

T SAN DIEGO TROUBADOUR

Alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, blues, gospel, jazz, and bluegrass music news



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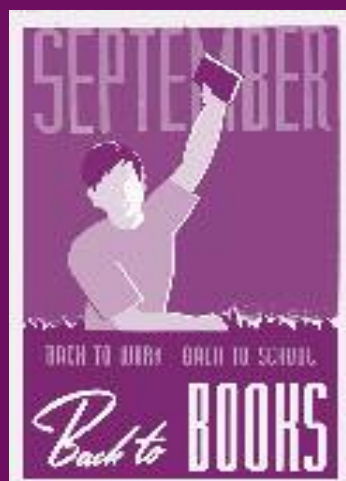
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To promote, encourage, and provide an alternative voice for the great local music that is generally overlooked by the mass media; namely the genres of alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, blues, gospel, jazz, and bluegrass. To entertain, educate, and bring together players, writers, and lovers of these forms; to explore their foundations; and to expand the audience for these types of music.

SAN DIEGO TROUBADOUR, the local source for alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, blues, gospel, jazz, and bluegrass music news, is published monthly and is free of charge. Letters to the editor must be signed and may be edited for content. It is not, however, guaranteed that they will appear.

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Email your gig date, including location, address, and time to info@sandiegotroubadour.com by the 22nd of the month prior to publication.

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The San Diego Troubadour is dedicated to the memory of Ellen and Lyle Duplessie, whose vision inspired the creation of this newspaper.

Claudia Vorce Taps into the Dance Career She Loves

by Paul Hormick

Once seen and heard in every performance hall in the country, the clickity clack of tap dancing was a mainstay of the Ziegfeld Follies, the Keith-Albee, and other vaudeville extravaganzas. For decades Broadway and movie musicals had to have at least one tap dancing routine, be it Fred and Ginger, Donald O'Connor, or even a cartoon frog from Disney. Tap was even common when television came along. Between the juggling act and Petrushka the Dancing Bear, tap dancers in full cathode ray black and white splendor tapped their way across the stages of Ed Sullivan in addition to other variety shows.

Along came rock and roll, disco, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and tap dancing became as uncommon as 17-cent a gallon gasoline. Locally, however, there is a change in the air. The zip, zing, and pizzazz of tap dancing can be heard — and seen — in three different San Diego showcases, all of which are the result of the work and dedication of one woman, Claudia Vorce.

"I want to show people that tap dancing is more than corny white gloved hoofers with broad smiles, making those extravagant gestures," says Vorce, as she mimes the flashy hand waves of the minstrel show tap dancing stereotype. She is sitting in a cafe close to her dance studio in North Park, with her black hair pulled back above her high forehead. Unsurprisingly, "built like a dancer" describes her thin frame and "balance your schoolbook on top of your head" posture. Her eyes are dark brown, but today she wears large sunglasses that make her a spot-on double for Audrey Hepburn in the movie *Breakfast At Tiffany's*.

With performances of almost every dance style — from African dance to hip-hop — that has been influential or came to prominence at some time in the United States, the Olio dance show is the most ambitious of Vorce's three undertakings. "I came up with Olio, the concept of the show, after I'd gotten back from a two-year stint in New York

in 2007. I'd been living there off and on since 2000, performing and teaching. And I was back in San Diego and I wanted something to bring jazz music together with jazz dancing. Jazz has evolved. Dance is just as important and has evolved just as much," she says. "And I wanted to show people this history of dance. I wanted to educate people, to show them that hip hop dancing just didn't spring up out of nowhere. That there is a history." The Olio troupe includes four drummers, a jazz trio, and six dancers, including Vorce. She chose to call the show Olio because the word means a hodgepodge, a mixture of different things, which she felt described the amalgamation of performance styles in the show. "I was surprised to find out that Olio is actually an old vaudeville term," she adds.

To give audiences this history of jazz music and dance Vorce goes all the way back to where it started — with African dance and drums. At one point, a member of the Olio production performs body percussion, in which bumps slaps and thumps on arms, legs, and torso turns his body into a drum.

Another part of the history lesson comes from Leland "Spoonful" Collins, performing percussion on spoons. Generations ago household items were often converted or adapted to make music. Washtubs became basses, and washboards were used for percussion. (As further evidence of how bygone this is, try to remember they last time you used or knew someone to use a washtub or a washboard to do their laundry.) Spoons were part of this rhythmic ensemble, producing a light yet rapid rat-tat-tat.

Olio comes into the twentieth century with a show of sequins and short flapper skirts. We now have Prohibition, bathtub gin, and the Roaring Twenties, as the dancers of Olio perform the dance that sums up all the excess of the Jazz Age: the Charleston. They then move on to the Charleston's more exaggerated and exuberant successor, the Lindy Hop. Vorce brings



Tap dancer Claudia Vorce

the vibe up to the present with hip-hop artists and dancing. Pianist Philip "Jay Jay" Lim is the musical director for Olio. His musical cohorts in the show include drummer Fernando Gomez and bassist Jeremy Eikam.

Like most of the arts and culture of the United States, the history of tap dancing is apocryphal, with legend and conjecture mixing with facts. Some dance historians say that tap dancing has its dual roots in the continents of Africa and Europe. They trace its beginning to the heavy stepped rhythmic

continued on page 8



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REVISITING THE 1960S: Hippiedom in a Navy Town

(part 1 of 2)

by Raul Sandelin

San Diego is a city largely built by the military, most specifically the Navy and the Marines. There's no doubt about that. Large swaths of the economy, the population, the very feel of the city exude a culture that is heavily dependent on battleships and jets and VFW beer busts. Hollywood has only helped the matter by filming over 100 movies here, with military themes and settings beginning with Mary Pickford's *A Girl From Yesterday* in 1915 through 1986's *Top Gun* with Tom Cruise.

Now, this is not to disparage the military or the men and women in uniform. But, in the rubrics of pop culture, especially the culture of the 1960s, anything "military" is an anathema to cultural creativity and, more important, cultural cool. If San Francisco is California's metro-center for serious Art and Los Angeles is the reigning mecca of Media, San Diego is still just a bunch of redneck jar heads stuck inside a submarine, at least according to the culture barons from those two fair cities to our North. If our two California neighbors give us, and the world, everything that matters, we can only give back an over abundance of screaming Phys. Ed. coaches with flattops...or so the story goes.

However, the world is more complicated than the stereotypes that SF and LA have painted about us. Whereas not many urban areas – not Portland not Houston not Milwaukee not Miami – experienced the hippie-era intensity of the Haight or Laurel Canyon, San Diego did experience its own cultural metamorphosis in the late '60s and early '70s. And, despite the Navy, or because of it, San Diego did just fine during the blooming of Flower Power. The truth is that San Diego was very active in creating the '60s universe. If we were sitting in the middle of, say, Oklahoma we would have been seen as a counter-cultural powerhouse. It's simply because we share a state with those two aforementioned culture hogs that San Diego never gets a break.

From early on, San Diego had a very lively and dynamic history that easily counteracts the supposed cultural repression imposed by the military. Sure, the cowboy-cum-sailor mascot makes for a tempting caricature. But, other characterizations are just as valid. There is the constant dynamic of the bi-national border region. There are early artistic movements such as Ernestine

Schumann-Heink's artist colony in Grossmont. There is the early, pre-Hollywood presence of the movie industry and its stars. There is the strong West Coast influx of African-American culture via downtown's Creole Palace, aka Harlem of the West, in the 1920s. Later, we would see one of the forefathers of the Freaks, Frank Zappa, spend his formative teenage years within our county line. All the while, the innately anarchistic beach culture keeps both the Right and the Left ideologically honest. The list goes on: the Stingaree district downtown, the racetracks at Del Mar, and Agua Caliente in Tijuana. All of these racier facets of our city's past create a rich pallet that easily counteracts any military rigidity.

Let's face another fact. From the 1940s onward, San Diego was easily reaping the windfall of the whole communications revolution that transformed the entire U.S. after World War II, putting even the farthest reaches of our county in touch with the rest of the world via TV, radio, and consumerism. We should never forget, for instance, that future music journalist Lester Bangs bought his first bebop jazz records in the supposedly reactionary, isolationist city of El Cajon as early as 1960.

By the mid-60s, San Diego had almost everything that our neighbors to the North had, and certainly more than many parts of America. There were three large universities in the county and a slew of junior colleges, all acting as lightning rods for the coming "Revolution." Around them sprang coffee shops, all-age clubs, and bars. San Diego's notoriously laid-back lifestyle and then the abundance of open spaces allowed impromptu happenings, free concerts, and love-ins to flourish unfettered, at least in the beginning, by police interference.

EVERY PARK'S A STAGE

San Diego was teeming with coffee shops and small venues as early as 1966, giving the new generation a literal platform to diffuse the new message and the new vibe. The Hi-Ho Club in El Cajon, the Heritage in Mission Beach, the Bathhouse in Pacific Beach, Lou Curtis' Folk Arts Records, the Candy Company and Bifrost Bridge in La Mesa, Circe's Cup and the Backdoor at SDSU, and Drowsy Maggie's in North Park all provided performance space for folk-inspired hoots, open mics, local showcases, and national travelling acts.

In addition, there were regular "free con-



Glory atop flatbed truck at free concert in front of Belmont Park, Mike Millsap with maracas (l), Jack Butler on bass (c), and Bruce Morse on drums (r), c. 1969

certs" popping up all over town – in the parks, on the sidewalks, or wherever a group of musicians and a crowd could assemble. Mike Millsap, the original singer for San Diego's legendary band Glory, remembers the free concerts starting as early as 1967. Millsap remembers, "Several bands would get together weekly at the corner of 6th and Laurel in Balboa Park. We'd play for five or six hours and pass around big jugs of cheap wine. Sooner or later, we'd have to move. So, we went to the Presidio, sometimes Aztec Bowl. Glory even played a free concert on top of a flatbed truck in front of Belmont Park. Finally, they wouldn't allow us to play just anywhere without a permit."

In the beginning, though, no one tried to stop these spontaneous gatherings of young people. "San Diego wasn't Kent State. We just wanted to play music," Millsap adds. Yet, later, "the cops saw us as anti-social." One free concert in 1969 that, according to Millsap, "was a political benefit of some kind," turned into a mini-riot as police and concert goers clashed on the grassy knoll above La Jolla Cove. Thankfully, the tumult was short-lived. Ultimately, the cops backed away and Glory was even able to finish its set. Later, the free concerts became officially organized events. In fact, Glory became the first local band to play at San Diego (Qualcomm) Stadium. "It was 1969, maybe 1970," Millsap says. "We put on a free concert after a Padres game. There were about 4,000 people, bad attendance for the Padres but a great crowd for us."

Thom Landt, who played guitar for local boogie band Leroy Zeke from 1969 to 1973, remembers the free concerts also. "We played with Glory and some other bands – the DC Blues Band, Whitehorse, and Sparky Hustle and the Pie. We also played a number of outdoor festivals that weren't exactly free – they cost maybe a dollar – but were huge productions." As Landt explains, local promoter Bill Wright put on several of these all-day concerts at Starlight Bowl and sometimes SDSU's Greek Bowl. "There would be five or six bands. But, unlike the free concerts, which were all local bands, there would be national acts at the top of the bill. Paul Butterfield, Tower of Power, Sons of Champlin, Elvin Bishop all headlined at one time or another." Through it all, Leroy Zeke was often picked as the local, opening act. "They liked us because we encouraged lots of crowd participation. Our set was always allowed to go long. We'd be called back for two or three encores and we were only the warm-up band."

