

VICTORY REVIEW

Acoustic Music Magazine

Volume 33

February 2008

Number 2



Transformation

Feb 21 - 24, 2008

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Our Mission Statement

The purpose of Victory Music is to support acoustic music in the Northwest, by fostering a community that nurtures musical growth, creativity and the appreciation of acoustic music

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EDITORIAL WITH A LITTLE GOSSIP

February 2008

BY ANITA LAFRANCHI

Hi, well it's official. I've been with Victory Music for 5 years. Amazing how fast the years fly by. Two more months and I will have been the Editor for 5 years. I started out by volunteering to scan CD covers and do some page layout in the Tacoma office. For me, living in Seattle, the trek was both expensive and time consuming, so the Victory Review moved to my basement when Teresa Ivory, the former editor needed to quit because of health issues.

Because most of the Victory volunteer community is based in Seattle, the Tacoma office hasn't been utilized to the fullest, so the Victory Music Board decided to close it. With Wintergrass finding new digs at the Sheraton (they were subleasing), the expense of a huge office space wasn't in the best interest of Victory Music funds. With the help of the leaser, a new tenant was found and that made a win-win solution. Victory will be out of the lease (January 31) with no problems. Most of the property will be moved into storage and then the Board will decide what space is needed and where, etc. Lew will still be working in Tacoma on Victory's financial issues in a smaller space. The Victory P.O. Box remains the same. Thanks, Lew!

Speaking of finances The Victory Review needs more Ads! If you are in a position to advertise in this publication, we really need your Ad. You may have noticed that we are Ad light, and in fact we do not have enough Ads to pay for the printing of this magazine. You can help even with a Gig Ad. The cost for Victory members is \$15 and that, folks, is a bargain. We need at least 50% more Ads just to pay for printing. You may have also noticed that the magazine seems smaller. This is not your imagination; to cut the cost of postage, we were forced to make the page size smaller. Not a lot, about a half-inch, but it saved us 30-40% a magazine in postage.

For the past few years I have been wondering how much longer The Review can hang on. The Review has been supported by Victory Music and is NOT self-supporting as it should be. The Review really needs more Ads to continue publication, and if you don't have any Ads, we are always happy to receive tax-deductible contributions.

To be clear, Victory Music is the parent of the Review. Victory Music is solid, but like all non-profits, it continues to need your support. Large non-profits have no problem asking for financial support, while smaller non-profits don't usually come right out and say it. Well, I'm saying it—Victory Music needs financial support not only from our members, but from people and musicians who see the benefit of an organization such as Victory Music: supporting *“acoustic music in the Northwest by fostering a community that nurtures musical growth, creativity, and the appreciation of acoustic music.”*

Victory Music is working on setting up a PayPal account so you can purchase CD's and memberships and Ads over the Internet. We currently take credit cards for Ads. So, if you value the calendar, the CD reviews, and the many articles and information the Victory Review supplies, please send in a few bucks or advertise. We have not raised our Ad rates in 5 years, and I do not believe a rate hike is in the near future either.

Next I would like to ask for volunteers. By the time this goes to print, Victory Music will have moved out of the Tacoma office. Ron Dalton is heading up volunteers to create our new and spiffy Web site. You do not need any Web experience to help, just a computer with Internet access. You can do this at home, and Ron will train any volunteers for this portion of the Web site update. I'm even going to help out on this project. You can volunteer any amount of time from 2 - 4 hours, or as many hours as you want! **Please see ad on page 21!**

Now on to a little gossip our gossip lady is taking a month off, so I have a little bit to share with you all!

*** Hank Cramer's recording of "My Sweet Wyoming Home" (Way Out West CD) was voted as the #5 Cowboy Song of 2007. The song will be heard on *Around Western Campfires*, a webcast radio show with host Marvin O'Dell (who, incidentally, was chosen as the Top DJ of 2007 by the Western Music Association).

*** The School of Magical Strings is offering beginning and intermediate classes in Celtic Harp this winter in Olalla, Seattle, and Bellevue. Olalla classes begin on Monday, Feb. 18th, at the Bouldings' own studio on Magic Hill, north of Gig

Harbor on the Kitsap Peninsula. Seattle classes begin on Tuesday, Feb. 19, at the New Discovery School, located at 1260 Harrison Street (on the corner of Pontius, two blocks from R.E.I.) Bellevue classes begin on Wednesday, Feb. 20th, at the Eastside Friends Meeting, 4160 - 158th Ave. SE (near I-90, just east of I-405). This winter term will run for six weeks.

*** Hilary Field and Patrice O'Neill have additional awards for their newest CD □ 2007 Parents' Choice Gold Medal, 2007 NAPPA Gold Medal (National Parenting Publications) and Finalist for Album of the Year, Children's category, 2008 Independent Music Awards. Featured in the Feb/March 2008 issue of Fit Pregnancy. Way to go! The Victory Review is planning on a cover story on this in the very near future. Look for it in the March issue.

*** Tom May is completing a new album, and Dick Weissman is finishing up a new double CD, one of instrumentals and the other of songs. Dick also has a new songbook that was published by Black Dog. The title is *The Family Songbook*, co-authored with Dan Fox.

*** Kendra Shank's *A Spirit Free* was Named Among "Best CDs of 2007" by: DownBeat - Jazz Times - Newsday - Jazz Improv NY - Slate Minneapolis Star Tribune - Arkansas Democrat Gazette - All Music Guide.

*** The New Year's Eve party hosted by Kate Rhiannon and Laurin Gaudinier at Kate's friend Craig's house was a huge success. The jamming was still happening when we left at 2 am. The attendees' list of Victory members is too huge to list, but if you were there you know who you are!

Well, that's all the gossip I have for now; next month Jan will be back. Please send her all the gossip you have, **because if you don't send it in to her, it won't get printed!**

Write to Jan at 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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WINTERGRASS TRANSFORMATION

February 21st-24th, 2008



BY PERCY HILO

PHOTOS BY DAVID CONKLIN

It's natural to want to know where our roots lie, who paved the way for us, and how things arrived at where they are today. From the innocence of a child's asking their parents where they came from, to a job candidate or company investigating each other before entering into an employer/employee relationship, we want to know the history. Indeed, it's often naive not to research the past, for history reveals where the pitfalls and progress have been and where the future may be taking us.

In the arts these histories are not only documented, they are revered, and it's relatively easy to get educated about the originators of musical, dance, literary, sculpture, and other styles that capture our fancy. This helps provide the background we need in order to take our place in a tradition and properly expand it with our contribution. However, these roots often go back farther than we can see at first glance, and the founders, despite their genius, are actually just another (big) step along the way.

It's the recognition of this fact that influenced Wintergrass to program a festival that features musical styles from the pre-Bill Monroe roots of Bluegrass all the way through to the latest expressions, while also covering a large age and geographical range. The theme of this 15th Annual Wintergrass is TRANSFORMATION, and it begins on Thursday, February 21st with our most unique opening concert thus far. The title is "Black And Bluegrass," as conceived and co-curated by Laura Love, who also performs in the show. Joining her are the Carolina Chocolate Drops, who interpret the black string-band music of the early 20th century that influenced so many of our styles; the fabulous Ruthis Foster, who excels at a wide range of African-American musics such as gospel, blues, R&B, and historical songs and incorporates these styles into her own songwriting; and two other acts that will be firmed up by the time you read this. This joyful evening will inform us as well as prepare us for the blessings ahead.

Now that I've got you excited about attending Wintergrass for the 1st through 15th time (or 1st time, and while we're on the subject of changes, let me inform and re-assure you about changes on the physical level. The Sheraton has been sold and the new owner has transformed it into the Hotel Murano: A stunning visual/comfort experience that, in keeping with Tacoma's reputation, features glass art from all over the world. But you can enjoy these changes instead of being wary of them because the new owner is very Wintergrass friendly and the quality and feeling of the festival will remain the same. The main



Above: Chris Thile

musical change is that the Copper Hollow stage in the lounge has been removed, but no problem. We're replacing it with a stage at the top of the hotel on the 26th floor where the music will be

just as good, you can enjoy an expansive view of the area, and one of the elevators will service this floor exclusively during show hours. In addition, there is a separate lounge area up there where you can get away and catch up with that dear friend you haven't seen since last year's fest. This new "aid and comfort" is just one more way of saying we care and want you to have as full a festival experience as possible. Meanwhile, the main convention stage, the church, the ballroom, and the Marriott will continue to host the high-quality concerts you veterans remember; we're also re-arranging the Marriott stage to allow for greater comfort and safety.

Now on to what you already know, long to see, and will gladly pay for. Legendary pioneers The Seldom Scene and Bobby Osborne will offer a look at how transition becomes tradition. Long ago they displayed loyalty to tradition while exploring new avenues of expression and often angered purists with their maverick ways. Now, they've long since won over the Bluegrass world and represent the current standard of excellence.

We are also proud to feature several 2007 Bluegrass award winners among our roster of traditionalists and "Newgrass" explorers: Dale Ann Bradley (female vocalist), Michael Cleveland (fiddle and instrumental band), The Infamous Stringdusters (song and album of year, emerging band), and the grascals (entertainers of the year). These top-notch talents are guaranteed to keep you blissed out all weekend.

Because the Wintergrass tradition extends up to the most current musical ideas and players, these must be represented alongside the older forms, and Chris Thile is the best possible news we can give you in the progressive Bluegrass and country world. His creativity and skills are beyond reproach and his band, The Punch Brothers, is an even better and more experienced version of last year's How To Grow a Band: Inventive, exciting, technically excellent, and lots of fun. Last year they delighted two full houses playing Friday only; that night

outsold Saturday night, so you'll want to get online or to the mailbox soon.

