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with today's greatest artists.



Featuring

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Michael Bublé
Mariah Carey
Natalie Cole
Sheryl Crow
Aretha Franklin
Josh Groban
Faith Hill
Norah Jones
Lady Gaga
k.d. lang
John Mayer
Willie Nelson
Queen Latifah
Alejandro Sanz
Carrie Underwood
Amy Winehouse

Tony Bennett

Duets II



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Tony Bennett *Duets II*

Tony Bennett has been singing “duets” since he and Rosemary Clooney co-starred on the CBS Radio/TV program “Songs for Sale” in the summer of 1950. In any number of live concerts in his career he has sung with Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Judy Garland, Lena Horne, and other artists from the “golden age” of American popular song. In 2006, the year of his 80th birthday, his *Duets: An American Classic* was released. The album—which included performances with Paul McCartney, Elton John, Barbra Streisand, Bono and others—won three Grammy Awards. The CD entered the Billboard 200 at Number 3 when it was released in October of 2006 and went on to be one of the best selling CDs of the year and Tony’s career. Bennett’s first Duets album also inspired the Rob Marshall-directed television special *Tony Bennett: An American Classic* which won 7 Emmys making it the most honored program at the 2007 Emmy Awards.

DUETS II includes a roster of artists as diverse as Lady Gaga and Andrea Bocelli but, as in the first *Duets* sessions, Phil Ramone returns as producer. Danny Bennett, Tony’s son, manager and executive producer on the project, observes, “The duets concept is not an original concept but the idea in these CDs is that nobody can cover the demographics, the various genres of music, and the male/female format like Tony Bennett can. I see these sessions less as duets and more as collaborations.”

Phil Ramone noted that although there are many different styles of artists, all the guest performers concurred that what helped make this CD so sensational was Tony Bennett’s consistency and support: “Tony’s warmth and artistic generosity was so appreciated by each guest performer. For many, they said that to record with such a master was a career highlight they’ll always remember.”

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The recording sessions, filmed by Academy Award-winning cinematographer Dion Beebe (*Chicago*, *Memoirs of A Geisha*, and *Collateral*), will be incorporated into a documentary being produced in conjunction with the release of *Duets II*. “This gifted film crew and production team of about seven people followed us everywhere,” Tony reflected, “and one example of how they inspired these recording sessions is what they did for the session with k.d. lang, someone who sings so beautifully and meaningfully. They created the most beautiful wall of blue velvet as a backdrop and it helped create just the perfect mood for us to sing ‘Blue Velvet’ which I first recorded in the summer of 1951. The set really inspired our performance.”

BODY AND SOUL - *duet with* **Amy Winehouse** . . . 24

Tragically this past summer, the passing of Amy Winehouse was announced just four months after she recorded “Body and Soul” with Tony at the famed Abbey Road Studios in London. The song, composed by Johnny Green, is one of Tony Bennett’s life-long personal favorite songs as is the 1939 Coleman Hawkins recording. The song and record always reminds him of the days in New York City when, as a young man, he would visit various jazz clubs on 52nd Street, “Swing Street,” and see and hear giants like Erroll Garner, Stan Getz, Art Tatum, Lester Young, and Billie Holiday. “Contemporary popular music artists, for the most part, have experienced primarily “rock” music in their lives. . .but then along comes Amy Winehouse who had such an innate sense and feeling for jazz. Amy’s idol was Dinah Washington—truly one of the best singers I’ve known in my life. I found Amy to be one of the most focused and professional artists I’ve collaborated with. She was a gifted and very spontaneous singer. She knew how to be in the moment. You sense that feeling in every note she sang on ‘Body and Soul.’ I was just knocked out with her singing and so was everyone else at the session. It is such a devastating loss that she is no longer with us.”

ONE FOR MY BABY (And One More For The Road) - *duet with* **John Mayer** . . . 15

It is not just astounding that Tony Bennett’s been making superior recordings since 1950, but that he keeps searching for new ways to present songs. As Danny Bennett said, “My adage about Tony is that he never sings the same song once. In other words, every night you watch him perform it is like getting a hand picked flower. . . every performance is so fresh and unique.” This ability served Tony well in his duet with John Mayer. “The approach to this song was a real challenge,” Bennett recalled, “because through the years Frank Sinatra’s 1958 version of ‘One for My Baby,’ from his *Only The Lonely* album, has been considered the definitive recording of this Harold Arlen/Johnny Mercer song. He sang it as a blues song with a real melancholy feeling and, unusual for Sinatra, he sang it with just his wonderful pianist Bill Miller’s accompaniment. When I first started singing the song in concert in the early 1960s at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, I added a nice little beat to the song because I didn’t want it to sound like I was trying to copy Sinatra’s wonderful recording. Well a few years ago I was watching Turner Classic Movies and on comes a Fred Astaire movie I’d never seen. It was entitled *The Sky’s the Limit* and it’s the 1943 movie in which Fred Astaire introduced the song. To my great and pleasant surprise Fred sang the song with the same kind of little beat I’ve been using and I had added it without ever having seen the movie. It was a joy to team up with John Mayer. We decided to assume the roles of a couple of guys in a bar together with just the hint of being a bit tipsy. We really had so much fun and he’s so talented. I enjoy his unique way of phrasing and I see nothing but a long and great career for him.”

