

VICTORY REVIEW

Acoustic Music Magazine

Volume 33

April 2008

Number 4



Andrew Ratshin

Yellowtail

Records

Inside...

- ✦ Folk, Blues and Bluegrass: ... North Coast Folk Festival
- ✦ Kids Korner: Classical Family Concerts
- ✦ Folking Around: 2nd Generations
- ✦ Portland: Portland Folk Music Society Books

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GALLOPING GOSSIP

April 2008

BY JAN DENALI



Hello Dear Readers,
Ahem... We will begin this month with a compare-and-contrast segment involving Mr. **Orville Johnson**. We will explore three recent events. Mr. Johnson featured prominently in each event, and yet each event included different bandmates, different playlists and focused on different instrument(s) and/or styles. Let's get started.

It was a dark and stormy night. We were heading out after the **Doug Kershaw** show in January. Speaking for myself, I was happy but hadn't quite had enough music. Lucky me, there they were: **Filé Gumbo** in the Triple Door's **Musicaquarium**. We reclined a few feet from the band just as **Doug Bright** was handing off the vocals to Orville. His emotional range is huge. He gives us sweet and subtle with nuance and ornaments galore then throws back his head and wails. **Filé Gumbo**, a local five-piece R&B/zydeco New Orleans-style band, gave Orville solid support as a singer and also as an electric guitarist. As expected, his rides are expressive and tasty. The band overall is so cool and so tight. The sound was smooth and big, perfect for the noisy bar.

A few weeks later Orville joined **John Miller** in a show sponsored by the Seattle Folklore Society. They shared the stage, sitting relaxed, each with a few instruments at his feet. The program was country blues, the music John was first known for. Hearing John sing was a treat and his style with this music is so steady and of the essence. Toward the end he broke through with what I know him for, the dense chords, changing each beat and the compositions that transport. Orville's slide guitar contribution on John's "Sicilienne" was heavenly. Orville alternated between slide and mandolin. He and John took turns leading out with each sharing the history of the original players and anecdotes about the tunes. The very slow Lonnie Johnson tune was masterful. The overall sound and interaction was mellow and deep. Orville's singing showed the same emotional range as with **Filé Gumbo**, but maybe more controlled fitting the intimate hall and rapt audience. A shout out went to **Grant Dermody** who is part of this act, but couldn't make the show. I look forward to hearing this show with the addition of his harmonica.

Some days later, the third show in our compare-and-contrast exercise played the Black and Bluegrass show at Wintergrass, then hit the main stage at the Triple Door. **Laura Love's** double bill with **Ruthie Foster** had a great buzz and it sure delivered. If you know the Triple Door, you know it has an elegant, sophisticated feel. Maybe you also know how it can rock! At the front of the stage was a straight row of six chairs. Laura came on-stage unannounced and sits in a middle chair and picks up her red bass. Soon, Orville, sitting on one side of Laura starts "The Cuckoo, She's a Pretty Bird. She Warbles as She Flies." And let me tell you what, do they ever sing as they play. The band includes **Clifton Vernon**, a North Carolina banjo player, a fiddle player who would later play bass for Ruthie, a bones player and lastly, sitting on the other side of Laura, is a person of presence (apologies for the unknown names!) who demonstrates adeptness as a singer throughout the set. It's a great band with an unusual feel and sound. Imagine Laura's folk-funk bass, extended soulful breaks by all (including Orville's Tex-Mex style cross picking on guitar), and multiple voiced full-on harmonies. The vocal blend was thrilling. This band gave us the comfort food of ensemble playing. The songs were mostly all good old community sing and gospel standards, including "We Shall Not Be Moved" (in the sweetest slow harmony) and "Cotton-eyed Joe." I really liked their rocking take on "Working on A Building For My Lawd, For My Lawd."

In closing the compare and contrast section involving Orville's musical breadth, (it's Or-vull, by the way) please note that he participated in several other area gigs and workshops in yet more settings with more people during the short time frame we covered. He's also teaching. *** Laura's role that night as a bandleader was inspiring to witness. She seemed to bring out the joy and shine in everybody while enjoying herself. After one long ending, actually very long with high pitches and holds and vocal slides all around, she laughed and laughed. The audience was ecstatic. Could Ruthie bring anything to follow that? Oh yes. She did just fine. She had the aforementioned violin player on bass (can you imagine bringing off slap bass right

in front of Laura?) and a gal, a cousin I think, on a drum kit. They took that ecstatic feeling and held it up throughout the set. The audience was right there. We knew what to do with our vocal part on Ruthie's "Real Love." My wailing back at her actually caught her eye at one point. I was lucky to be sitting so close to the stage.

*** **Jim Nason** hosted the lively First Thursday Open Mic at Crossroads. It was so lively and crowded, my duo didn't get a chance to play. We know what to do. **Next time, we'll get there closer to 6 to sign up.** *** Another venture involving Jim Nason, **The Other Band**, played two shows in Shoreline recently. They wrote to tell me they featured a lot of new tunes they'll be taking to the studio soon. Check their Web site for other opportunities to hear the new stuff from these great folks. *** **House of Tarab**, a local six-piece ensemble playing Arab music was at the annual Town Hall Zing Go the Strings show. What a treat they are. Two percussionists, stand up bass, an oud player and the former Iraqi National Orchestra violinist Salah Ali. Their ensemble connection was tight and light-hearted. This is great dancing music. *** **Alicia Healey, Marguerite Conti, Reggie Garrett** and **Gen Zierler** will have by now put on their show. The flyer, with nice head shots, says: "four distinct styles fused with rhythm, blues, folk rock, country, gospel, and pop... Four performers invite you to an intimate evening of warmth, laughter and song." It was held at the Graham Visitors Center in the Arboretum. I'd like to hear more about that. *** Another show that will have occurred by the time you read this is the benefit for **Utah Phillips**, who has stopped performing due to respiratory and heart problems. Concerts are taking place around the US and Canada. Janet Stecher, who we know will continue the legacy of songs and stories of radical history and social justice, has organized a show to help with Utah's expenses. The show will feature the collective effort and donated labor of **Seattle Labor Chorus, Rebel Voices, Citizen's Band, David Rovics** and **Fast Rattler**, which includes Utah's son **Brendan**. After sharing a festival stage with Utah, **Ron Thomason** of Dry Branch Fire Squad, who is quite a storyteller himself, said he had no idea until that day what a cult Utah Phillips had become. Although the show is over by now, you can still contribute to the well-being of this cult leader through the Seattle Labor Chorus. *** I like this image: my new neighbor Eli, 3 days old listening to *Siente: Night Songs*, from **Hilary Field** and **Patrice O'Neill**. "Dodo

Continued on page 5

LITTLE BITS AND PIECES

Various Bits of Information

BY TOM PETERSON

BY STEWART HENDRICKSON

Generations Meet At Washington Middle School's Gypsy Jazz Concert

The Seattle School District is nationally known for its high school jazz program, but Elizabeth Fortune's strings program at Washington Middle School is working its way into the spotlight. Fortune, the instructor at the Wintergrass Academy, has for several years included bluegrass, Gypsy jazz, Celtic and other traditional music styles in her orchestra classes. She and her students are leaders in the region for new talent and innovative approaches, an example for other schools to follow. This month, for the fifth year in a row, Washington Middle will showcase its program and bring top talent to the stage to play for and with the youngsters in a public celebration.

On April 18, Grammy nominee Darol Anger, best known as a member of Psychograss, and Joe Craven, popular multi-instrumentalist noted as a member of the famed David Grisman Quintet, will play some of their favorite jazz standards and guest with the WMS Orchestra. Anger will also lead the orchestra in several new pieces that had their world premier at Wintergrass. Fortune wants to push her students, and the audience, to "step outside the box - move beyond what we normally think of as orchestral music." One of Anger's new pieces is inspired by West African drumming. "It's fun and creative," she says, "and good for the students to encounter people who can teach things in non-traditional ways."

The concert will be at Seattle's Town Hall, and tickets are available at www.ticketleap.com or at the door.

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Victory Review

on our website

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www.victorymusic.org/victory_review_pdfs.html

Review, Violin-to-Fiddle Concert at Haller Lake, Jan. 12, 2008. By Stewart Hendrickson

On Saturday, Jan. 12th the Haller Lake Arts Council produced a concert, Violin-to-Fiddle, with two talented local violin/fiddle players. If you weren't there you missed a fantastic concert—one of the best I've heard in the past year, even if I am biased (disclaimer: I produced the concert).

It started off with Ranger and the Re-Arrangers, a full 5-piece band on a not-too-large-stage. But they filled the hall with some driving gypsy jazz. Ranger Sciacca, of course, was superb with his hot licks, slides and soaring melodies. And he had some great backup. David Stewart on mandolin played lead along with Ranger and was also very hot. Michael Sciacca, Ranger's father played backup guitar along with Todd Houton on bass and Jeff Moose on percussion. They played mostly fast jazz, but also a few nice slower tunes. They were a very tight-knit group. After the concert Ranger had to hit the road back to Walla Walla to get ready for his classes at Whitman College.

Sarah Comer played the second half, backed up with great guitar playing by her father, Emmett. I loaned Sarah my fiddle pickup so she was able to move freely on stage and lean into a great groove with her father on guitar. She began with a rousing tune on a cross-tuned fiddle using a lot of harmonious double stops. She then played mostly old-time American and Irish jigs, reels and contra-dance tunes along with a few slower tunes, and she even sang a nice song. Sarah is an incredible player. Only 19 years old (soon to be 20) she plays with the style and poise of a much older and seasoned player. And she makes it look so easy - all those notes flying off her fiddle with a lot of double-stopped harmonies, and not one missed or misplaced note that I could tell. It was quite fantastic.

Although both players had different styles and played different genres of music, they complemented each other very well, which made for a very enjoyable program. Both Ranger and Sarah have new CDs. They're absolutely a must to buy.

Ranger and the Re-Arrangers.
www.rangerswings.com/home.html
Gypsy Moon - Debut CD, released in summer of 2006, includes 7 originals and 7 jazz standards.
To order, email info@rangerswings.com
Sarah Comer. sarahcomer.com and
www.myspace.com/sarahcomer
Debut CD, Young Hands Old Fiddle Tunes
To order, email fiddleteacher@hotmail.com
Stewart Hendrickson Performing Arts Chair
Haller Lake Arts Council

Gossip continued from page 4

L'Enfant Dors/Gossip Dors Dor le P'tit Bibi" and "Carneirinho, Carneirao" – these two tunes alone will demonstrate exactly the pleasure of being in this world. Welcome, Eli.

Ms Denali frequents all manner of high and low joints, ferreting out each rich live art experience and/or film version of same. Her epicenter is Columbia City, Seattle. She says. "Please feel free to write me care of FreeRangeChick@HotFlashMusic.com with factoids, musical points of view, live music creators you'd like to know more about and tips for fun events, particularly of the free/low cost and/or regional artist(s) and/or family-oriented variety."

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ANDREW RATSHIN

Yellow Tail Records

BY MARIE GRIMM

A reluctant Andrew Ratshin sat down with me to talk about Yellowtail Records. “I don’t have anything to say. What can I possibly talk about? Didn’t we just do this ten years ago?” Something like that anyway. Andrew Ratshin is otherwise known as the force behind Uncle Bonsai, Electric Bonsai Band, Mel Cooleys, Yellowtail Records and NW Discs. He is also Hilary’s (Field) greatest fan and Emma’s dad.