And as usual, there's much more. Festival regulars Mike Marshall and Darol Anger will present music from their 3-decade collaboration and also team up with Vasen, a Swedish group whose joyous music (which will introduce you to the beautiful Swedish-keyed fiddle, the nyckelharpa) has been described as having telepathic intensity. Crooked Still was an '06 favorite who has returned to delight us once again, Spring Creek is another Bluegrass award winner, and Misty River and Pearl Django offer more variety, and therefore more for you to like. That's not even all of it, but you should be convinced by now.

We know that some of you wish to include dancing in your festival experience and that a few of you may prefer to only dance. Well, on Friday and Saturday evenings the Ballroom stage will be all dancing, and on Friday a special club Wintergrass ticket will get you into the Ballroom only (www.wintergrass.com). So it's your choice of how much and what kinds of fun you can handle. Among the dance bands will be the returning favorites The Wilders and The Duhks as well as Trampled By Turtles, The Packway Handle Band, Hot Club Sandwich, Jack Straw, Seattle's marvelous Tall Boys, and on Friday only, more of The Carolina Chocolate Drops. A wide variety of styles to move your feet and all or most of the bands will perform concert sets as well.

So what about the future? The Wintergrass Academy, that's what! The Infamous Stringdusters were such a hit on stage last year that we invited them back, and they were so impressive as individual musicians that we hired them to be our academy faculty. The sessions, for intermediate and advanced players, run from Tuesday, 2/19, through Thursday, 2/21. Those who either can't or would rather not be at all 3 days can opt for our brand new 1-day-only ticket. Either way, with Andy Hall teaching dobro, Chris Pandolfi on banjo, Jeremy Garrett on fiddle, Jesse Cobb on mandolin, Travis Book on upright bass, and Andy Falco on guitar, you'll benefit from the best in tutelage. And these lessons are absolutely meaningful. Getting tips from proven players and working on them is an excellent way of raising your playing to the next level. For information on any facet of this program you can check the web or contact Stephan Ruffo at (360) 385-6386 or at ruffo1@acousticsound.org.

Also on the classroom agenda is the D'Addario Wintergrass Youth Academy (age 8-14; we do make some exceptions to this) and its excellent instructors Beth Fortune and Joe Craven--multi-talented musicians and first-rate communicators whom kids and parents both love. This will be a ton of fun and will help establish solid musical foundations that dedicated students can build on. These classes will be held at Rialto Theater at 9th and Market near the hotel on February 21st and 22nd, and the post-academy performance will also be there at 5PM on the 22nd. With this use of the Rialto, Wintergrass hopes to begin a constructive relationship with the Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, the group that runs Tacoma's three main theaters. Due to the generosity of our sponsors, D'Addario and Ted Brown Music, some financial assistance is available and you can contact Patrice about it at patriceo@comcast.net.

And speaking of sponsors and relationships, we are most grateful to all who contribute to our success: D'Addario, Collings Guitars, and The Gibson Company are major donors; the City of Tacoma now includes Wintergrass in their Anchor Fund, which means we are family. Equally appreciated are Martin & Co., Deering Banjos, Fretboard Journal, Dusty Strings, Ted Brown Music, Santa Cruz Guitars, Beard, Rayco, and Guild. Patrice says that when she looks at their logos she sees friends, and that's what we should all see when filling our musical needs or purchasing musical gifts.

And speaking even more of sponsors, have you ever thought of being one? Not by yourself of

course, but as part of (hopefully) a large collective of our customers and fellow Bluegrass lovers. There are six levels of support from basic to archangel; benefits accompany each level, but the biggest benefit will be assuring the continuation of an entertaining and culturally meaningful event. Information is in the program and on the web (www.wintergrass.com) and we will graciously welcome your expanded support.

As to accommodations, the Hotel Murano and Courtside Marriott are full. (In order to get rooms there you must purchase a weekend pass to next year's festival by March 31st or become a major donor--see previous paragraph). The La Quinta is our friend and on the shuttle route (253-272-9457), and the Guesthouse (253-922-2500/800 422-3051), Econolodge (877-3781/253-922-9520), and many others are available at traveltacoma.com and at the Wintergrass web.

So you've got your ticket, and travel and accommodations are in order. Hooray! Now all you need are your instruments, a thick coat, sturdy footwear, and a healthy attitude--and a memorable weekend will be yours. If you have any questions about anything Wintergrass, the web address is www.wintergrass.com, or you can call (253-428-8056) or write PO Box 2356, Tacoma, WA 98401. We look forward to seeing each and every one of you and we're doing all we can to make your Wintergrass the best one ever until next year.

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

Below: Toddlergrass with Maria Camillo leading the dance!



REVIEWS

To Submit your CD for Review - Please send to the Victory P. O. Box in Tacoma. This is the **only** way to get your CD reviewed.

LOCAL

Local Classical Crossover

GIL PIGER: SPANISH CLASSICS WITH A TWIST
GJP Records, GJP6234



The classical guitar has always felt limited in literature, especially compared to the enormous wealth of material for piano, violin and other orchestral instruments. Guitarists will often turn to transcriptions, arrangements and commissions to help further the repertoire. The late, great Andrés Segovia even took it a step further, deceiving an audience into thinking he unearthed lost baroque treasures, while he was actually performing music recently composed in the baroque style by his good friend, Manuel Ponce. Gil Piger has added his take to the classic literature in his CD *Spanish Classics with a Twist*. Using multiple tracks and even rewriting sections, these well-worn compositions are given jazzy and rhythmic twists and turns. The castanets in the famous "Asturias" create visions of the intricate hand and foot rhythms of flamenco dancers, bringing the piece back to its roots in the heart of Spain. Percussion and dance rhythms even adorn the usually solemn "Romance." "Spanish Dance #2" (Orientale) by Enrique Granados fills eleven minutes, starting with the original piece and evolving into a multi-tracked jazz/Latin fusion tour-de-force. Piger, an

accomplished guitarist, composer and arranger, has added his touch to all nine tracks on the CD, taking familiar classics and bringing them well into the twenty-first century. (*Hilary Field*)

Local Folk

NICOLE-MARIE: ALL THE LIGHTS OF HEAVEN
#8576, no label,
www.myspace.com/nicolemariemusic

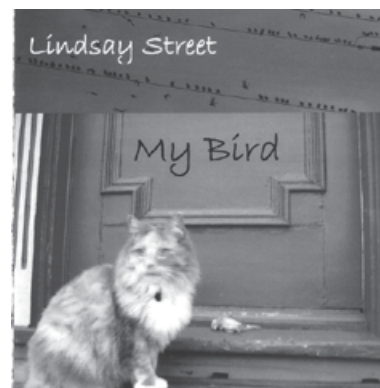


MySpace has become a new outlet for unsigned artists to get their music out there for people to hear, enjoy and possibly get noticed by a record label. One only needs to look at the success of Colbie Caillet and many others to see that this approach can work. Although she is not yet signed, young Washington local Nicole-Marie is doing her best to get her music heard, with a MySpace page and a seven-song, self-produced CD, *All the Lights Of Heaven*. Clocking in at less than 28 minutes, this CD is more an introduction than a full-fledged display of Nicole-Marie's talents and abilities, but it's enough to give the listener a pretty good idea of what she can do. The songs are primarily acoustic Christian folk music with simple, earnest lyrics about Heaven and beliefs, accompanied by spare instrumentation. The tunes could be a little overly earnest and simple at times, but her clear, beautiful voice carries them through. For me,

everything truly comes together and shows her true potential on the song "Single," which is catchy, memorable and the best match of music and vocals. According to her Web site, she likes to dabble in all styles of music, including hip-hop, and she even lists Prince as an influence, although these interests aren't apparent on *All the Lights Of Heaven*. Mostly, the CD feels slightly monochromatic in tone. Letting some of those other styles peek through on future songs would definitely add some more flavor. I tend to dislike an artist who favors stretching single syllable words into five or six, but Nicole-Marie shows enough here for me to hope she gets a chance to show what all she can do. (*James Rodgers*)

Local Folk

LINDSAY STREET: MY BIRD
Self-released. www.cdbaby.com



Lindsay Street is Robin Elwood on accordion and melodeon, Elizabeth Elton on violin, Jean Rogers on guitar and Bryan Early on bodhran. Rogers sings a few songs, most memorably the sweet "Belle Je M'en Vais," but this is primarily instrumental music in the Celtic tradition, tunes such as "Brian Boru," "Two Bonnie Maidens" or the very tight "Josefin's Waltz." I found myself moved most by Elton's violin, particularly on the medley of "Far & Away" and "Romeo and

Juliet.” Her sweet sadness did in fact carry me far and away. But the tone quality is set throughout by Elwood. You appreciate him particularly on “Sleeping Pug Waltz.” (I could have used a couple of liner notes—the Internet shows no other mention in the world of a “Sleeping Pug Waltz.” Does this mean the tune is original? If so, it’s certainly worth taking credit for!) As jacket photographs illustrate, the sense of the title is that of an offering — like the bird the cat brings home. The CD was recorded and engineered by band members in their Bellingham living room. It’s great to live in a time when the model of huge corporations anointing a small number of designated entertainers to provide music for the passive multitudes appears to be dying and being replaced by what Victory Music stands for: people making music themselves, and offering it to one another, as a cat proudly shows off its latest bird. (*L.A. Heberlein*)

Local World Music

MICHAEL MANDRELL & BENJY WERTHEIMER:
NOTES FROM CELTISTAN
 self released, WCM-200703;
 www.michaelmandrell.com &
 www.benjyusic.com



