

# WZAP Exclusive

## JIM CROCE



"I'm no missionary," says Jim Croce about his songs, "and I can't wear any armour, either. I just gotta be the way I am."

Jim's musical career started when he was five years old, learning to play "Lady of Spain" on the accordion. He says, "I was the original underachiever. I'd shake that thing and smile, but I was sort of a late bloomer." He didn't really take music too seriously until 1964, while he was attending Villanova College in Pennsylvania. There he formed various bands, doing fraternity parties and playing "anything that the people wanted to hear: blues, rock, a cappella, railroad music... anything." One of the bands was chosen for a foreign exchange tour of Africa and the Middle East. "We had a good time," Jim recalls. "We just ate what the people ate, lived in the woods, and played our songs. Of course, they didn't speak English over there...but I if you mean what you're singing, people understand."

He returned to Philadelphia and had decided to be "serious."

But it was hard to make a living playing in a band, and his previous employment experiences had host their appeal: "I'd worked construction crews, and I'd been a welder while I was in college. But I'd rather do other things than get burned." Like most underachieving accordion players, he had a hard time finding the right other things. His determination to be serious ("I even got a pair of those shoes that look like the Ace of Spades, with holes in them") led to a job at a Philadelphia R&B radio station, where he translated commercials into Soul. "I'd sell airtime to Bronco's Poolroom, and then write the spot: 'You wanna be cool, and you wanna shoot pool... (dig it)'. Increasingly frustrated, he quit to teach guitar at a summer camp ("to people who had to wear loafers 'cause they couldn't tie their shoes'") and even enlisted in the U.S. Army. He didn't have a very illustrious military career, but says he's prepared if there's ever a war where we have to defend ourselves with mops.

Back to the radio station again, briefly ("that was about the end of my seriousness"), and then he tried teaching "special education" to discipline problem students in a Philadelphia high school. Finally he decided to give his music a chance.

He'd been playing some pretty tough bars ("I can get my guitar off faster than anyone else"), then he and his wife, Ingrid, moved to New York and began working coffee houses. Tommy West, who had attended Villanova College with Jim, introduced them to Terry Cashman, and in 1969, Cashman and West produced their album, "Jim and Ingrid." They

remained on the coffee house circuit for a year and a half, involving themselves in the music business and collecting guitars. But, they soon became discouraged by the agitation and pressures of city life, and move to Lyndell, Pennsylvania, where they had their son, Adrian James. Ingrid learned to bake bread and to can fruits and vegetables and Jim, like a rich lady selling her jewels, sold the guitars he had accumulated, one by one. When the guitars ran out, he worked construction again and did some studio work in New York. "Mostly background 'oohs' and 'aahs' for commercials. I kept thinking, 'maybe tomorrow I'll sing some words.'"

Terry Cashman and Tommy West, who knew that Jim's talents could be put to better use, were still trying to convince him to do another album and get back into performing. Life in Lyndell was calmer than it had been in New York and Philadelphia and finally Jim decided that he could resume playing and still have time to write songs and be with his family.

His first album, "You Don't Mess Around With Jim," was an instant success. Jim immediately became a top bill club and concert performer and the title song and "Operator," pulled from the album, were both highly successful singles. The friendliness and sincerity of Jim's performances have endeared him to a wide variety of audiences. "Well," laughed Jim, "I'm glad I'm not running any more jackhammers. It's a lot easier to have a good time. I think music should make people sit back and want to touch each other...I just hope people get a kick out of it."

Since his first album, things have been strictly uphill for Jim. "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown," which was culled from the second LP entitled "Life and Times," reached the top of the national pop charts before it went Gold. Jim's latest album is called "I've Got a Name" and the title cut is part of the soundtrack for 20th Century Fox's new film, "The Last American Hero." Many other things are being planned for the unlikely superstar from Philly, including appearances in films as well as more soundtrack offers.

Jim Croce-"I've Got a Name." He certainly has. \*\*\*\*

(Editor NOTE)

A few months ago, Jim Croce was killed in a plane accident. The music world feels his loss for he was a sensitive performer who could make his audiences laugh or cry. It was a tragic end to a career which was only the beginning to his potential in music and in life. \*\*\*\*

### The Night Before

### The Morning After

Driving down the road one day,  
in the merry month of May.  
Met a man along the road,  
looking like a hairy toad.  
His shorts were green, tee shirt to,  
covered head to toe with dew.  
Thought he was a trick of light,  
when three more came into sight!  
In my wonder cried aloud,  
curiosity aroused.  
At my cry they turned to look.  
Where I saw four, ten now stood!  
Fear began to grow within,  
hundred's now instead of ten!  
Faster then the blinking eye,  
more and more they multiply!  
Froze behind the wheel in fright,  
more and more they grow in might!  
off the road my car did drive,  
blacking out I thought I died.  
waking up my tongue was thick,  
open eye's that tried to stick.  
hat to small upon my head,  
wishing I was in my bed.  
Not to drink I swear again,  
Especially, Gilberts Gin!!!!

M.L. Slygh

### The Old Man's Lament

Tell you how it was my son,  
I'll tell you, then it's done.  
How do you capture the sunlight,  
Or ride with eagle's flight?

Describe the sifting sand,  
Hold the wind in your hand?  
It's here and then it's gone  
Only a tingle lingers on.

We roamed wild and free  
Plain to mountain, river to sea,  
Taking only what we need,  
Never with lustful greed.

Such was our way for many years  
Before the whiteman brought us tears  
Rapeing our women, killing our men  
Ensalving our spirit with his pen

Gazing over this concrete lawn,  
I can still remember the dawn.  
Having nothing else left to give.  
The only Indians that lost, are those that live.

Paul F. Shoenfelt

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## ST. LOUIS' SOLUTION TO THE CRIME PROBLEM...

Courtesy: Oscar Newman's DEFENSIBLE SPACE

In 1964, a medium-rise (7 stories) high-cost construction apartment house was built in St. Louis. Over the next eight years robberies, rape vandalism and theft grew to such enormous proportions that surveillance had to be progressively increased. Police patrolled the entrances, corridors and stairwells of these buildings night and day. But crime continued to increase.

Frightened tenants abandoned the apartments in large numbers. Vandals moved in, greatly increasing the danger to the remaining residents, which, of course, lead to even more vacancies.

Finally, in 1972, St. Louis' solution to the problem was to blow up the building. This, despite the desperate need for housing.

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And if you decide to live at Laurel Glen by Dec. 17th you are eligable to win a new Volkswagen with a custom '38 Ford Hood

Of course, State College's crime rate is nothing on the order of St. Louis'. But as you all know, it is one the rise and people are becoming fearful. Knowing this, and wanting to give our tenants the maximum safety (with privacy) we built our apartment units with separate entrances. There are no corridors where the anonymous intruder can wait for his next victim. The front entrances are well lit and protected from the weather by balconies overhead (no searching in the rain for that elusive key).

The units are so placed that the entrances are seen by the surrounding tenants. Where you have this situation of common surveillance, the crime rate is always considerably lower.

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# Laurel Glen Community

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