

*Her voice is like the California weather, filled with sunlight.  
But there's an earthquake behind it. – Leonard Cohen*



Jennifer Warnes is an American singer and songwriter. She is best known for her rich distinctive voice, her interpretations of work by James Taylor, Leonard Cohen, and Buffy Sainte Marie, and for her association with the soundtracks of a number of popular films during the 1970s, '80s and '90s. Her biggest hits were **“Up Where We Belong”** (a duet with Joe Cocker, from the 1983 film **An Officer and a Gentleman**) and **“(I’ve Had) The Time of My Life”**, (a duet with Bill Medley from the 1988 film **Dirty Dancing**), both of which topped the Billboard pop singles chart, and **“Right Time of the Night”**, which reached the top ten in 1976.

Her desire and ability to sing came early and at age seven she was offered her first recording contract, which her father turned down. However, she did make a spectacular professional debut. Wrapped in the American flag, and accompanied by 350 accordions, nine-year-old Warnes sang The Star Spangled Banner at the Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium.

She was raised and schooled in North Orange County California. In high school, she was offered a college opera scholarship but chose to begin her career singing folk songs, popular at the time. In 1968, she signed with Parrot Records (a Decca subsidiary) and recorded her first LP. That same year, she joined the cast of the television show, The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour.

In November 1968, Warnes signed on to play the female lead, “Sheila” in the Los Angeles production of the stage musical Hair. In 1970, she met Canadian poet/songwriter Leonard Cohen who profoundly influenced her career and became a life-long friend. She would eventually tour Europe with Cohen’s band as a back-up singer and would record guest vocals for Cohen’s albums **Live Songs, Various Positions, I’m Your Man, and The Future**. Cohen’s Recent Songs included a duet on **The Smokey Life**. In 1972, Reprise records released her third album, **Jennifer** produced by John Cale. Her breakthrough single **“Right Time of the Night,”** released in 1976, brought her worldwide acclaim with the song hitting No. 1 on Billboard’s Adult Contemporary chart and No. 6 on the Hot 100. It just missed the million-selling mark (selling over 900,000 copies). The song also plays in the background of a scene from the film **When Harry Met Sally**.

In 1979, she sang the Academy Award winner for Best Original Song **“It Goes Like It Goes”** from the motion picture **Norma Rae**.

Warnes’ 1981 song **“One More Hour,”** written and composed by Randy Newman and recorded as part of the soundtrack album from the motion picture **Ragtime**, was nominated for an Academy Award.

The following year she teamed with Joe Cocker to sing **“Up Where We Belong.”** Written by Buffy Sainte-Marie, Will Jennings and Jack Nitzsche for the motion picture **An Officer and a Gentleman**, the song would be released as a single and hit No. 1 (for three weeks running) on Billboard’s Hot 100 chart and stands as Warnes’ biggest selling disc ever, being certified ‘Platinum’ for sales of 2 million in the United States alone. In 1983, she and Cocker won the Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal for **“Up Where We Belong,”** while earning the songwriters (Buffy Sainte-Marie and Will Jennings) the Golden Globe Award and the Academy Award for Best Original Song.

The same year she recorded a moving performance of James Taylor’s **“Millworker”** in the American Playhouse production of **Working**, based on the book written by Studs Terkel on PBS. In January 1987, Warnes released her critically acclaimed album **“Famous Blue Raincoat: Songs of Leonard Cohen.”** Cohen himself performed with her as a guest vocalist on two of the songs featured.

In 1988, at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles, she sang background vocals with k.d. lang and Bonnie Raitt for Roy Orbison’s television special **A Black and White Night**. This program still is played on PBS several times each year, because of its timelessness and because PBS fans request it.

That same year, her duet with Bill Medley, “**(I’ve Had) The Time of My Life,**” was included on the **Dirty Dancing** motion picture soundtrack album and reached No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and spent four consecutive weeks at No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary chart. The song won the 1988 Grammy Award for Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal and the Academy Award for Best Original Song. It was also certified ‘Gold’ for 1 million U.S. sales.

She performed many songs for film and sang a duet with B. J. Thomas, “**As Long As We’ve Got Each Other,**” as the theme for the TV series **Growing Pains**. In 1992, she released the audiophile’s dream album **The Hunter** to rave reviews and critical acclaim.

In August 2007, the Shout ! Factory Records label released **Famous Blue Raincoat - The Twentieth Anniversary Edition** with a 24-page booklet and four additional previously unreleased songs. That year, Jennifer also contributed to a tribute album of Canadian icon Ian Tyson’s songs.

In August 2008, her Cisco vinyl version of **Famous Blue Raincoat - The Twentieth Anniversary Edition** debuted at #7 on Amazon (pre-release) in company within the Top Ten with THE BEATLES and the BEACH BOYS.

She continues to be a sought after guest and duet performer as well as a concert performer, with sold-out performances in 2011.

### **Discography:**

I Can Remember Everything — 1968  
See Me, Feel Me, Touch Me, Heal Me — 1969  
Jennifer — 1972 (Produced by John Cale)  
Jennifer Warnes — 1976 US #43  
Shot Through The Heart — 1979 US #94  
The Best of Jennifer Warnes — 1982 US #47  
Famous Blue Raincoat — 1987 US #72 / UK #33  
Just Jennifer — (England) 1992  
The Hunter — 1992  
Best: First We Take Manhattan — (Germany) 2000  
The Well — 2001  
Famous Blue Raincoat- 20th Anniversary Edition- 2007

### **Selected singles:**

1976: “Right Time Of The Night” US #6 Pop, #1 AC, #17 Country  
1977: “I’m Dreaming” US #50 Pop, #9 AC  
1979: “I Know A Heartache When I See One” US #19 Pop, #14 AC, #10 Country  
1979: “Don’t Make Me Over” US #67 Pop, #36 AC  
1980: “When The Feeling Comes Around” US #45 Pop, #15 AC  
1981: “Could It Be Love” US #47 Pop, #13 AC  
1982: “Come To Me” US #107 Pop, #40 AC  
1982: “Up Where We Belong” (duet with Joe Cocker) US #1 Pop, #3 AC (Platinum) / UK #7  
1983: “Nights Are Forever” US #105 Pop, #8 AC  
1983: “All The Right Moves” (duet with Chris Thompson) US #85 Pop, #19 AC  
1985: “As Long As We’ve Got Each Other” (duet with B. J. Thomas).  
*(Used only in the opening titles of the television series “**Growing Pains**”. Not commercially released)*  
1987: “First We Take Manhattan” US #29 AC / UK #74  
1987: “(I’ve Had) The Time of My Life” (duet with Bill Medley) US #1 Pop, #1 AC (Gold) / UK #6  
*(Charted at UK #8 in a reissue - 1990)*

1992: "Rock You Gently" US #13 AC  
1992: "True Emotion" US #43 AC  
1993: "The Whole Of The Moon" US #49 AC

Visit <http://www.jenniferwarnes.com>



*Norman Seeff photos*

*Jennifer Warnes*