Yellowtail Records got its start in 1991 with the release of I Am Joe’s Eyes, the first of five Electric Bonsai Band recordings. Andrew knows how to work a joke. The oft-repeated tagline for EBB is “It’s not electric, it’s not a band.” Say it often enough and even if you didn’t get it the first time, by the time you hear it a few dozen times you’ll understand why it’s funny. EBB came into existence two years after the initial retirement of Uncle Bonsai. The group had ceased touring but Andrew continued to write for himself and eventually for the quirky Mel Cooleys.

In both Uncle Bonsai and the Mel Cooleys he was writing for female voices and consistently, over hundreds of songs, writes like there is girl in his head whispering clues. And of course there is the hapless Doug, subject of an entire album’s worth of songs. This is not just a singer/songwriter. This is a storyteller with a head so packed full of tales he needs to have a cast of characters on hand just so he can get all those voices out. “People tell me I should write a show. I tell them I’ve done it. These are all stories. I use singers like actors, just without the play.”

Andrew is the Venus flytrap of songwriters. He pulls you in with something sweet or funny, and then captures the deepest places in your heart with a killer instinct for the truth about the human condition. The neck-snapping opening lines of “Doug’s Divorce Part II” serve as a perfect example. The opening line, “Do you like to pull the band-aid quick or slow...” promptly elicits a laugh from the audience. You can almost hear that laughter being choked back as the next lines fall from the lips of the singer.

“Do you like to be the first or last to know? Is there someone you could phone, so you won’t be here alone, as you learn about the future blow by blow.”

An excerpt from “Just One Angel”

*Every Sunday God wakes up to
everybody’s problems
All those voices asking for forgiveness
Half asleep he waves his hand to quickly mass
absolve them
Wondering why he constantly relives this
I don’t want to take that time away
From someone who might really need
A sign from God that day*

*Angel Michael on his knees
Trying to find the time to help us
I don’t need such expertise could never
be that selfish
Isn’t there a minor angel
Not an angel one might miss
I can talk to, I can turn to
There to handle this...*

“You want to take your audience on a journey. If you want to take your audience with you, you have to find a way to draw them in. We do funny stuff, we do serious stuff. We bring them in and surprise them. “Lonely Grain of Corn” is an absurd topic, but the song is done serious and straight. You bring them along with you,” he explains. “Doug at the Gates of Hell – Epilogue” is the last words of a dying man. It is the achingly simple confession of an ordinary Jewish man that would definitely fall into what Ashley O’Keeffe (of Uncle Bonsai) describes as “sucking on tailpipes songs” were it not for the inclusion of one line: “What if the Catholics are right?” It’s that crashing together of insightful observation, clear storytelling and rogue quips that make Andrew’s work both brilliant and familiar.

Why form a record label? “When it came time to release Joe’s Eyes, I had offers from a couple of different labels, but honestly they were not offering enough. It made more sense to form a record label and release the CD on my own than to turn it over to someone else. I felt it would be more profitable to self-release. I was wrong. It didn’t work. How do you manufacture 1000 CDs in 1991 and still have 800 in the basement? You have to work at it,” Andrew deadpans.

But he persisted, first with re-releases of Uncle Bonsai material that had previously appeared only on cassette and LPs. (Yes, Virginia, there was a time when CDs were unheard of and when they arrived on the scene no one knew if they’d last.) Yellowtail released Hilary Field’s first CD, Music of Spain & Latin America to much critical acclaim, including an honorable mention as the Classical Album of the Year from the National Association of Independent Record Distributors.

“Suddenly we could get national distribution. Now we had a label. It was nepotism at its best. I assumed I’d be touring so national distribution was important.” At this point in time, the Web had not yet become the ubiquitous tool for musicians that it is today. Touring musicians still relied heavily on record labels for support.

Again, Andrew didn’t experience the success he’d hoped for with the Electric Bonsai Band. The Mel Cooleys had a fervent local following but did not tour. Yellowtail Records continued to find and sign artists to their label. Why? Quite simply, because the music was good. That’s it. No hidden agenda. When Andrew and Hilary (the other half of Yellowtail Records) heard someone they loved and who was amenable to the idea of joining the roster, they took them on. “Yellowtail wasn’t so much a plan as it was just a response to things that came along and now we have 27 releases.” Presently, the Yellowtail roster includes 11 artists. Of those 11, only one tours regularly.

That one touring artist is the latest addition to the Yellowtail family of artists, but is well known to the folk music world. Christine Lavin chose to release her 18th solo album Happydance of the

Excerpt from "But I'm Happy Now"

*You used to tell us we were all gonna fade away
I used to think that I was far from the
maddening crowd
You used to sing about the things that we
couldn't say
I used to wonder 'bout a heaven that was filled
with doubt
But I'm happy now*

Xenophobe on Yellowtail Records. It is not at all surprising to learn that Christine and Andrew have been friends for years and the two have a great deal of respect for one another. There is a strong current of love, respect and pure admiration running through the eclectic stable of Yellowtail artists. While Christine Lavin may be as far from classical pianist Geisa Dutra as you can get, each in their own way are excellent artists. Different as they are, Andrew is as eager to heap praise on fellow songwriters Matt Price and Scott Katz as he is for Siente, the collection of lullabies from around the world by Hilary Field and Patrice O'Neill (featured in last month's Victory Review).

As each release has come along the label has been able to pay for the CDs themselves. That may not seem like a recipe for a dream-come-true career, but it is enough for Andrew to continue this labor of love. As a testament to the indefinable stew that is Yellowtail, the label's best sellers right now are Happydance of the Xenophobe, Siente and Boys Want Sex in the Morning. Maybe not in that order, but you figure it out.

So, what happens when the co-author of "Penis Envy" fathers a beautiful daughter? If she is anywhere near as clever as her dad, she will tell him, "Dad these songs are not appropriate for children of my age." That is exactly what Emma has told her dad about his latest writing venture with Arni Adler. The two are writing a series of children's songs, but old habits die hard and so far there are songs about dead fish in the freezer, dead pets buried in the lawn and babies with hexagonal shaped heads. There will probably be more dead pets and more reasons for Emma to scold her dad.

Aside from writing inappropriate songs, Andrew has become the ultimate stay-at-home

dad. He is deeply involved in the schools Emma attends and has done a great deal of benefit work for them. Andrew explains, "Each year, Yellow Tail has donated various CD collections (the complete Uncle Bonsai, all the Hilary Field recordings, etc.). Half of the proceeds go to Sacajawea (Emma's former school) and half of the proceeds go to the Garfield High School music program (that's where Zubin (Arni's son) goes to school). In addition, this year I donated a hundred hours or so of time to record, mix and master a compilation CD featuring the students of Sacajawea, performing songs that each class wrote in a special songwriting program."

He's making sure his daughter is well versed in pop culture and has made CDs for her of 'songs everyone should know.' She knows them all. He should probably release those CDs on Yellowtail. He obviously adores his daughter, but in typical Andrew fashion, expresses his affection by saying, "I'm dreaming of living vicariously through my daughter."

Vicarious dreams aside, Andrew does have concrete plans for the immediate future. He continues his work with NW Discs, offering probably the best deals around for musicians who release less than 100,000 copies of their CDs. Like, way less. If you are considering doing a run of 1000 or less for your next project, you won't find a better person to work with. Yellowtail is planning a follow-up release to Siente and will also release a new Hilary Field solo CD. Uncle Bonsai has performed once or twice a year for the last decade, but is coming out of retirement and plans to do more frequent appearances. Ashley has lived in Iowa for many years, making it challenging to get together. She will still perform with the band as circumstances allow. Patrice O'Neill will be appearing regularly with the band in upcoming performances. Arni and Andrew are writing together regularly and much of that new material will show up in upcoming Uncle Bonsai shows and on a new Uncle Bonsai CD. Yellowtail will present their annual show at the Kirkland Performing Arts Center in November.

The final word from Andrew, at least until we meet again in 10 years... "I love Victory Music. Uncle Bonsai got our start at a Victory Music Open Mic. Victory has always been incredibly supportive of my art and I am ever grateful. I believe in this organization and think it is important that long-time members like me come back, stay involved and re-energize the organization that we all helped to create."

Yet another example that a joke told often enough will eventually be funny from the first word. In case you've ever wanted to recite the Doug introduction along with Andrew or any configuration where these songs pop up, here you go.

"First there was the Doug Suite, which was five songs about a guy named Doug. They were Doug Goes To Town, Doug Goes To The Circus (which is the same as Doug Goes To Town with the word circus where the word town was), Doug At His Mom's, Doug At Home (the song about spontaneous combustion), and Doug At The Gates Of Hell, the song written after the song about spontaneous combustion.

Then there was the Doug Trilogy... which was three songs about a guy named Doug. They were Doug's First Date, Doug Gets Married and Doug's Divorce. Then there was the Delilah Trilogy...Delilah being Doug's wife. They were Delilah Gets Married (same wedding, different viewpoint), Doug's Divorce (same song...this is a community property state), and there was no third song because...well, because she was gone. Then there was a strange group of songs called Doug Revisited. These include Doug's First Job, Doug Engaged, Doug's Greatest Christmas Ever, Doug And The TV, Doug Sees Cats For The Second Time, and others."

But back to Electric Bonsai Band. All that writing for other characters didn't empty Andrew's fertile imagination. EBB provided him the opportunity to do perhaps some of his best work writing in his own voice. The song "I am Joe's Eyes" is a devastatingly beautiful and intimate look at the meaning of life originating from a series of Reader's Digest stories based on autopsies. There are songs about aging, dying, art, and grace. Any songwriter wanting to know how it's done should study "Just One Angel" from the Primal Urges album. It is perfectly crafted in every way. To date, five Electric Bonsai Band CDs have been released on Yellowtail Records.