IT HAD TO BE YOU - *duet with* **Carrie Underwood** . . . 108

Carrie Underwood has gone on to achieve great success since winning the “American Idol” crown in May of 2005. She joined Tony on a song written in 1924, over 80 years before she was crowned “Idol” winner, which demonstrates not only her maturity as an artist, but also how durable and fresh these American standards are. Tony Bennett introduced “It Had To Be You” to a whole new generation of listeners when he performed it on the Grammy winning record of the year in 1995, *MTV Unplugged*. “I’ve always paid close, very close attention to the public and how they react to certain songs I perform in concert,” said Bennett, “and whenever I perform this great Gus Khan classic the reaction is tremendous. The public just adores this song!”



HOW DO YOU KEEP THE MUSIC PLAYING - *duet with* **Aretha Franklin . . . 44**

Yet another example of Tony Bennett's ability to collaborate with legendary musical artists from every genre of music is his electrifying duet with the "Queen of Soul" . . . Aretha Franklin. Here we have together, in a recording studio, two "Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award Winners" with a deep reservoir of admiration and affection for one another. Before going into the session Tony observed, "I was a little apprehensive about recording with Aretha as she is such a great artist." She and Tony share some similar history: Aretha Franklin's first records were recorded for Columbia Records in 1960; ten years prior Tony first recorded for the label. Another musical intersection for them is the love they share for the artistry of Billie Holiday and Dinah Washington. In fact, one of Aretha's first Columbia albums was a tribute to Dinah Washington. For their performance, Tony and Aretha chose a song very appropriate for two musical icons that collectively have been recording and performing for over 110 years, a song Frank Sinatra brought to Tony Bennett's attention. Tony recalled he was in the audience during a Sinatra performance at the Universal Amphitheater in Los Angeles when upon finishing singing "How Do You Keep the Music Playing" (a song written by Michel Legrand and Alan and Marilyn Bergman), in full view of the audience, Frank Sinatra said, "Tony, YOU should sing this song." After including it in his 1986 album *The Art of Excellence* it has now become one of the highlights of every Tony Bennett live concert, and there is a special magic on this recording. After the session Tony said of Aretha, "She made it so easy for me and she was such a natural that we did it in one take."



SPEAK LOW - *duet with* **Norah Jones . . . 72**

Going into this historic project Danny Bennett said, "It's very important to note that with all the new technology, Tony insisted on recording the same way he has since 1950 . . . to do live studio recordings. The most impressive aspect of this project, especially for younger artists, was to come into a studio to record and not overdub or employ all kinds of editing tricks, but to stand next to Tony and record live. And this chemistry is apparent when you hear him collaborate with Norah Jones. "Speak Low," written in 1943 by Kurt Weill, one of Tony's favorite composers, was the backdrop for his collaboration with Jones who Tony called "a quality artist." "The film crew not only captured how beautifully Norah sings but they also captured how beautifully she looks . . . she is gorgeous . . . I mean she has such a sweet face and it reflects her wonderful attitude toward life."



STRANGER IN PARADISE - *duet with* **Andrea Bocelli . . . 89**

Because of the international response to Tony Bennett's 1953 recording of "Stranger in Paradise," from the Broadway show *Kismet*, he was invited to perform concerts for the first time in Great Britain. For the 2011 version of this song, Tony performs with Andrea Bocelli, the biggest selling solo artist in the history of classical music. "What a great experience" said Tony. "First we flew to Andrea's home in Pisa. We had to travel around the world and to several U.S. locations in recording these duets. Andre has a beautiful Oceanside home with a home recording studio. I just love singing with him and as soon as the session was over, he invited all of us to a memorable home-cooked Italian dinner." And as Phil Ramone notes, "On their recording you'll find that this is not a competition between two great tenors. Instead what they produced was a tender and beautiful record."