All the treasures of the world seem to flow from the chalice of Notes from Celtistan, an amazing collaboration from the Celtic strings of acoustic guitarist Michael Mandrell and the broad tonal voicings of percussionist and multi-instrumentalist Benjy Wertheimer. The blend of intricate fingerstyle guitar work in open tunings combined with the talking tabla, congas and traditional instruments of India is full and richly satisfying. Reminiscent of the travels of Genghis Khan, Mandrell and Wertheimer gather together the glitter of melodic soundscapes, the fragrance of mysterious musical scales and the spice of flowing

rhythms to create these exotic sculpted songs. The journey begins in the Pyrenees Mountains with “Iberian Nocturne,” written by Mandrell, which has an ancient yet agelessly classical dream quality. “Sneakin” Out” illustrates the depth of musical connection that these two have achieved in what was a spontaneous creation materializing out of thin air during their studio recording session; just a little something that happened on their break, as it were. Their treatment of “Banish Misfortune” is traditional Celtic but clearly influenced by their own individual style. Defying regional boundaries, “Bhagavan Dude” has a broad dawn-on-the-desert scope that seems to contain elements of the American high plains but spends equal time somewhere in the Sahara giving new meaning to the term World Music. Organic and earthy with the shadow of found objects, “Turkish Coffee” had a full, round openness that surrounds the listener while the song moves forward with a steady assurance that resonates deeply and with satisfaction. “Road Dogs” is the rhythmic equivalent of one of those word games that you play with your traveling partner along vast stretches of highway from here to somewhere. Notes from Celtistan is already a brilliant work of World Music art, but Mandrell and Wertheimer go one step further with the capstone track “What was the Question?” The poignant observations and actions of the Bosnian cellist Vedran Smailovic are illustrated with a graceful and effective presentation that you will not soon forget. (*Nancy Vivolo*)

BLUES

WARNER WILLIAMS & JAY SUMMEROUR:
DOWN ‘N’ DIRTY
 Paxtent Music, CD-163

Warner Williams is an old East Coast scuffer who’s done it all, from playing with the biggest stars to busking. Jay Summerour is about halfway down the same path. Together they have a Sonny Terry- Brownie McGhee act working, with Williams singing the folk faves and Great American Songbook entries in his agreeably gruff voice while Summerour blows harp and makes it sound like a whole orchestra. The record’s called Down ‘n’ Dirty, but deep down these can’t be such bad fellas. “Black Cat Bone Blues,” and “Greyhound Bus Blues” have as much authenticity and authority as any blues ever committed to record; when these guys say

they “Ain’t Gonna Pick No More Cotton,” they ain’t, and their “Sweet Thang” is sweet. A big portion of the record, though, is devoted to warm, gently swinging versions of the likes of “My Blue Heaven,” “Blueberry Hill,” and “Georgia On My Mind.” These are all marvelous, and stack up well against the many re-imaginings of these warhorses that have accumulated over the years. Down ‘n’ Dirty is not a fussy, glossy release, but it’s cleanly executed and well-engineered by Tom Mindte, who captures both performers’ personalities in addition to the music. (*Tom Petersen*)

BOOK

ANDREA STOLPE: POPULAR LYRIC WRITING
 Berklee Press; ISBN 0-87639-087-4

Merle Haggard was on the radio the other day, being asked about songwriting. After a pause, he said that the best advice—and most accurate expression of his own approach—came from Bob Wills. “You can’t push it,” he said. “A song has to come natural, in its own time. If you push it, like through a tube, that’s what it’ll sound like.” Which is great advice if you’re Merle Haggard or Bob Wills, or Will’s hired gun, Cindy Walker. The appearance of wordsmith and music school prof Andrea Stolpe’s book touches off the great old nature vs. nurture debate. It’s often pointed out that even the greats have to work hard to get things “just so.” For example, Tom T. Hall’s book on songwriting pointed out that it took years of observation, notes, lines and assembled phrases to boil down to the beautiful ease of his hits. Still, Hall hears things that most people don’t, as did Harlan Howard, who used to sit at Tootsie’s out back of the Ryman and jot down stupid things that drunks say. Ah, but then things get technical, says Stolpe, and she’s right. Most of the current hits on post-Howard country radio are stupid, wretched things, awkward musically and verbal train wrecks designed to hurry up and get to some Hallmark moment or boozy halftime cheer. They needn’t be; shed a tear for all the clever lines wasted in “pushed” songs. Stolpe’s book is pretty clinical, but she takes things apart word by word and reassembles them so that the rhymes work, the stories flow, things happen in order, sentiments don’t clash or contradict, bad grammar is executed correctly . . . and the “money” line still sells the song. Do what she says, and you’ll have hits, but there’s still the sneaking suspicion that classics only happen with a little serendipity or a God-given knack. (*Tom Petersen*)

CAJUN

ACADIEN CAJUN BAND: ALL NIGHT LONG

Swallow Records SW-6203
www.AcadienCajunBand.com

What's the swamp equivalent of a garage band? This CD was clearly recorded live, without digital duding up, and I appreciated the rawness, particularly in the vocals. The second release from a group known for emphasizing the modern in Cajun music, it is imbued with Balfa influence, not just in songs written by the Balfas, but in style and spirit. The group was founded by Ryan Simon, who sings and plays accordion, fiddle and, unfortunately, electric guitar, which seems gratuitous and weak wherever it intrudes. (The guitar is the only thing wrong with an otherwise cranking version of "Married to One and In Love with Another.") Ryan's brother Drew, of the Pine Leaf Boys, is also all over the record. My favorite cut is the energetic instrumental "Cankton Two Step," followed closely by the Balfa fiddle song "None Charlot." (*L.A. Heberlein*)

**JACKIE CAILLIER, IVY DUGAS
& THE CAJUN COUSINS:**

FROM LOVE TO LAUGHTER AND GOOD TIMES
www.SwallowRecords.com SW-6204

I listened to this a bunch of times and it's still not quite clear if these guys are a Cajun band playing country or a country band playing Cajun. What is clear, though, is that the sons o' guns are havin' big fun down on the bayou, and this record more than lives up to its title. The liner notes admit that the whole bunch does this only after quittin' time at the day job, but this allows them a devil-may-care freedom that makes for more uninhibited playing than a lot of pros will allow on a record. The great part is that Caillier and Dugas are good enough to be pros—certainly Dugas writes country tunes that are as good as anything in the country canon, and he lives in that down home utopia of old trucks, good dogs and waitresses that wink back. The songs are sung with love and bellow-above-the-bar-noise gusto; the Cajun cuts suggest Don Walser singing in French. This a terrific party record—be sure to have it available next time you roll up the rug. (*Tom Petersen*)

JOE WARREN CORMIER: PURE CAJUN

Swallow Records
www.FloydsRecordShop.com
www.SwallowRecords.com

It's in French, sort of. But it's Cajun, so what would you expect? Joe Warren was a Cajun man born and raised in Church Point Louisiana. He passed away last October, just three months after the re-release of Pure Cajun, the only full-length recording he ever made. Pure Cajun is a collection of authentic Cajun French music composed or arranged, sung and played by Joe Warren Cormier. It includes his hit song from 1986 "T Bec Do," (Sweet Little Kiss) which has since become a Cajun classic and "Cinquante Piastries," (\$50 and a Pick Up Truck) recently made popular by the Bonsoir, Catin version. True to his Cajun roots, Warren's songs feature the accordion and fiddle, but unlike the earliest forms of this music, Cajun dancehall tunes have evolved to include guitar, steel guitar, bass and drums. Pure Cajun is toe-tapping dancehall music to be sure, and Junior Martin's steel guitar adds tremendously to Cormier's vocals and accordion playing. Originally released in 1990 by Swallow Records, this CD was re-mastered in the summer of 2007 from the original analog recordings as part of Swallow Records efforts to preserve the musical heritage of Louisiana. Pure Cajun is as fun as it is authentic. At first listening I was frustrated by not being able to understand the lyrics, but when I let go of that and just listened to the music, I was moved. And isn't that what dance music is all about? (*Heidi Fosner*)

JIM OLIVIER:

JIM OLIVIER, THE ESSENTIAL COLLECTION
Swallow Records – info@FlatTownMusic.com
or SwallowRecords.com

Jim Olivier runs his own home improvement business now, but for 25 years he hosted the early morning television program Passee Partout, promoting local music and musicians throughout Cajun Louisiana and East Texas. In 1980 he began recording his own versions of Cajun tunes and for six years Jim Olivier became Swallow records top selling artist. Jim Olivier the Essential Collection is a re-release of 19 of his greatest hits. It includes several songs written for Olivier's first album by V. J. "Boo" Boulet, including "If You'll Give Me Another Chance,"

"Comme Un Cadien," (Just Like A Cajun) and Olivier's big hit "I Love My Saturday Night." With one exception, "Nothing New, Same Old Thing," which Olivier recorded for this CD, the recordings are taken from his five albums from the 1980s. They employ fiddle, bass, guitar, steel and horn players too numerous to name, although accordion player Aldus Mouton and drummer Warren Storm play on every song. The general feel of the CD is relaxed and easy. This is dance music perfect for slow two-stepping and breezy waltzes. (*Heidi Fosner*)

CELTIC

**BUTCH BALDASSARI AND JOHN MOCK:
MUSIC OF O'CAROLAN**
SoundArt Recordings SAR-2254
www.soundartrecordings.com

Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738) is often called "The Bard of Ireland." An itinerant blind harpist, he left us more than two hundred melodies, ten of which Butch Baldassari and John Mock present beautifully here. Baldassari plays immaculate mandolin and bouzouki, Mock the concertina, whistle, harmonium and guitar. If all you know of Irish music is pub songs, this CD will be an education. Most of O'Carolan's compositions sound as precise and poised as anything from Vivaldi (whose music O'Carolan admired), and nothing here would be out of place in a classical drawing room. Even if you have no interest in Irish music, you would probably appreciate this CD for the musicianship. And if you do have any affection for the Celtic tradition, this should definitely be in your collection. (*L.A. Heberlein*)

FOLK

ALLEGRA BROUGHTON & SAM PAGE: SOLID AIR
Jackalope Records JKLP 1255
www.solidairmusic.com