These all-day festivals fell somewhere in between Woodstock and the stadium rock concerts of the later 1970s. Though the promoter was out to make a profit, the nominal tickets prices ensured that the events were open to all. And, with a half dozen bands all playing long sets ("We'd all just let it flow," says Thom Landt), the festivals would go long into the night. There is even a *San Diego Tribune* article, dated Monday May 15, 1972, discussing how a more mainstream Fleetwood Mac concert was cancelled due to poor attendance. As Landt explains, "The Fleetwood Mac show was scheduled for Mother's Day, Sunday, the same day as one of Bill Wright's outdoor shows at Balboa [Starlight] Bowl. Everybody went to the

outdoor show and stayed while the bands kept playing into the night." In the end, only 400 people showed up for Fleetwood Mac, according to the article. So, the show was cancelled.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE'S PEN

During the years 1967 through 1975, there were an easy dozen so-called underground newspapers that arose in San Diego, not to mention countless mimeographed student rags and forerunners of today's zine. *Good Morning Teaspoon*. *San Diego Street Journal*. *The Carpetbag Express*. *The San Diego Press*. *State College Railroad*. *The San Diego Wildcat*. All of these papers provided critical commentary on what was unfolding during the hippie generation. Most grew out of a need to express a certain viewpoint. So, some newspapers dealt with the national debates going on at the time. Some dealt with specific issues, such as student rights, Chicano rights, feminism, land development in San Diego, local labor issues, and the building of local alternative communities and co-ops.



Counter-culture newspaper the *Carpetbag Express* announces the GOP's decision to move its convention from San Diego to Miami, 1972

The history of these papers is a model for the times themselves as the newspapers would often gain a following and then merge with another paper or disappear overnight as the political winds shifted and the paper's founders moved on. So, these papers would unite and splinter from month to month to keep up with the latest contortions of this very volatile period.

Also, these many newspapers provided the first wave of "coffeehouse literature" to hit San Diego. Much like the *San Diego Troubadour* and other coffeehouse freebies do today, these papers gave to the '60s generation points of discussion and a compass regarding activities going on around town. Supplying a distinctly anti-Establishment take on local and world issues, they also cut through San Diego's right-leaning, often apathetic media, which served to fire up young people against the government right here in the heart of Nixon country.



Poster for show at Balboa Park Bowl



Mark Ferguson (Leroy Zeke) in the crowd at Balboa Park Bowl

Though nearly all traces of the 1960s underground press have disappeared, their vestiges do remain in the archives. And, the San Diego Historical Society has put together a collection that preserves this rich chapter in our city's past.

In addition, the *OB Rag* actually still lives with us [albeit online]. Ocean Beach, of course, has been described as the Haight-Asbury of San Diego. This was true 40 years ago and it's still true today. And, it shows the resilience of Ocean Beach that the community's original underground newspapers would still be going strong. During the '60s several terms and slogans developed, giving OB its distinctly nationalistic character such as "People's Republic of Ocean Beach" and "US out of OB." Spearheading this, the *OB Rag* originally set out to stop the city from building the jetties that created the San Diego River channels. And, soon the paper was calling to arms all those who opposed Ocean Beach being used as a tool of San Diego tourism and big business. The *OB Rag* not only opposed the development that threatened to swallow up Ocean Beach, it also consolidated a sense of community among the "OBecians" who were trying to create their own community free of right-wing city politics surrounding it. Today, this strong sense of community is still alive in Ocean Beach, as is the *OB Rag*. And, outgrowths of '60s radicalism, such as the People's Food Co-op still remain strong pillars of that community.

While most of the '60s underground press could be described as special interest, the *Door* encompassed a variety of topics from politics to music to cultural activities. As a result, the *Door* emerged as the most widely circulated and most mainstream of all of the papers. In fact, both of San Diego's great rock journalists – Lester Bangs and Cameron Crowe – wrote music reviews for the *Door* in the early days of their careers.

Eventually, all of these newspapers suffered from the changing times. Whereas the '60s started out with the purest of motives, the '70s began to re-interject profit motives and commercialism into the counter culture. By 1975 the *San Diego Reader*, first founded in 1972, consolidated its dominance of the alternative press in San Diego. The tone, like the new era, was less about radical politics and more about where to find the best sunset and where to buy the best stereo equipment.

(For more on San Diego's underground press, see Doug Porter's "The Origins of the Alternative Press in San Diego: The Days of the 'Door'" at the *OB Rag* website.)

Stay tuned for Part 2: Next month, we will look at FM radio, the day the '60s died and the '70s were born, and a word or two from the *San Diego* (aka KGB) *Chicken*.

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Recordially, Lou Curtiss

WE HAD SOME GREAT CONCERTS BACK THEN

I opened the store (Folk Arts Rare Records) on July 31, 1967 shortly after the first Folk Festival at our first location down at 3753 India Street on the corner of Washington. The next five years were busy ones at that location and around the city. My original partners Stan Smith, Carol McComb, and Gerrie Blake moved on after about a year, leaving me as sole owner. I got married to Virginia right after the second festival so it wasn't as sole as it might have been. Stan, Carol, Gerrie, and I started doing concerts at the Puppet Theater in Balboa Park. Texas bluesman Mance Lipscomb, Memphis bluesman Bukka White, Peter Feldmann and the Scragg Family, the Blue String Grass Boys, Kathy and Carol, and others all played there. That first concert-sponsoring organization called itself the San Diego Folk Music Foundation (fancy name and some pretty good music too).

Just about the time I took over ownership of Folk Arts, a couple of old friends of mine (Bob Cline and Monroe Jeffery) took over ownership of a La Mesa coffee house called the Bifrost Bridge (formerly known as the Land of Oden) and they in turn called in another friend of ours, Conrad Von Metzke, to put on a series of blues concerts. Conrad asked me to help

making contacts and co sponsoring. The first show we did there in 1969 was Lightnin' Hopkins. For an opening act I went to Ed Douglas who then, along with being an owner of the Blue Guitar, was also trying to get somewhat into the artist management showbiz in L.A. He told me about a young singer-guitarist named Mary McCaslin (I think she was just out of high school) who was making quite a name for herself at the Troubadour scene in Hollywood. She was about to do a record session for Capitol and was singing some with Linda Ronstadt. Little did we know that Mary would go on to record for Barnaby, Philo, Flying Fish, Mercury, Rounder, and a couple of her own labels (plus become a near regular at the 35 or so festivals I would do, both as a solo and with long-time partner, the late Jim Ringer). We just knew that Ed said she'd be a good opener for Lightnin' and she was that. More about Mary later. The Lightnin' show was a success and we went on to book Oakland Jesse Fuller, writer of "San Francisco Bay Blues" and one-man band. That was a good show too, and well attended. Next up was Sonny Terry Brownie McGhee. The show was a near sell out, but then Sonny got sick and Brownie volunteered to do the show alone, which he was more than capable of doing. However, more than three quarters

of the folks demanded their money back in spite of Brownie's fine picking. The show was a flop, and the Bifrost Bridge lost a lot of money and went out of business. That, I think, was one of those times when I was really disappointed in a San Diego audience. A little more support and they might have put Bifrost in a place to continue doing blues in concert. A couple years later when I was bringing the likes of Juke Boy Bonner, Robert Pete Williams, Sam Chatmon, Model T Slim, John Jackson, and others to the folk festival, there would have been another place to play for those guys. Oh, well.

I continued to be involved with the local blues scene. Folk Arts co-sponsored Howlin' Wolf and B.B. King at the Palace on Pacific Highway, T Bone Walker and Sonny and Brownie (this time both of them) at a place called Funky Quarters, Albert Collins at another place on University Ave. that I forget the name of,

and Albert King and Freddie King (together) at a place in Pacific Beach that had once been a movie theater. I forget the name of that place too, but I remember that for some reason I could never figure out why hardly anyone came). I guess we blues fans who trekked up to L.A.'s Ash Grove two or three times a month to see folks like Muddy Waters, Magic Sam, J.B. Hutto and his Hawks, Johnny Shines (oh, yes, I also co-sponsored Johnny Shines at Escondido's In the Alley coffee-house), Son House, Fred MacDowell, Earl Hooker, Freddie King, and others just couldn't understand why folks wouldn't turn out to a blues show in San Diego during those years. Those were the years I started to do a blues radio show to educate people about this great music, first on KPRI (later on KGB, KDEO, and since 1986 on KSDS (88.3 FM/Jazz88.org on Sundays from 8-10pm). This fall will celebrate my 40th year in radio in San Diego. Maybe some of you who have listened and taken to heart my plea to "go see some kind of music that you've never seen live before. You might find you like it," can come out to some kind of celebration if



Photo: Steve Covault
Lou Curtiss

we can get something together. I mentioned Mary McCaslin awhile back up the page. Mary quickly became after that Lightnin' Hopkins gig a regular on the San Diego folk scene. Although she was living in the L.A. suburbs at that time, she played regularly at the Heritage in Mission Beach and other places and we got to be pretty good friends. She went with Virginia and me to the Sweets Mill Folk Festival and met up with Jim Ringer; she played with Jim or solo at nearly every festival I put together for the next 45 years. In fact, it was probably a fight with the Adams Ave. Business Association about having Mary at the Adams Ave. Roots Festival (they didn't like Mary's music) that made me tell those Adams Avenue folks to "go fry their hat." Mary still writes great songs, plays great guitar (still an expert on guitar tunings), and is an all around exceptional performer who is still doing it. I hope she plays another festival that I'm involved with; I'd like to sit down with her and learn all the good stuff about the folkie scene as Mary sees it. Someone ought to do a concert with Mary down this way soon. Take a look at her website. For that matter, hell, take a look at mine (either the Folk Arts Rare Records website or my Facebook page (Louis F Curtiss) for some 3,500 recordings of stuff I like and care about. Hope you will too.

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by Lois Bach

Chris Carpenter: Stories from the Road

It was another Monday evening Open Mic at Lestat's West and after some talented and perhaps not so talented (but very enthusiastic) performers sang their two songs, it was Chris Carpenter's turn. The first notes on his piano were strong and definite and when he began to sing, the audience was riveted to his performance. "Must have performed as a child," I thought. "Piano lessons at the age of three?" Several days later I had a conversation with an Adams Avenue merchant who knew his history. My guesses were way off the mark.

Chris' journey began early. Born in Savannah, Georgia, his was the only white family in an Afro-American neighborhood. In 1972, when Chris was four, his parents divorced. Never seeing eye-to-eye with her parents, his mom, Sandra, left home with her young son. They carried all of their belongings on their backs, including her guitar. Sandra was a leather crafter, so before heading out on their long journey, she helped her son make his own leather backpack and Underdog mask. They first traveled to Vermont where Sandra met her new boyfriend, Larry. He was a wild-eyed, wild-haired hippie who, carrying a large accordion that he referred to as "the beast," joined mother and son on their trek west. Within the next few years they had traveled through many states. Along the way, they hooked up with others who played guitars and sang original and folk music covers. Chris fondly remembers a guitarist named "Bird" who once joined them by an evening fire underneath the giant sandstone formations in Utah's Zion Park while they sang songs like "The Weight" or "Rocky Mountain High."

"I didn't have any toys as a kid," Chris explained. "My toy was the world and my experience was with nature and my surroundings. We climbed up cliffs to explore ruins. We lived with the Indians in Havasu. In those days my diet consisted of rock bread that we cooked in the coals, pinto beans or brown rice, and maybe we'd get some vegetables if we were in a city. It was a treat to have fresh greens. On my sixth birthday we hiked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon and the ranger came and brought his guitar. It was a big deal that he came down the two miles and hung out with us. We all sat around a campfire and I enjoyed eating canned tangerines. They tasted delicious. It was wonderful!"

The trio walked across Arizona and New Mexico, following the train tracks along the way. The goal was to reach the top of Sunspot National Solar Observatory where Larry, who was a MIT mathematician, worked a deal with the government folks to do filing in exchange for using their telescope to look for whatever it was that he wanted to find.

"Did he ever find it?" I asked Chris.

"I don't know," he said, "because we left him there."

Chris was home-schooled during those years in the most primitive ways, but he was smart and loved to read. Without children's books, however, he read whatever he could get his hands on, most of which was adult literature that he didn't really understand.

"Like *Siddhartha*," he said with a smile.