REVIEWS

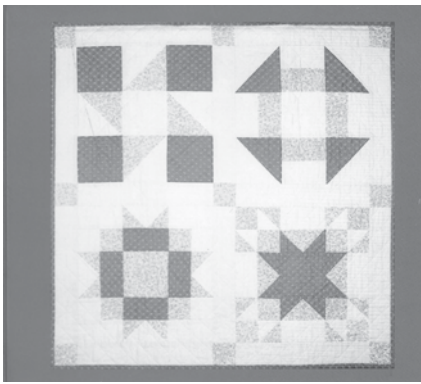
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LOCAL

Local Instrumental

MIKE FEKETE: YELLOW & RED

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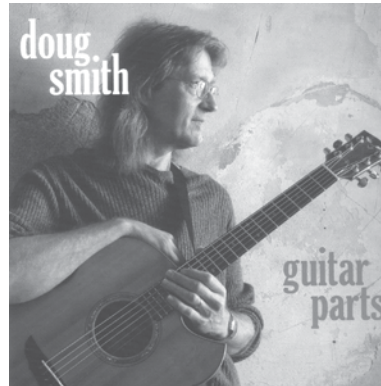


Mike Fekete, of Olympia, has his first full-length CD, and it's a winning disc of solo guitar, filled with rich, varied pieces that are fulfilling upon either light or close listening. Fekete recorded the CD at home and has achieved a deep, full sound that sounds like much more than a single guitar without sounding busy or overreaching. In particular, the bass tones are astounding, and this deep bottom and his employment of drone notes gives the whole CD a mesmerizing warmth. Fekete samples a number of different styles and influences, with cues and riffs recalling blues, swing, and country; a strong influence seems to be some of the ethereal explorations of psychedelica Jorma Kaukonen and the Jefferson Airplane, particularly on the title cut. Much to his credit, Fekete brings the 10 tunes in at a crisp 40 minutes: Not for him the endless variations and indulgences that have overtaken similar solo projects by other artists. Fekete plays what he has to play, shows the breadth of his talent, and that's all. It keeps the disc lively and fresh and ready for repeated listenings. *(Tom Petersen)*

Local Instrumental

DOUG SMITH: GUITAR PARTS

Solid Air Records, SACD 2063

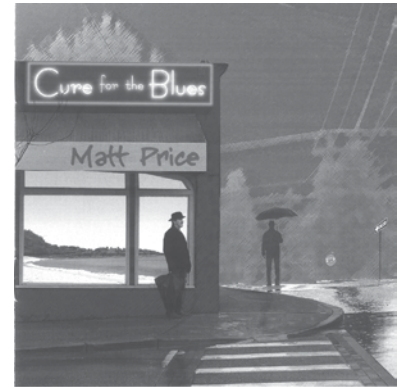


Some of you have heard of Vancouver, WA's Doug Smith, but all of you have heard him. He's one of the top guitarists of our time, an International Fingerstyle champ with a Grammy on the shelf and a list of credits that goes on and on; his work pops up on innumerable TV and radio shows because he has that perfect, breezy sound and a knack for adapting to a variety of moods. On this, his eighth album, Smith is reworking some material originally done for the American Gramophone "Dayparts" series to go with several new originals and a couple old faves. Smith's originals are delightful and show off his range of ideas nicely--he knows how to impress with his technique without getting arcane. His choice of covers can't help but elicit smiles: He thinks to make a brilliant medley out of erstwhile ho-hummers "Ave Maria" and "Can't Help Falling in Love," and surprises us with, of all things, the theme from "The Magnificent Seven"! The album boasts high production standards that serve to underscore how cleanly Smith plays--every nuance is there. Any fan of guitar music will enjoy and appreciate this album. *(Tom Petersen)*

Local Singer/Songwriter

MATT PRICE: CURE FOR THE BLUES

Yellowtail Records



Matt Price says he started as a poet but found that his words got more attention set to music. Part of the reason for that might be that he is also an excellent guitarist and has a voice often reminiscent of Bill Staines. But the words remain good poetry, often with wry insights such as those in "Happy Alone," in which the narrator says, "I'm as happy alone as a dog with a bone/ But I'd rather be with you and be blue," and "I dusted off my self-respect, now I need to engage in some self-sabotage/ I miss that old familiar feeling of neglect." My favorites are the narrative ballads--"Danger," about an almost innocent man on the run from the law; "Chaparral," a Marty Robbins-esque ballad with a ghostly Boot Hill vibe; and "Even Now," an anti-chantey about a guy who went to sea and disliked it so much that he's not even going back to collect the true love he went to sea to win in the first place. Despite the CD's title, the music's tone is less bluesy than jazzy, with drums by Mark Ivester, bass by Cary Black, accordion and piano by David Lange, and harmonica by Eddie Williams backing up Matt's fine guitar work. Vocals are enhanced by fine harmonies from the amazing Susan Welch and Joe Prater. Price presents stories that find

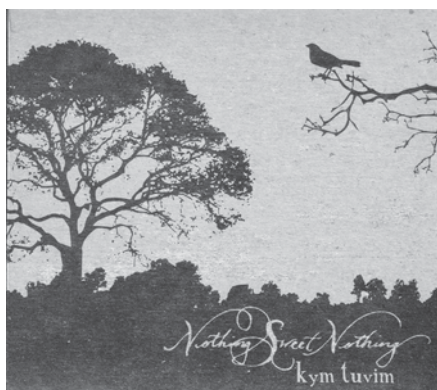
truths behind conventional romantic topics with memorable musical skill and great eloquence.

(Annie Scarborough)

Local/Singer-Songwriter

KYM TUVIM: NOTHING SWEET NOTHING

Retrofit Records, 219 S. 61st St. Tacoma, WA
98408 www.kymtuvim.com



If Nothing Sweet Nothing is anything, it is soulful. From the first track, “Mystery,” to the last, “Sweet Nothing,” this CD is deeply satisfying. Local talent Kym Tuvim is a gifted singer/songwriter who’s hooked up with some of Seattle’s finest for this recording. Tuvim’s singing and songwriting is being compared to Joan Armatrading, Traci Chapman, Joni Mitchell, Janis Ian, and Phoebe Snow. The musicianship on this CD matches Tuvim’s vocals in terms of its many layers of rich, bluesy, sensual evocativeness. I couldn’t pick a highlight. Every song shines and every song stands on its own. For personal reasons I liked the sad ballad “Reservoir,” but track 1, “Mystery,” pulls you in immediately with Tuvim’s sultry vocals and the pulsating rhythms of the pedal steel guitar and Hammond organ. “Birdsong” soars with Tuvim’s singing and rocks with the drumming of Chris Stromquist. Track 7, “The More I See You,” is a very pretty love song with a melody that floats on the air. It’s the only song on the CD not written by Tuvim, but her vocals do it justice. Tuvim writes as well as she sings; her lyrics are accessible but never clichéd. Maybe there is no end to the ways a love song can be written. Nothing Sweet Nothing is, after all, a CD of love songs, but there’s no shortage of variety here. The only thing consistent throughout this CD is the quality. This may be homegrown, but word of Kym Tuvim is out and she is beginning to get

the well-deserved national airplay and acclaim she deserves. (Heidi Fosner)

BLUES

ELEANOR ELLIS: COMIN’ A TIME

Patuxent Music
www.pxrec.com, info@pxrec.com

Comin’ a Time is an 18-track tribute to the Piedmont style of blues as performed by longtime blues scholar and musician Eleanor Ellis. She covers Skip James, Memphis Minnie and Kansas Jack, Mississippi John Hurt, Blind Boy Fuller, Sleepy John Estes, and others in her heartfelt and well-rendered versions of blues classics learned in her travels and in the barbershop of Archie Edwards. Edwards was a teacher, barber, and bluesman who became close friends and performing partners with John Hurt and Skip James during their last days in Washington, DC. On Saturdays his barbershop became a blues house where local and traveling blues musicians would drop in to jam and tell stories. Ellis was a regular at the Saturday jam sessions, and after Edwards died she helped establish the Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation, dedicated to preserving the musical heritage of the Piedmont Blues. This style, also known as East Coast blues, started in the area between the Atlantic Coastal Plain and Appalachian Mountains from central Georgia to central Virginia. The Piedmont guitar style combines intricate finger picking with a regular, alternating thumb bass line. There are some great tunes on this CD. Being a big fan of Skip James, I’m especially partial to track 3, “Cypress Grove,” and track 15, “Special Rider.” The bones, as played by Richard “Mr. Bones” Thomas, make the Sleepy John Estes song “Diving Duck” a personal favorite, and who doesn’t like a good version of Jim Jackson’s “Kansas City”? Fact is, Ellis does a fine job on all the tracks on Comin’ a Time. (Heidi Fosner)

JOHN-ALEX MASON: TOWN AND COUNTRY

Naked Jaybird Music,
available through www.CDBaby.com

Singer/guitarist John-Alex Mason is a musician with quite a love—not to mention a feel—for the blues. A Colorado resident, he, like many of us, discovered the many pleasures of blues as a teenager. Since then he has played with many

of the greats and has learned his craft well. This album shows him in fine form. All the sides are solo performances. He has two versions of the old Delta classic “Shake ‘Em on Down,” one electric and one acoustic. On the electric version he also plays bass drum, making it sound like a full band. He pulls this same trick on several other tunes. His rendition of Charlie Patton’s “Boll Weevil” is very impressive. John sounds like two guitars on this cut. He also does several Robert Johnson tunes, “Terraplane Blues” and “Milkcow Blues,” the latter being especially good. He has succeeded in making this song very much his own. On many of the songs he adds his own lyrics and does it very effectively. I don’t know if this is John’s first album but I hope it won’t be his last. (Lars Gandil)

KEN WHITELEY: ONE WORLD DANCE

Pyramid Records

Canadian blues/roots musician Ken Whiteley has an impressive resume. He has played with a lot of people including Pete Seeger, John Hammond Jr., and Leon Redbone. He is also a prolific song writer as his new CD shows. Nine of the 12 songs included here are his. On the opening number “Everybody Has the Blues,” Ken plays pretty good piano. After that he sticks to guitars and leaves the keyboard chores to others. Of his own compositions, I liked the opener as well as “Lunch Counter Encounter” and the Latin-flavored title tune. The covers include a good version of the Son House classic “Death Letter Blues” and a really rousing “Two Wings.” All in all a good album which should please Ken’s many fans. (Lars Gandil)

CAJUN

LA BAND PASSE PARTOUT:

LOUISIANA CAJUN MUSIC
Swallow Records

La Band Passe Partout was formed in 1990 by drummer Joe Lirette. They did three award-winning albums for the Swallow label in the 90’s. This is the first of the three, which is now on CD. The album notes say that they strived for a new sound, something that would attract young and old alike. Whether they succeeded is debatable. To my ear they sound pretty much the same as other Cajun bands. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing. I like the majority of Cajun bands I

have heard through the years and these guys fit the bill just fine. Blake Mouton's driving accordion is really nice and Junior Guidry's crying fiddle is good throughout. My one complaint is that the album is a bit top-heavy with waltzes. But then, that's Cajun music for you! (*Lars Gandil*)

CHILDREN'S

VARIOUS ARTISTS: DOWN AT THE SEA HOTEL
Secret Mountain, www.thesecretmountain.com

Down at the Sea Hotel is a lovely lullaby album that works well on numerous levels. These soothing songs, composed by such luminous songwriters as Nanci Griffith, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Greg Brown, Billy Joel, and others, will help relax both children and adults, without ever resorting to the saccharine fare often found in children's bedtime music. The CD is dedicated to the memory of Bob Feldman, the late founder and president of Red House Records, who passed away suddenly in early 2006. Red House Records recording artists John Gorka, Eliza Gilkyson, Lucy Kaplansky, Guy Davis, Lynn Miles, and the Wailin' Jennys offer graceful and heartfelt performances throughout the disc. A typical child's rhyme is given a bluesy twist and turn in the Tom Waits song "Midnight Lullaby." "Sing a song of sixpence, pocket full of rye. Hushabye my baby, no need to be crying. You can burn the midnight oil with me as long as you will, stare out at the moon upon the windowsill, and dream." In the Marc Cohen tune "Things We've Handed Down," John Gorka plaintively asks, "will you be a sad reminder of what's been lost along the way, maybe you can help me find her in the things you do and say," expressing the adult sentiments of the wonder of bringing a child into the world, and the joys and bittersweet emotions that follow. Although there are 12 tracks with different songwriters and performers, there is a welcoming sound of continuity from beginning to end. The title song is a storybook with beautiful and whimsical illustrations by Mireille Levert. Down at the Sea Hotel, along with other Secret Mountain titles, is available in two formats, as a storybook-music CD and also as a CD with printable files of lyrics, illustrations, and music charts. A portion of the sales will benefit the Breast Cancer Fund. Recommended for people of all ages as a peaceful musical retreat. (*Hilary Field*)

