

## Dee Carstensen – Bio

Dee Carstensen was born on February 18<sup>th</sup> 1956 in Maryland and currently resides in New York City with her husband, the vibes player and composer, Mike Mainieri [Steps Ahead]. The Carstensen family moved to Rochester, New York when Dee was five, when her father took up a professorship at the university. As a hobby, Dee's father, Dr. Edwin L. Carstensen, a renowned biomedical engineer, played piano and clarinet, and sang in barbershop quartets. Dee and her four siblings took music lessons from the age of five, and her first instrument was the piano. Aged eight, Dee was one of five students selected to study harp, with a harpist from the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. The course was organised by the Eastman School of Music [part of the University of Rochester]. Although those lessons were only meant to last one year, Carstensen went on to study the instrument for a total of nine years. Carstensen later spent time in Europe, Montana and California before settling in New York City, where she was 'discovered' by Mike Mainieri.

Issued by Mainieri's NYC Records Inc., Carstensen's debut solo album "**Beloved One**," produced by Bob Marlette [except for two cuts by Mainieri, one by Carstensen, and one by Bruce Martin, Marlette and Mainieri], featured session contributions from Mark Knopfler [Dire Straits] and Mainieri. Dee and Mike were married that year. Produced by Neil Dorfman [Sting, Dire Straits] "**Regarding The Soul**" marked the appearance of Mainieri's Exit Nine subsidiary imprint [which has issued all her subsequent albums], and apart from Carstensen originals and co-writes, the collection included a cover of Jimi Hendrix's "Angel." The initial pressing of "**Home Away From Home : Recorded Live 1995 - 1996**" featured eight songs, and was followed three years later, by the current ten song version. "**The Map**" was produced, recorded and mixed by Ben Wisch. Eight years would elapse between this release and Carstensen's next album of adult music.

In the lucrative world of film soundtrack music, Dee's voice was featured in the Sally Field directed "**Beautiful**" [2000] and in the television remake of Neil Simon's "**The Goodbye Girl**" [2004]. She sang the nineteen-fifties standard "Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams" on the "**The Prize Winner Of Defiance, Ohio**" [2005]. Having worked with John Frizzell on the latter trio of movies, Dee joined him to sing on "**First Born**" [2006]. Dee collaborated with Frizzell on the "**First Born**" lyrics, which were then translated and sung in Gaelic.

The children's song collection "**Can You Hear A Lullaby**" saw Dee win the 2001 Parent's Gold Choice Award. Guest vocalists on the recording included Everett Bradley, Curtis King and Julie Danksy. Carstensen's latest, adult solo set, "**Patch Of Blue**," was released in November 2005 by Exit Nine, and production was credited to Mainieri, Carstensen and Austin, Texas based composer/arranger Stephen Barber. Austin's Tosca String Quartet contributed to the recording. Dee's main instrument is an 85-pound, 47-stringed, 7 pedal Lyon and Healy electric harp, which she usually plays bare-footed. In concert and on her recordings, Dee occasionally plays piano.

Discography : "**Beloved One**" [1993] ; "**Regarding The Soul**" [1995] ; "**Home Away From Home : Recorded Live 1995 - 1996**" eight songs [1996] ; "**The Map**" [1998] ; "**Home Away From Home : Recorded Live 1995 - 1999**" ten songs [1999] ; "**Can You Hear A Lullaby**" [2001] ; "**Patch Of Blue**" [2005] :

### Arthur Wood

Kerrville Kronikles 07/06

[505 words]