Chris and his mom continued traveling through Mexico with plans to go to Tahiti and Guatemala on a long bizarre route. They rode the C-class train cars together with the chickens. William, a new boyfriend of his mother's, was Chris' new stepfather and a wandering gypsy. When they got to the Guatemalan border, they were turned away because William looked too much like a hippie. Instead, they headed for Mexico City where they boarded a plane to Hawaii. They lived on the beach for the next four months in fishing shacks. Chris enjoyed hanging out with a Filipino man who liked to play cards and eat rice cakes.

"I was looking for connections with other people, but I couldn't build relationships because we were always on the move," Chris laments.

After Hawaii, the trio moved to northern Washington near the Canadian border. When they needed money, Sandra and William worked for the forest service. When Sandra was six months pregnant with Chris' sister, she was jumping out of helicopters to fight fires.

"A guy named Tom and his wife invited us to build a house on their land. We cut down everything by hand, no power tools. We were under a time pressure because my mom was due at the end of December and there we were that month in the thick snow, my mom in our army tent while my stepdad and I were peeling poles and making things happen. We had the walls and roof up when we delivered my sister right there. I watched her birth. Once I got through the trauma of hearing my mother scream like nothing I'd ever heard before in my life, I realized what was happening, so in a sense it was okay but in another sense my insides were crawling!" His sister, Surya, was the first bicentennial baby born in the small town. The community presented his family with prizes of disposable diapers and formula, which the baby's parents refused to use. Shortly after the birth of his sister, Chris

photo: Dennis Andersen



Chris Carpenter at a recent Open Mic at Lestat's

and his family set off on another adventure over the next three years, exploring communities throughout Utah and Oregon and looking for other individuals who sought self-sufficiency and were one with the earth. When Chris was 11 and living in Oregon, his family joined forces with another family to begin their own community on 80 acres of land in northern California.

"It was a big swath of uncut beauty," Chris remembers. "We did everything ourselves: hand fenced, hand dug; I was a working kid and was forming good work ethics. And we were all into natural healing. Once I got blood poisoning and I spent an hour chewing up comfrey to pack as a giant poultice on my arm. By the next day it was souked out."

The area was remote and winter was especially hard for them with a 50-mile drive to go shopping as there was no passage between the river and mountains. So when Chris was 14 he took one of those trips with Sandra and William, except while his parents were running errands in town, Chris met a mom and her daughter. The daughter was a bit older than he and he thought that she was really cute.

"I ended up jumping in their car and I broke away!" Chris confessed.

They headed for their home in Sunburst, just outside of Santa Barbara. He helped out in the mother's store. Then a couple offered to send him to school.

"They were millionaires and they put me in polo shirts," he said. "It was strange because I'd never really had possessions and suddenly I was getting them. I always knew how to capture a rabbit or survive in the wild, but I didn't know what "gay" meant or how to pay an electric bill."

There was also all new music that he was unfamiliar with. Up until then his only musical influence was his mother's songs and tribal drums. Exposure to other kids his age was crucial at that point. Another neighborhood family wanted to take him in, one with older kids. The husband managed sewage plants in Mendocino. Chris would ride into town with him. One day Chris approached the principal at the high school, who allowed him to attend classes and live in the school. Chris was given a master key

to all of the doors. At one point he sectioned off part of the home economics building and opened a café where he sold breakfast food to make money. At night he slept in the library or the music department's recording studio where there were lots of pillows. But he was terribly lonely, especially over the holidays when he was by himself. Few of his fellow students knew that he was living in the school because it was embarrassing to him. Finally, when he was 16, the principal came up with an idea. He had a friend who was a child psychologist and jazz pianist who wanted to start a foster program.

"Ira Rosenberg became my foster parent for the next two years," Chris said. "We're still in contact."

While Chris was in high school, he began to play drums. He continued for the next seven years. "I played all sorts of drums - in rock bands and for the school football band. For four years I played in rock and blues bands in Mendocino."

Ira had been a big influence on him for piano and songwriting although Chris never took piano lessons. The singing began when Chris was about 20, playing in a group called the Fungis (pronounced *fun guys*). A band member said that his voice was much better than their female singer's. While working at a recording booth on the Santa Cruz boardwalk, a man who was signing up performers for a new TV talent show approached Chris, encouraging him to send in a VHS of his performance, but he never did. That moment has always stuck with him.

With his early entrepreneurial experience, his next move to Washington D.C. began his career in retail sales management. He helped open the first Nordstrom's on the East Coast. While there, he performed Elton John tunes before 500 people at a benefit concert. That experience inspired him. After three years in D.C. he was transferred to Nordstrom in San Diego. When the Gulf War broke out, the economy took a dive. Chris was let go from his job along with six other people. That's when he got serious about his music and songwriting.

"I played at Lestat's when there was a little stage in the window of the coffee shop.



Chris at age 2 with first piano



Extended family in Washington, c. 1977



Chris with his sister Surya, wearing wolf-fur coat in front of a wigwam the family made from bark and tarps, Medford Oregon, 1978.



Chris and his mom, 2006

I've probably sunk a good grand into recordings with Louie [Brazier] at Lestat's over the past 10 years. Now I'm shopping for musicians for my next recording."

Lestat's is one of his favorite places for music. "I'm hard pressed to find a place where people listen at an open mic." He also sells his recordings on CDBaby. Chris likes the exposure to a lot of musicians. He's been playing at Humphreys and entering songwriting competitions. "I've been in the grand finals a couple of times and got spots in the top five."

It's not surprising that his inspirations are drawn from the same musicians to which his musical style is compared.

"I get David Gray, Billy Joel, Elton John. I'm also inspired by Bruce Hornsby and Ben Folds. I love the melodic depth of a Taupin/John song but I also love the open frankness of a Ben Folds song. I'd like to think that I'm a mix of the two."

His future aspiration is to turn his music career into a full-time profession but not to play cover songs.

"The business side of me, as the guy who's been in retail most of my life, and the broke kid, I get a bit concerned about the money end of the music business. But I just love writing music. I have a passion for my stories," Chris stated enthusiastically. "[These days] my mom does a Patsy Cline act in big shows all over the East Coast - large convention centers with 6,000 people in the audience. She's a fascinating woman. She goes by the name CJ Harding and you can check her out on her website: CJHarding.com".

I asked Chris if his mom is still a hippie. That made him laugh.

"She's still into health and herbs and still stays away from man-made medications. But her lifestyle is definitely more modern. Today she carries a cellphone and has a condo in Florida with a great big TV."

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Jazz88 Ocean Beach Music & Art Festival

A GREAT IDEA GETS BETTER



by Chuck Schiele

Jazz88.3 and the Ocean Beach Mainstreet Association will make waves with its newly expanded Jazz88 Ocean Beach Music & Art Festival, Saturday, September 11, beginning at 10am on Newport Avenue in Ocean Beach featuring 28 bands on seven stages.

"We're excited to bring back the festival in full force, expanding it to include more jazz and blues acts than ever before," said Jazz88.3 station manager Mark DeBoskey.

Jazz88.3, San Diego's original jazz station broadcasting from San Diego City College, will bring an impressive lineup of 26 jazz artists and bands to perform on seven stages throughout the day, including saxophonist Maceo Parker, New Orleans brass band Bonerama, Charlie Hunter Trio, saxophonist Justo Almario, Geoffrey Keezer Trio, Ernie Watts Quintet, Holly Hofmann/Mike Wofford Trio, and the Four Queens of Boogie Woogie featuring Sue Palmer. In addition to nationally acclaimed acts, local student bands, including San Diego State University All Star Big Band, Mission Bay High School Dixieland Band, and San Diego School for the Creative and Performing Arts Jazz Ensemble will strut their musical talent.

"Expanding the festival allowed us to present more music styles, including Latin jazz, funk, blues, swing...many different elements," said Claudia Russell, Jazz88.3 program director and festival advisor. "The newly designed festival will offer three all-ages stages, as well as student musicians. After all, part of the jazz tradition is sharing and passing down the sound."

Music stages will be located at various Ocean Beach bars and venues, including Winstons, Gallaghers, the Harp, and Hodad's parking lot, plus the Main Stage at the foot of the Ocean Beach Pier, a Community Stage in the grassy area near

lifeguard Tower 2, and a private Patron's Stage in the courtyard of the Ocean Beach Hotel. Also along Newport Avenue, between Bacon and Cable streets, 60 fine artists will display and sell their work.

In commemoration of 9/11, there will also be a musical tribute to the U.S. military.

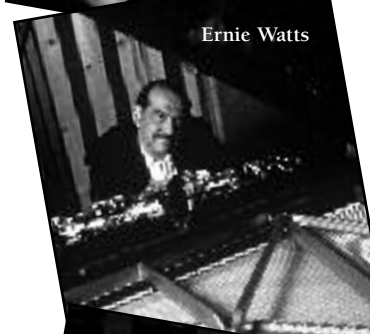
Tickets are \$30 general admission (plus \$2 service charge) and \$200 for VIP Patron tickets/seats, which include hosted food and beverage, complimentary valet parking, and a commemorative festival gift bag. Children age 12 and under are free. Tickets are available online: www.obmusicfest.org.

Being a huge fan of the event, and extremely happy about it being in Ocean Beach, I was sad to see the event sit out last year. I kept thinking, "How did THAT happen?" Alas, it looks like the folks at Jazz88.3 performed a serious review of their prior few years while exploiting the potential of the integrated Ocean Beach music scene hardware. Attendees will be able to cover all the stages in a short walk and wrist-band, while taking in the very best of the surf-ish Ocean Beach atmosphere.

The *San Diego Troubadour* had the opportunity to ask Jazz88.3 program director and jazz host, Claudia Russell, about their view of the festival in general as well as the specifics about how they've updated the event.

San Diego Troubadour: The Big Change. In years past, the event utilized only one stage. You went bigger this year, to include more venues and stages as well as other elements such as fine art. Please tell me about the changes.

Claudia Russell: There are several big changes. The first is the expansion of the festival in size. We wanted to add more stages and open up the festival area so more people could come out and enjoy the day. Also, it gives us an opportunity to show the wide range of styles Jazz88.3 offers to listen-



ers and concert-goers in southern California. This also fosters more of a relationship with the great businesses in Ocean Beach. The new Ocean Beach Restaurant and Entertainment Group (OBREG) has stepped forward to ensure our musicians, VIPs, and guests have a variety of delicious food to enjoy, we're including some major music venues in OB. Plus, we've got a craft beer garden. It's a real celebration of the good vibe OB has to offer. I'm also very happy that we've been able to add all-ages venues this year and offer free admission to kids under 12. Kids dig music and a lot of times, they miss out on great artists because those people are playing 21 and up clubs or more expensive festivals or theaters.

The fine art is a real plus, I think because our guests can not only check out a great art show just by walking through Art Row, but can also take home some unique pieces. It's a nice break between music sets, or to have a show in the parking lot at Hodad's, for example, as the backdrop to a nice shopping experience.

SDT: You seem to like Ocean Beach for this event. I'm very happy about that. Please, why Ocean Beach?

CR: First of all, OB is a very cool place. It has a certain reputation for being almost too funky, but it's that and a lot more. There are amazing antique shops, great clothing and jewelry shops, really good locally owned restaurants, and one of the best views of the sunset you could ask for. Also, the OB Mainstreet Association and the OB Hotel have been big supporters of this idea from the start and have worked very hard alongside Jazz88.3 to make this happen for the community of San Diego as a whole.

SDT: I didn't see anything on the subject in your press materials regarding broadcasting... will there be any sort of broadcast of the event? Internet?

CR: At this point, we have no plans for broadcasting. That's a goal I absolutely have my eye on for the future. Part of it is funding, and part of it is that we want to make sure we get this festival as right as we can. This is a re-birth of a festival in a way, so we want all our musicians, artists, and music fans to have the best experience possible.

SDT: I feel the same. Please call me anytime regarding the advancement of this mission statement, if you think I can help. For now, can you embellish on the 9/11 aspect of the event?