CHILDREN'S BOOK

LINDA URBAN: A CROOKED KIND OF PERFECT
Harcourt Children's Books,
ISBN # 0152060073

All 10-year-old Zoe Elias wants is a baby grand piano and an invitation to play Carnegie Hall. However, her dreams of glamour, sophistication, and diamond tiaras get tossed aside by the reality of the Perfectone D-60, a "wood-grained, vinyl seated, wheeze-bag organ." Instead of Mozart and Beethoven sonatas delicately cascading from her fingers, Zoe is relegated to TV theme songs and synthesized sambas. The stress of preparing for the Perform-O-Rama competition is amplified by the crooked detours in her everyday life. Between an agoraphobic Dad, a workaholic Mom, a former best friend, and an almost boyfriend (not to mention accidentally alienating the Fireside Scouts of America,) Zoe is right in the thick of that special sort of drama that fifth-grade girls know just too well. Setting the tone with concise sentences and short chapters, Linda Urban gets right to the heart and the mind of a young girl and her musical dream. With determination, persistence, and a good dose of humor, Zoe finds her own personal sort of perfect. The bumps and lumps in her music and in her life may not be the perfect she had in mind, but as Zoe remarks, "when you play the piano, you have to get the heart right. Which is harder than getting the notes right." A Crooked Kind of Perfect gets the heart right. This book, recommended for ages 8-12, was chosen as a Junior Library Guild selection and is on the American Library Association Children's Notable List. An inspiring and entertaining book for crookedly perfect in us all. (*Hilary Field*)

FOLK

JAMES GORDON & SONS: NINE GREEN BOTTLES
Borealis #182, www.jamesgordon.ca

One of the secrets to a good protest song, besides strong lyrics, a singalong chorus, and the feelings that the song could make a difference, is a voice full of hurt, pain, and indignation. While Nine Green Bottles is full of strong songs protesting war, modernization, and the stripping of our

natural resources, James Gordon lacks the voice to truly sell these songs. Now, this is not to say that he doesn't have a nice voice. It's a sturdy tenor, full of politeness and light, which works on tracks like "The Secret of Rock and Roll" (which feels out of place here), but with most of the record's being modern-day protest folk songs, the voice doesn't make the listener rise up in anger. It should be noted that James and his sons are very capable musicians on these straight-ahead tunes, creating simple rhythms and a loose, laid-back feel that carries the messages along, though again it does so on a gentle breeze instead of a stiff wind. This release could use just a little more roar. (*James Rodgers*)

NEW AGE

KEN ELKINSON: CUE
August Son Productions,
www.kenelkinson.com

Cue is a pretty collection of original piano compositions. There is a New Age gentleness to these pieces that is pleasant and easy to listen to. The song titles, with names like "Firefly," "Violet," and "Lightly," actually conjure different images from the songs themselves, which are similar in style and tempo. The right-hand chord progressions are lovely while the left hand repeats steady solid phrases. "January" and "Oregon Coast" were my favorites on Cue. I also enjoyed the last track on the CD, "Beautiful Sadness," written and sung by Elkinson's musician friend Tom Freund. This is Elkinson's 4th CD. His music has been used in documentaries and commercials and in-flight music programs. He is currently working on a number of projects including original dance compositions, film scores, and his 5th CD. Check out his website for more information and a sample of his New Age sound. (*Heidi Fosner*)

SINGER/ SONGWRITER

CAMPBELL TODD: CAMPBELL TODD
self-released, www.cdbaby.com

Campbell Todd is the debut release of the collaboration of guitarists Neil Campbell and

Stuart Todd, both of whom have multiple solo releases. The incredible musicianship found within makes listing this as a debut a little misleading. And while they have had years to get to this level, it takes nothing away from the amazing guitar work of these two, with creative string play filling out all corners of these fine songs. Adding to the pleasure is two fine tenor voices which work well apart and in harmony, singing straight-ahead songs that will make you think of early 70's singer-songwriters like Dan Fogelberg or James Taylor. Drummer Mark Brockelsby keeps the rhythm going strong, but he has a thankless job, for on a record that has guitar and vocals that sound this good together, few will be paying any attention to the man behind the kit. Campbell and Todd both hail from Liverpool, and while I won't make any Beatles comparisons, these two may just put that city back up on the musical map again. Buy this disc! (*James Rodgers*)

TRET FURE: TRUE COMPASS

Tomboy Girl Records, www.tomboygirl.com

True Compass is a beautiful work--contemporary folk music at its finest. The songs, the band, the musicianship, and the engineering on this CD are just right. In a style somewhat evocative of Mary Chapin Carpenter, Fure takes us into her heart, home, and mind where the listener finds compassion, tenderness, humor, and intelligence. There is enough variety in melody and subject matter to keep True Compass from being monotonous, but the CD definitely has a hearth-and-home feel to it. This is Fure's 4th CD on her own label--Tomboy Girl Records. Like the others she's recorded as a solo artist--Backhome, My Shoes and Anytime--True Compass is getting good reviews. Fure's long musical career includes working with the late Lowell George of Little Feat, who produced her first album in 1973. In those early days in LA she opened for Yes, Poco, and the J Geils Band. In the 1980's she decided to explore the world of indie music and she has become a bit of a legend in the genre of Women's Music. If you like folk music and want to hear something very good and very contemporary, you can't miss with Tret Fure's True Compass. If you're looking for more endorsements, go to her website and see what Dirty Linen and Sing Out Magazine have to say about her. (*Heidi Fosner*)

KAREN MAL: THE SPACE BETWEEN

Waterbug Records, PO Box 83, Glen Ellyn, IL 60138 or www.karenmal.com

Karen Mal sings her own compositions in a lilting soprano voice and plays guitar and mandolin on her CD in the space between. It's a nice collection of folk/country songs that reveal the reason Karen has been a winner or finalist in songwriting competitions from Portland to Florida. The actress/musician makes her home in Austin, Texas, now, staying busy as a solo artist and sideman playing mandolin, guitar, and singing backup vocals. She has toured in 40 states and opened for Tom Paxton and many others. Her work has been praised in Sing Out! Magazine and she is considered a rising star on the Austin music scene. She sings easily and sweetly and takes us down the roads of childhood, "When I Was Three," unrequited love, "Everything About You," south of the border with her own arrangement of the traditional "Flavia," and "Te Acuerdo En Mis Suenos"--a traditional to which she has given lyrics. All the songs are nicely arranged and include fiddle, accordion, piano, dobro, harmony vocals, and percussion in addition to Karen's guitar and mandolin. (*Heidi Fosner*)

RACHEL RIES: WITHOUT A BIRD

SoDak Records SoDak001

Wrapping her fluid, supple voice around the lyrics, Rachel Ries swings effortlessly between styles reminiscent of folk, blues, and vintage jazz. Defying any single genre, her songs always feel like they took a direct path from her soul. Conflict abounds in her expert storytelling, singing of love, loss, small towns, and unforgiving cities. Hailing from Chicago via the South Dakota plains, she beckons the city world to slow down to match her prairie heart in "Never You Mind" and then turns around and pleads "oh, Chicago, come and find us, come and hold us, come and be with us" in "Chicago." Her vocals reveal an incredible amount of dynamic range and control as she luxuriously lingers around the beat, adding an instrumental quality to the ensemble of surrounding players. The vocal accents in "I Could Leave" echo the percussive punch of guitar and bass, further delineating the sentiment "I leave you but know I'll just return to the doorway of every room you've ever lived." This album has the rare distinction of a CD and limited vinyl release, highlighting the warm analog mix and recording. Like a good novel or work of art, more layers reveal

themselves with repeated visits, and each visit is worth the trip. (*Hilary Field*)

WORLD

OMAR AKRAM: SECRET JOURNEY

Real Music RM7435

With titles such as "Run Away WITH Me," Gypsy Spirit," Caravan," "Nomadic Rhapsody," and the title cut "Secret Journey," composer and pianist Omar Akram invites listeners to join him on a musical escape to exotic worlds abroad. While the silky production and accessible melodies give the disc a very smooth feel, a closer listening reveals many qualities that lie deeper than its easy charm. Well-crafted compositions, exceptional musicianship, and a variety of classic and ethnic instruments keep the smooth surface from ever sounding mundane. The title cut opens with the mysterious and haunting sound of the duduke, a double reed woodwind of Armenian descent. The journey continues with musical interplay between piano and Latin guitar, until the ethnic percussion enters to drive the music forward. In "Passage of the Heart," the expressive tones of the piano, violin, and guitar seamlessly weave in and out of the tune as though in playful conversation. The disc closes on a peaceful note with "Angel of Hope," a stunningly beautiful piano and violin duet with a lyrical theme of rare depth and classical beauty. Omar Akram's acoustic grand piano holds the ensemble of this rich musical palette together, whether as a shining centerpiece of the music, or in counterpoint with other instruments, or as background accompaniment while other tone colors take the stage. "In a world where communication and understanding between cultures is sometimes difficult," explains Akram, "I try to have the instruments speak to one another in a manner that crosses any cultural barriers." Secret Journey erases musical borders and genres, offering hopeful music for a peaceful, multicultural world. (*Hilary Field*)

The Whateverly Brothers

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VICTORY Calendar

APRIL 2008

Please enter your calendar data on the Victory Music Website if you want your venue listed in the Magazine by the Second Monday of April for May listings! If listed after the Second Monday, your venue will still be on the website. www.victorymusic.org

Editors Note:

Whether you are a member of Victory Music or not, you are invited to list your gigs on the Victory Music web site. Listing your gigs on the website automatically gets your listing in the Victory Review. However, you must list your gig by the 2nd Monday of the month to make it to this page. I personally know that people look on both the website and in the Review to find musicians that they enjoy listening to. So, to promote your gigs, please visit our website to place your listing. This is a FREE service! Use it! Also, Ron Dalton is trying to get a new website going, with a new calendar. Please help him do this. See page 21 to see how you can help. A Non-Profit, such as Victory Music seriously needs volunteers!

