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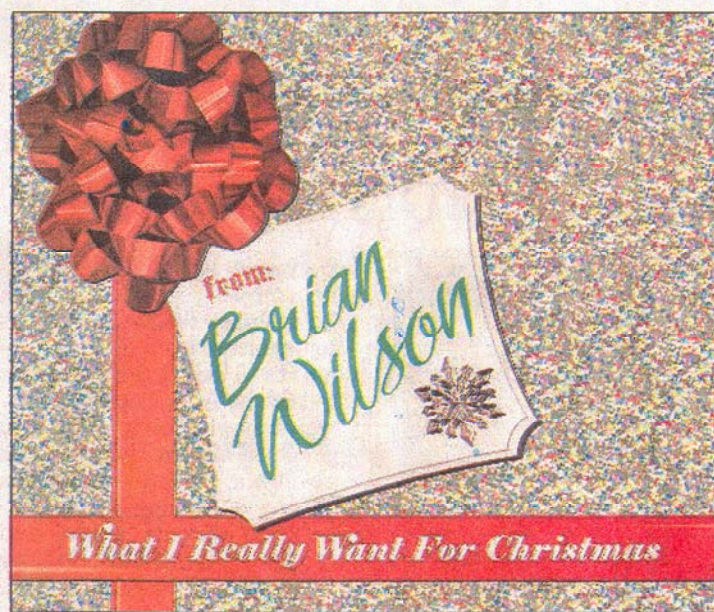


BRIAN A. GRIFFIN — MERCURY NEWS ILLUSTRATION

ARE YOU LISTENING?

MUSIC OF THE SEASON, FROM THE SUBLIME TO THE ORDINARY

BY MARK WHITTINGTON AND MARIAN LIU MERCURY NEWS | Some years, it seems as if Ebenezer Scrooge was behind the mixing board for the new holiday albums. They sound like lumps of coal. But this year, at least a dozen holiday albums will bear repeated listening. One or two might even find a place alongside Bing and Elvis in your Christmas rotation.



Out of the box

■ **Lawrence Savell**, "The LawTunes Holiday Trio" (*LawTunes*) — If you've got a lawyer on your holiday list, check out this New York litigator's tongue-in-cheek holiday rock offerings at www.lawtunes.com. The latest is "You Don't Want to Cross Santa" — as in cross-examine — backed by "Billin' on Christmas Eve." But Savell, who started writing satires for the talent show at University of Michigan, also has two other full-length holiday CDs. They are definitely cheesy and decidedly homespun. Savell obviously believes in "a healthy willingness of lawyers to poke fun at themselves."