CR: As we were looking at possible dates for the festival, making sure we didn't conflict with other community festivals, we realized our best date would fall on September 11th. After a few glances around the table, we tackled it head on and decided this gave us an opportunity to note the significance. It just seemed right that the best way was to acknowledge the men and women who serve in our Armed Forces. San Diego is an important military town and we feel it's important to note that. These people are still fighting a war triggered by the events of 9/11 and we respect what they do. It has nothing to do with anyone's politics, it's simply about honoring the human beings currently doing the job as well as the ones who have done the job in the past.

SDT: Who's participating in the music tribute?

CR: We're still settling the details, but I can tell you, I'm aiming for a military big band. Nothing like seeing all those dress uniforms on the bandstand!

SDT: Will there be any "officials" speaking on the topic?

CR: At this time, we're determining who will be speaking.

SDT: Please explain in general how the mission statement of this event embraces its own future. Are there plans to grow further from here?

CR: The mission statement of this event is three-fold: to make more people aware of the public radio music source that is Jazz88.3 and that we're a non-profit organization sustained primarily through individual and local business contributions; to give our community an affordable opportunity to hear a variety of music in a welcoming environment; and to act as outreach for San Diego City College, which offers courses that relate directly to the presentation of live jazz, as well as radio and video production. So, by offering something for almost everyone, making it a reasonable ticket price, and working with the local community, we're inviting people to come participate in the success of a musical, visual, and sensory experience that is very unique in San Diego.

SDT: Dig that! I notice the roster becoming significantly more robust. Can you offer any insight and/or comment on how the artists feel about the event?

continued on page 8

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Jazz88 Music & Art Fest, continued from page 7

CR: We've had nothing but enthusiasm from everyone we've invited. Some artists are even excited to see others perform! I love that. They appreciate a festival that focuses on jazz and blues, with the various flavors of those being well-represented. Many of these artists are friends of Jazz88.3; they've played our previous festivals, or appeared at Jazz Live, or just live up the road in some cases. We all know we're in this together: the business of presenting jazz to appreciative audiences.

SDT: What does jazz mean to you, personally?

CR: Wow. Tough question. It means so many things because it's brought me so many things. I grew up in a household with all styles of music imaginable: rock and pop, country, show tunes, blues, jazz, classical...everything from *Sesame Street* to America's top 40 to the jazz musicians we saw on TV sometimes. Jazz has brought me wonderful things. I've made friends through this music who are more precious than gold to me, real friendships that go beyond the stage introductions and on-air interviews. I'll never forget moments with people who were real musical heroes to me: sitting in a sound check next to Joe Williams and chatting backstage later before the gig is one that I treasure. But, also realizing the level of musicianship that's out there. I never really appreciated music the way I do now until I heard jazz. It's made me a better listener. Emotionally, jazz has given the world some of the most poignant music moments in history: Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit," Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," Ellington's sacred music, and many others. It helps us define our history.

SDT: How are you involved with this event?

CR: I'm the talent advisor and have helped select all the bands for the festival, as well as worked out the stage and performance schedule. I also coordinate the stage hosts (on-air personalities from Jazz88.3) and will be hosting stages the day of the festival. That's what it says on paper. Aside from that, I'm one of the ones who wakes up in the middle of the night worrying about the whole event.

SDT: With the station?

CR: I'm the program director and also host the "Jazz Ride Home" from 4-6pm Monday through Friday. I've been here since 2001

and love the individuality of Jazz88.3 in the San Diego radio market.

SDT: What is your favorite aspect of the event?

CR: When I'll look out at the audience and see everyone on their feet having a fantastic time! But, I'm also really jazzed about kids being able to see some of these artists.

Tap dancer, continued from page 7

dancing developed in both England and Ireland. The Irish danced the step dance and Englanders entertained themselves with the clog dance. As these two groups emigrated to the United States, they brought these steps to these shores. By the late 1800s they developed what is called buck and wing dancing and American clogging that was popular in the South.

Others believe that tap started in the South and developed from the Africans brought here as slaves. It is thought that southern slaveholders, fearing that their slaves could communicate over long distances with the tattoos of their drums, confiscated all percussive instruments from their slaves. Deprived of their drums, the slaves then transferred their complex rhythms into percussive dance, the precursor of tap dance.

One version of the beginnings and development of tap claims that tap dancing started on the high seas. As this story goes, as part of their routine to keep up morale and ensure that their men got some good exercise, pirate captains set aside time during the day for their men to dance. It is surmised that one of the dances that became popular with Irish pirates, known as the jigs and clogs, was the beginning of tap dancing. These dance historians make the connection between the term "buck" from buck and wing dancing and the word buccaner.

By the time that history gets us to the mid to late nineteenth century, there is some agreement as to the development of tap. By that time, in minstrel shows and showboat routines, there were two types of tap, the buck-and-wing dancing that was popularized by the duo of Jimmy Doyle and Harland Dixon, and the style made famous by George Primrose. Primrose danced in leather soled shoes, while the buck-and-wing was a fast style dance performed with wooden shoes. Over time these two styles

gradually coalesced.



There are some notable tap dancers that you've probably seen in old movies or youtube videos. Famous tap dancers that have inspired Vorce are Mable Lee and Bunny Briggs. Lee was known as "Queen of the Soundies," Soundies being short films that featured music and dancing. You can think of them as the very first music videos. Lee performed in several of these soundies with such jazz musicians as Louis Jordan, Cab Calloway, and Count Basie. A consummate improviser, Briggs toured with all the great bands of the swing era, such as Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Count Basie, and Duke Ellington. Keeping up with the times, he adapted tap dancing to the sounds of Charlie Parker and other beboppers.

Since the time she was three years old, Vorce has been dancing. Her mother was a dancer in the Ballet Folklorica, the lively and colorful dance troupe that celebrates the regional dances and music of Mexico. Vorce's mother wanted her children to carry on, figuratively and literally, in her footsteps and enrolled her children in dance classes soon after they had learned to walk. "I was five years old and taking ballet at the City of San Diego Civic dance arts," Vorce remembers. "And one night on television I saw the PBS special 'No Maps on My Taps.' The special was a documentary about tap dancing. I didn't know English all that well at the time, but the documentary still captivated me. I could see how emotional the people in the interviews were, how devoted they were, and what tap dancing meant to them. I told my mom right then I want to do this, that I wanted to tap dance! When I was back at school I found a flier, a Park and Recreation flier for tap dancing, and that's when I started in on tap."

In action, on the dance floor or stage, Vorce gives the impression of a very well controlled ball of energy. Her feet zip about, evoking the equivalent of a drum roll from

continued on page 16

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You walk further and you think, "What does it take to create such a harmonious place such as this?" You feel a breeze on your arms and face and you notice the light scent of blooming flowers. You even hear the sound of bees nearby, doing their important work in this environment.
You stroll again and you realize there is structure here to make this forest work. There must be water, the warmth of the sun, good soil, pollinators, and creatures to crack open pine cones so that seeds find their way into the soil.
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by Steve Thorn
photos by Michael Oletta

The Granada Building

is one of the glowing examples of North Park's success of becoming a revitalized community by utilizing its strongest asset: its splendid architectural past. In an entertaining web page called "The North Park Magical History Tour," Scott A. Shepard of the North Park Main Street Association described the edifice, located at the corner of 30th Street and Granada Avenue, as a "mixed commercial building, constructed during the heart of the craftsman period."

Handsome marble stairs lead to several offices. Behind one of the doors, the gentle sounds of a piano is heard. The door opens, and instead of a seeing a piano student, the visitor is warmly greeted by the musician who is the interviewee for this story: flutist Lori Bell. That Bell is clearly so versatile behind the keys is not a surprise when her family background and musical training are taken into account. Whether she is in formal attire in a classical music setting or dressed in more casual clothes for an outdoor jazz gig, Lori Bell remains steadfastly devoted to her music.

Originally from the Brighton Beach section of Brooklyn, Bell can comfortably be classified as a San Diegan, as she moved out to Southern California with her family when she was 10. She didn't need to go far to find her first mentors: they were her parents, Norman and May Bell.

"My father was an extraordinary trumpet player," said Bell. "He worked professionally his whole career as a big band lead trumpet player in New York City. He actually left home around age 17 and moved to New York to start working. He played in many known bands at the time – Al Donahue, Tommy Ryan, Mel Lewis, and Thad Jones, and worked for a while with Carmen McRae. My mother played the accordion and had an excellent ear."

Lori recalled playing as early as four "on the four-string guitar, which my father taught me – my first songs were "Girl From Ipanema" and "Corcovado." I switched to the six-string at around age 12 – at that time I was a very serious string player – but switched to flute at age 16...which rocked my entire world. It was sort of like seeing stars and hearing bells – knowing that you just found your calling in life. I also started piano around age 20 and work professionally on that instrument as well."

Since Lori performs in both jazz and classical music settings, how does preparation and execution differ between the two?

"The challenges in jazz are many," Bell revealed. "First, you have to be technically proficient on your instrument – that's where classical music comes in handy. Second, there is an enormous amount of theory. Every chord in jazz has the potential to extend up to the 13th, which throws you into another key in the upper extensions of the chord. Also, there is a plethora of different scales and patterns that you need to be fluent in all 12 keys. Then there is the dominant 7th chord, the animal that usually has alterations in jazz, such as the flat9 /

sharp11th / sharp5 / sharp9. This opens up another can of theory worms. Third, once the theory becomes second nature, your improvising has to be developed in order for spontaneity to happen coming from a completely creative and honest place – with of course a signature style and sound. It's an all consuming, life-dedicating art form.

"As far as classical music goes, when I first started studying flute, classical technique and repertoire came up very quickly. My first teacher, Fredrick Baker [at the time he played principal with the San Diego Symphony] was a very hard teacher, who insisted I practice orchestral excerpts, etudes, and repertoire. I did that for a while but always wanted to play jazz and study improvising. So I continued to play chamber music alongside my jazz studies until about seven years ago when I started taking a closer look at the flute and piano repertoire. Wanting more of a technical challenge, I went back to New York to study with my hero, Judith Mendenhall, and decided I wanted to start giving classical recitals and tackling pieces by composers such as Aaron Copland, Robert Muczynski, Hindemith, Schulhoff, Burton, and on and on.

Bell said she "only started to give classical recitals five years ago. I've been a jazz musician my whole career."

And what happens when the lights are dimmed and it's time to kick the performance mode into high gear? "The challenges are technical perfection and the ability to sound spontaneous, relaxed and musical on stage – and to connect with the audience," said Bell.

After her finding her career path with the flute at 16, she got her first residency at 18, "a gig that I held for nine years until the venue closed. It was called the Prophet and it was an international vegetarian restaurant. I played in the most exquisite lobby with a stage and piano." The Prophet was a landmark in City Heights, located in the 4400 block of University Avenue. A restaurant and entertainment center, the Prophet drew health food advocates Gloria Swanson and George Harrison. It was a labor of love for owner Makeda Dread Cheatom, who remains a vital force on the San Diego music scene for her support of world music.

Along with saxophonist Joe Marillo (profiled in the *San Diego Troubadour*, June 2010), the late pianist Shep Meyers brought an East Coast charisma and energy to the San Diego jazz scene. Meyer's portfolio – collaborations with Woody Herman, Anita O'Day, Julie London, Billy Daniels, Terry Gibbs and many others – spoke volumes about jazz in America during the last 50 years. He was an important mentor to Bell in the early phase of her career.

"I had the good fortune of meeting Shep Meyers when I was 19," Bell recalled. "We were introduced by the Musicians Union to play a gig sponsored by CETA, a government organization that funded us to play 28 gigs a month in schools, elementary through high, to demonstrate and talk about jazz. I did this for two years with Shep and three other band members: bassist John Leftwich,



Norman Bell (far right) in the 1940s



The Prophet vegetarian restaurant in the 1970s



Lori Bell with her Prophet family (2nd row down, 3rd from left)

drummer Scott Elam, and vocalist Kevyn Lettau." Leftwich has played on sessions with Chet Baker, Hubert Laws, and Carmen McRae; Scott Elam, described in the March 2007 *Troubadour* issue as a "San Carlos 'funkster,'" has kept the beat in a variety of genres; and the Berlin-born Lettau has emerged as an internationally renowned Brazilian singer.

