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Debi Derryberry

Singing Thru the Summer

by [Kat Avila](#)

I was at Borders to see the cute, friendly Debi Derryberry, who does the voice of **Nickelodeon's** Jimmy Neutron and other cartoon voices. She's doing free shows in the Southern California area to promote her children's music CD **What a Way to Play!**. The 12-track CD has original songs written by Derryberry as well as traditional favorites like *Itsy Bitsy Spider* and Woody Guthrie's *This Land is Your Land*.

Sequential Tart: *While most people recognize you for your work as the voice of Jimmy Neutron, you've also worked on the English dubs of the anime **Zatch Bell!** (as the "mamodo" or little demon Zatch) and **Tenchi [Muyo!] in Tokyo** (as Ryo-Ohki, Yugi). Are you familiar much with Japanese animation?*

Debi Derryberry: I must confess, I am not that familiar with Japanese animation. I have done voices on many anime shows and thoroughly enjoyed it.

ST: *You did a demo tape of jingles using a kid's voice, which was easy since you had worked as a jingle singer in Nashville. But it's not the way most people break into the voiceover business, is it?*

DD: I suppose most people make a voice demo and submit to an agent. I happened to

know an animation casting director who loved my voice and helped me get an agent right away. In fact, I didn't even consider a career in voiceover. Most of my experience was in theatre and singing!

ST: *How did you get involved with Mark Hamill's mockumentary **Comic Book: The Movie** (2004)?*

DD: Mark and I have the same voiceover agent, and I have known him for years. He is such a dear and asked me to be in his movie.



Debi Derryberry
Photo by Joan Lauren

ST: *On your resume, you list "whale riding" as one of your special skills. Say what...?*

DD: While I was recording *Bobby's World*, I got a call that they were casting for a small woman the size of a 10-year-old boy to ride the whale for the boy in a new movie called *Free Willy*. They needed a scuba diver. It was a perfect match since I am a scuba diver. End of the story is that I spent seven weeks riding the whale and serving as the body stunt double for the boy in the movie. What a hoot!

ST: *You wrote the music and lyrics for half the songs on your kids' music CD **What a Way to Play!** What made you decide to do a kids' CD, after six years of leading your own country music band, **Honey Pig**?*

DD: I have always written songs and sang. I wrote my first song when I was nine years old. It was after I had my son that I realized how much fun I had always had singing my kid's songs. It was a no-brainer to make the children's album. I love performing for and singing with the children. They are really a lot of fun. I disbanded my country band, Honey Pig, after working really hard for six years at it. I was tired of staying up late and taking time from my son. Children's music lets us play together and he can attend my

shows.

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