Allegra Broughton knows how to write a song with a hook. Whenever I listen to "Glorious Bird" with its refrain, "Didn't we laugh? Didn't we cry? Didn't we love love love the stars from the sky," I find it in my head for days. Her songs frequently seem so familiar you can't believe she could have written them; "Take Me Away" and

“Sweet Little Mystery” are timeless. Although there are other musicians—Nina Gerber makes an appearance—Page provides guitar on most cuts as well as bass, his primary instrument, and Broughton provides percussion as well as guitar and vocals, so they can be the whole band. They have a wide range of musical styles; “Not a War Song” has a Norteño feel, “Mission Bells” is bar-band rock and “Grace” is early 70s easy-country. Broughton’s voice is similarly malleable. On “Grace” it approaches Tracy Nelson country. (*L.A. Heberlein*)

KEITH GREENINGER: GLORIOUS PEASANT

Wind River Music #003

www.keithgreeninger.com

For his fourth solo recording, and first in six years, Folk/Americana artist Keith Greeninger releases *Glorious Peasant*, a bluesier, more soulful release than you would expect. While his voice isn’t incredible, reminding me of a bluesier Art Alexakis, Keith knows his limitations and creates songs and music that allow it to shine. As the title suggests, Keith comes across as a common man, a singer for the people, and the songs, lyric-wise, lean towards a storytelling folk style. But the instrumentation pushes the tunes into more of the bluesy territory that Jeff Healey has mined for years. Although I really enjoyed listening to *Glorious Peasant*, and would gladly do so again, there were no songs that stuck in my brain to resurface hours or days later, reminding me of the experience. Part of that may lie in a production that seemed a little too slick and over the top, taking a powerful song like “Breaking Through” and adding too many layers to what should have been a simple love song. It is a strong foundation with maybe one too many coats of paint. (*James Rodgers*)

JAZZ

IRENE: SUMMER SAMBA

self issued: VRC 8201

available on www.CDBaby.com

Singer/actress Irene grew up in Southern California and fell in love with Latin music in all its forms. Over the years she’s become a great student of the arts, with a fine ear for the many subtle distinctions between regions and

styles. Irene started out as a big band singer and doesn’t confine herself to any particular genre, but this time she’s backed by her Latin Jazz Band (a very fine eight piece combo) for a salsa set. North of the border, samba has generally been pigeonholed as a fun but narrow style, suitable for evoking frisky evenings at balmy cantinas or romantic moments in cruise ship ballrooms. Like Bossa Nova and mambo, it had a “moment” and yielded a small, well-known repertoire, but samba’s brio and flexibility has made it somewhat more influential and easily transported into other popular styles. Irene, with her big band background, adheres to the style of samba’s romantic era (vaguely early-’50s). She is fine, clear singer, and the band really swings. She covers the big samba hits and the samba-influenced classics, like “Whatever Lola Wants,” “Besame Mucho” and “One Note Samba,” and finds ways to Latinize “My Heart Belong (sic) To Daddy” and “Let’s Face the Music and Dance.” She knows her stuff, though, and exposes a bunch of other numbers that are part of the still-evolving samba scene one continent to the south. It all blends nicely and this CD is an enjoyable listen from start to finish. (*Tom Petersen*)

MIKE LONGO TRIO: FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY

Consolidated Artists Productions

www.jazzbeat.com

Oscar Peterson died last month, so it seems fitting to review a CD dedicated to him by one of his students. *Float Like A Butterfly*—the new CD by the Mike Longo Trio—is a modern, swinging post-bop tribute to the man Longo credits with teaching him “true jazz piano playing.” A very young Longo heard Oscar Peterson play “Tenderly” in concert many years ago. It was that tune that made Longo want to become a jazz pianist. He has become a very accomplished one. He covers “Tenderly” beautifully on track 5 of *Float Like A Butterfly*. Longo studied with Oscar Peterson for six months at Peterson’s Advanced School of Contemporary Music in Toronto. It was this experience that helped Longo get a job with his other great teacher, Dizzy Gillespie, and Longo performed with Gillespie for 25 years. The Mike Longo Trio—Paul West on bass and Jimmy Wormworth on drums—covers ten great jazz tunes on this CD including Wayne Shorter’s “Witch Hunt,” Freddie Hubbard’s “Blue Spirits,” “Here Tiz (Impromptu)” by Gillespie and Monk’s “Evidence.” What you hear are first and second takes played live in the studio without prearrangements. Listen and you’ll be floating like a butterfly too. (*Heidi Fosner*)

OLD TIME

ROBIN & LINDA WILLIAMS: RADIO SONGS

Red House Records, RHR CD 204

widely available

Radio host Garrison Keillor has never made any bones about his running a sort-of parallel Grand Ol’ Opry, and accordingly, appearing on *A Prairie Home Companion* seems to bring out the best in performers. It was only natural that the great Robin & Linda Williams were early, and thereafter yearly, guests on the program, and now the pleas of fans have been answered by the release of their great musical moments from the show. *Radio Songs* is about as close to perfect as a CD can be, with spare-no-expense live recording technology, the finest backing musicians on the planet (Guy’s All Star Shoe Band, often with Peter Ostroushko, and the Hopeful Gospel Quartet), and, of course, the Williamses themselves. Reflecting the sensibilities of the show, much of the CD is amiable acoustic folk, with a lot of gospel and really old timey stuff (Stephen Foster), but Robin and Linda have their fearless and challenging side, too. “50,000 Names” is a profoundly moving anti-war song, referring to the Vietnam Memorial but all-too-applicable today. They also romp through a hepped-up “Hesitation Blues” and get playful with the whole PHC cast on “Marvin & Mavis Smiley – Down Home Diva.” This CD is automatic for any and all fans of acoustic folk, country or gospel. (*Tom Petersen*)

SINGER/ SONGWRITER

ROMI MAYES: SWEET SOMETHIN’ STEADY

self-issued; see www.romimayes.com and online outlets

Our Midwestern connection called and said something powerful was blowing down across the Plains from Canada. Brace yourselves—they weren’t foolin’. Romi Mayes is a singer/songwriter of rare force and assurance, with sharp-edged attitude and an air of pansexual danger that will fast attract serious fans of dark Americana. From the looks of concert footage available online, this plays even better live. Tellingly, *Sweet Somethin’ Steady* is produced by Gurf Morlix, the heartland savant largely credited

Continued on page 17

VICTORY Calendar

FEBRUARY 2008

Please enter your calendar data on the Victory Music Website
by the Second Monday of February for March listings!
If listed after the Second Monday, your venue will still be on the website.
www.victorymusic.org

02/01/08 Adam Hill Cafe Allegro
4214 University Way NE Seattle 7
pm Free 541-350-3546

02/01/08 Pint & Dale Tania Opland
& Mike Freeman Wired & Unplugged
717 First St. Snohomish 7:30 pm
\$5-10 suggested donation Puget's
Sound reveals new North-end venue
first Fridays, co-sponsored by KSER
90.7-FM. www.livelocalmusic.org
206-729-0820

02/02/08 Steve Wacker World Cup
Espresso and Wine 5200 Roosevelt
Way NE Seattle 7:30 to 9:30 pm
\$5 suggested donation Singer/
songwriter/guitarist Modern, poetic
Americana 206-729-4929

02/02/08 Kym Tuvim, Liz Stahler,
TER-RA (Teri Payton, Sara Sanders)
House Concert Capitol Hill Seattle
8-10:30 pm, doors open 7:00 pm
\$15 donation Singer-songwriters,
acoustic, folk/pop 206-328-2479

02/04/08 Jake Shimabukuro Jazz
Alley 2033 6th Ave Seattle
7:30 pm Hawaiian-born Ukulele
virtuoso www.jazzalley.com

02/06/07 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

**02/07/08 Warren Chang Music
Ensemble** City Hall 600 4th Ave
Seattle Noon-1 pm Free Celebrate
the Lunar New Year with traditional
Chinese music <http://www.seattle.gov/seattlepresents>

02/08-09/08 Hank Cramer Galway
Bay Pub 880 Point Brown Ave NE
Ocean Shores 7:45 pm Free A night
of Irish music. 509-996-3528

02/08/07 Back Burner Acoustic
bluegrass and swing band Egan's
Ballard Jam House 1707 NW Market
Street Ballard 9-10:30 pm \$5
Acoustic band that plays a mix of
bluegrass, swing, and Americana for
all ages! www.back-burner.net

02/08/08 The Tennessee Three
Kentwood High School Performing
Arts Center 25800 164th Ave SE
Covington 7:30 pm \$26-28 Johnny
Cash's original band. 253-856-5051

**02/09/08 Bee Simonds, Forget Me
Nots, Jeremy Burk** The Showbox
SODO 1700 1st Ave S. Seattle 8 pm
\$7 adv./\$10 door Seattle's top singer/
songwriters at the new Showbox
SODO. www.showboxonline.com

02/09/08 Eric Madis Trio Vino Bella
99 Front St Issaquah 7:30-11:30 pm
No Cover Eric Madis, Ted Burik
(bass) and Don Berman (drums) play
jazz and blues in an intimate, warm
wine bar. www.vinobella.com

02/09/08 Swamp Soul Cajun/Creole/
Zydeco Dance Band The Highliner Pub
3909 18th Ave West (at Fisherman's
Terminal) Seattle 8-11 pm \$12 Trad.
and contemp. Cajun, Creole, and zydeco
dance music 206-283-2233

**02/09/08 W.B. Reid & Bonnie
Zahnow** Haller Lake Community Club
12579 Densmore Ave N Seattle 7 pm
\$10, \$2 off members, kids 1/2 Old-time
country songs & fiddle tunes, Southern
string blues, Mexican song & dance
tunes. hend@stolaf.edu, 206-367-0475
hallerlake.info/artsevents.html

02/12-13/08 Elaine Elias Jazz Alley
2033 6th Ave (alley entrance) Seattle
Brazilian vocalist & pianist 206-441-
9729 see www.jazzalley.com for time
and cost.

