

# Groban talks about growing as an artist

By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## NEW YORK

Singing a mix of operatic tunes and sweeping ballads has been a successful formula for Josh Groban: since the 25-year-old made his debut six years ago he has sold millions of albums with his soaring voice and classical-crossover sound.

But Groban decided to tinker with the formula on his latest album, *Awake*.

He collaborated with the likes of Dave Matthews and Herbie Hancock, and used African rhythms on some songs, even adding the harmonies of South African acts like Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

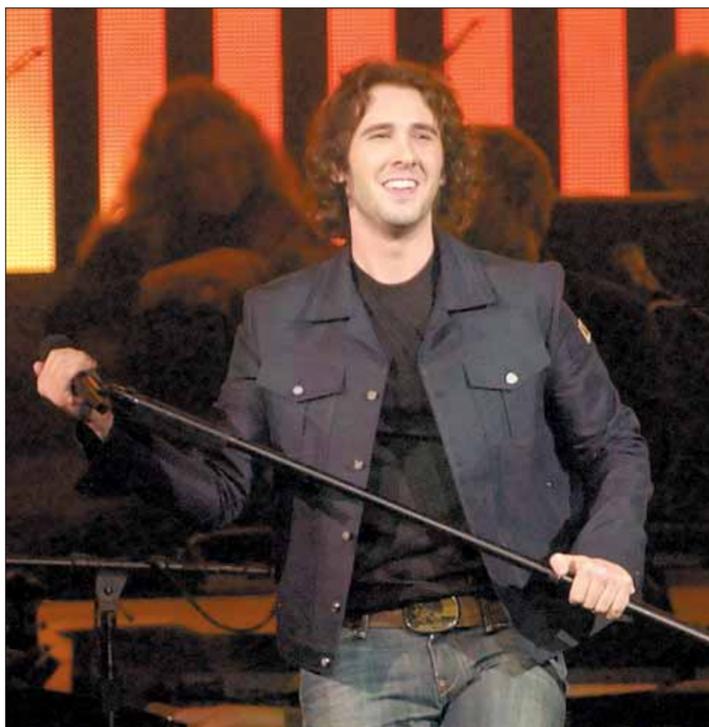
He also put more of himself into the record by using his own pen, helping write some of the album's songs, including the emotional "Lullaby."

It was a bit of an artistic risk, but one Groban felt he needed to make after a life-changing trip to South Africa. Love songs are still paramount in his repertoire: this week, he releases a special romance-themed album, *With You*, in Hallmark stores. Still, Groban, who embarks on a tour this week, is interested in more than torch songs these days.

**AP: Your trip to South Africa really influenced the record. Were you searching for a different artistic view before you got there?**

**Groban:** When I went to South Africa, the only thing that I knew was just how much that I wanted to be there, and how much I've always ended up loving the music from South Africa.

The trip for me, it could be any number of things for me. It could have just been a fun experience ... and it could have been just one of those inspirational times in my life, and it just happened to be, not



Singer-songwriter Josh Groban performs at the Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids, Mich. Groban's latest album, *Awake*, was influenced by a trip to South Africa.

just for my music. Meeting Nelson Mandela, and being able to be the ambassador to his foundation (to help the impoverished and those with AIDS and HIV) ... that just left me with a feeling of wanting

to come back and wanting to dedicate part of my life to helping that cause.

**AP: This album definitely has more of a world view.**

**Groban:** I think more and more I like to

find songs that talk about and encourage the most universal truths. I think a song like "Weeping" ... reminds us all not to forget our common humanity in times of political struggle ... all sorts of differences. So, it's very gratifying to be able to find music that has a message sometimes.

The message is very simple, sometimes it's just about love, and sometimes the message is a little more political, a little deeper than that. But it's just something that I'd certainly like to do more of in the future.

**AP: You wrote a song on the album with Dave Matthews; most people wouldn't picture you two together.**

**Groban:** Dave and I hooked up because I basically just asked him. I was such a fan of the music for so long, and when I wrote the melody to "Lullaby," I knew that Dave would be this incredible lyricist for this song, him being South African and just having a great poetic way of writing lyrics.

**AP: We don't see you too much in the celebrity gossip pages. Do you deliberately try to keep a low profile?**

**Groban:** We're in an age now, press-wise, where people are so addicted and hungry for every little piece of information that if they can't see your privates, they don't care, and I mean that literally. When that starts happening, you become much more famous but much less interesting as an artist, I think, because people stop turning to the art as a way to find out more about you.

**AP: What are some of your guilty pleasures?**

**Groban:** I am a normal 25-year-old guy. Just because it's not (captured by) paparazzi doesn't mean I don't like to go out to clubs. It doesn't mean I don't like to hang out with my friends.

# TOP 5

of the week

## Television

1. "American Idol" (Tuesday), Fox
2. "American Idol" (Wednesday), Fox
3. "Grey's Anatomy," ABC
4. "House," Fox
5. "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation," CBS

— Nielsen Media Research

## Movies

1. "Ghost Rider," Sony
2. "Bridge to Terabithia," Disney
3. "Norbit," Paramount
4. "Music and Lyrics," Warner Bros.
5. "Tyler Perry's Daddy's Little Girls," Lionsgate

— Exhibitor Relations Co.

