

THE FULL ARTICLE:

No Payne; No Gain: Harold Payne and the Power of Positive Music

By *Meryl Ann Butler*

<http://www.opednews.com>



Harold Payne. Photo: Duff Ferguson by [Harold Payne](#)

Harold Payne (Los Angeles, CA) is a multi-platinum singer/songwriter with an earthy, soulful sound. His music has been featured in numerous television programs, commercials, and movies, including *Beverly Hills Cop II*, *Splash*, and *Summer Rental*, and has been commissioned by corporations and individuals. Payne has recorded an assortment of albums that will hold your heart hostage with his unpretentiously sexy voice and modest charm. In January, Payne won the 2010 Posi Music Award in the Group/Chant Category for his feel-good, "positively" rockin' song, *Something Wonderful*, (*Stayin' True* album. Note: links to videos and audios of songs mentioned are at the end of the article.)

The Posi Awards have been called "*The Grammys of Positive Music.*"



Faith and Harold and other Posi Nominees sing Stand Together, Jan. 2011 by [Jim Downer](#)

In 2009, Payne and LA-based singer-songwriter Faith Rivera shared the annual Posi Music Award for Most Uniting Song for their soulful, movin' and shakin' song, *Stand Together*.

Payne's songs have been recorded by over 100 artists, including Rod Stewart, Patti LaBelle, Sly Stone, the Temptations, and the Kingston Trio; and he's no stranger to Billboard's Top 5. Payne's hit, "*Music Speaks Louder Than Words*" has been recorded by dozens of artists, most memorably by Peter, Paul and Mary.

Hits from the Partyin' Past

Payne is a longtime collaborator with Bobby Womack, the famous Popular and prolific, protÃ©gÃ© of soul music pioneer Sam ("You Send Me", "Chain Gang") Cooke.



Harold Payne and Bobby Womack by Yoav Giladi

Womack charted 36 hit singles from 1970 to 1990, including the well-known party song, *Daylight*, which he and Payne co-wrote. Both Leon Russell and Destiny's Child's Kelly Rowland have recorded the song.



Kelly Rowland of Destiny's Child recorded Payne's "Daylight" by [wikimedia commons](#). Womack and Payne have collaborated on countless songs, including "When the Weekend Comes," (a Womack/Sly Stone duet), " Don't Break Your Promise Too Soon," (a Womack/Rod Stewart duet) and "Save the Children," (performed by Carlos Santana on his *Live in Tokyo: The Budokan DVD*.)

Nowadays, Payne's goal is to leave his audiences happier than he found them, noting, "*My mission is to touch people's lives in a positive way and to use my gifts for good--and for good fun.*" In California, Payne performs at least three or four nights a week in a variety of venues, singing music from his CDs as well as inspired improvisations. He notes, "*it gives me a chance to 'get sweat' on all of my songs ... it keeps my writing muscles 'tuned up,' and keeps me connected to the source that inspires me.*"

In addition, Payne is often invited to perform his uplifting music at "New Thought" services including Unitarian, Unity, Religious Science, and other non-denominational organizations.

On Father's Day, at the Unity Church of Fairfax, VA, Payne sang a poignant song he'd written for his late dad: "Pass It On," from the album of the same name, which touched the heart of the congregation with its appreciative, "pay it forward" theme.

The Positive Music Association states that affirmative lyrics and music have "*a positive effect on the listener. The benefits of listening to positive music include physical and emotional healing, increased motivation, a sense of connection and unity among others and the natural world, facilitating the process of experiencing grief, sadness, anger or apathy, and an increased sense of well being and joy.*"

Serving the Greater Good

Payne generously peppers his career with a variety of charitable activities. In June, he participated in the Unite4Japan concert in San Pedro, California, during which volunteering entertainers raised \$30,000 for the 2011 Japan Relief Fund. Payne opened the concert with "*We'll Be There for You (Kimi No Soba Ni)*," a kind, compassionate "love note" he wrote to the Japanese after the disasters earlier this year.



Faith Rivera and Harold Payne by Rivera and Payne

Payne contributed the song, "*You Are My Teacher*," co-written with Rivera, to *Harmonizing with Humanity's* autism awareness CD, and he has also lent his voice to the fundraising efforts of political hopefuls from Los Angeles to Capitol Hill.

Positive Vibes from Coast to Coast

In June, Payne headlined Jeff Wolf's Positive Music and Arts Festival in The event featured a lineup of musicians performing on the outdoor stage at Stillwaters, Wolf's lakeside property in the foothills of the Shenandoah mountains.

Improv: It ain't fer sissies!

At Payne's live performances, his careful listeners are richly rewarded with lyrics that he has unexpectedly and humorously "repurposed" to suit the moment.

And with astonishing sleight-of-hand, he can pull a suddenly finished song out of a hat by its ears. It's a skill that Mark Victor Hansen of *Chicken Soup for the Soul* fame appreciated when he showcased the singer in one of his popular conferences: Payne can craft the essence of a speaker's message into a new song that's ready to perform by the end of the lecture.