04/03/08 Savannah Fuentes & Carmona Flamenco Seattle City Hall 600 4th Ave. Seattle Noon - 1 pm FREE Spanish Flamenco music and dance www.seattle.gov/seattlepresents or 206-684-7171

04/04/08 Gumbo Twins & Cat Loves Crow Wired & Unplugged Coffeehouse 717 First St. Snohomish 7:30pm \$5-10 donation Old-Timey Harmony Duos at new Puget's Sound First Friday venue; KSER 90.7-FM Community Radio co-sponsors. www.livelocalmusic.org, 206-729-0820

04/09/08 Stewart Hendrickson Roeder Home 2600 Sunset Drive Bellingham 7:30 pm \$8 to \$12 donation Fiddle, voice & guitar. Traditional songs from British Isles & America, & sea songs. Whatcom Co. Homemade Music Society 360-734-7872, lopresti@nas.com, stewarthendrickson.com

04/10/08 Ryan Hoffman Swing Trio & Andi Francoeur The Pike Pub & Brewery 1415 First Ave. Seattle 7:30pm \$5-10 donation "Spring-time Cabaret a la Francais" at new Puget's Sound second Thursday venue downtown. www.livelocalmusic.org, 206-729-0820

04/11-13/08 (Fri - Sun.) Women's Retreat w/ The Righteous Mothers Sahale Retreat Center Near the Hood Canal Belfair Full Weekend \$210, covers everything Workshops, Jamming, Concert, Fun, Relaxation www.righteousmothers.com

04/12/08 Bob Antone & Mike Pryor Haller Lake Community Club 12579 Densmore Ave. N. Seattle 7 pm \$12, \$2 off HLCC, kids \$6 Bob Antone & friends - "back-rattle-beat" music & storytelling from NW woods. Mike Pryor - songs about Seattle & NW hend@stolaf.edu, 206-367-0475, hallerlake.info/artsevents.html

04/12/08 Deb Seymour & The Debonairs Cascade Coffeehouse (Cascade Unitarian) 1550 Sunset Hwy East Wenatchee 7 pm \$5 Friendlest Concert Setting in East Wenatchee! Home of the Big hat! www.myspace.com/cascadecoffeehouse

04/12/08 Dulcimer Day in the Wallows, hosted by Heidi Muller Joseph Methodist Church 301 S. Lake St. Joseph 9 am \$50-55 Mountain dulcimer workshops, jam, evening concert with **Heidi Muller, Bob Webb, Susan Howell, Niels Andersen.** www.heidimuller.com

04/12/08 The Wanderers in Concert Vermont Hills United Methodist Church 6055 SW 55th Drive Portland 7 pm \$15 A sing-along concert featuring classic 1960's folk songs and Woody Guthrie's Columbia River song collection. 503-246-1213

04/13/08 A Bridge to Bosnia: A Musical Journey Temple Beth Am 2632 NE 80th Seattle 3 pm \$5, \$10, \$20 A multicultural concert featuring professional Bosnian, Jewish, and African-American singers/

dancers to benefit Bosnia Eleanor Reynolds 206-789-7643

04/17/08 The Kosher Red Hots Seattle City Hall 600 4th Ave. Seattle Noon - 1 pm Free Klezmer, Yiddish, Ladino and Jazz www.seattle.gov/seattlepresents or 206-684-7171

04/18-19/08 North Coast Folk Festival Ocean Shores Convention Center Point Brown Drive NE Ocean Shores **See ad on page 23!** Concerts & workshops by **Country Joe, Tom May, Dick Weissman, Hank Cramer, David Rea, Michael Guthrie, Nancy K. Dillon,** www.oceanshores.org/todo/folkfestival.htm to purchase tickets on-line. 360-289-2451

04/19/08 Coyote Ridge Bluegrass Wranglers Cashmere Community Coffee House at the Cashmere Riverside Center 201 Riverside Drive 7:30 pm \$3 at door - \$7-\$10 hat pass for musicians. Marie Vecchio 5095481230 chuck@histrungmusic.com www.cashmere-coffeehouse.com

04/19/08 Debashish Bhattacharya Kent-Meridian Performing Arts Center 10020 SE 256th Street Kent 7:30 p.m. \$18-20 One of the greatest slide guitarists in India blends traditional Indian music with world music and the blues. 253-856-5051

04/19/08 Eric Madis Trio Vino Bella 99 Front St. Issaquah 7:30-11:30 pm No Cover Eric Madis plays blues and jazz with bassist Martin Rush and drummer Brad Stoll at this

wine bar in downtown Issaquah.
<http://www.ericmadis.com>

04/19/08 Wes Weddell Band Crossroads 15600 NE 8th St. Bellevue 7:30-10 pm Free! Award-winning local songwriter brings full, six-piece band to Crossroads Stage. All-ages. www.wesweddel.com

04/23/08 Hank Cramer Jefferson County Library 620 Cedar Avenue Chimacum 6:30 pm Free Sea Shanties from Northwest Waters: sponsored by Humanities Washington 509-996-3528

04/24/08 Wayne Horvitz, Eric Eagle & Geoff Harper Seattle City Hall 600 4th Ave. Seattle Noon - 1 pm Free New music for piano, bass and drums from a maverick Seattle composer.

WEEKLY VENUES

SUNDAYS

Every 1st & 3rd Sunday Victory Music Open Mic Alderwood Mall, next to the fireplace at the Food Court 3000 184th Street SW Lynnwood Sign-up 4:30 pm, music 5-7 pm Free victory@nwlink.com

Every Second Sunday Cape Breton/Scottish Traditional Session Celtic Bayou (see celticbayou.com) 7281 W Lake Sammamish Pkwy NE Redmond 4 pm, Free Monthly Cape Breton traditional session open to players at all levels; dancers or singers welcome susanmcburke@msn.com

Every Sunday Irish Music Session Fados First Street and Columbia Seattle 4 pm free Beginning to Intermediate Irish Music Session. Come join the fun! marygrider@yahoo.com

Every Sunday Island Music Guild Open Mic Pegasus Coffee House 131 Parfitt Way Bainbridge Is 7-9:30 pm donation. 2 song night.

Every Sunday Scotty Harris/Mark Whitman The J&M Cafe 201 First Avenue Seattle 9 pm R&B jam Maridel Fliss - Mflissm@aol.com

Every Sunday Irish Sean-nos Dancing Workshop Velocity Dance Center, Chamber Theater 915 East Pine Seattle, WA 4-5:30 pm \$15 sliding scale, Rhythmic, playful, inventive! Sean-nos is old-style Irish step dancing similar to Cape Breton or flatfoot clogging. www.myspace.com/seannosseattle, maithcailin@yahoo.com

TUESDAYS

Every Tuesday Malcolm Clark Acoustic Open Mic Kit Carson's 107 Interstate Ave Chehalis 7-10 pm Free Bring your axe. Acoustic blues and singer/songwriter. 360-740-4312

Every Tuesday Traditional Celtic session P&G Speakeasy Cafe 15614 Main St NE Duvall 6:30-8:30 pm free Open to players of all Celtic traditions.

Every Tuesday Old Time Social Open Jam every Tuesday! Conor Byrne Pub 5140 Ballard Ave NW Seattle 8 pm Free Open old-time jam - see www.oldtimeseattle.com for details

Every Tuesday Victory Music Open Mic at Q Cafe 3223 15th Ave W, Seattle 98119 (just south of the Ballard Bridge) (206) 352-2525 www.qcafe.org Sign up: 5:45 - 6:15 pm Music: 6:30 - 9:00 pm Cover charge: \$2 members, \$3 everybody else. Musicians do not pay to play. Wonderful large venue, very family friendly. Coffee, tea, soft drinks and pastries available.

Every Tuesday Victory Music Open Mic The Antique Sandwich 51st & North Pearl Tacoma (Ruston) Signup 6:30 Music 7-10 pm \$3, \$2 members Piano & sound sys. provided.

Every Tuesday holotradband New Orleans Restaurant 114 First Ave S Seattle 206-622-2563

Every Tuesday Glenn Harrell Dock Street Landing 535 Dock

Street Tacoma 7-10 pm Free Acoustic 253-212-0387

Every fourth Tuesday Rick Fogel Hammer Dulcimer Circle Houseboat named E-Z Street 2143 N. Northlake Way Seattle (Fremont) Open jam for hammer dulcimer players. 7 pm Free Rick Fogel at 206-910-8259

WEDNESDAYS

Every Wednesday Barry Pollack Asteroid Restaurant 3601 Fremont Ave. Seattle 7 - 9:30 pm 206-547-9000

Every 1st Wednesday Irish Hooley Tugboat Annie's 2100 West Bay Drive NW Olympia 8 - 10 pm free Irish songs, tunes, dance, etc. with a host band, showcase set, session, and Irish open mike 360-943-1850

Every Wednesday Floyd Standifer Quintet New Orleans Restaurant 114 First Ave S Seattle 7:30-11:30 pm A jazz legend in Seattle. 206-622-2563

Every Wednesday Malcolm Clark Acoustic Open Mic The Shire 465 NW Chehalis Ave Chehalis 7 - 9 pm free Acoustic open mic, singer/songwriters welcome 360-740-4312

Every Wednesday Mid-Week Jam Laurelwood Event Center 123 North Blakeley Street Monroe Jam- live & on-stage! Any genre. Smoke free. 7:30 - 10 pm Donation

THURSDAYS

Every Thursday Live Jazz Jam Asteroid 3601 Fremont Ave N. #207 Seattle 9:30 - 1am N/C

Every 1st Thursday Victory Music Open Mic Crossroads Shopping Center 15600 NE 8th Street Bellevue sign up 5:30 Music 6 - 9 pm Free. Food Court Stage has a piano & great sound system

Every 1st Thursday S.O.N.G. meeting NW St John Vianney Parish 12600 84th Ave NE Kirkland 7 - 8:30 .m 425-806-0606

Every 1st Thursday Bob Jackson quartet featuring Buddy Catlett New Orleans Restaurant 114

First Ave S Seattle 7-10 pm no cover 206-622-2563

Every Thursday The Fourth Ave Celtic Session Plenty Restaurant/Pub Fourth Ave. and Columbia St. Olympia 7:30 - 10 pm no charge An open session where Celtic, Folk, & Old Time music is played & sung. Good food, spirits. <http://home.comcast.net/~onebutch>

Every Thursday Giants Causeway Irish Session Giants Causeway Irish Pub 201 Williams Avenue S. Renton 7ish-10 pm Free Giants Causeway is the most welcoming Irish Session in the Northwest. Free food and drink if you can play!

Every Thursday (except 1st Thursday) Ham Carson Quintet New Orleans Restaurant 114 First Ave S Seattle 7-10 p.m. no cover Swinging hot jazz 206-622-2563

Every Thursday Out of Tune Open Mic 15th Avenue Bar 7515 15th Ave NW Seattle Sign up 8 Show starts 8:30 pm Open mic music and poetry 206-208-3276

FRIDAYS

Every Friday Open Mic Wired and Unplugged Internet Coffee House 717 First Street Snohomish signup 6 p.m. music 6:30 pm Free Courteous crowd 360-568-2472

Every Friday Glenn Harrell Meconi's Pub & Eatery 709 Pacific Avenue Tacoma 4 - 7 pm No Cover Acoustic 253-212-0387

SATURDAYS

Every 1st and 3rd Saturday Tacoma Celtic Players Open Session Spar Tavern 2121 N. 30th St. Tacoma 2 - 4 [m free Free beginner-/friendly session Tune list on www.sessionsnw.com/washington.html

Every 1st and 3rd Saturday Tacoma Celtic Players O'Farrell's Restaurant 11000 N. Meridian Puyallup 2 - 5 pm Free This is an open Irish/Celtic session for beginner and intermediate players Non-smoking. Jamie Marshall Lowellirih@yahoo.com

FOLK, BLUES AND BLUEGRASS To Headline the 2nd Annual North Coast Folk Festival!

BY TOM MAY

PHOTOS BY DEBBIE DUTTON

2nd Annual North Coast Folk Festival
Friday-Saturday, April 18th-19th, 2008
Ocean Shores, Washington

We are no strangers to April showers in the Pacific Northwest. Usually, we have had a taste of spring already and are ready for more. For most of us in the “upper left-hand corner,” that means thinking about a trip to the beach. What better excuse for a coastal trip than a folk festival?

This year, for the 2nd Annual North Coast Folk Festival in Ocean Shores, famed Woodstock performer Country Joe McDonald will top a varied bill that also includes the Canadian Celtic music sensations Tillers Folly. The

boys from Vancouver wowed everyone at the first North Coast Festival in September of 2006, and they are primed and ready to come back and do it again with new songs, a new CD and their incredible energy and virtuosity on stage.

