drone of a shruti box and the talking-drum sound of an udu.

10. Song To The Moon

music: Antonin Dvorak, English lyrics: Daphne Rushbridge from the opera *Rusalka* (1900)

Czech composer Antonin Dvorak is probably best known for his *New World Symphony*. It too contains the highly singable, folk music type passages that make the composer so popular. His work does indeed use many idioms of his native Bohemia. This aria from his opera *Rusalka* has long been a favourite of mine. As so often in fairy-tales the water-nymph, Rusalka, falls in love with a human prince. She sings her *Song to the Moon*, asking it to tell the prince of her love.

11. Moon River

music: Henry Mancini, lyrics: Johnny Mercer (1961)

Written by Henry Mancini and lyricist Johnny Mercer for the soundtrack of the film, *Breakfast At Tiffany's*, the song was originally called "Blue River" but someone else had already written a song of that name; there is in fact a Moon River in Savannah. I decided to record the song in 4/4 time and just with strings to demonstrate the simplicity of the lyrics' sentiment.

12. It's Only A Paper Moon

music: Harold Arlen, lyrics: E.Y. Harburg, Billy Rose (1933)

Harold Arlen is one of the greatest hit and jazz standard writers. Like with Gershwin tunes there are so many different ways of approaching this song; swing, Latin, Caribbean – it is a tremendous vehicle for jazz. I decided to use a different approach and use the lyrics to describe the feeling that without the one you love life is just a bubble. I regard it as a lullaby.