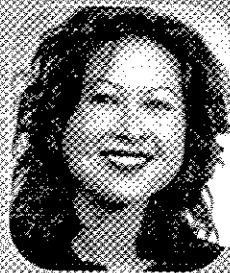


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Singing
through
life
Attorney
doubles
as
songstress



INGRID CHIEMI SCHROFENER IS A FOLK SINGER-SONGWRITER who performs evenings in small clubs in the Greater Boston area. The title of her new compact disc, *Living on Two Coasts*, mirrors the duality of her life. She grew up in Hawaii, a state where ethnic mixes are the norm. Her mother is of Olanawan lineage, her father emigrated to Hawaii from Salzburg, Austria. The diversity in her family resonates through her songs at night. With the dawn, she returns to another arena—the courtroom—where she is a probate litigator for a Boston law firm.

Music courses through her veins and offers her an opportunity to synthesize her experiences of both the cultures of east and west. In fact, she uses that experience as a basis for lectures and discussions in her profession as an attorney. She recently offered her insights to attorneys in family law through the Boston Bar Association to "sensitize them to cultural differences."

She noted that significant cultural differences could be important in trying to understand persons from other parts of the world. Chiemi serves on the Asian Lawyers Executive Board and explained that Asians have a "different way of thinking of words or gestures and mannerisms." An example, she said, is that Asians do not look you in the eye when conducting a conversation.

Even our myths may have different meanings, she said. For example, the mythical character "Tom Thumb" is German in origin. In Japanese culture, he is known as "Little One Inch."

"So, if east and west have different meaning of the same words and gestures, my music reflects those cultures," she said. "And so does my story telling" which takes the form of folk music.

Her love for music began its expression in her early years. She wrote her high school class song, "Steps to Find" that was sung in four-part harmony by her fellow 425 graduating students in Hawaii at Punahou High School. "Steps to Find" was her first written piece. "I have been in love with music my whole life," she said. When young, "classical music was imbued" in her by her parents. First she studied the violin, then the viola and finally the piano.

Chiemi was the reigning Miss Teen of Hawaii in 1987-88. As a 'teen queen,' she performed, singing and dancing for and at many charitable functions and fundraisers.

Chiemi is a graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and English. She is currently a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and the Phi Eta Chi Honor Society. She is also a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and the Phi Eta Chi Honor Society. She is also a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and the Phi Eta Chi Honor Society.



Performed before the Pope

"WHILE A SOLOIST and member of the 150 person Boston College Chorale under the direction of the late liturgical music composer Dr. C. Alexander Peloquin, Chiemi was graced with the part of the female angel in Haydn's *The Heavens Are Telling*, which she performed with the Chorale in a special audience with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican in Rome.

While in graduate school, Chiemi was a soloist and member of *The Wand'ring Minstrels*, an acapella singing group covering various pop tunes for charitable and graduate student events. Chiemi's musical influences are Joan Baez, Suzanne Vega and Annie Lennox. She thanks God for giving her a voice and sends much Aloha to her family and friends for their love and support, especially to her husband, Josh...

She made her way to Boston from Hawaii to visit her cousin who then was a student and cheerleader at Boston College. "I fell in love with the campus," she recalled. Subsequently, she enrolled at Boston College and eventually took up studies in Philosophy and English. She responded to a series of questions:

What is the connection between singing and litigating?

What I do during the day is just a different sort of performance, but performance all the same, with a courtroom as the stage. What I do is tell stories. Sometimes, as in my songs, I share aspects of my life and experiences with an audience. As an attorney, I represent my clients by actively advocating their stories. While the forms contrast sharply, the stories in each venue have one thing in common, the form is governed or constrained by music in one case and by applicable law in the other.

On both of your compact discs you use just your maiden name, Chiemi, not your married "Cherise-Lee". What does it mean?

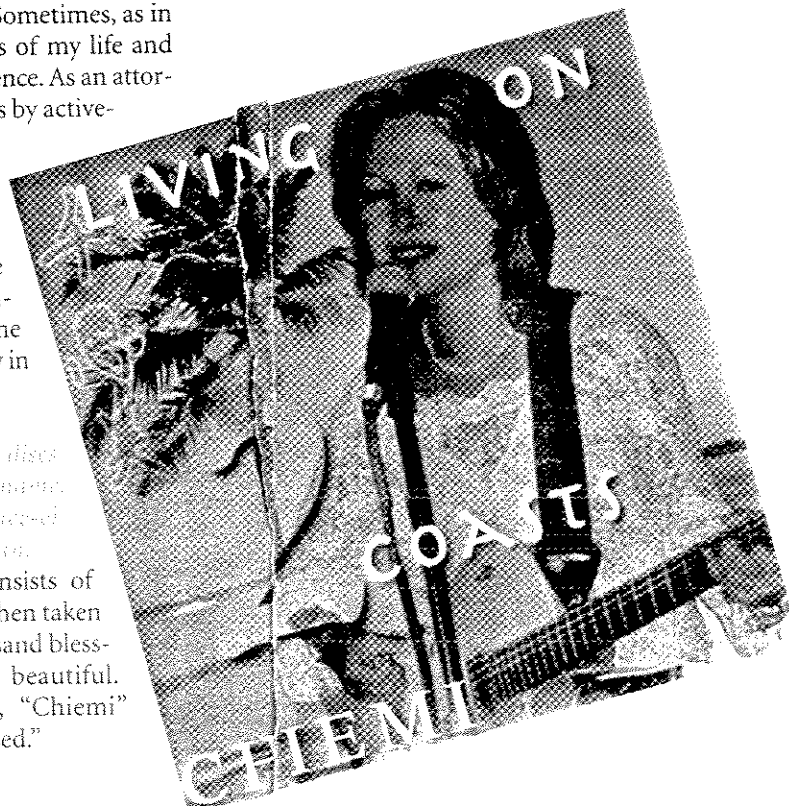
Chiemi in Japanese consists of three Kanji characters when taken separately mean, a thousand blessings, benevolent, and beautiful. When taken together, "Chiemi" means "one who is blessed."

You live in the east, so perhaps many of the scenes in your songs are of being in a world that you see through the eyes of others. Would you care to say more about that?

Although I live in Newton now, my song imagery comes from Hawaii. It makes sense-even if situations and events I write about may happen here, the vocabulary I draw from was defined by the sights and sounds of those years. My memory is rich with remembrance of stories of all kinds; humorous or poignant phrases, notes, chord sequences and tunes. As these come back into sharp focus I record them in a journal I started when I was 12 years old. These recollections are all, in a sense, puzzle pieces that I piece together when I compose a song. Sometimes I jot down music, or just a turn of phrase. Occasionally I have what I think is a chorus for a song, complete with music, but no verses, or vice versa.

Two of Chiemi's songs, "Old" and "Living on Two Coasts" were selected to be included in "Songs of AMERICA," a 2005 CD produced by Tom Hartman at Hill-Top.

Chiemi's new album is also listed at CD Baby.com, and is available at The BC Bookstore, and Newbury Comics (Harvard Sq., Fresh Pond & Newbury St.)





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