

The Upside (and Downside) of Love

Valentine's Day broadcast renders the mixed emotions of the occasion in music *by Mark Wahlberg*

Valentine's Day is special for everyone, hopefully one way or the other. It is for me in more ways than one because of a special broadcast we did last year here at The Current—The Greatest Love Songs of All Time—that was so popular that we decided to do it again this Valentine's Day, February 14, from 7 p.m.–midnight.

The broadcast generated more positive response than anything I have ever done on radio. The playlist ended up mirroring our mission because of the diverse styles and eras represented, and it was quite essentially a show designed to bring people together through music.

Last year, everything I played got at least one vote from our audience. Some were special dedications, personal moments encoded in musical notes, and others were the biggest vote getters. In other words, a combination of universally recognized standards from every genre we play—and quirky—from Al Green's "Let's Stay Together" to the Gang of Four selling "Natural's Not In It."

Several listeners suggested that we do an alternative too—break-up songs! With all the new technology at our disposal, now we can do both at the same time. On Valentine's Day we look for a separate Web-only stream, containing perhaps such gems as "Song for the Damp" by Ben Folds Five.

With love in the air, I couldn't ignore it when venturing to choose a few recent finds, too ...



Far Away From Me **By Ulrich Schreier**

This is Schreier's first solo CD. Originally put out in 2001, but recently re-issued because his 2004 release, *A Stranger Indeed*, got such a good reception. I always got a call or an e-mail when I played it in the early days of the station—generally one of the biggest surprises as it is not structured like a set full of radio singles.

The electronic production quality is awesome. Lush, textured and weaves of sculptured sound gently wash over you like the massive waves of soothing salt water pictured on the cover. He comes from the more small town on the north German coast that my wife comes from, too, so perhaps there is something genetically linkages to this warm and loving soundtrack that we like to have on to create the right atmosphere.



Let's Have a Dinner & Do Dancing **Mandragora**

Of course everyone knows that there is some weird genetic connection between the tango and love, so this is perhaps a "no brainer" as they say in the business. These guys have been filling the dance floor of the Loving/Pats Bar for many a Sunday night, actually helping instruct couples in the fine art of the tango. You can literally recreate that atmosphere in your living room with this set of tango classic mixed with a few surprising covers ... "Jungle Like Teen Spirit" tango anyone? It works!

You can make your request online when you visit www.mpr.org and click on The Current. The Greatest Love Songs of All Time airs Feb. 14 from 7 p.m.–midnight on The Current. If you'd like to hear the 100-odd, stream The Greatest Break-up Songs of All Time on www.mpr.org.