

## Troubadour Tales

American singer-songwriter Chuck Brodsky has gained a reputation in the States for down-to-earth lyrics about ordinary folk sung in an often jocular, and always entertaining style.

Brodsky is no stranger to this country. In the Eighties he had three spells on various kibbutzim as a fruit picker, but this will be his first professional musical visit here. "I'm thrilled to be coming back to Israel," said Brodsky in a telephone interview from Northern Ireland, where he was on tour, prior to arriving here.

Now a guitarist, Brodsky began studying piano at the tender age of five. "My mother played piano, and I got a lot of encouragement from my parents," he explains. It was at college that he made the switch to guitar. "I realized it was going to be logistically difficult doing outdoor gigs with my friends, so I needed to play something a bit more portable."

Today Brodsky regales audiences all over the US with a considerable repertoire of lyrics encompassing such diverse topics as Eddie Klepp - the first white baseball player in the Negro Leagues - a nasty blues number about a gun-happy commuter, and a humorous ditty entitled "On Christmas I Got Nothing." The latter tells the story of a man who remembers Christmas as an unhappy time in childhood because, while all his friends received gifts, he went empty-handed because he was Jewish.

"That song goes down great wherever I go." says Brodsky, "even in places where they may never have seen a Jew before." The number should be well received on his 12-date Israeli tour.

Brodsky's delivery is soft, throaty, and wry, and conveys the sense of a man who has covered a lot of mileage in his time - much like the early Bob Dylan recordings. "I didn't set out to sound like Dylan, I just sing that sort of song," he explains.

Since turning professional eight years ago, Brodsky has produced several albums. "The Ballad of Eddie Klepp" and another baseball song, "Lefty," were so well received by the baseball community that they have been entered into America's Baseball Hall of Fame's recording library.

While much of Brodsky's material touches on the most personal of subjects, he is never over-sentimental. He may be compassionate, but there's always at least a modicum of black humor somewhere along the line to keep his audiences on their toes.