

# Happydance Of The Xenophobe

the new solo release from

## Christine Lavin

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**Street date: Tuesday, September 18, 2007**

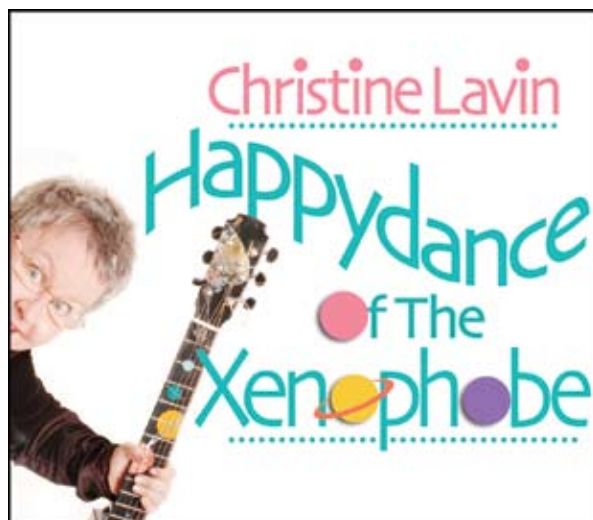
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**Happydance**, n. [hap-ee dahns] "An impulsive, spontaneous jig of joy."

**Xenophobe**, n. [zen-uh-fohb, or zee-nuh-fohb] "A person unduly fearful or contemptuous of that which is foreign, exotic, or out of the ordinary."

**Happydance Of The Xenophobe** is my new topical, political, 13-song collection that will thrill the National Weather Service ("Here Comes Hurricane Season"), delight Julia Child devotees ("Whipped Cream"), enrapture caffeine addicts ("Chocolate Covered Espresso Beans"), but also irk Priscilla Presley, the NRA, cigarette smokers, Faux News, and best of all, Dick Cheney. The album ends with an unexpected medley of five of my favorite folk tunes from the '60s and '70s set to a *dance beat* (more on that below). Plus there's a hidden surprise bonus track.



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### Happydance Of The Xenophobe: The Songs

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1. **"The Most Polite City In The World"** If you go to [www.rd.com/content/good-manners/2](http://www.rd.com/content/good-manners/2) you will see I'm NOT making this up! *Reader's Digest* conducted a 'global courtesy test.' Guess who won?

2. **"Happydance"** Admit it. You, too, have a dear friend who is married to a complete idiot, and you are just praying for the day you can do this happydance behind their back.

3. **"Chocolate Covered Espresso Beans"** Jenna Esposito, a young NYC cabaret singer, ([www.jennaesposito.com](http://www.jennaesposito.com)) asked me to write a song for a show she is creating of all coffee-themed music. By coincidence I had just met Leslye Alexander at a dinner party -- she runs Koppers Chocolates, a company founded by her dad, Harold, who invented chocolate covered espresso beans back in 1968. Thanks, Harold! [www.kopperschocolates.com](http://www.kopperschocolates.com)

4. **"More Than 1,000,000 Americans"** On April 26, 2007 in a New York Times column that dealt with the aftermath

of the Virginia Tech massacre, Bob Herbert wrote that since 1968, the year that Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. were assassinated, more than 1,000,000 Americans have been killed by guns. Not in wars, on our own soil. That statistic stuns.

5. **"Here Comes Hurricane Season"** This whole hurricane-naming thing has bugged me for a long time. I think this idea of mine will help save lives (*who the hell wouldn't get out of the way of Hurricane Ka-Boom-Boom??*). And it's high time we started naming tornadoes. Twisters rock!

6. **"Tom Cruise Scares Me"** was written by my friend the infamous "Guitar Man of Central Park," David Ippolito ([www.thatguitarman.com](http://www.thatguitarman.com)). If the weather is warm on a Saturday afternoon, you'll find him not far from West 77th Street and Central Park West singing to hundreds of enraptured New Yorkers and tourists. David's version of this song is different from mine -- Wolf Blitzer and Oprah Winfrey scare him (but not me); Kenny Rogers and The Weather Channel scare me (but not him).