Bell described Shepard as "a wonderful jazz pianist and an experienced composer and arranger who had just moved to San Diego from New York where he previously worked with Larry Rosen and Dave Grusin in GRP...Grusin Rosen Productions, which back in the '80s was a major record company in New York. Shep did a lot of scoring and arranging for GRP and many other writing projects for radio and TV. He was a mentor and an inspiration to me as an up-and-coming composer and arranger. His writing style inspired two original compositions of mine – "Zara" and "Children's Samba" – two children's songs I recorded in 1989 for the Discovery label. Shep was a very dear friend and is deeply missed by the whole San Diego community; it was a big loss."

After Meyers' death in 2009, the Shep Meyers Music for Literacy Fund was established. Over \$5,000 has been raised toward the Oak Park Elementary School in San Diego. For many years, educators have seen a connection between a musically active child and an increase in math, writing, and reading scores. Hence, the title of the fund.

It wasn't long before Bell's talent was acknowledged by the dean of West Coast jazz journalists, Leonard Feather of the *Los*

Angeles Times. A soft-spoken Englishman, he only gave praise when it was deserved. He was effusive in his accolades for Bell. "Of course I was blown away with the review from Leonard Feather! He gave my first recording, *Love Will Win*, 4 1/2 stars in the *L.A. Times*; truly unbelievable," said Bell.

The great merit of a positive Feather review wasn't lost on the National Academy of Recorded Arts and Sciences, which has gone on to acknowledge Bell and her musical collaborators over the years. The first CD in the initial Grammy ballot nominations was *Love Will Win* with pianist Dave MacKay and bassist Andy Simpkins, with the nomination coming in the category Best New Artist. The CD would be the first of many projects featuring Bell and MacKay. Comfortable in both bebop and bossa nova, MacKay is the link to storied bebop greats Art Tatum, Bud Powell, and Bill Evans as well as the seductive Latin rhythms of Jolito Gilberto, Antonio Carlos Jobim, and Luis Eca. MacKay's blindness did not deter him academically, as he attended Trinity College in Connecticut, Boston University, and several prestigious music programs. MacKay might one day wish to complete an autobiography, as his performance resume reads like a who's who of jazz: Joe Pass, Chet Baker, Shelly Manne, and Bobby Hackett are among the famous names who have shared a concert stage with the 78-year-old MacKay. Bell and MacKay have collaborated on several albums. *Take Me to Brazil* was an 1988 release that featured Bob Magnusson on bass, Duncan Moore behind the drums, John Pisano on guitar, and Melissa MacKay as the vocalist. An original member of the Three Sounds, Simpkins was a consummate professional who played with Sarah Vaughn and George Shearing.

The second CD to receive initial Grammy ballot nominations was the CD *Interplay*. It was also the name of a group that featured Bell, MacKay, and guitarist/vocalist Ron Satterfield, who later performed with the renowned band Checkfield. The categories were in Best Jazz Instrumental Performance of a Group (*Interplay*); Best Jazz Instrumental Solo – Lori Bell ("It's Just Talk"); Best Instrumental Composition – Dave McKay ("Joyful"); Best Instrumental Solo – Dave MacKay ("Joyful").

Bell's third CD to receive Grammy nominations was her first solo album, *Lori Bell*. This CD appeared on the initial Grammy Ballot under the following categories: Best New Artist (Lori Bell); Best Instrumental Composition ("A Heart Is But a Flower"), Best Instrumental Arrangement ("Equinox"), Best Jazz Instrumental Solo ("Cartagena");



Bill Evans Tribute at the Athenaeum in La Jolla



tune),” Bell explained. “I usually do a little talking with the audience as well describing the different musical styles.”

Bell’s concert itinerary for the fall season will allow music lovers the opportunity to see her at a variety of venues in Riverside and San Diego Counties. The Labor Day holiday weekend will commence with an early – and memorable – start when Bell teams up with MacKay at the Merc nightclub in Old Town Temecula on Thursday, Sept. 2, 7:30 p.m. Affectionately called ‘the Merc’ by locals, the concert venue is part of the historic mercantile building, one of the oldest structures in the vicinity and a splendid architectural example of what life was like in Temecula prior to the housing boom.

The third story auditorium of Central Library in San Diego will be the site for a free matinee show featuring Bell and pianist Diane Snodgrass at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, September 12. As part of the continuing concert series at the Central Library, Snodgrass and Bell will be presenting a flute-piano recital with an emphasis on 20th century music. A member of the Palomar College music department faculty, Snodgrass’ emphasis is on Baroque. She has performed locally with the San Diego Master Chorale and the First United Methodist Church of San Diego Masterwork Chorale.

Saturday, September 18, 8pm, will mark the 30th anniversary of Bill Evans’ death. Bell will be part of a special concert at Dizzy’s nightclub, which will honor the pioneering work of Evans, a pianist who cemented his reputation through his 1959 sessions with Miles Davis on the latter’s seminal album, *Kind of Blue*, regarded by many critics as the greatest jazz album of all time. Bell will be part of a trio featuring Magnusson on bass and Tommy Gannon on piano. Profiled extensively in the *San Diego Troubadour* back in August 2006, Magnusson has remained close to the nucleus of the local jazz scene yet enjoys an international following through the time when he was performing with legendary artists Sarah Vaughn and Buddy Rich. Gannon performed behind the antics of Bob Hope and Jerry Lewis, and entertained along side Frank Sinatra, Henry Mancini, and Steve Allen. He also played with bassist Joco Pastorius, of Weather Report fame prior to his death at age 35. Gannon is in his seventh year performing with the Evans tribute trio.

Magnusson and Bell will be teaming up for another free concert on Wednesday, October 13, 7:30 p.m., at the Pacific Beach branch library. Joining the bassist and

flutist for an mixture of standards and originals will be Joe Azarello on piano. A former radio host for the “Piano Masters” program at City College’s Jazz 88 FM, Azarello has performed with artists as diverse as Rich and Chuck Mangione.

On Sunday, November 7, 4 p.m., Bell and Snodgrass collaborate on another Bach to bebop presentation, this time at Greene Music on Miramar Road. A long established piano retailer for over 35 years, Greene Music is also wonderful concert locale for hearing live music.

Bell will close out 2010 with an exotic engagement, and music fans will definitely need to bring along passports. She will be one of the artists participating in an eight-day music gathering in Costa Rica. Titled “Music in Costa Rica: The Rising Stars of Jazz Tour,” the festival will be both informative and intimate; attendance is limited to the first 200. The artists are part of the Resonance Records family.

Joining Bell will be pianist Marian Petrescu from Finland, Swedish guitarist Andreas Oberg, and American vocalist Angela Hagenbach. On its mission statement, Resonance Records “is a division of the Rising Jazz Stars Foundation, a California 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation created to discover the next jazz stars – passionate, brilliant musicians from around the world. We assist and support them through recording, performance opportunities and distribution of their art. Every Resonance CD and DVD is produced without compromise, to create and preserve our artists’ jazz legacy.”

For the complete discography and itinerary of Bell, visit www.loribellflute.com



In the Studio

Best Contemporary Jazz Album.

The San Diego Music Awards, scheduled for September 10, finds Bell’s current Resonance Records CD, *The Music of Djavan*, nominated for Best Jazz Album of the Year. The album is a tribute to the gifted Brazilian artist and composer, Djavan Caetano Vina.

When asked to comment on the current state of San Diego’s jazz scene, Bell’s opinions seem to echo sentiments made by veteran musicians on the local circuit. [“It’s] Sort of dim,” said Bell. “There aren’t nearly as many venues as there were 20 years ago. However, I believe it’s the same all over the U.S....not enough jazz venues.”

Perhaps one way to reverse the trend is to introduce the younger generation to music. Bell is doing her part. “Last year I coached at Skyline Elementary in Solana Beach and really enjoyed working with the kids there. I think I might do it again this fall.”

Another educational outlet is a presentation called “From Bach to Bebop. It could also be called “From Johann Sebastian to ‘Diz.’” The music begins on a refined note until the tempo, as you can imagine, starts to pick up. “My Bach to Bebop program features classical music for the first half [usually beginning with a piece by Bach], followed by a jazz set [usually ending with a bebop



At Dizzy’s, with Joey Carano



At Dizzy’s



At Dizzy’s



Flute lesson with Adan Provincio



Bluegrass CORNER

by Dwight Worden



September Bluegrass

There has been some great stuff for bluegrass guitar players of late. Last month saw a concert by solo guitar phenom David Grier held at Old Time Music store. David, ranked as one of the 10 top guitar players of the decade by *Acoustic Guitar* magazine, presents a truly remarkable solo show. It takes some courage to put on a solo show of flat pick guitar with no singing. But, David can pull it off and remains one of the most respected and admired guitar players of our generation.



Chris Stuart

Coming up this month on Saturday, September 11 from 10:30am to 12 noon, also at Old Time Music store, will be a bluegrass rhythm guitar

workshop taught by Chris Stuart. Chris is the leader of **Chris Stuart and Backcountry** and is a sought after teacher of rhythm guitar. Every serious bluegrass guitar player should spend time studying rhythm techniques, and a workshop with Chris is a good opportunity. The art of rhythm guitar in a bluegrass band is greatly underrated but is perhaps the single most important aspect of a successful band. Working with the bass player, the rhythm guitar player's job is to get the band into "the pocket" and drive the band with that classic bluegrass rhythm.

If one listens to the truly great bluegrass bands, one will invariably find a great, anchoring rhythm guitar player. Give a listen to the early **Bill Monroe and his Bluegrass Boys** recordings anchored by Lester Flatt on rhythm guitar, and to the great work produced by **Flatt and Scruggs**, again anchored by Lester Flatt on rhythm guitar. In the more modern era, give a listen to the **Del McCoury Band** anchored by Del's outstanding rhythm guitar, to the **Seldom Scene** anchored by Dudley Connell's flawless rhythm guitar, or to any of the other great contemporary bluegrass bands. And, give a listen to Chris Stuart's excellent rhythm work on any of the **Chris Stuart and Backcountry** recordings. But be prepared: playing good bluegrass rhythm guitar is not easy. It takes knowledge, technique, and lots of practice, but is worth the effort. The fee for the workshop is \$20. To sign up, contact Old Time Music at (619)-280-9035. You won't regret it! By the way, look for Old Time Music to move to a new and better location sometime his fall.



Serious bluegrass guitar players will also want to check out the new book on Tony Rice just released by Word of Mouth press and written by Tim Stafford of

Blue Highway and Carolyn Wright. Titled *Still Inside, the Tony Rice Story*, this fine book addresses every aspect of the most influential bluegrass guitar player of all time. Yes, there are other great guitar players who have had great influence, ranging from Clarence White and Doc Watson to Bryan Sutton and David Grier, but none has had the influence and longevity of Tony Rice. You will find this very readable book full of tidbits

about Tony, written by his friends and musical colleagues over the years, and you will learn a lot about the sometimes enigmatic and private Tony Rice as well. There are lots of great pictures and an entire chapter on "the antique," which is what Tony calls his 1935 Martin D-28 guitar, which originally belonged to Clarence White. The book can be ordered at: <http://www.tonyricestory.com>.

If you're not totally exhausted from bluegrass, having enjoyed the Summergrass Festival last month, September has a couple of nice bluegrass events coming up as well. Held over the weekend of September 18 and 19 is the 40th annual Julian Bluegrass Music Festival and Banjo and Fiddle contest. The performers include the Gates Hailes Collaboration, Trails and Rails, and the traditional banjo and fiddle competitions.

