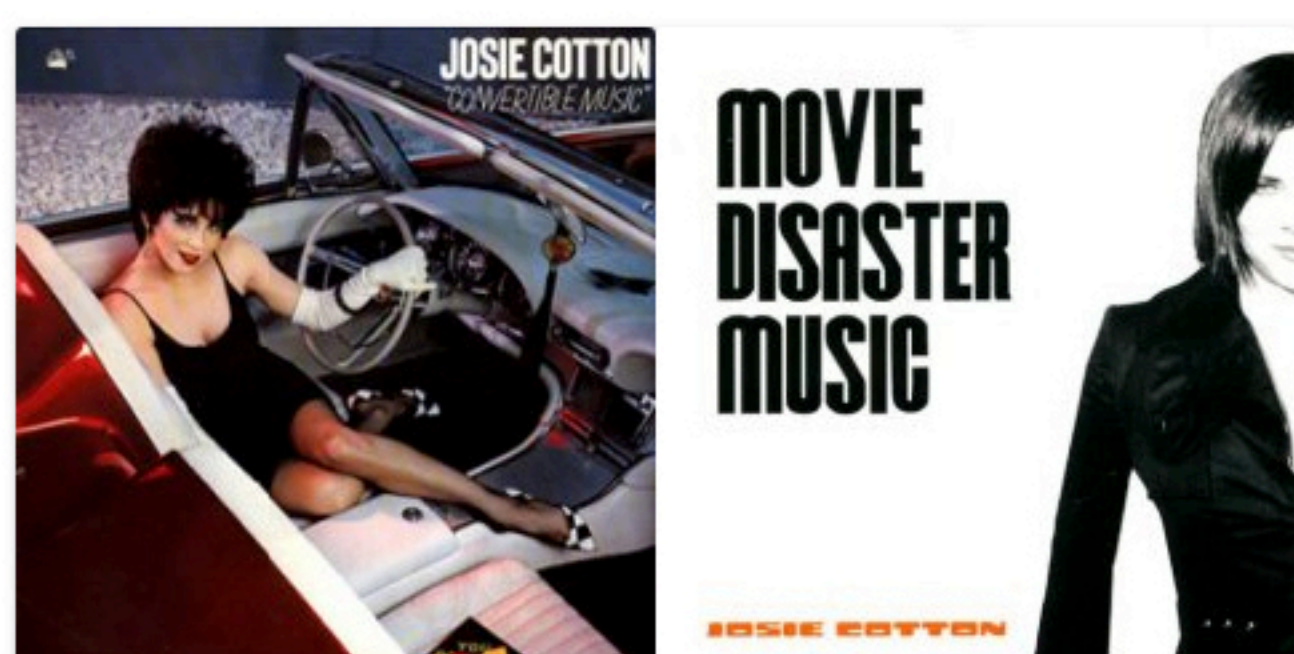
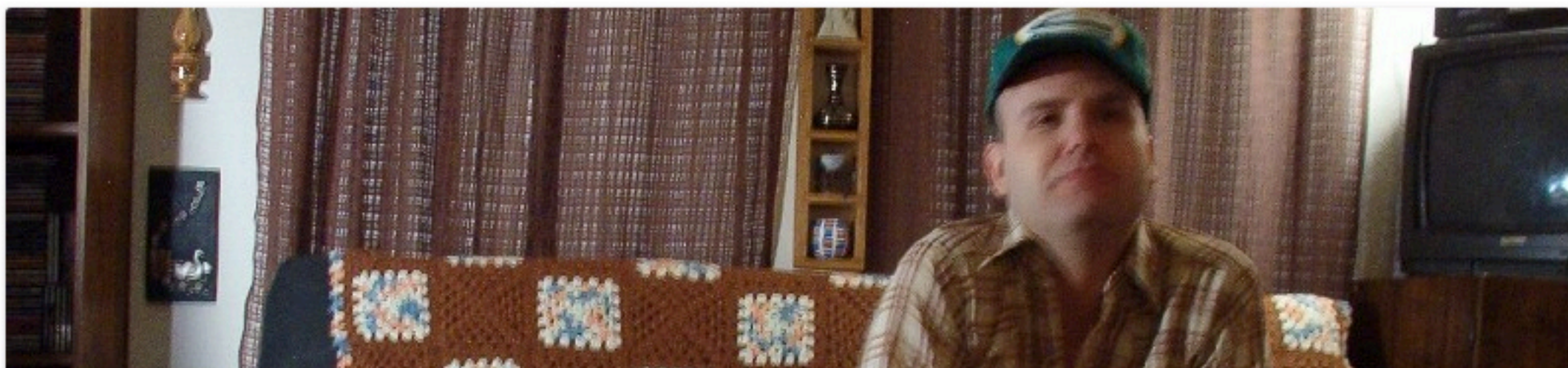


# Jeremy Gloff

releasing independent music since 1993



I'd known about Josie Cotton since I was a kid. Her look was unique and unforgettable. But I never heard her music. Sure, I'd heard \*about\* her music. When I'd released my album ROMANTICO back in 2003 my friend Susy Martian said it reminded her a lot of Josie Cotton. But I was still a stranger to Josie's worlds...

