

# Positive Feedback

## Collectors track down *The Hunter*

When the Acura Motor Company asked recording engineer Elliot Scheiner for his personal seal of approval for its newly developed ELS (named after Scheiner) DVD-Audio surround auto sound system, he used the Jennifer Warnes disc *The Hunter* to test

the unit. "The frequency response is pretty wide," Scheiner said. "It's pretty even and balanced very well, and it makes every speaker system sound very good."

Scheiner has an ear for pure-sounding audio. As the recipient of multiple Grammy® Awards and countless accolades for his engineering work, he also coproduced *The Hunter*. "The album is a beautiful record, and it is a beautiful-sounding record." Still, Scheiner was shocked when he learned that the vinyl version of the 14-year-old recording had been selling on eBay for more than \$400 recently. "That's pretty amazing. I think it's wonderful. It's a great record, and I'm pleased that it commands that kind of money," he admitted.

"Take a compact disc title of Jennifer's and a vinyl copy of the same title — most people are really surprised how much better the vinyl sounds," said John Jansky, a Warnes collector and current treasurer of the Audio Society Of Minnesota. Jansky also recently paid \$338 for a still-sealed copy of *The Hunter* on eBay (two previous auctions for the album ended with high bids of \$426 and \$239.50). "This is the most I have ever paid for an album. However, as an audiophile, I often spend large sums of money for equipment. I paid \$5,000 for my turntable and cartridge."

"I don't know why *The Hunter* was deemed an audiophile recording," said Scheiner. "I never thought it was an audiophile recording. I know people who consider themselves audio purists who use this record to test their speaker systems. When we recorded it, we just went for what was going on... I always try to make a record special, but it's not an audiophile recording."

Released in 1992, *The Hunter* was the long-awaited follow-up to Warnes' critically acclaimed 1986 *Famous Blue Raincoat*, an album of Leonard Cohen songs that features Stevie Ray Vaughan on guitar ("First We Take Manhattan") and Cohen's own vocal stylings ("Joan Of Arc").

"I always thought it was my best record," said Warnes. "However, *Rolling Stone* didn't want to review it. They didn't feel that it was an album significant to my career." In spite of the magazine's snub, *The Hunter* garnered Scheiner a Grammy Award nomination for Best Engineered Album.

Warnes is also no stranger to praise. With three #1 hit singles to her credit —



1977's "(It's The) Right Time Of The Night" and her '80s soundtrack duets with Joe Cocker, "Up Where We Belong" (*An Officer And A Gentleman*) and Bill Medley ("I've Had) The Time Of My Life" (*Dirty Dancing*) — learning that *The Hunter* still has a

loyal following and that collectors are willing to pay excessive prices for it provides a bittersweet satisfaction. "I'm glad someone has proved *Rolling Stone* wrong," she said. "I'm glad someone gets into that record and hears the passion I put into it."

Although *The Hunter* continues to have a healthy resale value, collectors and fans may be surprised to learn that Warnes never received a dime when it was originally released, and she has yet to be paid for it. "Private Music, who originally put out *The Hunter*, went through a lot of personnel changes, and I've never received payment for the work. So when someone buys it, I don't get a penny for it," she said. BMG currently owns the recording. (Numerous requests to BMG for information about *The Hunter* went unanswered.)

When *The Hunter* was originally released, Private Music issued the recording on compact disc and offered a small number of vinyl releases to the United Kingdom and German market, creating an almost instant collectible. Although those recordings are legitimate releases, there are an increasing number of illegal releases of Warnes' albums. "The Attic label releases are legit; however, those from Classic Records or Rock The House, with the exception of 200 promotional copies, are not," she said. "I've been through the angry stage," she admitted. "I have been peeved, but there are ways to deal with it." Warnes has worked tirelessly to educate her fans and the general public about counterfeiting and piracy in the recording industry. "If you have a minute, write to the company and ask if the artist is getting paid," she suggested.

Warnes continues to record and perform. A remastered DualDisc version of *Famous Blue Raincoat* is set to be released in June. The deluxe package will include five new songs as well as photographs and video from the original recording sessions, including a 45-minute conversation between Vaughan and Cohen.

Have you discovered a rare collectible from one of your favorite artists on an online auction site? I'd love to know about it. Contact me via my Web site at [www.isleofwrite.com](http://www.isleofwrite.com).

— Lisa Wheeler

Web site of interest  
[jenniferwarnes.com](http://jenniferwarnes.com)