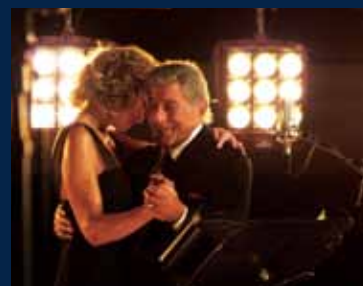
THE GIRL I LOVE - *duet with* **Sheryl Crow . . . 53**

George and Ira Gershwin wrote "The Man I Love" in 1924 and the brothers' songs have been an integral part of Tony Bennett's career. "Tony is the greatest interpreter of the genius produced by the Gershwins," said Phil Ramone, "and it was wonderful to watch and listen to Sheryl Crow team up with Tony on this one." "Jorge Calandrelli wrote a beautiful orchestration for the session," recalled Bennett, "and I think Jorge really captured the magnificence of George Gershwin's uniqueness as a composer. The orchestration is classical. And then, Sheryl and I did something that hadn't been done with the song in that we altered Ira Gershwin's lyrics so we could sing this classic as a duet. I think it worked beautifully."



THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT - *duet with* **Faith Hill . . . 96**

Tony Bennett teamed up with Tim McGraw, Faith Hill's husband, on his first *Duets* album and now the time had come to collaborate with Faith. As producer Ramone observes, "Some of our greatest singers come out of country music and I believe it's something about the honesty most country singers have. It is unique and very compatible with Tony Bennett's approach to everything he performs. It's total honesty." For Tony the session is memorable, "Faith Hill is one special person and again that gifted documentary camera crew captured her beauty. For our record of 'The Way You Look Tonight,' which Jerome Kern and Dorothy Fields wrote for Fred Astaire, they had her in a stunning evening gown and, in the only time in the making of the CD, they had me dress in a full tuxedo. Then for the background, they created the magnificent Art Deco set and it just inspired our performance. When we finished the recording, I told her wonderful husband, 'Faith Hill is the female Frank Sinatra!'"



WHEN DO THE BELLS RING FOR ME - *duet with* **Mariah Carey . . . 113**

For the 1986 CD *Astoria: Portrait of the Artist*, composer Charles DeForest wrote three original songs for Tony Bennett including "When Do The Bells Ring For Me" and for this recording of the song for the *DUETS II* sessions Tony chose Mariah Carey. "She's just so talented," said Bennett, "and she invited us to travel to her beautiful home in Los Angeles which is equipped with a state-of-the-art recording studio. During the session, recorded when she was close to giving birth to a set of twins, I kept kidding her that our record was more than just a duet because I was actually recording with three people! And let me just say that she knocked that performance right out of ballpark. She was sensational."



THIS IS ALL I ASK - *duet with* **Josh Groban . . . 79**

Tony Bennett introduced the Gordon Jenkins song "This Is All I Ask" into the "Great American Songbook" with his 1963 recording and is joined on this track by Josh Groban. In analyzing the reasons so many younger performers, among them Groban, are able to give such superb performances for both *Duets* and *Duets II*, Phil Ramone commented, "It's important to understand that the much of the success stems from interaction and spontaneity when Tony records with these artists. He treats each one as an artist. It's always musician to musician. Some of the comments the guests consistently made were focused on how thrilling it was to watch Tony continually reinvent and how he created the proper environment for the honest performances you hear on this CD. And 'This Is All I Ask' is a perfect example of this."





WHO CAN I TURN TO (When Nobody Needs Me) - *duet with* **Queen Latifah . . . 67**

Because of the 1964 Tony Bennett recording of "Who Can I Turn To," composers Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley enjoyed a great success on Broadway with their show *The Roar of the Greasepaint . . . The Smell of the Crowd* which contained the song. Tony continues to dazzle audiences when he sings it in concert. The song was a great choice for teaming up with Queen Latifah. "If you listen closely to this recording," Tony explains, "you will discover that Queen Latifah has a beautiful voice and I think the best voice since Ella Fitzgerald. You watch, she is going to be around a long time she has so much talent. She has eliminated all fear from her attitude. She is just so positive in her approach to everything... acting or singing... whatever she does she does it so well. She really sings with the gift Ella had. When you listen closely to 'Who Can I Turn To,' her voice is as sweet a voice as any woman that I've heard sing."



DON'T GET AROUND MUCH ANYMORE - *duet with* **Michael Bublé . . . 29**

Danny Bennett found that each recording date brought its own thrills. "Each session was like a master's class for the guest performers and that's what made these sessions so memorable," he observes. "These recordings further demonstrate what The New York *Times* stated several years ago, 'Tony Bennett not only bridged the generation gap, he demolished it!'" Tony's influence is apparent in many new artists who have embraced the popular standard and certainly that is evident with Michael Bublé. "Whenever I get together with Michael we have so much fun. We both love Duke Ellington's music and on 'Don't Get Around Much Anymore' we were able to use a wonderful arrangement by Marion Evans. We did a couple of takes and each one was great. There was a difference in each take but they all had a nice jazz feel to them."