02/14-17/08 Mindi Adair Jazz Alley
2033 6th Ave (alley entrance) Seattle
Saxophone sensation 206-441-9729 see
www.jazzalley.com for time and cost.

**02/14/08 Baby Gramps & Eric
Apoe** Tinfoil Mardi Gras Pike Pub
'Museum Room' 1415 First Ave
Seattle 7 pm \$10 suggested donation
Puget's Sound moves flagship venue
to the heart of downtown Second
Thursdays: a kickoff pairing not to
miss! All-ages. www.livelocalmusic.org
206-729-0820

02/15/08 Karin Blaine Concert
Egan's Ballard Jam House 1707
NW Market St Seattle 7 pm Dinner
Show \$12 Cover Seattle's own folk
chanteuse entertains with originals &
charm. Doors open 6 pm. Reservations
good idea 206-789-1621 www.ballardjamhouse.com

02/16/08 Michael Guthrie Pegasus
Coffee House 131 Parfitt Way SW
Bainbridge Is., 7:30-9:30 pm 206-842-
6725 Donation www.moorafa.com

02/16/08 David Grier in concert
Cashmere Community Coffeehouse
Cashmere Riverside Center 201
Riverside Dr. Cashmere 7:30 pm \$3
at door + \$7-\$10 Hat Pass Grammy
Award winning acoustic guitarist
509-548-1230
www.cashmerecoffeehouse.com

02/17/08 Hank Cramer Yakima
Valley Museum 2105 Tieton Dr Yakima
1 pm Free "Celtic to Cowboy," a music
program sponsored by Humanities
Washington 509-996-3528

**02/18/08 Open World Russian Jazz
All Stars** Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave
(alley entrance) Seattle Russia's rising
jazz stars 206-441-9729 see www.jazzalley.com for time and cost.

02/18/08 School of Magical Strings
Winter Harp Classes Magical
Strings' studio Olalla 6 pm beg.,
7:30 pm intermediate \$160 6-week
term for beginning and intermediate
Celtic harp Philip Boulding 253-
857-3716 www.magicalstrings.com

**02/19/08 School of Magical
Strings** Winter Harp Classes New
Discovery School 1260 Harrison St.
Seattle 6 pm beg., 7:30 intermediate
\$160 6-week term for beginning
and intermediate Celtic harp,
rental instruments available Philip
Boulding 253-857-3716 www.magicalstrings.com

02/20/08 School of Magical Strings
Winter Harp Classes Eastside
Friends Meeting 4160 - 158th
Ave SE Bellevue 6 pm beg., 7:30
intermediate \$160 6-week term for
beginning and intermediate Celtic
harp, rental instruments available
Philip Boulding 253-857-3716
www.magicalstrings.com

02/21/08 Buddy Catlett & Friends
City Hall 600 Fourth Ave Seattle
Noon-1 pm Free Legendary jazz
bassist joins with fellow luminaries
for a jam at City Hall! <http://www.seattle.gov/seattlepresents>

02/22/08 Seattle Labor Chorus
annual Sing-Along & Auction!
Central Area Senior Center 500
30th Ave S Seattle 7-9:30 pm \$10-
15; Pay what you can Good songs,
good food, good company. Desserts,
snacks and beverages provided. This
is popular; get tickets early 206-524-
7753 www.seattlelaborchorus.com

**02/23/08 David LoVine & Hank
Cramer** in Concert Black Dog Cafe

7217 Lantzville Rd Lantzville By donation Two Northwest shantymen share stories and songs Call for time 509-996-3528

02/25/2008 Karan Casey Band The Triple Door 216 Union St Seattle 7:30 pm \$28 advance A most soulful singer of Irish Traditional Music. Karen's band includes piano, guitars, and cello willbard_productions@comcast.net

02/26-27/08 Juan Canizares Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave (alley entrance) Seattle Legendary Flamenco Guitarist 206-441-9729 see www.jazzalley.com for time and cost.

02/28-29/08 Duke Ellington Orchestra Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave (alley entrance) Seattle Music by America's greatest composer see www.jazzalley.com for time and cost. 206-441-9729

03/1-2/08 Duke Ellington Orchestra Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave (alley entrance) Seattle Music by America's greatest composer see www.jazzalley.com for time and cost. 206-441-9729

02/28/08 Jennifer Spector Crossroads Shopping Center 15600 NE 8th St Bellevue 6:30-8:30 pm Free Award-winning performing songwriter www.jenniferspector.com

02/29/08 Hank Cramer 4th Annual Lee Earl Cowboy Gathering Elks Lodge, 3444 Country Club Dr Lewiston All day By donation A gathering of Northwest cowboy poets and singers 509-996-3528

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 - Mfliss@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 Ravenna 3rd Place Books & Honey Bear Cafe 6504 20th Ave NE Seattle, WA sign-up 6-6:45 pm music 7p.m. donation

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 holotraddband 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 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 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

Every Thursday Open Mic Highliner Pub & Grill Fishermen's Terminal - 3909 18th W Seattle sign up at 8:30 music at 9:15 pm free acoustic music highlinerpub@yahoo.com

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

RIVERCITY BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

2008 Reviewed

BY ALEX PERLMAN

A fantabulous festival of full-time fun! The 4th Annual RiverCity Bluegrass Festival (1/4-1/6 in Portland, OR) was a great blend of national, regional and local acts, many great workshops and plenty of “en route” and late night jamming opportunities. Getting there (and back – as Bilbo would say) was accomplished by many from the Bellingham and Seattle areas via the RiverCity Bluegrass Express Jam Train, part of a perfect pass for a weekend of bluegrass. David Rosenbaum, who enjoyed the ride, observed: “From Seattle to Portland, the scenery was beautiful - and we enjoyed food, drink, chatting. Three jams started up in the 1 1/2 cars that we occupied - a great beginning of the weekend to come! Our trip back home Sunday evening was a wonderful way to wind down the weekend. It was dark and rainy outside, while the train was warm and comfortable. Talk was more quiet and familiar than on the way down and the music was more intimate, as musicians, now friends, played bluegrass and country songs. It was a perfect end to a great weekend.”

The Festival showcased many well known performers, but by far one of the most touching moments was Del McCoury singing a duet with Mary Stuart on the Curly Putnam Jr.’s classic “Green, Green, Grass of Home” in honor of the late Porter Wagoner who made the tune famous back in 1964 and was to have been this year’s headliner. You could imagine Porter smiling down on all as the entire crowd joined in on each chorus. A class act and great performance filling in for the fallen star. Thanks Marty and Del, Porter’s proud. Sunday’s gospel church was hosted by Rhonda Vincent, who has remembered to keep it real – even as she wears the fame of the IBMA Female Vocalist crown. Post-set Rhonda sat right down square on the CD sales table and talked eye-to-eye while she autographed CDs, as did the always affable Del McCoury.

Due to limited space – we’ll leave a review of every artist/group behind – and let the reader catch up by re-visiting the December 2007 Victory Review or www.rivercitybluegrass.com.

Special kudos to banjo maestro Tony Furtado who, besides playing his own set on the lobby stage with Scott Law and Darol Anger, also put in an extra, last minute set on the main stage. Kudos too for Darol, who staged an amazing set with his Republic of Strings group, which includes reigning U.S. fiddle champion Alex Hargreaves.

The Ethos Youth Academy was a resounding success, with very skilled younger and older instructors passing on their best licks to kids from pre-K through 12. A great program getting off the ground very nicely in Portland due to the efforts of Chick Rose who ran the Wintergrass Youth Academy for 11 years. The RiverCity Youth Academy stage was a feature enjoyed by many on Saturday, following the day-long Friday program.

And now: Workshops, Workshops, Workshops

The Bill Evans Banjo Workshop was filled to capacity [jammed :-)]. Bill is a great teacher, very relaxed and full of tips and tricks to help beginners, as well as advanced players, accomplish slick licks and increase proficiency. Bill covered vamping styles (using or dropping the bass note), and determining how percussive you want to be. He emphasized that style is always the individual’s decision – a balancing act between how you play and with whom you are playing. There was plenty of opportunity to try things out in this workshop. Among Bill’s many tips, he discussed walking up the neck to change chords without changing the chord shape, moving your eyes to where you want to be on the neck, and letting your hand follow. Bill rarely moves his hand off the strings, because it always gives him a reference point. Keeping the index finger anchored on the 2nd string as he moves up and down the neck is something he picked up from watching vintage Earl Scruggs videos. Bill noted that playing in a quartet setting gives the banjoist the opportunity to provide the back beat. Maybe the fiddler doesn’t

want to chop – the banjo (your banjo) is there to do so. The banjo is the metronome of the bluegrass band. Bill also spoke to regional differences – West Coast players roll more, while the East Coast players tend to vamp.

Bill spent a lot of time talking about basic patterns, and how they can be dressed up. Once you learn a couple of formulas, you’re set! You can add a roll pattern, play bouncy (syncopated) or straight (each note having equal value), accenting a note to change the feel. Historically, things have changed and evolved over the years. In the ‘70s, Bela Fleck played with a lot of bounce, but now things are much straighter. Bill also noted that there’s a practical aspect to playing straight - when you speed up, it’s difficult to maintain a bounce. The Amazing Slow Downer software (freeware) is a helpful tool (easily found via a search engine). You can slow down the playback of a song without altering pitch to practice. While listening to Earl Scruggs, you’ll discover that he played things pretty straight once you slow down his lightning speed.

Bill noted that while there are a lot of complicated sounding chords, they are generated from simple chords. You can play a G chord on the 9th fret, and then make a minor change with ring finger on the 3rd and 4th strings. Adding some notes on top changes things yet again. Bill showed some alternate ways of playing one of the patterns he had presented early in the session, In The Mood. By the end of the workshop, it was clear by the happy faces that everyone had gotten great value from Bill’s information and relaxed teaching style. It was also evident that Bill is a great guy who enjoys playing and wants you to enjoy playing, too.