Country Joe McDonald has been touring extensively, performing songs and stories of Woody Guthrie. He will also reprise some of the material from his early career in his headliner sets on Saturday, April 19th. Dig out that Woodstock video or CD and give it a listen again, and bring it to the festival for Joe to sign for you!

In the late 1960s, Joe had signed with Vanguard as a solo performer and went to Nashville with Sam Charters to record an album of Woody Guthrie songs. Since the players on the session worked at this all the time and



Above: Tillers Folly at the Galway Pub at Ocean Shores

made few mistakes, the recording was over very quickly; there was time left over to track some country standards, and both Thinking Of Woody Guthrie and Tonight I'm Singing Just For You were released the next year. The Guthrie album won him critical acclaim and a spot the following year at the Hollywood Bowl celebration in honor of Guthrie featuring Joan Baez, Arlo Guthrie and many who had worked with Guthrie while he was alive.

Country Joe has continued to write and record, having issued, on average, an album every 1.25 years since 1970. He tours regularly

as a solo performer in the US and abroad. He will be performing two sets on Saturday, April 19th to close out the festival.

Also performing at this year's event will be Del Ray, a renowned blues artist from the Puget Sound region; she'll be flying in from a performance in New York to perform her traditional and original blues, and also to conduct a workshop on the music of The First Lady of the Blues, Memphis Minnie.

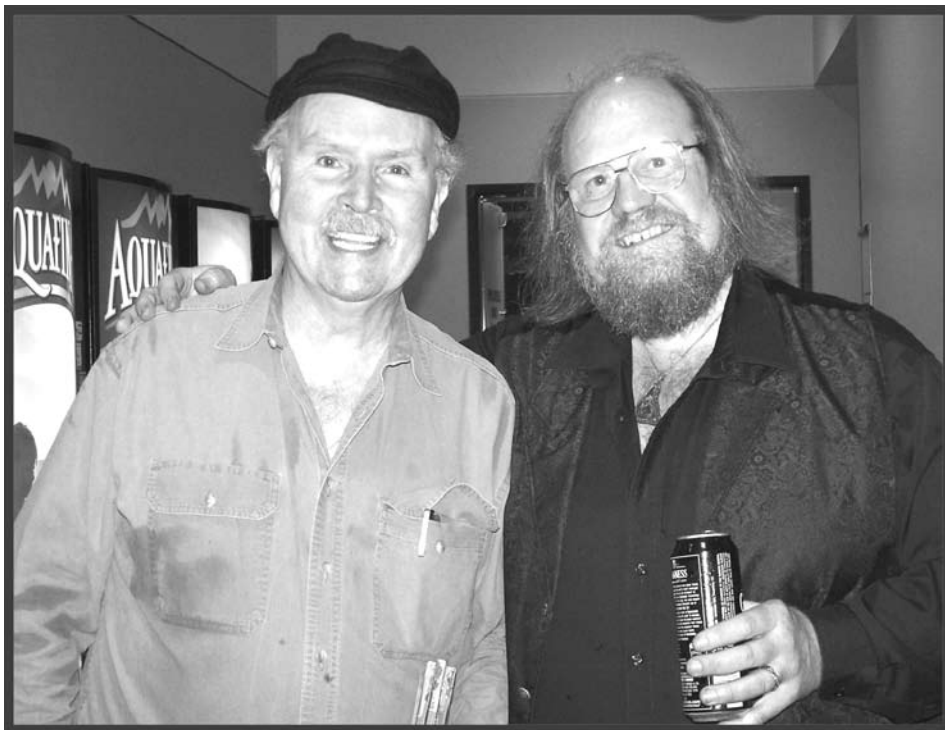
I will be joined by my fellow musicians Donny Wright and Fuzzy Purcell, and we will be performing songs from my new CD Blue Roads,

Red Wine, which will be released the week of the festival on the national label Waterbug. It has been a wonderful past year, with the release of my book Promoting Your Music: The Lovin' of the Game (with co-author Dick Weissman) and the release of the new CD.

Hank Cramer, a Northwest favorite from Winthrop, Washington with his compelling songs of the sea and his entertaining stage show, will once again be a festival favorite. Hank has had a busy year too, performing from Colorado to Arizona, Guam and finally back home here to Washington

State. Hank will perform sets of his own music, conduct a workshop, and will also be doing a tribute set of the music of John Stewart to precede Country Joe McDonald's set on Saturday night. Hank released two new CDs this past year to great reviews.

Prairie Flyer, an award-winning five-piece bluegrass band from Spokane, Washington will make their first appearance in Ocean Shores. Moving beyond the usual bounds of bluegrass, these boys put on quite a show. Jim Kelly of the Clatskanie Festival in Oregon says, "If you've never seen Prairie Flyer before, head for (the



Above: Tom Paxton and Tom May at the first North Coast Folk Festival.

next festival) and catch them. I've seen few bands who could move from a Stanley Brothers song to Townes Van Zandt, from their own solid bluegrass instrumentals to Steve Earle to Fred Eaglesmith and back to traditional bluegrass with such ease and grace."

Also performing will be David Rea, longtime guitarist for Ian and Sylvia, Gordon Lightfoot, Judy Collins and others. Dick Weissman, one of the founding members of the Journeymen (along with John Phillips of the Mamas and Papas and Scott MacKenzie) and a successful author, music producer, and sideman, will regale us with his banjo expertise and tales from a life well lived in music.

From Seattle, Victory Music members and songwriters Michael Guthrie and Nancy K. Dillon will present their thoughtful songs and stories. Both are familiar figures in festivals and Victory music events throughout the region.

There will be concert sets, workshops, an open mic for emerging performers and singer/songwriters and lots of vendors, food and drink. I know the open mic is of particular interest to Victory members; it will take place from 1-6 pm on Saturday, April 19th at the Convention Center.

If the Festival runs true to form this year, there will be lots of spontaneous music breaking out after each night's closing sets at the Galway Bay Pub and hotel rooms all over Ocean Shores!

After the first festival in 2006, there were lots of stories about all-night sessions in Hank Cramer's hotel room, with Victory member Jim Portillo leading many of the songs.

All performances will take place at the beautiful Ocean Shores Convention Center or at the intimate Galway Bay Restaurant and Pub. Proceeds from the event will benefit the North Beach Music for Kids program that provides musical instruments to children of low-income families.

Hotel and motel rooms in Ocean Shores are very reasonable in the springtime, and no hotel room anywhere in town is far from the beach and coastal walking trails, or more than a few minutes stroll from the festival venues.

Tickets for the two-day event are \$25 if purchased prior to February 29, 2008 and \$35 thereafter. Tickets can be purchased online using credit cards and PayPal at www.oceanshores.org or by calling the Ocean Shores Chamber of Commerce at (360) 289-2451. Special lodging and ticket packages are also available. The North Coast Folk Festival is sponsored by the Ocean Shores Chamber of Commerce, Shilo Inn of Ocean Shores, Quinault Beach Resort & Casino, Galway Bay Pub, Ramada Inn of Ocean Shores and other fine local businesses.

For more information call (360) 289-2451 or (888) 48-BEACH.

Below: Hank Cramer at the Microphone, Tom May on guitar with microphone and the outside group is Tillers Folly.



KIDS KORNER

Classical Family Concerts

BY HILARY FIELD

Arts organizations have long known that the future of classical music depends on future generations. There are a number of classical music concerts programmed especially for kids and families, with music that is engaging and interesting for all ages. Here are some highlights coming up this month.

Vagabond Opera

Saturday April 12th, 11 am and 1:30 pm,
Town Hall, Seattle
www.brownpapertickets.com

Opera is not usually the hot ticket for the twelve and under crowd, but the Northwest based Vagabond Opera promises to liberate this historical form from any notion of stuffiness with theatrical performances in a multitude of languages. Eric Stern, a European-trained opera singer and composer, created Vagabond Opera in 2002. Dissatisfied with the classical opera world, Stern set out to create something new. The description on their web page describes the Vagabond Opera experience as “passionate offerings of Bohemian cabaret, Paris hot Jazz, gut bucket swing, Tangos, Ukrainian folk-punk ballads, Klezmer and vigorous originals” that come in full contact with a cabaret of riverboat gambling queens, Turkish belly dancers, with a good measure of Marlene Dietrich, Kurt Weil, Duke Ellington and Edith Piaf. In a recent interview with the Washington Post, Stern talked about his eclectic taste. “I feel, as a composer, like an artist and I’ve got a lot of colors on the palette,” Stern says. “I’m not going to think, ‘This color of opera doesn’t go with this odd meter from Macedonia.’” Vagabond Opera’s bass player Jason Flores describes the mix of music as a “beautiful mess in a lot of ways. It’s just a hodgepodge of anything goes, and if it works, it stays.” Vagabond Opera, presented with the Seattle International Children’s Festival and sponsored by KEXP 90.3FM and Parent Map, is appropriate for children 6 and older. This concert is free for kids 12 and under with accompanying adult, and \$5 for adults. No children admitted without adults. No adults admitted without children.

Lucidarium Family Concert

Sunday, April 27th, 1 pm, Town Hall, Seattle
www.earlymusicguild.org

Lucidarium, an ensemble that specializes in Medieval and Renaissance music, will be performing a concert for kids and families based on their award winning musical creation *La Istoria de Purim: Music and poetry of the Jews of Renaissance Italy*. This program tells the story of the Jewish holiday Purim through the prayers, songs, and dances typical of a Jewish family celebration in 16th century Italy. Avery Gosfield, the artistic co-director of Lucidarium, explains the origin of the 16th century Purim play, written in Italian with Hebrew characters, which inspired the program. “Written in ottava rima, a poetic form that was sung in Italy from before the time of Boccaccio and still sung today in Central Italy (by a population that cuts a broad swath across society: carpenters, schoolteachers, even Roberto Benigni on occasion,) it was an indication that the Jews of the time participated wholeheartedly in the culture around them.” The group did extensive research into this repertoire. Gosfield noted that the “archaic traits and links to Renaissance music we found in the liturgical and para-liturgical repertoire was remarkable and reinforced our conviction that there was a continuous exchange between the Jews and their neighbors.” In this family friendly version, kids will have a chance to experience the sounds of early instruments including lutes, guitars, winds, and drums, and hear songs of ancient Jewish cultures.

Peter and the Wolf

Saturday, April 26th and May 3rd, 11 am, S.
Mark Taper Auditorium, Seattle
www.seattlesymphony.org

The adventures of Peter, his grandfather, the duck, the cat, and of course the hungry wolf, are one of the most famous and enduring orchestrated stories for young people. The fun and exciting story is highlighted by Prokofiev’s score, and is an excellent way to introduce children to the instruments of the orchestra. This is part of the Seattle Symphony’s Discover Music Series for children from age five to twelve, conducted by Carolyn Kuan. Associate Conductor Kuan, who arrived in Seattle in 2006,

worked on family concerts when she was a graduate student at the North Carolina School of the Arts. In an interview with the Seattle PI, Kuan talks about her philosophy of classical concerts for kids and families. “These concerts should be fun. They need to be focused and educational, but I want the kids to want to come back. I want the kids to turn to their parents and say, ‘that was exciting or great or both.’” Kuan’s engaging personality on the podium is perfect for the popular culture and family concerts. She understands the importance of visual and verbal elements to keep the action moving, and is quite aware of the attention span of her audience, especially in the context of twenty first century culture. “We are talking about a generation used to television, the computer -- things that go very fast.” Carolyn Kuan and the Discover Music Series offer symphonic music to kids in a way that is accessible, educational, and entertaining. “It is crucial to expose kids to classical music when they are young, even if the exposure is limited” says Kuan. “Sometimes these concerts are the kids’ first experience with classical music. I like to go into the audience before concerts and talk with parents and kids about what they are expecting. Even if I talk with only a few, I like to make the connection. Kids like all sorts of different things, and I want to expose them to great music and to get them thinking.”