7. **"Smokers"** One day it was hovering around 3° Fahrenheit in Manhattan as I was walking up Madison Avenue, I saw clusters of smokers huddled in front of massive skyscrapers, and this song came to me in a flash. I know smokers are going to hate it, especially the line, "Kissing a smoker is just like licking a dirty ashtray." But it's true. *Tough love!*

8. **"Russian Michael"** Every Monday night, if I'm in New York, I go to Jim Caruso's extreme open mic "Cast Party" at the jazz club Birdland on West 44th Street. Russian Michael is one of the friends I met there.

9. **"As We Stumble Along"** As I type this (July 07) I have now seen the Broadway musical "The Drowsy Chaperone" more than 40 times (it's my version of church: always restores my faith in mankind, and reminds me why I make music). A national tour starts in September '07 -- the Drowsy Chaperone herself sings this song in the show, then the entire cast again, at the end (very different from my folkie approach). Go to [www.drowsychaperone.com](http://www.drowsychaperone.com) to learn more. Torontonians Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison wrote this song. Oh, Canada!

10. **"Whipped Cream"** Lodi Carr is another friend I met at Birdland. One night she asked me if I would write a song for her, then five minutes later she asked if I knew of a 12-Step Program for people who like whipped cream too much. I said, "I don't think so . . . but I think we have an idea for a song." Lodi has a terrific album, Lady Bird Lodi Carr. Go ahead and google her. She's a fascinating jazz diva babe.

11. **"Why?"** I noticed recently that I am writing songs that are hard for me to sing and play, and then I realized this could be a good idea for a song. This summer I sang and played it soooo badly onstage at The Winnipeg Folk Festival that I think I scared the audience. Lord knows I've hit some of these clams by accident -- *but it's so much more damn fun to hit 'em on purpose.*



12. **"Reminiscing With The Gentle Lonely Elusive Boxer Of Love"** In February '07 I sang at a surprise party in Coral Gables, Florida for a guy named Bernie who loves folk music. Between my sets a DJ spun pop records from the '60s for the guests to dance to, but I wished there could be a folk medley you could sing-a-long and dance-a-long to, so I started putting this together that very night. I love all these songs (and I once worked with John Hartford and gave him a twirling lesson -- that night he sang, clog danced, played the fiddle and twirled his bow all at the same time). I gathered together relatives, friends, and some of the terrific singers I met at Birdland to turn this medley into a real party at the end. This one's for you, Bernie! (p.s. to DJs: song is 5:38, not 6:23)

13. It wouldn't be a **surprise bonus track** if I told you what it is. I will say it's Brian Bauers and me on vocals -- Brian co-produced this album in between doing his own concerts as lead singer of the alt acoustic rock band "The WMDs" ([www.thewmds.com](http://www.thewmds.com)). *Check those boys out.*

**Love the side musicians who are on this recording:** violinist Robin Batteau, Steve Doyle on bass, Tim Quigley on drums, cellist Anil Malawe, Paul Prestopino on banjo/mandolin, percussionist Chris Berry. We recorded at a wonderful Manhattan studio called Midtown Sound ([www.MidtownSoundNY.com](http://www.MidtownSoundNY.com)), owned by a fabu opera singer named Giovanni Blanco (OK, his name is Johnny White). Phil Klum mastered. Thanks dudes, and also thanks to Jed Fort, Shin Kamei, Irene Young, Carol Ehrlich, Andrew Ratshin, and everyone at Yellow Tail Records!

*You might be thinking: Why Ptolemy's Universe on the back inside panel? Why the disco ball? For 1400 years Ptolemy's Universe was accepted as truth. 1400 years. Must have been difficult for xenophobes back then to accept differing world views, and now we are dealing with modern-day xenophobes -- religious fanatics of all stripes who don't want to be distracted by Science or Truth, and don't want us to be distracted by them, either. Perhaps it's only xenophobes, with their self-righteous, limited view of life and death who can do the happydance right now. The rest of us are too damn worried.*

*Hmmm . . . I think it must be time for me to go see The Drowsy Chaperone again . . .*



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