

# 8th Grader Records Song To Help End Child Trafficking

**MIRROR STAFF**

Veteran music producer Peter Asher is no stranger to creating emotionally charged music over the past four decades while producing hit records for James Taylor, Linda Ronstadt, and 10,000 Maniacs.

But the cover version of Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water" with a local 8th grade girl named Ava Delaney may be the one that moves you the most, even before you hear a single note.

That's because of the motivation behind the recording. Asher was approached by Ava Delaney and her father Carl Daikeler to record the song so they could donate all the profits from downloads of the song.

"When Carl and Ava explained the idea and the purpose of this altruistic project I climbed on board without hesitation. I confess that I was not aware of the enormity of the slavery problem until they showed me," said Asher. "Bridge Over Troubled Water" is a masterpiece of a song, and its composer is

a friend of mine, so my only concern was that I do justice to both the cause and the song. And, of course I wondered whether this 14-year-old could really deliver."

Ava Delaney said she was originally going to sing the song in choir at Malibu Middle School.

"But when my Dad heard me sing it, he thought we could do more with it," Ava said. "We called it our 'Bridge To Freedom' project. Getting to work with this incredible producer, Peter Asher, and at the same time helping rescue these kids who are slaves by helping International Justice Mission raise money turned into a really special once-in-a-lifetime project."

The artists worked out of The Village Studios in Santa Monica. The recording session started only after watching IJM's DVD documentary called "End of Slavery," which put the team in the mindset of the problem they were setting out to solve: There are more slaves now than all 400 years of the transatlantic slave trade.

It is estimated that there are close to 30 million people being held captive and abused as slaves. Chil-

dren are an estimated 26 percent of those sold into slavery. And nearly two million of those children are exploited as sex slaves.

IJM has rescued more than 18,000 victims of slavery and oppression and secured the convictions of 800 traffickers, slave-owners, and other criminals for violent abuse of the poor.

Asher describes the process of making the record: "Our team created a contemporary arrangement of the song and you can only imagine my excitement when I first heard Ava sing it in the studio. She totally nailed it on the first couple of takes – singing the song with an intensity and emotional commitment beyond her years – as with an instinctive empathy for the children her own age who are being so grievously abused. I am proud of this record, proud to have worked with Ava – and will be even more proud if it can help make a difference."

And now thanks to this music legend and his 14-year-old friend, this new recording of "Bridge Over Troubled Water" is now available on iTunes and most other music download services for 99 cents, and



Eighth grader Ava Delaney's cover of "Bridge Over Troubled Water" is now available on iTunes for 99 cents with all profits being given to International Justice Mission. **COURTESY PHOTO**

all the profits are being given to International Justice Mission. Additional contributions are being raised concurrently at [www.IJM.org/BridgeToFreedom](http://www.IJM.org/BridgeToFreedom).

# Santa Monica Author Debuts First Novel

**SARAH WAGNER**  
*MIRROR INTERN*

Santa Monica author C.T. Hillin recently finished her first paranormal romance novel "The Imati" that's set in a world of immortals, Souljumpers, Seekers, and ancient prophecies. The book centers around a 300-year-old "Imati" (an immortal) who looks like a 17-year-old girl.

Hillin created the idea behind the novel back in 2008, which was to "flip a common formula." Hillin told *The Mirror* that many popular books at the time "were about a normal teenager becoming extraordinary," whether that was "getting superpowers or dating a vampire" or anything else.

She wondered what would happen if she created an anti-hero: "someone who already was extraordinary but lost it all. A lot of 'The Imati' came from that."

Since the main character is immortal, Hillin saw an opportunity to educate readers about one of her passions: history.

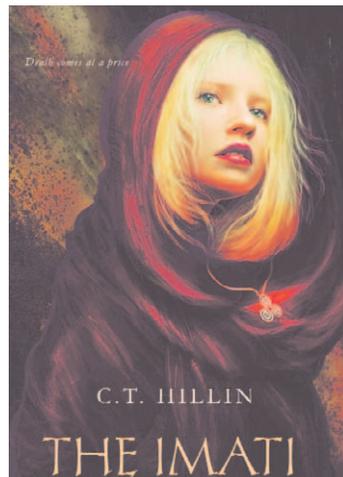
"I love history and so making my lead character immortal was awesome for me because then I just get to tell all of these flashbacks [and] sort of bring teenagers there too," Hillin said. "Like the French Revolution and like Slave Tradeship... I basically got to take all of my favorite moments in history and stick a character in them."

Another one of Hillin's passions is travel. She credits many of the travel opportunities she has received to her time at Yale University.

"I was lucky because at Yale I got an opportunity to travel the world a lot; I got to study abroad in Paris for a summer when I was learning French, and Yale provided us a trip to Italy at one point," she said.

She also made friends from around the world and got to go visit their homes.

"Beyond just having a love for History I also, throughout traveling to those places [featured in her novel] I have a firsthand experience of going there, so in the book when I take my character to Prague I remember the cobblestones, I remember the build-



History, travel, romance, and fantasy inspire debut novel by young Santa Monica author C.T. Hillin. **COURTESY PHOTO**

ings; everything in the book is real places and real diners and real streets. It's kind of transporting people to that world."

Hillin is especially excited because the book is a joint venture with her brother.

"His film production company is the one publishing it," she said. "I have been working on this book for four or five years and you just become very attached to it so it's nice to have someone who allows you to follow your passion and really stick to your guns and do something the way you want it to be done and who really gives you the freedom to do that."

Print editions of "The Imati" is available at [www.theimati.com](http://www.theimati.com) and Amazon. The eBook version will be available shortly following the hard copy release.

# Tobinworld Students Ride Waves



Surf's up at Santa Monica beach for handicapped teenagers from Glendale special needs school.

Students at Glendale's Tobinworld, the pioneering education and treatment center for autistic and emotionally disturbed youth, got a rare opportunity to surf the Pacific Ocean through a partnership with Buccaneer Board Riders, the premier clothier to the surfing world and Santa Monica-based Project Save Our Surf, an educational nonprofit dedicated to preservation of marine life.

The Tobinworld program was highlighted by an excursion to Santa Monica beach last Thursday morning when 15 select Tobinworld students get to cut their surfing skills in the Santa Monica surf under supervision of professional surfers from Project Save Our Surf.

Tobinworld provides about 450 students special education and a diversity of treatments based

on a behavioral management system expressly created for autistic and special needs children and adults.

It operates two campuses in Antioch, CA, in addition to its Glendale main campus.

Buccaneer Board Riders in Costa Mesa was founded by CEO Matt Stone to reflect his surfing roots and his commitment to push the limits of design for the surfing community.

Stone also owns Sea Wolf, another surf wear clothing brand.

This is the second year for the surfing program as part of Tobinworld's annual summer school session, which is designed to introduce students to an eclectic range of non-traditional activities and broadly heighten their awareness of life skills in addition to core academic courses.