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## Joan 'One of Us' Osborne on Her New Album, Carlyle Hotel Residency and Life After *That* Song



It's always rough for an artist to be saddled with one mega-hit. It's especially rough when the artist in question is [Joan Osborne](#), whose rich and varied CV completely defies the relative simplicity of "One of Us," her massive 1995 hit.

The song was nominated for Best Female Pop Vocal Performance, Record of the Year, and Song of the Year in 1996, and though Osborne didn't pick up any Grammys for it, it's continued to hang over her career, which has included collaborations with the surviving members of The Grateful Dead, the remaining members of the Motown backing band, the Funk Brothers, and Mavis Staples.

This week, Osborne embarks on a residency at New York City's famed [Hotel Carlyle](#), as part of their intimate [Café Carlyle](#) concert series. PEOPLE caught up with Osborne to talk about what her residency has in store, what else she's doing, and what life has been like after that song.

**You're doing songs from Bob Dylan's songbook for this residency, right?**

Exactly. I thought it would be a great chance to work out this idea I had of doing a "songbook series" of albums, the way Ella Fitzgerald did. She recorded the songs of

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Gershwin, Cole Porter, etc., and I'm interested in trying that with songs of more recent writers, so Dylan was an obvious choice.

## **Do you have a set list worked up?**

Well, the show came up suddenly, so we're working hard to put the set together. Obviously there is a vast wealth of brilliant material, so the challenge is to pick the right songs for me – to find the sweet spots where my voice and the musical arrangements can allow the songs to resonate emotionally as much as possible.

## **What's your favorite Bob Dylan album?**

I have to say either *Time Out Of Mind* or *Oh Mercy*. Those are just personal choices because the albums touched me so deeply at the time they came out. And *Blood on the Tracks* is really killing me these days – I'm listening on my headphones at the gym and just weeping on the elliptical trainer.

## **Was it hard for you to overcome the stigma of "One of Us?" You have this fantastically varied career, and so many people only knew you from that one song.**

Well, it's hard to look back on that now as anything but a gift. Though the song was different than the rest of the *Relish* album, it brought a lot of people to the album who probably never would have heard of it otherwise. I wasn't super comfortable as a "pop star," but the level of success that the album achieved has supported the longevity I've had as an artist. And people don't really follow me down the street anymore, so it's cool.



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## **How did you feel when it popped up in *Austin Powers 2*?**

I was mortified, but it was because I was on a date at the time. My date and I picked the Austin Powers movie to go see. It was our first real date, so we thought we'd keep it light. But I had forgotten that "One Of Us" was in the movie – the permission had been given many months before – and when their version of it came on in the theater, I just wanted the floor to swallow me up.

## **What have you been up to in the studio lately?**

My most recent albums [are \*Love and Hate\*](#), which is about the complicated terrain of adult romance, and the debut album from my side project band, [Trigger Hippy](#), which is meat 'n' potatoes rock and roll. I'm pretty proud of *Love and Hate*. I think it's some of the best writing of my career, and it feels good to have that sense that you are continually growing as an artist. And Trigger Hippy is just a blast.

## **And you do an annual Mother's Day concert, right?**

For the last several years, we have done [a Mother's Day benefit concert](#) in New York City, featuring guest artists who are also mothers. It's become a really fun tradition, with guests like Rosanne Cash, Allison Moorer, Martha Redbone and Amy Helm. This year we are raising money for the [Bard Prison Initiative](#), which educates incarcerated women and men, keeps them from returning to prison, and raises awareness about profit-based mass incarceration in the U.S.