Stage Fright Workshop - Professional counselor, banjo and dobro player (of Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising) Tom Tower says, “It’s all in your mind.” There are 4 areas to pay attention to when dealing with stage fright: 1. Preparation--do what you can to make the stage familiar, bring a “magic friend” like a water bottle, lucky pick or wear your favorite underwear; 2. Practice--know your stuff. Rehearse in the same configuration as if on stage; 3. Mind body connection--be in a state of relaxed alertness by learning to breathe, using only the muscles you need to do your stuff; 4. Set aside negative self talk--learn how to control your inner doubts.

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MUSICAL TRADITIONS

Folk Music in Seattle

BY STEWART HENDRICKSON

The folk revival of the late '50s and '60s had its Seattle beginnings in 1953. Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger had sung at union halls and other venues here in the '40s. Around 1950 Walt Robertson, a young folksinger who grew up on Bainbridge Island, and fresh out of Haverford College, began singing around the University District. A few years later he had his own show, *The Wanderer*, on KING TV. Influenced by Walt and some nationally-known folksingers such as Burl Ives and Pete Seeger, a few university students became seriously interested in folk music.

In 1953 Ken Prichard, Bob Clark, Walt Robertson, Ric Higlin, Janice Tennant, Dick Landberg, Don Firth and several others decided that they needed a folklore society, an organization charged with collecting and preserving the folk music and folklore of this area before it disappeared. They considered several names, including The Washington State Folklore Society (there might already be such a society), The Seattle Folklore Society (too geographically limited), before they decided on the grandiose name, The Pacific Northwest Folklore Society.

Although the main purpose of the Society was academic, to collect and preserve folk material, they also presented concerts, workshops, and even street festivals in cooperation with The East 42nd Street Arts Association, an organization made up of many of the same people. Some of the concerts featured Walt Robertson, Northwest Indian dances by Bill Holm and his wife, Marty, programs by the Scandia Folk Dance Club organized by Gordon Tracie, and Dance Circle, a local group interested in Balkan Dancing.

The Society came to an abrupt end about 1955, after Pete Seeger came to give a concert. This was at the height of the anti-Communist McCarthy era, and anyone involved in folk music was suspect of having Communist leanings if not outright membership (Pete Seeger was black-listed by the HUAC). The membership dropped almost to zero overnight as students and teachers were worried about

their careers. The Society, however, still had some presence, because a concert in 1962 at Seattle University sponsored by a student United Nations Association was cosponsored by the Pacific Northwest Folklore Society.

In 1966 the Seattle Folklore Society was founded by John Ullman, Phil and Vivian Williams, and several others. This was a different group of people, more interested in source musicians, those who got their music through the oral tradition, than in the home-grown folk revival singers of Seattle who learned their songs from books and recordings.

A few years later the Seattle Song Circle formed. This group was made up of some of the former members of the Pacific Northwest Folklore Society and some younger folk singers. They first got together at the early Northwest Folklife Festivals, singing in stairwells and other acoustic spots at the Seattle Center. They were influenced by members of the Vancouver, B.C. Song Circle who suggested that they form a similar group in Seattle.

Over the intervening years many of these older Seattle folk singers dropped out of the Seattle Song Circle and went their different ways. And the Seattle Folklore Society became more a concert-producing organization for mostly out-of-town singer songwriters. More recently a few local singer songwriters have performed at their concerts, but mostly it has been musicians from outside the area, who can bring the largest audiences to their concerts.

After I came to Seattle from Minnesota about twelve years ago, I became involved with the Seattle Song Circle and met some of these older Seattle folksingers. I also joined Victory Music and met many local musicians as I did sound for weekly Victory Music concerts at the Youth Hostel near Pike Place Market (1998-99), and then helped organize an open mic and ran a monthly concert series at Valdi's Ballard Bistro on Ballard Ave (2000-2001).

As I become acquainted with more local musicians I am increasingly impressed with the level of talent we have here. Victory Music open mics give these musicians a chance to be heard,

and also allow new talent to develop. And live music is now heard more in local coffee houses, pubs and other venues.

But there has also been big change in the type of music heard here. Those local folksingers in the early '50s sang mostly the traditional songs that had come from Europe and developed in rural America. In the folk craze of the '60s folk music became more of a commercial product with traditional songs rearranged and rewritten for a popular audience and new songs written in an urban setting and for anti-war protest. And in recent years the singer-songwriter era has blurred the line between pop and folk music.

About a year and a half ago I became involved with the Haller Lake Community Club and its Arts Council. After being invited to do several gigs for them, how could I refuse to join the Arts Council? I did so because it was a good opportunity to contribute and to bring our talented local musicians and the community together for the benefit of all. As chair of the performing arts I have put together a diverse series of monthly concerts featuring local artists. I hope to see this develop into a major focus for the local music community.

As my musical interests have grown, I have also become more interested in the traditional music of the Pacific Northwest. I have discovered that we have a rich folklore in our region that goes back to the native Americans who were the original inhabitants here, and forward to those folksingers of the early and mid 20th century and people who are even now writing songs about our history, people and environment.

Because this folklore and these folk songs are in danger of disappearing and no other group seemed interested in preserving and growing the tradition, I decided to revive the Pacific Northwest Folklore Society. With Bob Nelson and Don Firth, two original members, we recently put together a web site, pnwfolklore.org. Last spring I produced a house concert for Bob, and this fall a reunion concert for Bob and Don, all under the banner of this old Seattle society. We plan to do more in the future.

I have also met with the Traditional and Ethnic Music Committee of the Seattle Folklore Society, and together we would like to preserve and share our folkloric heritage. I do not view traditional music as a museum piece from the past, but rather something continuously evolving.

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KIDS KORNER

Eric Ode

BY HILARY FIELD

Eric Ode is an award-winning musician, poet, entertainer and educator. Hailing from the Pacific Northwest, his schedule is full of performances and workshops in schools, libraries, festivals and concerts throughout the US and beyond. He has released numerous books and recordings, as well as a DVD *Welcome to the Music Workshop*. His cheerful, high-energy personality imbues a constant sense of fun into his lyrics and poems, from feeling pride in climbing the gym rope (but wondering about how to get down) to the ecstasy of brand new shoes. The publication *Booklist* described Eric's CD *I Love my Shoes* as "a toss-up whether the 12 wacky cuts on this album are poems set to music or original songs with lyrics reminiscent of poets Jack Prelutsky or Shel Silverstein. Either way, the high-energy humor and bouncy beat will tickle funny bones and set toes tapping." Eric generously offered some background on himself and his music in this interview.

HF: Please briefly talk about your background in music, in writing, and in education.

EO: My mother is a strong piano player and really enjoys classical music. If you walked into our house while I was growing up, the radio was likely on. She had me taking the mandatory years of violin. I can't play a note now. Next were the piano lessons, some of which I enjoyed and some of which were drudgery. It was the music theory courses in community college which really opened things up, allowing me to take what I had learned on the piano—which was very traditional note-reading stuff—and integrate chords and their inversions and extensions. It makes me wish there were more music teachers out there who could teach practical theory and help kids discover composition and improvisation—the creative, interpretive side of music as opposed to strictly the sight-reading side.

I brought a guitar with me to WWU and taught myself the basics. Someplace in there I was doing more and more songwriting. I graduated from WWU in elementary education and

taught twelve years for the Puyallup School District, mostly fourth grade but a handful of years of first and third. My heart is still very much into education.

HF: When did you start to write and perform for children?

EO: While I was teaching I would now and again write songs for the classroom as well as for various church choirs I was directing. My first album for kids was released in 1996, but children's music and children's poetry was still very part-time back then.

HF: What happens in a typical Eric Ode writing workshop for students?

EO: That depends a lot on what the teachers and students want to have happen. Often it's a group writing session where together we create a song or poem. We discuss the writing process, brainstorm, write, revise and end up creating a song or a poem that I never would have created on my own—maybe a song about a mouse playing baseball or a kid with a jet pack, or maybe a poem about a school principal who joins in a snowball fight.

HF: What is especially exciting for students about the writing process?

EO: I'm not sure many students do consider the writing process exciting. I think the natural tendency is to see it as tedious and frustrating. You can't blame a kid for wanting to begin at the beginning and later down the page find a place to write "the end." But the writing process—the prewriting exercises and revising and editing, searching for appropriate word choices—all of it can be exciting in the same way any creative process can be exciting. When I'm sharing at schools, one of my big goals is to help kids enjoy the process and to understand that it isn't just an exercise for the classroom—it's something everyone goes through if they want to create something they're proud of.

HF: How are your workshops interactive?

EO: We sometimes create independently in workshop sessions and then find time to share, but more often we create as a group. The workshops are very busy and productive, but they're also a little improvised. I always have a general idea of what I think we'll accomplish in our time together, but more often than not, the journey is dictated by where the students want to go.

HF: Where do you find inspiration for your music and your poetry?

EO: When I was writing the poems for *Tall Tales of the Wild West (And a Few Short Ones)*, I began in the same way I encourage students to begin. I grabbed a notebook and began brainstorming potential topics. Something I've overheard, something I've seen or read, and the way two or three words play off each other... they've all been inspiration at one time or another.

HF: Your CD *Trash Can* is dedicated to the memory of Joe Raposo and Jeff Moss. How did they influence and inspire you? Who are your other major influences as a writer and as a musician?

EO: I'm so glad you found that! I was born in '66, so I was three years old when *Sesame Street* was launched. Joe and Jeff were groundbreaking in their approach to children's music—lyrically intelligent, musically intelligent. Try picking apart a song like "Rubber Duckie" or "Bein' Green" or "I Love Trash" or "Sing." Holy cats, that's brilliant songwriting in anyone's book! Joe Raposo once said, "We don't play down to kids. We just have a very short audience." Isn't that perfect?

