

Alisa Fineman

Since then, Alisa has toured extensively, appearing at such festivals as California's Strawberry Festival, the Napa Valley Festival and the Kate Wolf Memorial Festival, Austin's South-By-Southwest, The Kerrville Folk Festival, The Connecticut Family Folk Festival, and Spokane's Columbia River Festival. She has performed at the National Songwriter's Academy showcase at The Troubadour in Los Angeles and in the Treestar Concert Series in New York. In 1992 and '93 she was Artist-In-Residence at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies in Rhinebeck, NY. In addition to her solo work and work with her partner and fellow-musician Kimball Hurd, she is also a former member of guitarist Martin Simpson's highly acclaimed Band Of Angels, and a frequent guest-artist at performances by Trapezoid founder Paul Reisler.

And now, Alisa's new CD, *Closing the Distance: Poems, Prayers and Love Songs*, featuring contemporary arrangements of traditional and original songs from the Jewish Diaspora, marks a radical but natural departure from Alisa's previous recordings, and a new direction for her musical and humanitarian sensibilities. Her long-time love of Jewish and world music began at the summer camp she attended through her teens and a work/study experience on a kibbutz in Israel; and on this CD, produced and co-arranged by Alex de Grassi, Alisa sings in Hebrew, Ladino, and English with two guest vocalists, Elias Lammam and Shabda Kahn, singing in Arabic. Set against a mixture of Middle Eastern and Western instrumentation, the arrangements draw from a broad base of traditions that explore the roots of Alisa's cultural heritage.

Those who have followed her career see it as the logical extension of Alisa's musical journey of discovery. For the past fifteen years she has been increasingly called upon to contribute her talents as a cantorial soloist at celebratory events and at several synagogues in Northern California. Currently, Alisa's cantorial responsibilities are mostly in association with Congregation Beth Israel in Carmel, CA. She also is an active member of the vocal and instrumental ensemble, Ya Elah!, a spiritual and interfaith ensemble endeavoring to inspire unity through sacred texts.

It has to do with generosity. What makes Alisa's songs stand apart is her own sense and gift of generosity.

- **Robin Roberts**
The Open Road, KUSP
Santa Cruz, CA

Fineman's resonant voice gives her songs a depth of feeling and experience that the lyrics only hint at.

- **Santa Cruz Sentinel**

Alisa's concerts are like Babette's Feast. She gives herself completely.

- **Lyn Golliher**
Learning Center, NYC

"Alisa is easily among the best of the next generation of singer-songwriters."

- **Tom Paxton**

Warmth, beauty, fresh themes, vivid-word pictures. Alisa is a class act.

- **Rod Kennedy**
founder, Kerrville Folk Festival

Alisa's gift is what she refers to in her music - that spark of the divine inside all of us, a divinity that manifests itself in different people in different ways. Alisa's divinity shines through her music and stories. With this CD she closes the distance, breaks down walls, opens doors and windows!

- **Doug Baumgardner / Little**
Washington, VA