A Musical Heritage

Sunday, April 20th 3 pm, Hodges Hall,
Bainbridge Island
www.bainbridgeperformingarts.org

The Bainbridge Symphony Orchestra is another organization determined to ensure the future of classical music by engaging young people in the historical repertoire. In their upcoming program, *A Musical Heritage*, multiple generations of musicians will perform side by side on the same stage. This is the Bainbridge Symphony Orchestra’s 35th anniversary, and they decided to celebrate by looking towards the future, as personified by the young musicians that make up the Bainbridge Island Youth Orchestra. The evening spotlights two young talented soloists. Violinist Birgitte Gingold and cellist Max Aussendorf, both seniors at Bainbridge High School, will offer music by Mozart and J.C. Bach. The program also includes music performed separately by the Bainbridge Symphony Orchestra and Bainbridge Island Youth Orchestra. The concert concludes with all of the groups together, in a musical celebration of the Bainbridge Island community.

Hilary Field is a classical guitarist, recording artist, and teacher. Feel free to contact hilary@mulberrybushmusic.com

ACCENTS ON MUSIC THERAPY

Community Music Therapy

BY BARBARA DUNN

The term “community music therapy” speaks to the practice of music therapy outside the confines of clinic walls; therapeutic work that can come out of participation in community-based experiences. Currently, the term is more of a point for discussion than a developed style or practice of music therapy. Most of these discussions of community music therapy have taken place in European music therapy circles.

Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy is an international online journal that published a discussion paper by British music therapist Gary Ansdell entitled: “Community Music Therapy & The Winds of Change.” In his words, “there seems to be a mismatch currently between what many music therapists practice, and the over-arching theoretical model which claims to guide and legitimate their work.” The theoretical models that guide music therapy training are, for the most part, based within protective clinical settings. Ansdell suggests that many music therapists already include some form of community work or experiences in their therapy practice but have been reluctant to describe this work as “therapy” because it exists outside the clinic walls.

There have been a variety of written responses to that original article in *Voices*; they debate the term, concept and practice of community music therapy. There is disagreement whether or not there is even the need for a separate label of Community music therapy. Is it simply standard music therapy practice to involve the community in the therapeutic process? Some object to the term community music therapy because it can be confused with “community music,” which is an established profession throughout the United Kingdom. (See “Debating the Winds of Change” at www.voices.no)

A new book came out last fall called *Community Music Therapy*, edited by Mercedes Pavlicevic and Gary Ansdell. I highly recommend the book if you are interested in this topic. Contributors get more specific about places and applications for community

music therapy, through discussion of culture, community, space and transformation. The following are some examples of situations described in the book:

A hospital where the music therapy began with a patient in her room and then moved out into the hall or a community space within the hospital.
A public musical performance that came directly out of individual work in music therapy.

The music that evolved during a training with home-based care givers in a community in South Africa.

A Music for Health group that uses music to address trauma with groups affected by the “troubles” in Northern Ireland.

Impromptu music that develops outside a café at a community mental health center, the music begins with a former music therapy client and the music therapist.

Years ago I worked with a woman who had some psychiatric challenges and a developmental disability. She was also a gifted musician who loved to play the accordion. I worked with her on developing a sing-along routine that she could take to nearby nursing homes. We put together song sheets and a set list. I worked with her on performance etiquette, tempo and other music related items. We also worked on various ways of encouraging the nursing home residents to sing along. During the period of about 3-5 years, she had sing alongs set up in several nursing homes and was paid for her work by the home. Initially, I went with her to the “gigs.” Eventually, she became more independent and I saw her 1-2 times per month while the “gigs” continued on a weekly basis. Was this music therapy? Was my individual work with her music therapy and the performance something else? Certainly, the community component was very important in my work with her. I am quite certain that she did not have the skills to facilitate the entire program, i.e. set up the gigs or arrange the material. The therapeutic goals for this community-based experience were many: increased self-esteem, socialization, enhanced communication skills, financial reward, and increased independence.

When I did my training in social work I was very impressed with systems theory and how it relates to therapy. It meant that you would have a greater impact on someone’s life if you addressed the many systems that they interface with on a regular basis. This concept had a profound impact on my music therapy work. I could no longer just work with a child in my office one hour per week and believe that I truly made a big difference. I started including her/his family in my sessions so newly developed skills could be taken to the home setting. I contacted the child’s school, met with the teacher and sometimes had music groups with the child’s entire class, thus addressing some of the social skills we were working on. The natural evolution of my work involved the “community” in a very real sense.

In conclusion, is my client experience (described above) an example of community music therapy? Is community music therapy an actual practice? Is it different from just plain old “music therapy?” I do not have an answer to these questions, but I am appreciating the discussions that are occurring around the subject. I like the way the term is inspiring us to discuss the components of music therapy that have relevance to our clients, communities and the world at large, discussion that takes us beyond the clinic walls.

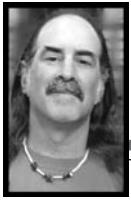
References:

Ansdell, Gary (2002). “Community music therapy & The Winds of Change”. [online] *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*. Retrieved May 6, 105, from [http://www.voices.no/mainissues/Voices2\(2\)ansdell.html](http://www.voices.no/mainissues/Voices2(2)ansdell.html)

Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy, www.voices.no, on-line journal published by Sogn og Fjordane University College in affiliation with *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy* and in collaboration with *World Federation of Music Therapy*.

Pavlicevic, M. and Gary Ansdell, G., Ed. (2004) *Community music therapy*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Barbara Dunn, LICSW, MT-BC directs the Music Therapy program at Whidbey General Hospital. She is also a professional musician and is available for music therapy-related consultations. Contact info: barbdunn@whidbey.com, phone: 360-341-2060, web site: www.barbaradunn.com



FOLKING AROUND 2nd Generations

BY PERCY HILO

I don't believe in dynasties in any area of life. As a rule we experience far less quality as the dynasty wears on. (This is painfully obvious in politics, and with rare exceptions, in sports, arts, and business as well.) At certain points this affects the overall quality of life, with more than 6.5 billion people on the planet there are clearly many people with unconnected bloodlines who could fill those positions with a higher level of character and competence for the benefit of the greater society. What I do believe in is the passing down of culture so that our children will have knowledge of its history and application as well as the insight about where they come from. Of course, this passing on should not be forced in any way, rather it should simply occur as part of growing up while allowing for each child to develop into their own unique adult person. With this in mind, along with a healthy curiosity about the direction of our culture's youth, I asked several children of dedicated veteran folkies how it felt to grow up in an atmosphere permeated by folk culture and what, if any, effect it had on who/what they've become. This also gives me the opportunity to introduce you to several beautiful and talented young people who I like and respect and who I feel are projecting a healing influence on the planet.

Tyler Morgan doesn't remember when he began making music. Such was the atmosphere provided from birth by his parents Philip and Teresa via Victory Open Mics, the Victory Sings at Sea shanty group, and their family band, The Cutters, which Tyler and his sister Arwen joined as fairly young kids. Having witnessed a wide variety of folk styles along with the ever-present mainstream musics, he has developed an open outlook and broad comfort zone, which allows him to use music to connect with a great diversity of people regardless of their differences. It also allows him to pursue rock, blues, and pop musics as a profession while practicing a more simple and grounded lifestyle in other areas. While remaining with The Cutters as bass player and singer, he has also co-founded a creative and dedicated rock trio, The First Line, whose musical goal is to connect with audiences based on feeling and just plain good music as opposed to flash, shock value, or strict tradition. The band's exciting first CD, First

Flight (available on itunes), is ample proof that they have something to say that is theirs alone, yet can relate to a wide audience through the authenticity of their presentation. Tyler aspires to continue down the path of songwriting and performing and connecting with as many people as possible, including himself. Now that's a path worth walking!

Jen Allen-Zito didn't identify her upbringing and social scene with any particular culture until her high school years. What she did understand is that music, politics, and spirituality went together because her mother (nationally known songwriter/performer Linda Allen) brought them together in songs that Jen and her sister Kristin would sing with her at home and in public. Beyond the home she observed a strong community of people playing music for the simple joy of it: People who believed in working for peace and were damn good at singing for it as well! These are all things that stick with her as she continues on her path.

At the same time she always listened to pop music and took Suzuki music lessons, which made musical diversity a given and led to a duo of eclectic musical compositions and performances with Kristin that were well received at Folklife a few years back. Now she's getting ready to finish her BA in music at Cornish and is excited about possible projects with some of her fellow students as well as being politically involved as a strong supporter of Barack Obama. And all the while she continues to be close to her family, surrounded by folkies, and finds herself always humming their tunes. And that humming will keep them alive!

Growing up in a home dominated by folk culture occasionally made Raffi Maslan feel like he didn't fit in among others his age but has led him to a young adult lifestyle colored with deep meaning and substantive contributions. He gained an appreciation of folksong from his father, Fred, with whom he still shares singing at song circles and singing camps, and of folk dance from his mother, Bernice, whom he still goes to dances with. In addition, a Jewish upbringing in a private grade school manifested a strong foundation of Jewish culture and tradition, and then on Friday nights the family would go to Grandma's for a big dinner and sing around the piano. Raffi states

that the appreciation of one culture enabled his appreciation of others and how refreshing that is compared with what so many people feel about "their" culture as opposed to many others. Another heavy duty influence was the Folklife Festival where he would spend hours being amazed by the wide variety of it all and would count down the days to the fest as if it were the new year.

Fortunately for our folk community, Raffi has taken a straight line from those days to his present ventures. Besides continuing to contra dance and sing many fine/fun songs (I can attest to his energy at the annual Rainycamp singing camp), he dances with the Radost Folk Ensemble (traditional Balkan dance), is learning to play guitar, is involved with the newly begun Jewish Artists Forum, and is the youngest person ever elected to the Northwest Folklife Board of Directors. With all the shallow and trendy entertainment we're spoon-fed today, I sometimes wonder about the future of our traditional forms, but seeing Raffi in action reminds me that there's nothing to worry about.

Arwen Morgan, like her brother Tyler, plays in the Cutter family band that performs traditional and contemporary folk music. She plays the fiddle and sings with them, is proud of her musical upbringing, and grateful beyond words for the opportunities it has presented her. She points out that Philip and Teresa are both expansive and diverse people who opened her eyes to all the different ways of life out in the world.