HF: Please talk briefly about what to expect in your program, "Waiter, There's a Fly in My Song!" created for the summer 2008 Reading Series.

EO: This will be a fun summer, and I'm looking forward to that program in particular. Library gigs are always a kick! I've used a primary puppet character and a lot of music stitched together with a storyline for the last couple of Summer Reading Series, and this program will be a lot like that—very interactive with plenty of movement songs and call-and-response songs, props, poems... Now that I think about it, I'd better get busy on that fly puppet!

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MUSIC THERAPY

Music and Labyrinths

BY NANCY HURLLOW HOUGHTON, M.A., MT-BC

For seekers who dare, traveling into the unconscious can provide valuable insights and lessons otherwise out of reach. Many have tried to do this with drugs and other substances. As a music therapist, I prefer less invasive approaches. Allowing music to assist in accessing an altered states affords the client a non-toxic, safe means to travel.

During a recent music and imagery session with a client, I discovered that an inward journey to music is not unlike a meditative walk in a labyrinth. Labyrinths are circular paths, generally described by lines of stones. One walks into the center, pauses, and returns through another circular route. These are often used for meditation and problem solving, and have served as a spiritual tool for centuries. Music and Imagery offers many of the same benefits when used in a therapeutic manner. The connections were made much clearer recently.

As my client was relaxing to music and preparing to venture inward, I suggested that she see her wanderings as though entering a labyrinth. Through this suggestion, the imagery, feelings and thoughts the session evoked were meaningful and relevant to her situation and gave rise to her remarking "It is sooo much bigger once you start down the path!" Her sense of inward travel amazed her as the deeper she went, the more expansive and inviting was the journey.

The music therapy practice of Music and Imagery invites the listener or "traveler" to roam around their unconscious for a glimpse at symbols and images that may add meaning or relevance to their external situation. The music is used to gently guide the listener into this sacred space through meeting their current state in a musical way. Through discussion prior to the musical intervention, the therapist will determine in what state of mind and emotion the client seems at the moment, and what level of tension is appropriate to introduce. Tension in the musical selections is gauged by its degree of harmonic dissonance, tempo, rhythmic complexity, instruments used, and other musical parameters. Therapists trained in the method of Music and Imagery have studied musical examples and mapped out their characteristics in a way that they will know which pieces will best fit

their therapeutic needs. If a client is highly agitated at the beginning of the session, the therapist might choose to mirror that agitation in a piece of music, then gradually guide the client into a more relaxed state through a progression of musical pieces. Through this understanding and acknowledgement of the client's state, the therapist creates an empathetic relationship and a safe container for the client's process.

In Music and Imagery, the music provides structure and a framework to support the traveler much as a labyrinth provides the path. Labyrinths are derived from ancient symbols that signify a meandering yet purposeful journey toward wholeness. The labyrinth creates a safe, sacred space for accessing receptive states of consciousness.

Each of us, whether we are walking a labyrinth or listening openly to music, has a uniquely personal experience. How one walks or listens differs with each event. Some go forth with a desire to open the door to the unconscious, allowing ego to step aside. Others venture inward with a question or a concern. I instruct my clients to ask their busy minds and judgmental voices to take a break, and to approach the experience with a sense of awe and respect. This openness encourages a sense of exploration and wonder and invites a receptive state. When open and receptive, we have the opportunity to connect with our inner, knowing voice and even voices from a universal unconscious.

As my recent client set forth on music-induced labyrinth inside, she was awestruck by the ease with which she could follow the path. The music supported her as she took eager steps into the unknown, feeling safe and upheld on her journey. Around each bend, she discovered beauty and depth, and a reassurance that what lurks beneath isn't nearly as dreadful as she had anticipated. Her brave expedition was rewarded with symbols and assurances that while, yes, it is a long road home, it is also worth the effort.

A typical labyrinth.

For more information about music therapy, contact the author at nhhoughton@msn.com, or visit www.musictherapy.org, or www.wramta.org.

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with making Lucinda Williams commercially palatable without diminishing what makes her appealingly frightening. Mayes has a lot of that same hardness: some sass, some bitter resignation. At times she seems cornered by her intelligence and awareness, as when she dissects relationships that, for all their joyful times and sweaty passions, just aren't meant to be. A good example is "Angeline," which throws in the twist of being sung as if from the male point of view . . . maybe . . . Mayes notes on her Web site that the title track, a five-star acoustic rocker, is one that "chicks dig" even though it sounds, on first listen, like a male fantasy about a gal that can't get enough. Turns out, on closer inspection, to be another hard lesson: Mayes would like to be that much in love, that devoted, but Dude, it just ain't happenin'. Now that's good songwriting! Mayes gets off great lines on just about every song, and the tunes are well-crafted, without awkwardness or dead ends. She's got a strong little group behind her, unplugged except for a mild electric guitar on the first couple of tunes and a whole lotta unnecessary thrashing on "The Other Dame" (betcha Gurf's thinking "radio"). Mayes plays a mean Gretsch herself, and her wheel hoss is Chris Carmichael, who bends strings but also handles drums—on the skins but also on cardboard boxes, the back of his J-45, and anything else handy but sounding right. That's good playing! And Sweet Somethin' Steady is a good album. (*Tom Petersen*)

BILL STAINES: OLD DOGS

(Red House Records; RHR CD 208; widely available)

Is Bill Staines implying that he's become an old dog? In a sense, sure! After 30-some years of the finest songwriting, the most tender interpretations of other people's songs, and the most caring attention to vocal and instrumental nuances, Staines has achieved that transcendent state as a person, inhabiting his work completely and comfortably. His peace is ours, too, as Staines connects with his audience in a bond of understanding well like that between people and their faithful canine companions. In Staines' own words, he does not try to be something he's not, and he loves for the sake of loving. Old Dogs is not goopy or sentimental—it's a grown up record, for grownups. Staines revisits familiar territory: loves lost and found, lots of crisp fall days, and a few long meditations down at the local tavern.

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A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR KIDS IN MUSIC: WINTERGRASS AND BEYOND

BY TOM PETERSEN

A great “Aha!” idea worth repeating and passing along came to me years ago from the great Old Time fiddler and Bluegrass mandolinist Adam Tanner. “What I’m always hoping to do,” he said, “is show kids that’s there more to do, with the same skills, than saw away as fourth chair, second violin in the school orchestra.” This wasn’t a putdown of school programs: It was a call to action.

While the numbers show that school music programs are as popular as ever and thrive even while fighting budget cuts and battling short-sighted administrators and school boards, it’s also well known that some attrition does take place, especially in the junior-high years. “What am I going to do with this?” is the lament of the 13-year-old able to coax the most beautiful sounds from an instrument, but only in one genre and on a small number of well-worn tunes.

Tanner’s idea, of course, was to hip the kids to jazz, swing, western, bluegrass, and old time. Not only would this open up vast new areas of experience and enjoyment, but the kids would discover the roots of the music more common to the teen species, blues and rock and soul. Such players suddenly become . . . cool! Once this process is underway, the kids begin looking for related instruments to test and try using their transferable skills. The teenage fiddler in my household breaks up his violin scales and position exercises by bashing out blues licks and Beatles songs on the mandolin, while his little sister is now reaching for our travel guitar when she’s done practicing the cello.

None of this is surprising to Victory members and readers of this magazine, I’ll bet, but something everyone can do is suggest, at every opportunity, that kids need exposure to a wide variety of the kinds of music that can be played on their chosen instrument. See to it that school programs invite old-time fiddlers to play for the string sections and that a copy of the IBMA Discover Bluegrass video is on hand. Prod every parent of a kid taking horn lessons to make sure the tutor mentions Dixieland Jazz, for example.

Of course, one of the best ways to inspire your young musician, or any one you know, is happening this month in Tacoma: Wintergrass’s Kids Academy! Wintergrass is the best festival in the country, in part because of its promotion of and support for young people. Teaching kids to play Bluegrass both ensures that the music will pass on to the next generation and makes the festival a participatory experience for the whole family. The kids aren’t moping around while Mom and Dad pick or listen to others play at the Hotel Murano, they’re having a blast on their own!

Kids Academy instructor Joe Craven is the embodiment of Tanner’s idea: He draws in kids from every musical discipline, showing the similarities and possibilities, both through impassioned playing and by employing his collection of wacky instruments (gas can and bedpan mandolins and guitars!) He then explodes the world of anyone who has played only one style, showing where each instrument can go, be it Bluegrass or elsewhere. Wintergrass Kids Academy enjoys the support and cooperation of Ted Brown Music and D’Addario Strings, which bring instruments to the academy so that students can play something other than their main instrument. Typically, the Kids Academy is loaded with violinists trying to become fiddlers, but you should see the stampede when they break out the loaner banjos!

If Craven is the Pied Piper, then the Leader of the Band is Beth Fortune, top-notch strings teacher in the Seattle School District and a part of Kids Academy throughout the decade. She brings the technical expertise and the “school interface” to the Kids Academy, calmly and warmly maintaining order, providing individual tips and plans for carrying the Wintergrass experience forward in the students’ lives. Every parent would want his or her child in Beth’s class (and I’m one). One of the most inspiring moments every year at Wintergrass is just after the Kids concert, when they all come tearing off the stage wanting to jam ‘til the cows come home with Mom, Dad, or anybody!

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The term I like to use is in-the-tradition, which means it might sound like a traditional song, but it was written only recently.

In an era where music is considered a commodity to be purchased, I would like to make music something that we create for ourselves and we do in close association with other musicians. Homemade music and live local music is the best in my opinion.

Stewart Hendrickson is Chemistry Professor Emeritus – St. Olaf College, Research Professor Emeritus – University of Washington, and in his new career, an unemployed folk musician (voice, fiddle, guitar; <http://www.stolaf.edu/people/hend/music.html>). Contact him at hend@stolaf.edu for questions, ideas or comments.

