



:: [Home](#) :: [Design](#) :: [Art](#) :: [Music](#) :: [Fashion](#) :: [DIY](#) :: [Contact](#) ::

Jeff Solomon

Jeff Solomon

Written by Keenan Wells interview by Angel

At the age of 17, Jeff Solomon received a ukulele as a gift. Fortunately for Solomon, it was strung incorrectly. Solomon explains:

"It was strung incorrectly, but I learned to play it that way and I still insist on stringing my baritone ukulele 'the wrong way.'"

Solomon's EP, "Around the Square," flaunts his mis-strung ukulele as well as many other instruments, most prominently piano. We hear a sound that is altogether wholesome and melodically rich, with jazz chord versings intertwined with iconic pop structures and textures. Solomon, admittedly new to rock and pop influences, comes from a strong jazz background, citing influences everywhere from Dixieland to Ornette Coleman and James Carter. Boasting a broad sound, he draws not only from these inspirations, but others from a long list of iconic singer/songwriters such as Rufus Wainwright, Elvis Costello, Elton John, and Stevie Wonder.

Solomon's sound is similarly large and weighty, his voice always washed in slight reverb, often hitting with the melodic fervor and flare of a young Ben Folds. We hear a song like "Gramercy," with its thick but bright drum tracking and punching piano bass stabs and realize that Solomon also bears an uncanny vocal resemblance to one of his admitted inspirations, Rufus Wainwright. If there were a formula for creative success, Solomon seems to have figured it out:



"My songs stand out a little because of the jazz influence. I don't think jazz is extremely prevalent in the sonic language of indie rock these days... I grew up listening and playing songs with lots of different chords, and I continue to use jazz chords in my songs."

Solomon, the son of Romanian immigrants, and like many other Romanian children, was ushered to sit at a piano by age 4. It wasn't until 14 that he took to the ivory. Like a gateway drug, the piano got him hooked onto saxophone and then ukulele. Ultimately, finding himself immersed in jazz music, Solomon arrived at the pop he so eagerly attacks on his record:

"I went to Cornell to study jazz and classical composition, and it wasn't until college that I started to become interested in pop and rock."

Now, Solomon's audience is as widespread as it is diverse, with listeners also enjoying the likes of Andrew Bird, Rufus Wainwright, Ben Kweller, Jack Johnson, and Belle & Sebastian.

Solomon plans to continually promote his record by playing venues nationwide and in the UK. He also expects to release a second EP this year, while juggling his time with the sketch comedy group, Elephant Larry.

www.jeffsolomonmusic.com



[Read and view](#) Issue 3 featuring Tom Vek and Who Made Who

© 2006 Carpal Tunnel Magazine