Coming up the following weekend on Saturday, September 25 will be the first annual Santee Gourmet Food Wine and Bluegrass Festival. Held at the beautiful new Santee Community Park, this event will feature gourmet food and wine from local and regional merchants and will present two outstanding bluegrass bands: **Gone Tomorrow** and **Shirhouse Band**. The action takes place from 5-9:30 pm. For information visit: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Santee-Wine-and-Bluegrass-Festival/303940761520>.

Summergrass, what a great bluegrass festival! **Michael Cleveland and Flamekeeper**, **Chris Stuart, Special Consensus, Bluegrass Etc.**, and all the other bands were outstanding; the weather was perfect, the crowds mellow, and the experience memorable. If you missed it, mark your calendar for next year. Here are few shots from acclaimed photographer Dennis Andersen taken at this year's Summergrass.



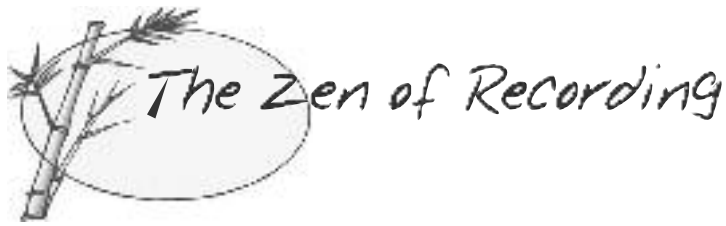
Fiddle Boot Camp w/ Megan Lynch



Trish Gagnon w/ the Jaybirds



John Reischman w/ the Jaybirds



COOL TOOLS THAT RULE, PART 2: THE ACID TEST

All right...last month, we had some fun discussing inner-tubes and submerged spectacles and pretty much skirting around the issue of actually educating and/or informing ourselves about, well...*recording*.

Suffice it to say that I've spent some extra time delving deep into the feature set offered by **SONY Creative Software's ACID Pro 7** (\$399.95 retail, \$299.95 street), which combines full multitrack recording and mixing, MIDI sequencing, and of course, its highly regarded "pick and paint" looping abilities. I've always been a fan of this software's ease of use and quickness in putting together demos and remixes. With this latest version, ACID moves itself into the role of a full-blown DAW (Digital Audio Workstation). Instead of bumping shoulders with the likes of Apple's GarageBand, it's banging elbows with big boys, the likes of Cubase, Logic, and ProTools.

Among the application's many new functions and features are a dedicated mixing console with input busses, enabling complex routing of tracks and effects and facilitating the use of external effects processors for those yearning to work outside of the "box".

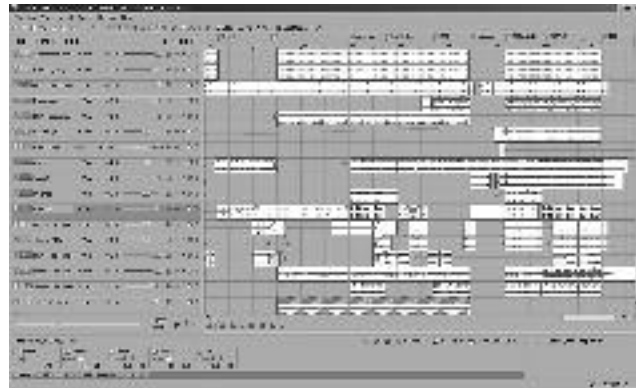
ACID has also heavily bolstered its MIDI features like real time processing and even more precise control over events. Additionally, users can now "freeze" MIDI tracks that are routed to multiple soft synths and render them as .wav files to lighten the load on their CPUs.

Cadence gets its makeover too, with the ability to not only combine multiple tempos and time signatures within a project, but utilizing tempo curves allows you to perform a gradual transition from one tempo to another. Also notable is the ability to import multi-tempo remix files via the Beatmapper tool. A count-in feature has been added (finally!) so there's no need for inserting an extra measure or two at the start of your song.

With all of this functionality, the workspace can quickly become cluttered, so things like nested Folder Tracks are also a welcome element. These can hold

all your drum tracks or vocal takes for example, making them collapsible into one track instead of say, 40. The user interface is also highly customizable, so you can set up all of your "go-to" elements and create an extra efficient workflow, without any of the fat from unused features getting in your way.

Covered in Part 1's review of Sound Forge was Zplane's *élastique* audio time stretching and pitch shifting, allowing dramatic time stretches and pitch-shifts of Beatmapped tracks while retaining



maximum sound quality. Again, I cannot emphasize enough just how much this has improved the sound of one's audio in ACID.

Another great feature (which I hope more products adopt) are interactive online tutorials that can be accessed from within the application. With concise titles like "How to Record Audio," "How to Use an Audio Envelope," and "How to Use Input Busses," it's quite conceivable that you may never need to crack open the included manual or even use the "Help" file!

Eager to put these things to the proverbial test, I installed the program (via SONY Creative's ubiquitous challenge/response method) and opened up a recent file I had created using version 5 of ACID. The wide array of windows seemed ALL come up at once (which wasn't the case, but it was more than I'm used to seeing anyway), making things seem more than a bit daunting. With monitor real estate already at a premium, I was able to quickly tidy things up and could concentrate on how to best utilize things like the Mixing Console. Again, there are a lot of things that come up here, but there are some cool ways to toggle them on or off. I especially liked that you could view all of the tracks here



Sven-Erik Seaholm

with or without the faders, leaving only the track's meter visible.

I pulled up a piece of video and began to score it. Toying with the excellent ACID FX plugin (also known as the ACID Pro Effects Rack powered by iZotope,) was cool, because it's kind of a one-stop

shop of the features you use most often, like EQ, Delay, Reverb and Distortion. I really appreciated being able to hang out in one window and check out all of the possible FX combinations without all of the flitting from window to window. Now if they can just make a customizable "Rack" that would allow access to all of my third-party plugins in one window... that would be on my personal

wish list.

Otherwise, all was just as advertised or better. Veteran users of ACID will feel right at home, with the added features being very welcome and the program's rock-steady performance remaining just as ironclad.

If all of that isn't enough (and really, don't you think it should be?), ACID Pro 7 software includes over 3,000 loops and 1,000 MIDI files for music creation, as well as the Garritan ARIA for ACID Pro player, the Native Instruments Guitar Combos, and Submersible Music KitCore. The ARIA player alone is worth the price of admission with excellent orchestral sounds place right at one's virtual fingertips.

With ACID Pro 7, SONY has taken an already solid performer and made it more capable, more professional, and just more better. No, it's not as simple to use as GarageBand, but that's because it has so very much more to offer. Download a free trial version and see if you don't agree.

Sven-Erik Seaholm is an award-winning independent record producer (kaspro.com), performer, and recording artist (svensongs.com). Catch his live performances at Zel's Del Mar September 4, with Allied Gardens on September 11, and at the La Jolla Open Air Market September 26.

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Hosing Down

by José Sinatra

CHIPPING AWAY, CONSTRUCTING THE TRUTH

Is it just me, or has this been one heck of a weird summer?

When it gets to the point that 10-12% of adults in San Diego actually believe that Superman truly existed and lived in New York City in the thirties, maybe it's time I stopped making up false survey results like this.

Come to think of it, I don't think I'd be too surprised if that spurious assertion were true — I might even knock up the percentages — but I've always considered surveys as suspect and worthless as the Bay City Rollers. Or Sade.

Truth has always seemed easy to distort, and the distortion can be empowering, even profitable. I'd like to see the very word "percent" eliminated from political debates, with so much manipulation and decontextualization and intimations of scholarship. It just tends to hammer home a basic fact that the public is still unable to grasp: that all politicians are at heart greedy, lying miscreants.

Truth is, I got up on the correct side of the bed this morning and am feeling as chipper as I might hope, having revisited in my dreams many of the whoppers I've heard repeatedly during these sullen summer months.

The strange music stories keep going around: John Lennon had originally wanted to call the Beatles the *Rolling Stones*. Dennis Wilson was the real creative genius of the Beach Boys. Paul Simon's musical *Capeman* was originally called *Cartman*. The greatest conductor of the twentieth century was Mantovani. Mama Cass Elliot choked to death on Jimi Hendrix's vomit.

Of course, those are the famous old chesnuts, and they're all true. But the whoppers that seem to have sprung from the likes of these call into question not only the sanity but the humanity of their believers. No doubt you've been hearing that stuff about Wycliff Jean, Steve Tyler, Lady ("I'm gagga for") Gaga, Whitney Houston, and on and on...okay, and about yours truly being an incredibly worthless jerk who goes around telling everybody about the time in 1978 he went to dinner and a concert with Paul and Linda McCartney. Don't believe any of it.

When I'm (oh, by the way, it was March 1979) confronted with so much degeneration of discourse, it wreaks havoc on my frown lines, but sometime during this summer's chill I decided to stay away from idiotic arguments and remain, as I said, chipper.

But then, inevitably, has come the belligerent, drunken fratboy whom I'd never met who suddenly wants to kick my ass to impress his drunken buddies and vacuous *laydeh*. This has far too often brought me to tears.

"Sup, dude?!" (their dialect fascinates me)

"What do you mean?"

"You deaf, faggot? I'm here! I'm here! 'Sup?!" (priceless)

"I'm not gonna fight you..."

"Ah mo kick yo' f--."

"But you're a miracle!" (I've read Carnegie)

"Let's get it own, dude! I'm — I'm what?"

"A miracle. A real live, talking stool sample."

And within a matter of seconds I'm on the pavement, bruised and/or bloody, crying because I got hurt. Because it usually hurts a lot.

Ah, but I suppose it's just because it's such a very strange summer. And it's prob-



The Hose himself: open, honest, nauseating

ably just the calibre of college student San Diego is turning out these days. Either way I feel a sweet nostalgia for those days, when these *feces vivants* were allowed to drink on the beach; sand offers the victim a relatively cushioned embrace. Concrete has always been brutal and tough, so proud of its bad boy reputation; only a fool would ask it to soften up a bit.

It becomes obvious that far too many modern-day Americans (like those ill-mannered students) survey Life's abundant menu and order their own destinies from the *various* section, without even a glance at the offerings listed within *sundry*. As Dr. Stu (Stewart) Pendiss pointed out in 1947's monumental *A Final Flush*, the difference between a card game and a toilet is defined by one's attitude toward his God, the Romantic Ideal, and/or Pee Wee Herman.

This summer also offered me more welcome proof as to the ignorance of the phrase "you can't go home again." It's intended, figurative meaning was blown away, thanks to my Los Angeles friends Craig Ingraham and Deborah Masterson.

Craig (a superb musician/singer/songwriter) had formed a band in L.A., in 1973, to record some of his original songs. Deborah, his girlfriend, was one of his background singers, as was I. (The 19-year-old pianist was named David Benoit, and I think he still plays somewhere today.) So, we rehearsed and recorded in L.A., but curiously did our only live shows down here in San Diego, the last one being at the Starlight Bowl in October of 1973, after which everyone went different ways and many of us lost touch for three decades or so...

On this summer *38 years later*, joined by our original percussionist, the magical Sody Arzea, we did a show once again, at Café Libertalia (thanks, Jesse!). Even our original roadie, Stan Stafford, was back (bless his heart!) and there were moments up on stage with Craig and Deb that I thought I could swear that my soul... oh, how do I say this?... my soul got a woodie. (38 years later and he calls it a woodie? Surf city, here we came.) I thank you one and all, especially the lovely folks who decided to check us out. I'm certainly hoping for more shows in the fall, as my recent meticulous inquiry reveals I am up to 90% more chipper when performing with these dear friends, home again, than when I'm not. The value of love and memories can always grow in hungry hearts, and that's an absolute truth.



RADIO DAZE



by Jim McInnes

NOTES FROM A TALKING APPLIANCE

When you work as "talent" in TV or radio, you tend to think everybody within eye- or earshot knows who you are and where you work. Maybe not.

Recently, my wife, Sandi Banister, was standing beside her car while watering some plants in front of our house. The car has personalized license plates that include the letter-number combination "B1."