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For fun, he’s got a medley of “Freight Train” and “Oh Babe It Ain’t No Lie” called “Cotten Pickin’” (good, no?). Other covers include Norman Blake’s “Uncle Sam” and Guy Clark’s “Lone Star Hotel Café.” All of the songs are imbued with lively, unexpected embellishments—chirpy notes and well-placed skritches, thumps and modulations, every one perfect, every one provoking a smile and a warm-all-over feeling . . . kind of like settin’ with yer ol’ dog on a pleasant autumn afternoon. (Tom Petersen)

Kids Korner Continued from page 16

HF: What new projects do you have in the works?

EO: The new album is titled *When You Smile*, a “feel good” sort of collection of songs and poems. We should have it out by mid-February. I flew my favorite guitar player, Todd Babbitt, and my favorite drummer, Steve Lee, down to Nashville to record in the basement studio of my very good friend, Mark Lange. We crashed through the lion’s share of the tracks in a stretch of about ten days.

For more information on Eric Ode as well as his performances, workshops, books, DVDs and recordings, please visit his Web site at www.ericode.com.

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

PORTLAND

Remembering Jerry Ricks

BY DICK WEISSMAN

I first met Jerry Ricks in Philadelphia in the late 1950s. He was working in the kitchen at a folk club called The Second Fret, and he was one of the few young black musicians who was interested in acoustic blues. Within a few years he was managing the club, and had become quite a fine guitarist. He lived around the corner, and he and his late wife Sheila often hosted visiting musicians such as Mississippi John Hurt, Skip James, Doc Watson and Gary Davis. In fact, on one of his albums Doc credited Jerry with the encouragement that enabled him to keep on playing and touring at a time when he was lonely and away from his family.

They say a large percentage of careers in music have to do with proper timing. Jerry's career, at least in the United States, always seemed to be a bit off. During the 1960s folk revival, it seemed that folk fans only had room for one black acoustic blues musician. Taj Mahal was more promotionally oriented, he had an "act," and basically he became the token young black acoustic blue musician in the revival. At

the time Jerry and Larry Johnson were the only folks on the scene, and Larry seemed to drift in and out of circulation. After a number of years teaching guitar, performing, and doing some recording work in Philadelphia, Jerry moved to Europe. He had a jazz-blues duo with European musician Oscar Klein, and they made a dozen records in Europe and toured widely.

Harry Tuft and I established contact with Jerry in the mid-1970s, and we basically convinced Jerry to move to Denver. He and I did a bunch of gigs in the schools and elsewhere, and Jerry taught guitar at the Denver Folklore Center. He also studied jazz guitar with Denver guitar legend Dale Bruning. Jerry then returned to Europe, but came back to the states in the 1990s. Suddenly there were a bunch of black musicians playing acoustic blues—Eric Bibb, Guy Davis, Alvin Youngblood Hart, Otis Taylor and Corey Harris. Jerry got to do some concerts and festivals, but basically he was now too late. Jerry ended up going to Croatia, where he had a brain aneurysm in August. He was operated

on, but got two hospital infections and passed away in early December. Once again, his timing was unfortunate. He had picked one of the few European countries without a national health insurance system.

I have many fond memories of Jerry Ricks. I remember playing electric guitar with him on a recording session for a film score I had written, as we layered three guitar parts each on a sort of neo-Allman Brothers tune. Then there was the gig he and I and the late John Pila did with Chubby Checker at the Lambertville, New Jersey Music Circus when Chubby was doing his brief folk thing. Jerry was a wonderful guitarist, and it is a pity that he was never recorded over an extended period of time in the way that Fredrick Ramsey recorded Leadbelly. Jerry knew many tunes that people like John Hurt performed, but never recorded. Now many of those pieces are lost to us forever.

We can only hope that some of the great musicians of the folk revival, like Erik Darling, Mike Seeger and Frank Hamilton, are afforded that archival level of recognition that escaped Jerry. Someday the Folk Alliance may tear itself away from its commitments to the "business" of folk music long enough to recognize the need for such endeavors. Jerry's music will live in the minds and hearts of those of us who either played or studied with him.

River City Continued from page 14

The Basic Jamming Workshop "The Off Key Beginner Bluegrass Jam Workshop," came complete with handouts, a song list, a list of the ten jam-mandments and an explanation of 1,4,5-itude, much help to a folkie 'shedder' like Larry, who claims "I'm not too used to playing well with others." Chick Rose and company made ya feel welcome as sticks at a "caramel apple" party. Great workshop.

Advanced guitar with David Grier, Scott Nygaard and Jim Nunally – David's advice: "Don't listen to other people tell you how to do it. Don't study so much that you become someone else as a musician. Look at 'em, learn from 'em, 'n' play...just play your instrument...all the time, then play it some more." Other advice: Use a heavy pick; learn from others; play music - don't just practice licks; play with others; play with records, sure learn those licks, now

improve them for your personal use, and here's some news . . . play your instrument, piles! Good workshop, tough subject, old question: "How do I get to the Grand Ol Oprey (Carnegie Hall, Bumbershoot, or Folklife)? Answer: ... just practice, 'cause there ain't no pill." Some attendees of this workshop reported that there was too much talkin' and not enough pickin'.

The harmony workshop with Misty River – Dana, Chris, Laura and Carol taught how to find harmony notes in relationship to the melody line of a song. Using Stephen Foster's "Hard Times Come Again No More," we built a "harmony stack" for the song's chorus. Bluegrass vocal parts are called: high baritone (two parts above melody), tenor (one part above melody), lead (melody), baritone (one part below melody), low tenor (two parts below melody). Blending sounds to match one another comes from listening and practicing

together, matching volume, tone, vibrato, and phrasing. The Fair Four did a great "voices-on" job work-shopping as well as giving good explanations, a touch of theory, and demonstration. Just what a workshop should be.

Dobro workshop with Orville Johnson: hands-on and hands-down one of the better play-along workshops of the Festival, says Alex. Orville connected well with the group, eschewing a rectangular lecture room in favor of a busy lobby area. He sat in-circle with them and played at a great demo/learning tempo that most followed nicely; a great workshop by one of the finest.

The 4th Annual RiverCity Bluegrass Festival was covered by Alex Perlman, Karla Oman, Lynette Hensley and Larry Baumgartner, with special thanks to David Rosenbaum for his Jam Train review and workshop insights.

MARITIME MUSIC In February

BY MATTHEW MOELLER

Ahoy! Welcome to a new season of maritime music. In 2008 there are an incredible number of opportunities to enjoy maritime music. Look what's happening, just in February and March.

The Northwest Seaport Sea Chantey Sing-along, held every second Friday of the month, will feature Dan Roberts as the song leader in February. Mr. Dan is well known for his love of traditional call-and-response work songs of the sea and his wry humor, and who can match that voice? Anyone is welcome to lead a song or just join in the fun. It's truly a fun event for the whole family. Admission is free, though the hat is passed and donations are gratefully accepted. Refreshments are available and the gift shop will be open. Dress warmly. The ability to sing is not required.

Coming up for the March sing-along will be Capt. Dan Quinn, and the April session will be led by that fantastic duo from the South Sound, Spanaway Bay. As always, the event will be hosted by yours truly.

The first concert of the 2008 Northwest Seaport Concert Series will be March 8, 2008. David Lovine, renowned west coast shanty man, has been confirmed for the show. Sharing the stage will be the Phinney Ridge Run Runners (Steve Lalor & Trapper Graves-Lalor). Mark your calendars, you know it will be better than great. For the latest information on the concert series and the sea chantey sing-along, check the Northwest Seaport website www.nwseaport.org or call 206-447-9800.

Over on the Kitsap Peninsula, Tugboat Bromberg (gotta love that moniker), will be playing at Bella Luna Pizza in Suquamish, on February 7th, starting at 7:00 PM (Bella Luna Pizza makes some of the best thin-crust pizza around). I've played with Tugboat in the past. He's about as authentic as they come. He's got the parrot, the tattoos, the beard, the rum-soaked voice and the demeanor of an old scallywag. A truly unforgettable fellow.

I dropped in on the Budd Bay Buccaneers (Burt & Di Meyer), monthly sea chantey sing-

along in January. Although early January is a tough time to have events, due to all the other distractions, it was well attended. About a dozen folks gathered at the Urban Onion Cafe, in Olympia, on the first Sunday of the month. They're a very comfy group to sing with. You won't feel like an outsider very long. For more information, check out the Bucs website: www.buddbaybuccanners.com. I plan to go back again soon.

Hank Cramer is recording again, between performances at the Galway Pub in Ocean Shores and at the Yakima Folklife Center. An evening with Hank is never dull, as that baritone voice takes you on journeys on the sea and horseback. www.hankcramer.com Hank also organizes a sea chantey camp. It's a whole lotta fun. I highly recommend it. The next camp will be held in June. Watch for details in the next month or two.

Oh yeah, I'll be playing at the Crossroads Mall on February 21, 2008, starting at 6:30 PM. Admission is free. I'll be performing songs from my CD *Reaching Home* and new songs that you've not heard yet. Drop on by and I'll give you a discount on my CD.

Finally, Canadian chanteyman Tom Lewis will be releasing his long awaited songbook, *Worth the Singin'*, on April 26, 2008, which also happens to be Tom's 65th birthday.

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Writers: Contact victoryedit@mindspring.com

Calendar: I could use someone to format the calendar for the Review - about 4 hours a month after the 2nd Tuesday and before the next Monday. I need a committed person. Format in Word Contact: victoryedit@mindspring.com

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Victory Music needs a space for a open mic venue that will allow us: music for at least 3 hours, a place to store the sound equipment, some control on the noise levels of the room when music is going on, seating for at least 75, but 100+ would be better, some kind of food service, parking in the neighborhood would be great, a door charge would be great, (but not a huge problem. (NO ALCOHOL!! We are always a family oriented organization. victory@nwlink.com



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