



# Exclusive Premiere: Jim Page Shares “Angeline” from Upcoming Album - American Songwriter

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by **Jacob Uitti**

When Bonnie Raitt says she is a “longtime admirer” of a certain artist, we know it’s important to pay attention to that songwriter, too.

Enter: Jim Page.

Enter Raitt’s thoughts on Page: “Jim’s been writing great topical songs for as long as I can remember, bringing his acute wit and wry humor to a host of subjects that can really use both. In the tradition of Woody and Dylan, he cuts right to the heart with music you actually enjoy listening to. I’m a longtime admirer.”

If that’s not a ringing endorsement, we don’t know what is.

For the acoustic-playing folk-song-writing Seattle-based Page, music has been part of his life for decades. He’s shared stages with Rob Wasserman, Christy Moore, and Bonnie Raitt, along with many others, ever since his early days in the Greenwich Village scene in New York City at the height of its notoriety with folks like Bob Dylan leading the way.

Page, who will be releasing a new album, *The Time Is Now*, in April, is also set to hype the LP with a couple of new singles. And we here at American Songwriter are happy to premiere the first—“Angeline,” which you can check out below.

Page, who recorded his first album in San Francisco in 1975, has had his songs covered by acts like The Doobie Brothers and Christy Moore. His songs have been played around the world on stations like BBC 1 and KEXP 90.3 FM.

We caught up with Page to ask him a few questions about his career and the new release.

**American Songwriter: How does it feel to be making music for something like 50 years—does the world feel that much different?**

**Jim Page:** It’s pretty exciting these days actually, once you get the hang of it. You can record at home and release it digitally all over the world the next day. That was unthinkable in my day. The distances

were greater, the time was longer, and the recordings were big heavy boxes that you had to lug around. You can still make vinyl if you want to, it's back in fashion, but you don't have to.

Also, the subject matter is wide open again. That seems to go in phases. It was open in the '60s, and then it closed for a while, then it opened again and then it closed, and now it's open again. And I should also mention that there's certain notoriety that comes with age. I've been doing this since 1965, '66. Sometimes people look at me and say, "That's him! He's still here." Yep, I'm still here.

**AS: Can you tell us one good Joan Baez or Bonnie Raitt story?**

**JP:** I was sitting in the courtyard of a recording studio in LA in the early '80s. I was waiting for John Trudell to show up. John always had his own sense of time and I just had to roll with it. I was writing a postcard about a statue I was looking at that didn't have any arms. I was turning it into a joke when this red-haired woman came right over to me and sat down and said, "Hi, I'm Bonnie Raitt. I'm a fan." I didn't know what to say, I was a little flabbergasted that someone like her would be talking to someone like me, but there we were. There were cassettes of me being passed around in some movement circles and I guess she got of those. She couldn't hang right then because she was busy, Bonnie's always busy. Busy and smart and funny. We grew to be fast friends over the years and I'll take on anybody who says a bad word about her. She's a great artist and tireless advocate who spends a lot of invisible time reuniting old blues players with their rightful royalties. Ain't that somethin'...

**AS: What was the genesis of the new single, "Angeline"?**

**JP:** Angeline is a name that you hear around Seattle. There's a tree named after her and a woman's shelter. Like the song says she was Chief Seattle's daughter, her name was Kikisoblu. She was renamed Angeline by the rich wife of one of the city founders so that they could basically say, "She's ours now, one of us, no danger." But she was unstoppable. She wouldn't move when they told her to and she wouldn't stop living her life right in front of everybody. I wanted a song that would tell that story, that would challenge the assumptions of ownership, that would celebrate her for who she was and what she did, and that would celebrate us for taking the chance to live into a future that is not predetermined.

**AS: What do you love most about music today?**

**JP:** There are so many great players out there it's unreal. Singers, writers, you name it. I can't keep up, I wouldn't even try. I love the way that it's so global. Through the digital mediums, it circles the planet. The way they pass those songs around and everybody puts a part on it—Songs Around The World. The way that street music—busking—has become a globally recognized force. I used to do that a lot and I take it seriously. People in Galway, Ireland, communicate with people in Seattle. It's an historically honorable art form that's come into its own and it's beautiful.

I love the way that world-class players do political music even if they just slip it in with verse here and there. Everybody does something—it's gone diffuse.

And of course, I love the way that folk music and the acoustic guitar have become a major part of the cutting edge. Folk music by definition has always been edgy and full of life. It doesn't pull punches or worry about record labels. It's not intimidated by silk suits or award ceremonies, and it won't keep its mouth shut. It's a toolbox for everybody to work with.