I spent this past summer collecting a lot of music and books. And out of the blue something made me type "Josie Cotton" into the Amazon.com search engine. And I listened to the sound files. And I knew immediately these were songs and lyrics and worlds I would have to explore. The sunlight was calling and later...the shadows.

The musical history of Josie Cotton is interesting and brief. There was a cult hit in the early 80s with "Johnny, Are You Queer" followed by the accompanying album *Convertible Music*. There was the obligatory follow-up album *From the Hip* and then years and years of silence. Josie poked her head out for a moment in the early 90s with the independent release *Frightened by Nightingales* (which I have yet to hear...can't find it any cheaper than \$65 on Amazon). There were rumors of five unreleased albums. And then finally in 2006, twenty four years after *Convertible Music*, the silence was broken with *Movie Disaster Music*.

And so I jumped head-first into the worlds of Josie. In this essay I can only focus on her two masterpieces...the first album...and the newest. (*Nightingales* is a world I will explore someday... and *From the Hip* felt like only a skip and a jump to the next phase.) Close your eyes...and enter...enter...

It is the year 1982. Picture it. Any sunny boulevard near any beach during the hottest day of July. And life unfolds before you both in slow motion and in warp speed. Beautiful shiny cars whiz by with beautiful people and their temporary white smiles. These are the youth of 1982. And maybe Josie Cotton's *Convertible Music* is the sound track for this very day in 1982. Stop in your tracks and look around you. See the girl with the blue bikini and the jet black hair with the ocean dripping off her skin? And see her priceless smile? In her eyes are the greatest hopes of love and romance. There are the kind of hopes life only allows us to feel at the age of 17. And maybe some of Josie Cotton's songs are about this girl. "He Could Be The One" — naive hoping and longing for the perfect Romeo. The perfect man to comb the beaches with at 2 A.M. — tanned and built and shiny. If you stop and look up and down this sunny beach road in 1982 you might see all of the characters from Josie Cotton's *Convertible Music*. These songs aren't about dumb people. These songs are about naive people. People who shine before they realize how temporary shininess is. People who love with all their heart before they realize how temporary love can be. These are songs about people caught in their glorious, youthful, most blissful moments. Even the heartbreak in the songs is temporary. Next weekend will bring a new party, new boys, new girls, and new songs to dance to.

The most heartbreaking moment on *Convertible Music* is "Pictures Of Dad" — a character sketch of a young girl determined to not make the same mistakes as her mother. And maybe this song is about the smartest girl on the beach. The girl who will survive when the party is over. And all eleven songs on this album are audio polaroids of the young spirit. Love at its most innocent and passionate. Lipstick at its pinkest and most fabulous shades. These kids could easily be trapped in these songs forever. Forever playing volleyball, falling in and out of love, dancing to the beat of 1982, and never growing old. Endless lust and magic...

But 1982 ended, and eventually so did 1983. And even then the 1980s ended. And so did the 1990s. And twenty four years later Josie Cotton gave us another glimpse of the same beach street. On the surface it may seem there is very little in common with *Convertible Music* and *Movie Disaster Music*. Or is there? Both albums use the word "music" in their titles, and each album is exactly eleven songs long.

On *Movie Disaster Music* we are presented with the flip side of the coin. Because off of those same beautiful beach streets, in the same grocery stores, and in the same movie theatres where you find the beautiful youth...lie people in the shadows that might see you even if you don't see them. If *Convertible Music* was an audio painting of the naive youth, on this newer album we are presented with portraits of people living on the fringes and in the darkness. What happens to the most beautiful people twenty four years later? When the naive heartbreak morphs into jadedness. When minor tragedies give way to the true grit and disappointments brought on by the harshness of the human spirit. And *Movie Disaster Music* explores these darker sides. The ditches and gutters of every beautiful street may be lined with dead bodies, rockabilly murderous chicks on a hell-bent quest to find The King, and Kung-Fu girls who will eventually blow up this forsaken town.

Perhaps the same girl who wouldn't look at her pictures of dad ended up the ghostly apparition in "Bridget In The Sun." Or the lipsticked and bee-hived innocent girl who proclaimed a "Rockin' Love" ended up marrying the boy who turned out to be "Beautiful But Deadly". The entire sunshine world façade of 1982 is exposed in "Happy Face." And its then I gape with wonder...how these two equally beautiful and opposite words were created by the same mind. And delivered by the same voice. It's haunting, and it's frighteningly accurate.

In my experience I've known a lot of people who shine and burn out by the time they are 25. And they end up hiding in libraries and recording studios and in living rooms and the diners of America. The same beauty that drove up and down the street at noon in the convertible 24 years ago is now driving 100mph overnight on a desert highway. Looking for something true and real. And I will bet a million dollars Josie Cotton knows this girl too. And maybe will write a song about her. Because 1982 is over. Look inside. That girl is us. Let me know if you find anything true and real.

I strongly recommend anyone with a hunger for creative, wonderful, and thought provoking music check out these Cds. They are worlds you will enter and never forget.

Josie's new album "Invasion Of The B-Girls" has just been released. What will that world be like?