Christmas Gift Ideas

SWISS MISS CD "Heimweh"

Funky folklore – for (mostly) young people who do not appreciate their parents taste for Swiss Music

What are Heidi's Granddaughters up to? 12 renowned female Swiss singers representing different generations, music styles and ethnic backgrounds spice up traditional folk music from all over Switzerland with its four official languages and countless dialects. Arranged and produced by the New York based Swiss singer and guitarist Eliane, SWISS MISS is a whole new Swiss experience celebrating both - tradition and innovation.

Alphorn loops dueling with human beat box grooves, Swiss hackbrett meets hot NYC rhythm section, a grumpy farmer family works their field to reggae sounds and did you know that the Swiss had the blues as early as in the 18th century?

What started out with some big ideas scribbled on a napkin in a New Yorker bar, had soon developed into a major project. Andra Borlo and Eliane have organized several tours in the US, Argentina and Switzerland, concerts in Canada etc.

The CD is available for $ 14.95 directly from the group's website www.swissmissmusic.com which contains also a lot more info in German and English.

Snow Party

Illustration by Mark Jones, Text by Harriet Ziefert

A picture book for children ages 4 – 8. Absolutely delightful and ever so charming illustrations.

This is what Mark Jones says about himself: "I was born in Basel to an American father and a Swiss mother. We lived in an apartment in Liestal and eventually moved to the United States by the time I was two. I held on to my Swiss citizenship and to this day I have both a Swiss and a United States passport. Being Swiss was a huge part of my identity while growing up. I was the only child in my class who had pictures from his infancy dressed up as a Waggis for Fasnacht. I distinctly remember knowing the name Betty Bossi before I knew the name Betty Crocker, and I still get odd looks from Americans when I use words like 'Maschinli' and 'Pfläschterli' instead of 'remote control' and 'band-aid'.

The Swiss influences on Snow Party are due to the fact that I spent my summers in Switzerland and, ironically, all my memories of snow come from the months of July and August. I would take trips to high peaks like Titlis, or to the Gornergrat at Zermatt, and get a taste of the white winters I never had in Florida. However, snow just involves the setting in Snow Party, the real appeal of the book is the charming community spirit of the snow people. While it may seem a stretch to others to connect this book to Switzerland, I, on the other hand, see Snow Party as a mirror image of my experiences with the first of August festivities in my grandparent's village of Bubendorf. Granted, the snow people aren't setting bonfires or blowing alphorns, but looking at my illustrations brings back crystal clear memories of the village gathered up on a forested hill with rows of tables, a band of musicians, children and adults laughing, eating and singing some lovely songs, not to mention all the speeches and toasts. Quite frankly, the gathering depicted in Snow Party got it's soul from those memories. The book can be purchased for $ 16.95 at www.blueapplebooks.com