A woman strolled past while walking her dogs, saw Sandi's plates, and commented, "Did you know Jeff are Jer are back at B-100?" Sandi replied, "There's no B-100 anymore." "But I just heard Jeff and Jer on there this morning," said the woman. Sandi said, "No, that was the DSC, who are now the morning show on Jack-FM; they used to be on KGB!" "No, it was Jeff and Jer!" the stranger emphasized. Then my wife proceeded to explain that she had worked at B-100 and KFMB-AM from 1984 until 1991. She was there when Jeff and Jer were hired. The duo's show has been off the air for over a year. And KFMB-FM (JACK) used to be Star 100.7 and before that, about 17 or more years ago, it was B-100!

After the woman's dogs finished fertilizing our neighbor's lawn, she turned to Sandi and, unswayed, and said, "I DID listen to Jeff and Jer this morning!"

Okay.

KGB morning show co-host (or Co-host!) Coe Lewis told me recently about some in-house research done a few years ago (when I was the afternoon jock on the now-defunct 103.7 The Planet). She said that the majority of people who recognized my name believed that I was still on KGB, even though I'd been fired there three years earlier! The Planet's program director, Todd Little, strongly believed KGB was scoring ratings points during my show on 103.7 because I was so associated with them.

Now I get emails from people saying they're glad I finally found a job at KFMB. I tell them thanks and that I've already worked there for almost four years! That's why I try to keep my ego from getting too big. I realize that I am just a voice from an appliance.

The Greatest Thing That Ever Happened

...or will happen, depending on when you read this, is the Jazz 88.3 Ocean Beach Music and Art Festival, along Newport Avenue on Saturday, September 11. This event's a must for lovers of adventurous music, whether it's jazz, funk, boogie, blues, or soul.

The lineup is fantastic! 26 bands will play across seven stages! Performing artists include saxophonist Maceo Parker, who made his name alongside James Brown; the cheeky, trombone-heavy New Orleans funk band, Bonerama; trumpet star Gilbert Castellanos and his New Latin Jazz Quartet; the Four Queens of Boogie Woogie, featuring one of my favorite pianists, Sue Palmer, Texas blues



by Peter Bolland

RUNAWAY TRAIN

How do you stop a runaway train? How do you break that racing chain of thoughts and worries and plans and schemes? How do you stop the spinning kaleidoscope of all-possible-scenarios that flood the mind's eye with a dizzying array of fragmented colors and lines that lead nowhere? If the mind is such a powerful part of life, why do we overthink everything to death?

From the perspective of evolutionary biology, it makes sense that the early human beings who worried a lot and excelled at imagining elaborate worst-case scenarios would have a better chance of survival. The hyper-vigilant hominid, perpetually anxious about whether or not there was a saber-toothed tiger in the bushes, was far more likely to survive and pass on his genes than his more lackadaisical brother, you know, the one they call "Tiger Food." Traits like the capacity to worry were naturally selected by the process of evolution. The result? Modern humans have an inordinate capacity to vividly imagine every conceivable negative outcome and spend a lot of time worrying about the worst possible future, a place where everything goes wrong, everything is lost, and everyone hates you. Early humans who worried about scarcity of resources would work harder to store up food. They would envision future problems and work hard to prevent them by creating elaborate plans. As a result, they would be far more likely to survive than their live-for-today neighbors who never worried about a thing and died from easily preventable missteps. We are the children of worriers.

So, here's the problem. We modern humans have plenty of food and adequate shelter and extremely long odds on the possibility of a saber-toothed tiger attack, yet we still carry around with us this vestigial and irrelevant conditioning. Our capacity for worry and fear far outstrips our actual risk factors. The mind, once our greatest asset, is now our greatest liability.

Have you ever woken up at three in the morning, mind racing, thoughts crowding, worries bearing down on you like angry bees? It's dark. Everyone's asleep. You're lying there, perfectly safe in your bed. You're not thirsty and you don't have to pee. There's nowhere to go and nothing to do. And yet there you are, adrenalin-sopped, heart racing, blood pounding, desperately envisioning endless possible negative outcomes, inventing problems and emotionally inhabiting them for absolutely no reason whatsoever. It's all just conditioning playing itself out, echoes of once-useful impulses. There are no saber-toothed tigers.

Maybe it's time to turn these giant brains of ours back on themselves. Maybe we should do a little thinking about thinking.

The first thing you have to do is laugh. It's all sort of silly how the thought-stream sucks us into a vortex of anxiety despite the absence of any legitimate cause. And when you laugh, the death-grip of the mind is loosened. I always worry a little when I visit churches or synagogues or mosques or classrooms or satsangs where no one's laughing, where a desperately serious and self-important air hangs over the entire room and every soul in it. Without laughter, people too easily fall prey to the ever-pervasive thought-stream. When we laugh, the whole charade is exposed and we, for a moment anyway, return to our original selves, free and easy, as we were before these giant brains took over. That's why laughing

singer Marcia Ball, and jazz piano star Geoffrey Keezer.

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PHILOSOPHY, ART, CULTURE, & MUSIC

STAGES

feels so good. It is a glimpse of freedom.

The second thing to do is decide to set into motion some different patterns. Now that the shackles of the busy mind are no longer hidden, it's time to search for the right key to unlock them for good. Techniques like meditation, centering prayer, physical exercise, music, dance, immersion in the beauty of nature, practicing loving kindness toward others — these are all proven and effective methods for breaking the tyranny of the thought-stream. There are also a whole host of other remedies that are far less effective: television, shopping, drugs, alcohol, or any other form of sensual escapism. The problem with these "solutions" is that they tend to create as many or more problems than they solve. Some people realize this after the first bong hit. For others, it takes 30 years of addiction for the bloom to fade from the rose.

My friend, the spiritual teacher Will Newsom, uses the analogy of a compass. When we are trapped in the thought-stream, drowning in currents of worry and fear, it's as if our compass needle is jitterbugging all over the place. How do we get the needle to settle back to truth north? How do we restore our original inner peace, our naturally joyful equilibrium? We cannot force the needle to go where we want it. In other words, you can't solve the problem of over-thinking with more thinking. "A problem cannot be solved," said Einstein, "with the same consciousness that created it." Like trying to see your own eyes or bite your own teeth, we cannot cure the mind with the mind.

Wayne Dyer writes that a sign he saw on the wall of a church basement where he attended his first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting burned into his psyche like a brand: "Our best thinking got us here." Relying on the mind to cure the problems of the mind is a fool's errand.

Does it help to replace bad thinking with good thinking? Certainly. Does it help to set positive intentions and craft a plan of action? Naturally. Right thinking is a necessary preliminary step in the process of restoring sanity. But it is only a preliminary step. Right thinking alone is insufficient.

Instead, Newsom and many others suggest a far simpler approach. Quiet down, rest in the silence and wait.

You don't have to fix anything or solve any problems. That's just more mental manipulation. Instead, sink beneath the mind. For most people, meditation and centering prayer are the best paths to this goal and are profoundly effective if given a chance. When we meditate or practice centering prayer, we practice presence in this now moment and drop down beneath the level of thought. Deepak Chopra calls it entering the gaps between thoughts. Don't try to stop your thoughts. Resisting them only makes them stronger. Instead, simply notice them, laugh, and settle down like a rock sinking to the bottom of a pool and watch your thoughts slide by above you on the surface as if you were watching clouds drift by in the sky. You are not the clouds; you are not your thoughts. In the content-free, thoughtless silence your compass needle will naturally return to true north all by itself, through no effort of your own. In the same way that we do not consciously digest our own food, grow our own hair or heal our own cuts, inner peace is not an achievement of the mind. It happens only when you break free from the tyranny of the mind.

Great spiritual teachers from Jesus to Yoda all make the same promise: peace is possible — as individuals, as families, as communities, and as a planet — if we somehow learn to get off of this crazy, runaway train.

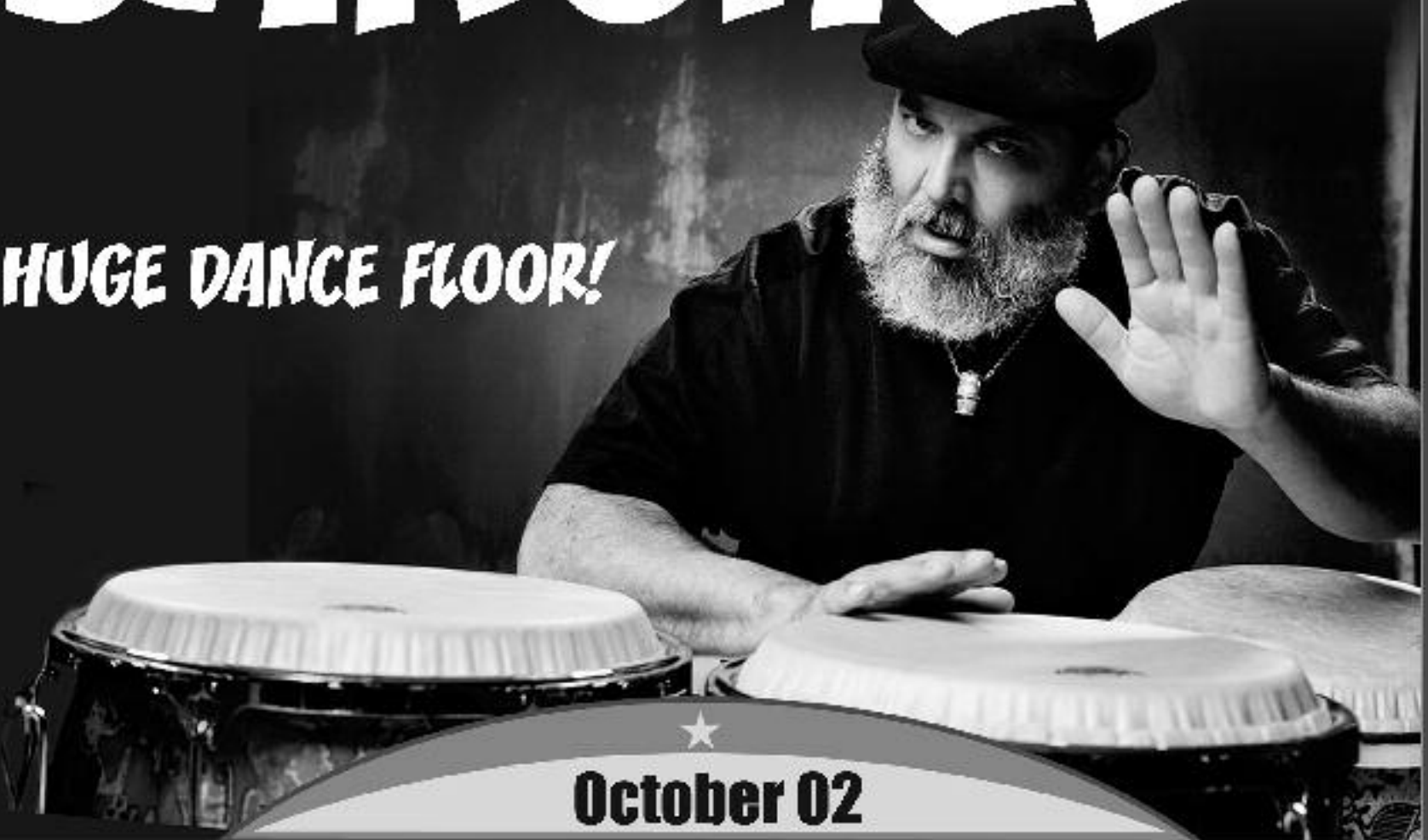
Peter Bolland is a professor at Southwestern College where he teaches eastern and western philosophy, ethics, world religions, and mythology. After work he is a poet, singer-songwriter, and author. He also leads an occasional satsang at the Unity Center and knows his way around a kitchen. You can find him on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/peter.bolland.page or write to him at peterbolland@cox.net



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by Terry Roland

David Wilcox Sings the Language of the Heart

There's something energizing about originality. Talking with David Wilcox for an hour is a reminder of how the first discovery of truth feels, as though it's been mined and the gold is just lifted out of the earth. There's a noticeable absence of cliché, ideology, and parroted language. While David is coming from a place of spirit, he is not a shaman or priest. He is a songwriter who considers music a force of healing, a natural medicine best experienced first hand, soul to soul, and heart to heart, being to being. An example of this is his 2009 release, *Open Hands*, which he recorded solo on an analog 12-track tape. His upcoming release, *Reverie*, brings a new diversity in narrative and style. In our recent conversation, David spoke at length about the relationship of music to his life and his own discovery of a faith that transcends religion found in personal creativity.

