

## Lee Adams: Virtually Yours

by [Sander Wolff](#) | 12.01.10

**10:00am** | Every once in a while you meet someone whose talent and artistry are so vast that it is humbling. It may not happen all at once but, rather, in dribs and drabs. You may catch a song lyric here, a melody there, discover a novel or two and, eventually, realize that the person you're sipping coffee with at the local bistro is, in fact, a creative genius. Ok, so you may be thinking that I'm prone to hyperbole and, perhaps, you're right. Except in this case.

I'll confess, too, that I have little objectivity when it comes to [Lee Adams](#). She's a long time and dear friend, but that in no way diminishes the truth of her many creative gifts. Her career in entertainment [began very early](#) and, since then, she's fronted bands, recorded two full length albums, published [two novels](#), has a successful career as a voice artist, and plans to take up oil painting sometime.

Recently, she discovered a huge cache of her recordings, spanning four decades. With the help of Anthony Arvizu, co-owner of The Compound Studio, she's compiled and mastered a three-part collection of previously unreleased material, available now for digital download, called [Virtually Yours](#). I asked her how the idea emerged.

**Lee:** Well, it came to me that there was a great deal of my stuff that had just never been released, and odds were good that much of it wouldn't be recorded or performed again. So I thought, hey, why not just make it all available as downloads, you know?

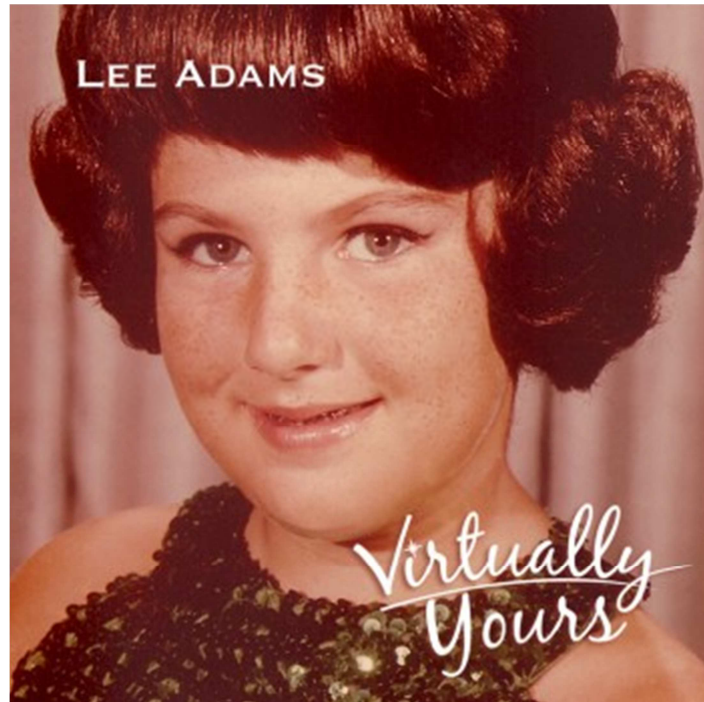
**Sander:** *By 'great deal of stuff,' what, exactly do you mean?*

**Lee:** Songs that were mastered but not released, songs that were recorded only during rehearsals. And there were others that were recorded as demos but never made it to sessions. Man, there was a lot. For every one I've put out on this project there are so many that aren't. It was daunting, and nostalgic, too. There are a few on "Virtually Yours" I nearly forgot about. So it's been a real 'Spring Cleaning' kind of project for me.

**Sander:** *What was it like to hear songs you'd performed or recorded that you'd all but forgotten?*

**Lee:** Heavy! Keep in mind that some of what I, uh, rediscovered was down-right embarrassing. But I wanted to go all the way back to the beginning of the songwriting process, so...

**Sander:** *In reconnecting with that early material, did you discover something about yourself that you'd forgotten?*



**Lee:** Well...I know I was struck by recurring themes in a lot of the music. A kid's song called "Unicorn" that I put on volume three of this project was a case-in-point. I thought how that same sentiment was explored again in a song called "Like a Gypsy." That recurring theme thing happened more than once. Arguably again, years later, in a song called "Physician."

**Sander:** *What was the theme, or sentiment?*

**Lee:** In that case, it's that you have the power within you to change your circumstance. To not be constantly seeking outside answers when you already have the answers. Something like that. Of course, most of my music is a whole lot darker than that, but apparently I've been mulling over that particular sentiment for a long time.

**Sander:** *Do you feel that your perspective about this question has evolved over the years?*

**Lee:** Actually, no. But the way I've chosen to write about it has. "Unicorn" is ridiculously sweet. It's about a unicorn, for fuck's sake. Roll forward to "Physician" and you hear a pretty brutal interpretation.

**Sander:** *What criteria did you use in selecting what to include?*

**Lee:** There were a few that I really wish I could've put out with "Virtually Yours" that were just recorded so badly, had fidelity problems, on old cassette recording that were barely holding on. I couldn't bring myself to do it. So, people being able to hear the songs was one criteria. There are a few that I pulled aside to release on the next album, hopefully next year. I chose to release the stuff in basically two volumes, that would stand up like albums on their own. So I put the more roots oriented songs on Volume One and the more wordy pop stuff on Volume Two. Volume Three being just a handful of extra stuff.

**Sander:** *Part of the process was working with one of your old band mates, Anthony Arvisu, who now runs [The Compound Studio](#). What was that like?*

**Lee:** Really wonderful. Anthony has recorded and co-produced so much of my music over the years, it was perfect to be able to have him master this collection.

**Sander:** *You've been performing a bit, lately, with [Shake and the Chantoosies](#). Has this effort to plumb the depths of your songbook inspired you to put a band together?*

**Lee:** Those folks are just so much fun to work with. I don't know about putting a band together but I am rehearsing with two old pals of mine, Mark Huhnke and Tony Motta, putting together a showcase of the tunes on this collection, and that has been extraordinary. We've talked about doing a few shows beyond that one, and I want them with me for the next album, so... I don't want to dream too big, you know? Just one step at a time. Those guys are two of the most brilliant musicians I've ever known. It's awesome to be working with them again.

**Sander:** *Has this process inspired new work?*

**Lee:** Yes, I feel a song coming on.

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*Lee Adams' music can be found on [CDBaby](#), [Amazon](#), and [iTunes](#). Visit [AJuliePageMystery.com](#) to learn about her other creative efforts.*