At the same time she also felt alienated among her peers because she always felt a natural inclination toward creative and spiritual exploration, while most kids around her seemed to be deprived on these levels and so were unable to understand or respond to her feelings and needs in a positive manner. Fortunately, because of her supportive family and the larger, more compatible and empathetic community that extended from it, she has learned to appreciate her unique one and only self and the space she occupies. This has led her to the Cornish College of the Arts where she is studying to be a theatre artist. She's also studying dance (she formerly performed with student folk dance troupes at Folklife) and voice, and at the Cutters' 2007 Christmas Concert it was clear that these efforts were paying off. Her voice soared like a bird in summer flight and nestled in the soul like a flower in bloom, helping to make the family's sound more complete and satisfying: A genuine joy to hear. Her goal is to be a performing artist in all the areas she's now engaged in, and if talent and passion are any indication, a 9-to-5 work schedule is not in her future!

Continued on page 21

PORTLAND

Portland Folk Music Society Update

BY TOM MAY

Dick Weissman is hard at work this month finishing up his new album, and also starting on a new book. So it falls to me to give you some of the monthly news from this part of our Northwest!

A couple of festivals to recap. The Winter Folk Festival in Florence, Oregon, in January was a terrific success. I drew the short straw to be the first performer on Saturday morning, at 10:45 am, to kick off the musical festivities, and was amazed to have a crowd of about 280 people to hear myself and my son, Dylan, play a set. The entire festival, from the opening reception to the closing act on Sunday afternoon, was one of the best run and more entertaining folk festivals I have been to in recent years. The facility, the Florence Events Center, is a lovely, multi-functional space that all the performers and vendors enjoyed. The sound and light crew also merits a special mention for their excellence. Hal Weiner, his volunteer staff, and the entire community of Florence deserve major kudos for creating an inspirational event that exemplifies the power of grassroots commitment and vision.

Now, back from the beautiful Oregon Coast to Portland's Aladdin Theatre for "Winterfolk 20," the

largest annual folk event in Portland that is also a major fundraiser for Sisters of the Road Cafe, an important organization supplying low-cost and no-cost meals to Portland's Old Town area.

The tickets were sold out before the February 2nd date, which is always a relief to the director (in this case, me). Despite a lousy cold, Rob Folsom and his darling sidekick Katie made the drive from Seattle to do his usual sterling job at the soundboard. This being the 20th anniversary of the event, the anticipation and excitement of the crowd was evident as they filed into the Aladdin Theatre lobby.

David Rea started the evening out with a great set, followed by Sky in the Road, and then the Portland group "Rite of Spring," celebrating 45 years in music. The night progressed with a few songs from my new CD by myself and my band, an unforgettable performance by Misty River, some tasty banjo stylings, and stories by Dick Weissman. Three Together, featuring Portland Grammy-winning guitarist Doug Smith, did a compelling set of songs and instrumentals, and Jim Page did his usual exceptional performance, with some great backup on fiddle by Billy Oskay.

Then Peter Yarrow took the stage. He brought tears to my eyes when he began his song "Music Speaks Louder Than Words;" it was such a great punctuation on what "Winterfolk" is. He proceeded to entrance the audience with songs and political commentary, finally finishing by inviting all the musicians onstage for a four-song finale. The audience and all the musicians of the evening finished "Winterfolk 20" singing "Where have all The Flowers Gone," "Puff," and finally "If I had a Hammer." Powerful, emotional moments that wind up making a difference in many people's lives. "Winterfolk 20" was a landmark experience, and we all celebrated and picked until the wee hours at an aftershow party.

In other Portland news, Kate Power and Steve Einhorn, much-loved musicians and ex-proprietors of Artichoke Music, have a California and Southern Oregon concert tour planned. They have been busy working on new songs and songbooks that will be released this next year, and are looking forward to hitting the road and playing some tunes.

Portland's Mary Flower will be a featured performer at this year's Juan de Fuca Festival in Port Angeles, Washington, along with myself and quite a number of other artists from this neck of the woods.

I do hope to see you all at the North Coast Folk Festival at Ocean Shores, Washington, April 18th and 19th . . . Cheers! Tom May

ED Note: See ad on page 23 for NCFE

VICTORY MUSIC CONCERT SERIES

April 25th 7:00 - 9:00 pm

ESPRESSO AMERICANO

Corner of Hoyt and Everett Avenue

Featuring:

Tamara Lewis with Special Guest Alice Boytz

"Pure Voice with a side of Patsy Cline."

Joe Perlman - "Where Life meets Song."

Dulcimer Day in the Willows

Appalachian Dulcimer Workshops & Concert

Saturday, April 12 · Joseph, OR

\$50 pre-registration, \$55 after April 5

Info & registration at www.heidimuller.com

with Heidi Muller, Bob Webb, Susan Howell, Niels Andersen





15th Annual
Juan De Fuca Festival
Port Angeles, WA
May 23 - 26, 2008
www.jffa.org



2008 Port Gamble
Maritime Music Festival
August 16, 2008
www.livelocalmusic.org

MUSICAL TRADITIONS

So You Want to be a Star!

BY GUEST COLUMNIST BOB NELSON

A friend and I recently went to an open mic in Seattle. One of the performers was an attractive lady who sat on a stool, arranged her guitar, nodded to her partner, and started singing. After a few lines I leaned to my friend and asked him if he knew what language she was singing? Her voice was fine, the song was melodic, but I couldn't understand a single word. My friend shook his head and said he didn't have a clue either. On the drive home, I began to analyze what was wrong with her performance.

By way of background I should explain that I am an experienced stage singer. I was fortunate to be tutored at an early age by a legendary radio and stage performer. Here are techniques, the basic techniques that can lead to a strong performance:

As a performer you have an obligation to your audience to present your material with as few barriers as possible. Audiences are lazy. They didn't come to your performance to work, they came to be entertained. Don't give them a chance to go to sleep, or worse, get up and leave. Some of these barriers include such things as poor diction, poor voice and instrument work, not knowing your material, singing too fast or slow, or only singing to yourself.

Good diction is nothing more than getting the words out of your mouth. You have teeth, tongue and lips. Use them. Concentrate on spitting out the final consonants. It's not "No woo fir, an no coal flam." It's "No wood fire and no coal flame." There are books available of good diction exercises. Take some training from vocal coaches... they are out there.

Your voice is a musical instrument just as your guitar. Learn to use it well. Take some lessons. Learn to breathe well and support your tone. Learn how to not hurt your voice. Learn your instrument well. Practice, practice, practice. Remember, no one wants to hear you practice on stage.

Learning your material is critical. You can't connect with an audience if you're singing from a book or a cheat sheet. Live and breathe that song, day and night, until the words are automatic. I recently sang a concert where, just two days before the performance, I dropped a strongly requested song. I just couldn't get the words into my pea brain. Why, I don't know. I've even recorded that song, but I knew I wasn't ready to perform it that night.

Another necessary aspect of a good performance is planning your material well. You don't want to do a whole set of nothing but sad songs. Neither do you want to do several songs together in the same key, or tempo. Vary your material. Make it interesting. Boredom puts audiences to sleep.

Beyond the basics of good diction and good instrument work, you must communicate a passion for your songs. Love what you sing and make your audience love it also. I remember a story an early singing teacher told me. It involved a 16 year-old future opera diva who was giving a recital at Carnegie Hall. She had a limited repertoire and quickly ran through her program and her one prepared encore. But her performance was so stunning that the audience demanded more. After a brief whisper to her pianist, she sang a song that was brilliant in its execution, yet no one had heard it before. Years later she admitted that she had sung the Polish alphabet to a vocalizing exercise.

It's all about being a performer!

Bob Nelson was a Seattle folksinger in the '50s and '60s. He now lives in Everett, WA. He recently retired and is getting back into performing. Contact him at the.deckman@comcast.net for comments and more information on the early folk music scene in Seattle.

MARITIME MUSINGS

April

BY MATTHEW MOELLER

One of the problems with writing for a monthly deadline, is that it's difficult to make the events of two months ago, sound fresh. Like all performers, I want you to know about the upcoming performances, not the ones you might have missed. As a performer, I've felt that no matter how good the gig might have been, the next one will be better (Trust me, I'd never lie...). In this case, however, I want you to know about what you missed and how to avoid missing it in the future.

For eleven years, on the last weekend in February, the Fisher Poets Gathering in Astoria OR, has been a local, almost private event. For several years, I've promised myself that I would go and see what it was all about. As a songwriter and a lover of all things nautical, the opportunity to go and see how the men and women of the sea see themselves, is rare a treasure. I'm always hungry for a new story or a song idea. What I beheld was

something different. What I beheld was a vibrant, talented community that spans the northern Pacific and reaches eastward to the fabled fishing grounds of New England.

In my observations I've noted that commercial fishers are uncommon in one thing, their common love of fishing. It's not exactly a love that you and I might understand. They do what they do because anything else would be a poor excuse for living. Fishing grinds them down, it steals their families, their health, and their fortunes and in response, on lonely night watches, they write. They write poetry.

Much of the poetry is doggerel and some of it is questionable, but these are not trained writers. These are men and women who are still trying to make a living from the sea. Their perspective is fresh with daily experience. The stories they have to tell us are personal, real, humorous, sad and frightening.

Do not miss next year's gathering!

Okay, on to the rest.

The Northwest Seaport Maritime Music Concert Series is in full swing. Coming up on April 19th at the Center for Wooden Boats, are Bold Horizon and Halibut Stew. Bold Horizon; features eclectic, slightly irreverent, nautical and old timey music; sea chanteys, ballads, British, Irish, American tunes, with three of the Northwest's best: Dan Roberts, Steve Akerman, and Tom Rawson. For more information: <http://boldhorizon.homestead.com/>. Halibut Stew is Alan Hirsch and Stan James, two veterans of the Northwest folk scene whose repertoire includes Ivar Haglund's humorous songs about sea life. We don't get to hear them very often so mark your calendars. (www.nwseaport.org)

The famed local group, Broadside, has been trying to make adjustments for the temporary loss of Mary Benson. The members now include: Trapper Graves-Lalor, Carol Mesford, Jan Elliot-Glanister and Felicia Dale. My sources say the new configuration is fantastic. Watch for them.

Fair Winds, Capn Matt

Folking Around - Continued from page 18

Amy Mills grew up without a dominant culture in the home, which allowed for an open mind and a wide variety of endeavor that have remained with her. Her parents listened to a wide variety of music from Beethoven to the Beatles to ZZ Top, and she loved musicals too. The folks folk danced, dad played piano and basketball, and mom exercised and taught her to waltz in the kitchen. Having access to the whole world of music and dance, with parental attitudes that other cultures were fascinating, valuable, and equal, gave her the confidence to follow her heart even when it wasn't "cool." Her feeling is that, "Really being cool is doing what you love, not what other people think you should like." Amen to that!

Like Raffi, Amy's early experience led directly to her adult life: She works as Education & Outreach Coordinator at the Northwest Folklife Festival. She also works with Balkan Festival Northwest to produce the annual Balkanalia Festival and other live music events, is excited about her swing dance performing group, and makes documentary films about people doing creative cultural work because that's what she wants to learn and teach others about. Among her goals are to get the whole world dancing, make more films, and encourage people to treat life like a participatory event rather than a spectator sport. She feels strongly that although it appears natural for generations to be mutually exclusive, a lot is lost in the separation and it would be nice if we could find a way to bridge the gap. Meanwhile, the folk culture keeps her grounded and her work helps keep it alive.

Well folks, I hope you've enjoyed meeting some of our younger community and may the second generation be equally alive and creative.

All comments welcome: Percy Hilo, PO Box 21761, Sea. 98111-3761, (206) 784-0378, percivalpeacival@myway.com



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