YESTERDAY I HEARD THE RAIN - *duet with* **Alejandro Sanz . . . 103**

A song from Mexico with an English lyric by Gene Lees was introduced to North American audiences with Tony Bennett's 1968 recording of "Yesterday I Heard the Rain" and for this duet Tony chose the winner of 15 Latin Grammy awards, Alejandro Sanz. "This is an example of two iconic artists creating a record together," said producer Ramone, "and both Tony and Alejandro share the same deep passion for life and for music." One of the qualities Sanz processes really impressed Bennett, "I have to say that he is such a relaxed person. I thought I was relaxed, but Alejandro is so calm he made me nervous! But seriously, when he performed on this record he was so with it. He gave the performance all he had. Working with him I can understand why he is so successful and beloved all over Latin America and it was a joy to record with him."

ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET - *duet with* **Willie Nelson . . . 61**

Phil Ramone spoke for everyone including Danny Bennett and his brother, Daegal Bennett, who did the engineering work on these sessions, the film crew and everyone else who witnessed for the first time a historic collaboration held in Nashville between Willie Nelson and Tony Bennett. "To be in a recording studio with these two giants," said Phil, "and watch the wonderful ease and comfort level they had with each other was really one of the highlights of this project." And, for Tony Bennett, it was like meeting an old friend. "Willie travels all over the country to do concerts and he travels with his family in a bus. He graciously invited me aboard to meet his wonderful wife and daughter and it was like visiting old friends in their home," says Tony. "Then he and I headed into the recording studio and I was so impressed with his absolute honesty, naturalness, and simplicity. When he performs he does just what the composer has in mind. It is just amazing how he can make a song come alive...not with fancy tricks or anything like that...he just sings in such a natural way and right away the song is in its natural tempo and he brings just the right feeling to the lyrics. If you're a composer you'll get a perfect record if Willie Nelson records your song!"



WATCH WHAT HAPPENS - *duet with* **Natalie Cole . . . 85**

The recording sessions for DUETS II were filmed in a complete and intimate way under Danny Bennett's supervision. "We filmed everything," he explains, "from the moment Tony would arrive at a session right through the whole process. Instead of having stationary microphones, I asked that everyone wear a wireless mike and a sound person collect all the conversations. As I had hoped, the longer people walked around with the wireless mike on, the less self-conscious and relaxed they were and the conversations were so real. To have Tony Bennett sitting around with Natalie Cole and hear them talk about her wonderful father and Tony's great friend, Nat King Cole, talking about their times together and about Nat recording at the Capitol Tower studio near the corner of Hollywood and Vine. It was just wonderful, and we have hundreds of hours of material that is turning into something quite special and unique."



For Tony Bennett, recording again with Natalie Cole was one of the highlights of these sessions. "One time I was at a Luciano Pavarotti concert in Rome," Tony recalled, "and there was a huge audience. Natalie Cole was a guest artist at the concert and she came out on that stage swinging and I said to myself, 'Wow! Wait a minute. This is truly one of the great new jazz singers in the world.' And sure enough when we recorded a terrific Michel LeGrand song I first introduced in 1965, she brought just the perfect feel to 'Watch What Happens.' I also have to say that along with all of that talent, Natalie Cole is just a wonderfully spirited person. It's in her DNA to be that way and I love being around her."

THE LADY IS A TRAMP - *duet with* **Lady Gaga . . . 6**

The last recording session for DUETS II was held in New York City on the start of Tony Bennett's 85th birthday week. Although Tony is a "UN Citizen of the World," he still believes that New York City, his hometown, is the greatest city in the world and to be home on his birthday week, and in a recording studio was satisfying in itself, but to be collaborating with Lady Gaga on "The Lady Is A Tramp," a Richard Rodgers/Larry Hart song written in 1937, was a grand way to conclude the DUETS II project.



Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta (AKA Lady Gaga) is, like Tony, a native New Yorker (she was born in NYC in 1986, the same year Tony Bennett returned to the Columbia label) and from an early age she, like Tony, demonstrated a talent for music and performing. As a young child she played piano and then in high school she acted in many plays and performed in the jazz band. She and Tony share a mutual interest in music and art and at the session Lady Gaga reaffirmed her affinity for jazz and popular standards as one of her very first musical loves. The first time Tony Bennett performed "The Lady is A Tramp" as a duet occurred in September 3, 1988 (Lady Gaga was 21) when Frank Sinatra asked Tony to perform with him at Bally's Grand in Atlantic City. This new duet version with Lady Gaga is all a duet should be—and it swings with sass. "I was already very impressed with Lady Gaga as I had seen her sing at a benefit event that we were both performing at in New York City. She is a terrific piano player and has a wonderful and powerful voice and I asked her that night if she would join me on the album. In the studio we had a marvelous time recording and I discovered she has great jazz sensibility and we even scatted together. I think time will prove her to be an even bigger star than Elvis Presley—she does it all."