## Albums

1. *Infinity on High*, Fall Out Boy, Fueled by Ramen/Island/IDJMG
2. *Not Too Late*, Norah Jones, Blue Note
3. *Daughtry*, Daughtry, RCA
4. *Konvicted*, Akon, Konvict
5. *Headstrong*, Ashley Tisdale, Warner Bros.

— Billboard magazine



## DINING WITH DUFFY

### Mass Ave. Pub

**Address:** 745 Massachusetts Ave., Indianapolis  
**Phone:** 974-0745  
**Hours:** 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. Monday to Saturday; noon to midnight Sunday  
**Credit cards:** Major cards accepted  
**Entrée price range:** \$4 to \$6.75

## Indy avenue's pub provides comfortable fare for the masses

Two years ago, the Mass Ave. Pub was humming along nicely as the 745 Bar & Grill, a comfortable, unpretentious watering hole with commendable pub grub, named after its address on Massachusetts Avenue in downtown Indianapolis in a sturdy brick building built in 1912.

Then, in January 2005, the 745 Bar & Grill was compelled to go on sabbatical when its kitchen was swallowed up in a hole being dug in the neighboring lot for the construction of a new building.

The digging got too close to a back wall, which collapsed and took the kitchen with it.

After two patient and persistent years, owner Tracy Robertson has her bar and grill off the disabled list and in full, hearty health, with its opening last week as the Mass Ave. Pub, the name change taking advantage of the charming and lively dining, imbibing and cultural makeover that Massachusetts Avenue has rendered and enjoyed the past two decades.

Only the name has changed. Robertson maintained the basic décor theme from before the construction mishap, with the brick walls adorned with mirrored upscale beer advertising signs, a flat-screen monitor at the front wall, an eight-stool

bar, and a small, comfortable dining room that seats about 45.

With the newly remodeled kitchen open until around midnight, and the bar to 2 a.m., the menu has the traditional and vigorous comfort food selection, revolving around hefty burger selections, with Swiss mushroom gravy and grilled onions among topping options, grilled chicken sandwiches, BLTs, three-cheese grilled cheeses, strombolis, breaded fish sandwiches, pizzas and wrap sandwiches.

Offhand, I could not think of a better way to welcome back a neighborhood pub than to immerse myself in its breaded

pork tenderloin, preceded by a cup of its chili.

The chili (\$2.50 for a cup, \$3.50 for a bowl) offered an impressive, tasty balance of ground beef, beans, and the tomatoey, mildly seasoned broth.

The breaded tenderloin was also on target, large and thick without showboating and dissing the bun.

The somewhat crunchy breaded left room to fully enjoy the tender pork, with the optional onion, pickle, and tomato additives.

The kitchen plays up its onion rings, with the crunchy batter quite tasty, but as with most onion rings, a bit too dominant

for my personal taste. I prefer the onion to take center stage, as they do with a lighter tempura batter.

But this is a minority opinion among devotees of the Mass Ave. Pub onion rings, who see it as further proof that their favorite neighborhood pub on Mass Ave. hasn't missed a beat from its two-year involuntary vacation and looks stronger and even more welcoming for the experience.

*Veteran restaurant critic Reid Duffy writes a weekly review for the Daily Journal. Comments may be sent to letters@thejournalnet.com.*

The only thing worse than missing the game...

...is not knowing the final score.

**BUY ONE MONTH  
FOR \$10.40  
GET ONE FREE**

**DAILY JOURNAL**

The newspaper you need to read.

**Call 736-2777 to  
subscribe, or log on  
thejournalnet.com**

Offer limited to one month free, for new subscribers only. Free Internet access with every subscription. Does not include mail delivery. Offer valid on prepaid orders only.



**The New**

**812-597-4335**

# Chevrolet Poynter

Morgantown, In

**No tricks!  
No gimmicks!  
No fees!**

**Just Great Service**

**It's our promise!**

**New SUV's under invoice!**      **You keep the rebate!**

**Even new trucks under invoice!!**      **All new cars under invoice!**

**End of February Clearance!!**

**ALL REDUCED!!**

<p><b>03 Buick Rendezvous CXL</b> 7 pass, loaded! <b>\$12990</b></p> <p><b>2005 Chev Equinox AWD</b> 2 to choose, NICE <b>\$16885</b></p> <p><b>2004 Colorado Crew Cab</b> Traded, 5 Pass 2WD <b>\$15995</b></p> <p><b>2005 Chev Avalanche</b> 19000 miles <b>\$ 21985</b></p> <p><b>2006 Impala 2 to choose</b> under 10K! <b>\$15887</b></p> <p><b>2001 Suzuki Grand Vitara</b> XL7 7 passenger <b>\$8998</b></p>	<p><b>04 Pontiac Grand Am</b> GM Program car <b>\$9995</b></p> <p><b>02 Chev Trailblazer 4x4</b> New car trade <b>\$9995</b></p> <p><b>2003 Chev Malibu</b> nice car! <b>\$9245</b></p> <p><b>00 Chev Silverado EXT</b> <b>4x4 LT, V-8, leather \$12450</b></p> <p><b>2003 Ford Taurus SE</b> great price! <b>\$5995</b></p> <p><b>06 Chev Uplander (2)</b> ready for vacation! <b>\$14750</b></p>
---	--

**CheaperChevy.com**