

'Tis the season to release record albums

By Casey McCabe

Despite the fact that Christmas has been "just around the corner" for the past three months, the next 21 days will undoubtedly be the hardest for those people who did not have the foresight to do their shopping before the post-Halloween rush.

As pressure begins to build, so do reminders from advertisers that they have the perfect gifts for your loved ones. If everyone believed in the late night sales pitches, Christmas morning would find Dad with a pocket fisherman, Mom with a kitchen magician and the kids quickly learning a glass cutting kit is not hours of fun at all.

Not surprisingly, in the last few years there has been a rise in the sales of record albums as Christmas gifts. After all, music is a field wide enough to please most everyone, while some believe they can never own too many albums.

Record companies have not sat back idly watching this trend develop. Christmas has become a time for elaborate packaging and repackaging of music, to ensure that when it comes to gift giving, there will be something for everybody on vinyl.

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON is certainly no exception. One of the more common techniques is to hold out on releasing albums by well-known artists until a few weeks before Christmas. Fleetwood Mac's

Tusk and *The Long Run* by the Eagles hit the racks in time for fans to start a barrage of hints aimed at friends and relatives, under the assumption that it would be worth waiting until Christmas if someone else would pay the unusually high list price.

Other long-awaited albums having just come out include Little Feat's *Down On The Farm*, which marks the last works of the works of the late Lowell George; Dan Fogelberg's *Phoenix*, Pink Floyd's *The Wall*, and Stevie Wonder's *The Secret Life of Plants*. Wonder's equally long awaited *Songs in The Key of Life* was a blockbuster during Christmas 1976.

Another common sight in record stores around the end of November is a new crop of greatest hits albums. This year's offering includes the best of Donna Summer, the Little River Band, Rod Stewart, 10CC and the Electric Light Orchestra.

GETTING MORE to the heart of the Christmas spirit is *A Christmas Together* by John Denver and The Muppets. Maybe a little too cute for some, it's still an enjoyable holiday fare for fans of both Denver and the Muppets, with traditional choruses of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," "Silent Night" and "Deck The Halls," as well as a couple of new songs by Denver written especially for the album, "A Baby Just Like You" and "Alfie, The Christmas Tree."

Even Willie Nelson has gotten into the act this time. Fans who are curious as to how this legendary figure in progressive country music would handle such songs as "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer," "Jingle Bells" and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" are advised to pick up his latest album *Pretty Paper* and find out.

For the more religiously inclined, there are at least two albums out by Pope John Paul II to add spiritual cheer to the holidays.

A record album is fairly hard to disguise when put underneath the tree, but at Dirt Cheap they'll let you try with decorative Christmas album folders for 35 cents.

But if you are worried about entrusting someone else with your musical taste, or are not sure what to buy for a friend, the answer may lie in gift certificates offered by local record outlets.

A gift certificate can eliminate the problems that occur when a parent assumes that all young people really "dig" Grand Funk, or when your roommate buys you his favorite album, only to have to take it for himself a few weeks later while muttering about your inability to relate to anything. Whatever your shopping problems are, just remember, there's something for everyone on vinyl. And in case you've forgotten, Christmas is just around the corner.

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Starting Over

Elderly...

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"Coffee Break" includes fashion shows and advice on how to buy or make economical and fashionable clothes. "Speak Out" is editorial time—a "televised soap box" in which people can write or state their opinions on current issues.

"We have a bulletin board for statewide senior citizen's activities, and an action line," Bates said.

There will be 28 programs this year, 18 regular programs and 10 specials. Some of the features planned for "The Grand

Generation" this year include an interview with State Sen. John DeCamp of Neligh, a Social Security question-and-answer program, a home safety test and a four-part special on cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. Dated material is edited out and eight reruns are shown during summer.

In addition to the TV program, "The Grand Generation" has a weekly newsletter in "Voice" magazine, put out by the Nebraska Commission on Aging.

"Last year our audience increased by 700 percent, according to the Nielsen company," Bates said.

Watercolor...

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Tomko organized the show and wrote the catalog for the exhibit. He originally studied Italian Renaissance art, but became involved with American art as a teacher in the 1960s.

"Schools then didn't specialize in American art and usually the new man had to teach it. Of course, that has all changed. American art is really in right now," he said.

A 15-minute video-tape presentation accompanies the exhibit. In addition, Tomko will be giving several lectures.

Joslyn will offer three watercolor workshops in conjunction with the show. Isabella Threlkeld, a watercolor artist, will lead the classes. With a bachelor of arts

degree from Wellesley College and master's degree from NU, Threlkeld has studied in Italy, at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and at American University in Washington, D.C. Her work is represented in museums and galleries across the country, said Dale Galusha, coordinator of workshops and seminars at Joslyn.

The first two workshops will be Dec. 11-14, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Dec. 11-14, 2 to 5 p.m. The cost will be \$25 for museum members and \$30 for nonmemberships.


A weekend workshop will be offered Dec. 15-16, Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. The weekend session will cost \$23 for members and \$25 for nonmembers.

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