Harold Payne performing by Harold Payne

Watching that kind of magic happen is like peering through a window into the soul of the creative process. And Payne has parlayed that unique talent into a custom song service that memorializes a variety of clients' special occasions.

Flying Friendly Skies

On a recent Southwest flight, Payne was among the delighted witnesses to a surprise, in-flight marriage proposal. At Payne's request, friends of the lovebirds scribbled details of the couple's lives on airline napkins, which were secretly passed to him, and he composed a song faster than you could consult a rhyming dictionary.

Since Southwest allowed Payne to bring his guitar on board as carry-on luggage, he was able to surprise the newly engaged couple--along with a plane-ful of travelers--with a custom song that celebrated the occasion! And thanks to technology, it was captured on an iPhone video, now on YouTube.

B.O.W. WOW!

While on the East Coast in June, Payne also performed at the B.O.W. (Barrel Oak Winery, Delaplane, VA) singing a mix of boomer and current favorites, improv, and originals.



Payne and friends cutting up at the BOW by Meryl Ann Butler

B.O.W. is a kid- and canine-friendly winery with some of the most



breathtaking views in the Blue Ridge foothills.

Caitlin and Maverick with Payne at the Barrel Oak Winery by Meryl Ann Butler

100% Natural

What comes across loud and clear in Payne's solid performances is his authenticity, appreciation, and generosity.

His radiant smile and rugged, "cowboy" good looks keeps listeners riveted. Every moment of his performance is infused with the energy of a musician who genuinely loves what he does, and Payne envelops his grateful audiences in it.

Singer/songwriter Harold Payne by Harold Payne

And don't blink an eye, or you might miss one of his creative lyrical twists or a hilarious, "Payne-ful" pun!

A Bit of Heaven on Earth

In Payne's song, *Angels Don't Always Wear Wings*, a mom invites her little one to look for angels in everyday life.

It's true, angels don't *always* wear wings - sometimes they wear guitar straps!



Harold Payne offers a hopeful and heavenly vision of positivity through the captivating fusion of his boyish smile and smoldering voice. It's a devilishly divine combination that entices listeners to let the music raise their spirits a notch or two.

If you are lucky enough to be in Southern California, check Payne's online calendar at www.haroldpaynemusic.com/performances. He can often be found performing his unique mix of originals, covers and improvisations at a variety of local venues including: Tony's on the Pier Redondo Beach; 21 Oceanfront Newport, and Montage Resort, Laguna, in addition to other special events. He also performs as a member of the band Gravity 180, formerly known as Gravity. WARNING: if you play the group's CDs in the car, be careful - the magnetic mix of Clydene Jackson's sensuous sound with Payne's bluesy vocals is likely to steam up the windows!



"Gravity" oil on canvas; Clydene Jackson, Oliver Brown & Harold Payne by [Synthia Saint James](#)

ABOUT THE INTERVIEWER:

Meryl Ann Butler is an artist, author, educator and OEN Editor who has been actively engaged in utilizing the arts as stepping-stones toward joy-filled wellbeing for over 25 years. She studied art with Harold Ransom Stevenson in Sea Cliff NY.

RESOURCES

Hear Harold Payne's music:

"*Something Wonderful*" by Harold Payne

<http://www.myspace.com/haroldpayne>

"*Stand Together*," Posi Award winning song from Faith Rivera and Harold Payne

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFLMVHMh1uk>

Bobby Womack sings Womack and Payne's, "*I Wish He Didn't Trust Me So Much*" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovmS20sc2_U

Daylight , which Womack co-wrote with Payne.

<http://www.amazon.com/Bobby-Womack-Greatest-Hits/dp/B00001R3HY>

Payne's "*Music Speaks Louder Than Words*" recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHy2vXM6Ktk>

Payne sings *We'll Be There for you (Kimi No Soba Ni)*,

http://www.reverbnation.com/play_now/song_8276676

Southwest Airlines Flight 3627 (Sept. 19, 2009) - Proposal Song by Harold Payne <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqfMLfKNhFU>

Custom Songs 4 U <http://customsongs4u.com/samples.html> is Harold Payne's music service, memorializing special occasions with one-of-a-kind songs written especially for each event, including weddings, birthdays, retirement, and more.

Gravity 180 (Clydene Jackson, Oliver Brown & Harold Payne)

www.gravity180.net

RELATED LINKS

emPower Posi Music Awards www.empowerma.com/PosiAwards

The Positive Music Association www.positivemusicassociation.com

Randy Grossman's Harmonizing with Humanity autism awareness fundraising album and other events at www.hwhrecords.com

Faith Rivera website www.faithrivera.com

Jeff Wolf's Stillwaters Studios and annual Positive Music and Arts Festival www.stillwaters-studios.com

Barrel Oak Winery www.barreloak.com

Unity of Fairfax VA www.unityoffairfax.org