

Paul Colman lets it go

In 2004 Paul Colman changed direction.

In spite of a US tour and a Grammy Award nomination, the Paul Colman Trio decided to call it a day, owing to financial problems. As a result, Paul found it necessary to refocus.

He planned to do some solo work, only to find that he was unable to continue recording with the Trio's record label.

He was living in America with his family at the time, and realised that he needed to make some big decisions.

"I sat down with my wife and said, 'Do you want to go home to Australia and just do the independent thing? Do you want to stay here and not sign to a label, just travel around and sell CDs out the back of my car like we used to?'," he says.

"We felt like it was the right thing to sign to another label. So my new manager went out and got me another record deal. The new record label was one that I'd turned down a few years ago, [but] they weren't sore about it, they were like, 'Great, we'd like a chance to work with you this time'. They were really excited about it."

However, when the time came to start working on an album, Paul struck a snag, finding it difficult to write new material.

"I'd got myself into a bit of a zone in late 2003 when I was doing the last record, realising that the Trio was in a lot of trouble financially and I really needed to write some hit songs to get it back on track. When you have that mentality, you don't tend to produce your hit songs!"

It took Paul a while to break that thought pattern and get back in tune with God's direction for his music.

"Finally, I just thought, 'I can't do this'. And I literally heard God's voice in my head say, 'Give it up. Let it go. Stop trying, and just write a song about how you feel towards Me.'

"In five minutes, out came this song [*I Owe it All*]. And it's one of my favourite songs on the record. At the end of it, the impression I got from God's voice was, 'See? I'm where the songs are. The more you take your hands off the steering wheel, then the faster and straighter you're going to go.'

"Now you can tell why I've called my record *Let It Go!*"

This experience gave Paul new direction. He toured America, Canada and Europe as a solo artist during 2004, and is currently touring Australia. He has just released *Let It Go* and an acoustic album, *One Voice One Guitar Vol 2*.

One Voice is a collection of twelve acoustic numbers, while *Let It Go* is a full production, recorded on Paul's new American label.

"The sound is a mixture between my favourite band records and my favourite singer/songwriter records. It's somewhere between Neil Finn and U2."

Despite having less money to spend on *Let It Go*, Paul had a great time making the record.

"I had a third of the budget, [but] I had the most amazing players and amazing producers who gave ten times more than they were paid," he says, "So I actually had a better experience than I've ever had on a record before."

"I think God was saying, 'If you trust me, I'm the best manager and promoter you'll ever have. I gave you the gifts and unless they're in my hands you're never really going to be satisfied.'

"So I don't know whether what I'm doing now is going to be commercially successful. I don't know whether I'm going to go to the top of the charts, I don't know whether I'm going to win a Grammy Award. I don't know whether I'm going to play the sellout concerts. But I do know that I've put into my art what's really been happening in my life."

"It's an exciting time because I don't know what's going to happen."



Paul Colman (photo by Jeremy Cowart)

I feel like I care a bit less than I did and yet, I sort of care more. I feel like I've learned a lot and I've had to humble myself and realise that there's a lot of things I needed to change in my life. And I know that coming into 2005 I've faced a lot of that stuff. That's why I called my album *Let It Go*. That's what it's all about.

"Jesus said let go of your life and you can really have it. That's been the thematic aspect of what's been happening and I think it's making my performances more enjoyable too, because I care deeply about what happens, but I feel lighter. I feel like I don't have to try."

"I'm being more who I really am. And people are responding to that. It's a wonderful season right now, it really is."

by Lynne Stringer

A Very, Very, Very Big God



The latest CD from the people who brought you *The King*, *the Snake* and *the Promise* is a fabulous resource for parents, teachers and those involved in children's ministry.

Featuring Karen Pang from *Play School*, *A Very, Very, Very Big God* is especially designed for preschoolers, but has a broader appeal.

Like secular music, these songs have lots of interactive fun with animal noises, and questions and answers. However, it is firmly grounded in the Bible, allowing truth to be easily memorised.

The songs are short, catchy and thematic, falling under three sections: God Who Made Me, God Who Loves Me and God Who Saves Me. They can easily be incorporated into a Sunday School program, and the CD has lots of extras, including sheet music and overheads, as well as suggestions for actions and extra verses.

There are familiar songs, such as *Jesus Loves Me*, *I'm H-A-P-P-Y* and *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life*, but most are new, written by Stephanie Carmichael and Simone Richardson.

This CD will get children singing Bible songs at church, at home and in the car, having lots of fun while they learn God's Word.

by Kara Martin