San Diego Troubadour: What's been happening lately?

DW: I'm getting ready for a tour. I just finished doing the Rocky Mountain Folk Festival. It was a good experience. It opened me up to new song ideas. I was there teaching and performing and suddenly I have songs to dream about. I can hear them coming in the distance.

SDT: You were teaching as well?

DW: Yes. This happens when I teach. My music is new to me right now. At the workshop I can't cover everything, but I like to get into the quirkiness of the music. The songs are a kind of musical navigation.

There's this place where the heart cracks open to the subtle variables that help steer my life. This way I don't miss my story. The song can come in and give a window to how my heart can feel. You know, life is a chance for a bold adventure. Songs wake me up to that. Suddenly, I feel I want to make music out of my day and out of my time here. It still does that for me, more than ever. The songs I write direct me deep into the heart. They tell me what I want, that thing in my life that keeps my dreams going. I find that I can be the go between for the subtle yearnings of my heart and my conscious mind. It becomes an oasis of joy.

SDT: How has your songwriting changed over the years?

DW: You know, for a while, when I was younger, my life was about the songs. Now, the songs are about my life. I came to a place where my relationship with my wife feels like a song; my time with my son feels like a song; my relationship with my neighbor feels like a song. The song used to be a place I'd go to escape. Now, the song comes to me. They help me face my life and bring me into my own skin. Now, the songs bring me to my life. They become something to live up to.

SDT: Is your songwriting influenced by spiritual views such as Buddhism or Christianity?

DW: I'm aware of the religions. But, for me, it's just something fun to know about. It's like using different language. I'd like to scratch out the word, "god" and replace it with music. What you give a song it is kind of like a gift, like wrapping a present. You wrap it in a story so when it's opened up, you find what the song is really about. That's the gift. For the listener then, there's a sense of discovery and it becomes their own. Like a song on the new album, a simple story of three brothers who are confused by what their father is doing. The father smiles at them and soon the song unfolds to be one about Jerusalem.

SDT: You've described a lot about the inspirational side of songwriting. What about the craft?

DW: I find the time spent working at it is a way of making the song true. It's that intense focus. There's a sympathetic vibration with the audience. It leads to a higher level of craft. It shows respect for the listener. It intensifies the transformation at the spirit level that informs the song. If you could graft it, the song would start going up a steep slope. It gets more complex and as more time passes, the song becomes simpler and beautiful until some other whisper starts speaking through. The song becomes truer. With good craft, the song sounds like

it just happened.

SDT: How does the writer's ego work for or against this?

DW: I think in the big picture the original motivation doesn't matter. It's like people who go surfing. It may not be for the right reason. But, the ocean is so big, the currents so deep, it doesn't matter why they're there. The ocean will work on them, inform them of its depth. It's the same with songwriting. You start writing because you want to be this or that, but then, it's like emotional alchemy. You may come at it for selfish reasons. For me, it was James Taylor's fault when I first heard the song, "Golden Moments." [sings] Now I gathered up my sorrows/and I sold them all for gold/and I gathered up the gold/and I threw it all away. You know, you can take the most painful, debilitating experience and something beautiful can come of it. It becomes healing. Life becomes not something to get over, but you work on it, and it works you. It's like when you first play guitar. You think you have two things going on. There's your left hand, then there's your right hand, but it's really one thing. When you get inside the song, the experience that brought it about and the song itself are really one thing. Writing keeps a balance. It's about balance. You say, "wait a minute. Why is music in my life in the first place?" The reason for writing becomes clearer and clearer until it's so much more fun. There's no gatekeeper, no institution or reason for the music. The beauty of the music can be so humbling.

SDT: You've thought a lot about the reason we make music and write songs.

DW: Yeah. It really does destroy your ego. It's important to do something impossible. There's nothing more impossible than music. You know, it destroys your ego. The only thing that keeps the music from really happening is your "self."

SDT: When it comes to ego, it seems to keep us from doing so many of the right things, be it from a Buddhist or a Christian perspective....You know, like the idea of love your neighbor as yourself.

DW: It's also hard because with something like that, it's a directive. But it's more a matter of being than loving. This influences behavior and the love takes care of itself. No need for the dogma. Don't love your neighbor, be your neighbor.

SDT: Do the spiritual teachings all come down to something universal for you? Like the oft used cliché, "all paths lead to the same destination."

DW: In the world religions, there's great beauty. It's amazing – the similarity, the connection. Yet to say that to someone just starting out is another thing. We all have a river to cross. There are many boats. There's the Jesus boat, there's the Buddha boat. But, we don't want to get stuck deciding which boat is the best. Or, it's like climbing a mountain. If someone tells, you can take all paths and you're just starting out, it's confusing. It's important to take one and stick to it. Inside the different faiths there is great commonality, but outside there all of these differences. And we're left with this wonderful conundrum and sometimes the messenger gets confused with the message. Bruce Cockburn said about those who know can't really say it and those who say it, don't really know [laughs].

SDT: Tell me about writers out there who are taking a similar approach to yours. Who would you say are your influences and kindred spirits?

DW: Most of them are not musicians! There are a lot of musicians I love to hear. I may disagree with some, but if I hear someone get vulnerable; if they speak in song from that place where they are cracked open; if they can write about what they're afraid of, where they find joy and how it surprises them, then I check off the box and think that this is a good person who will always be my friend. Then, I never see them in the same way. It's like that song chose them. A lot of times I'll discover something unique

in the song's meaning, something that really moves me, something with wonderfully complex overtones and the writer doesn't know and didn't intend what it inspired in me.

SDT: Do any artists you admire in this way come to mind?

DW: I was doing the song school a few days ago and there was this guy there who started writing songs at 60 years old. He wrote this spectacular song. I asked him if I could learn it. I shaped it a little bit and sent it back him. I felt like, "okay, I could say it like this..." It's a song that breaks the rules but holds this story that's too hard to touch, yet is holds up lightly, like this beautiful vision. Great songs really do this magic trick like what would happen when the magician looks in the hat and is surprised that the rabbit really is there.

SDT: When you say story what do you mean?

DW: Well, I was talking with Carrie Newcomer a while ago. We laughed about the perception that songs need to be "about something." Sometimes songs aren't about anything at all.

SDT: Are you talking about experience as opposed to reporting?

DW: I have friends who are into things completely different from me. I have friends who golf. They get into it on a deep mystical level. When I talk with them, they're surprised that I know what they're talking about. But, really, all I have to do is cross out the word music and replace it with golf. I have a wonderful neighbor, Danny Dreyer, who's written a book called *Chi Running*. It's a back door to spiritual practice for people who run, starting with Tai Chi and looking at the body's own expression of energy before the body was actually there. He teaches how to be in alignment with that energy – how not to fight yourself but to apply everything you experience. What we Americans need are back doors into a beautiful experience of connectedness without the tired old language that tries to turn it into marketing.

SDT: Tell me about your latest recordings.

DW: My latest was released last year called *Open Hands*.

SDT: It was done in analog. Can you tell me why?

DW: Yes. We used old-school 16-track recording. It kept us honest. No tricks, no easy edits. It made the performance real. The first track is called, "Dream Again." Once you've heard it a few times, you'll notice there's a hail storm in the middle of the song as we were recording. It sounds like really big brushes on a really big snare. Just before the song drops down to a quiet verse, the hail storm stops. If it hadn't stopped at just that moment, we would've had to re-do the recording. It captured a beautifully realized momentum on tape, a sense of urgency.

SDT: What about the latest?

DW: No one's heard it yet. It's just been mastered. It's much more cynical than I've been in the past. Like a song that states how institutional religion ruins everything. It's the first time I've written in characters. You know, Randy Newman and Richard Thompson write through characters. They may write about something they disagree with but it tells a story. There's a song called "They Call It Torture, We Call It Freedom." I'm singing about protecting America and just by the way we protect it, it's no longer what it once was. I didn't used to write this way, through characters. I was always a little too fearful of being misunderstood.

SDT: Well, David, thank for your time. I look forward to seeing your shows in San Diego and L.A.

DW: Thank you. It's been fun.

David Wilcox will be performing at AMSD Concerts on Saturday, September 11, 7:30pm. 4650 Mansfield St., Normal Heights.



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- Accordion – Black and white Italian made; old, belonged to grandma



Tap dancer, continued from page 8

her tap shoes, as she glides across the floor. Tapping on the balls of her feet, she gracefully sways her arms at her sides, raising them high overhead as she leans back on her heels to tap out a more forceful line. She brings her right foot forward for a rat-a-tat-tat that seems to put an exclamation point on a statement she just made.

While Olio might be something of a history lesson, Vorce's other show, the Cherries Jubilee, is her homage to the halcyon days

of the Harlem Renaissance. She designed Cherries Jubilee to recreate the shows at the Cotton Club, Harlem's premier nightclub during the middle decades of the twentieth century. In these Cotton Club routines the Cherries Jubilee chorus girls swirl large boas or use large ostrich feather fans to cover, reveal, and cover up again their sequined outfits and fishnet stockings. The Cherries Jubilee revives burlesque when it was a little bit naughty, when things were performed with a bit of a wink and a nod.

Vorce's third show, Groove on Tap, is more paired down and features Vorce as she

taps and taps some more. She developed the showcase with drummer Toby Ahrens. Since their premier show at Hot Money Love in 2007, the two have added to and developed Groove on Tap. She performs what might be considered traditional tap dancing as well as incorporating different rhythms not normally associated with tap, such as Brazilian and world rhythms.

Vorce is planning a number of upcoming shows for all three of her projects. "I'm so pleased that I have a three of these projects," she says. "And I'm so lucky that this is what I do, that dancing is my career."



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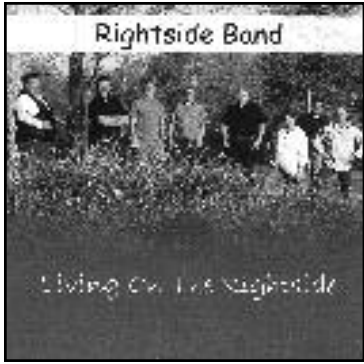
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Rightside Band Living in the Right Side

by Frank Kocher

San Diego's Rightside Band has been around for over a decade, but under the name of the Gospel Review Vocal Band. The contemporary Christian/gospel-rock band changed their name, but not their approach, a couple of years ago. The group was put together in the late '90s by Jim Burnett, their manager and producer, and his wife Linda Lee, who is the featured singer in a vocal quartet. A band of supporting musicians, including long-time drummer John Watts provide the musical backing for the spirited sounds that have been featured in numerous county churches, festivals and coffee-houses. The old band and Linda Lee have released discs previously, and the new one, under the new name, is *Living on the Right Side*.

The ten songs are covers of Christian folk-rock and gospel songs by a number of established genre songwriters. Recorded in "the upper room" on several of the tracks there is a live-in-the-studio sound, joyful and inspired (and with the instruments echoing together, buried by the keyboards). No big problem, though, when one remembers that this is a big band that plays in churches; it often sounds like it was recorded in one.

Gospel starts off with "Living for the Moment," as snare drum shots set up a vigorous foot-stomp; Linda Lee sings about living the righteous life. The three male harmony backups give her plenty of support throughout, and on "Rightside of the Dirt" there are vocal tradeoffs. "When you wake up in the morning, no matter if you hurt/Be glad you're still alive and on the right side of the dirt." This one has some old-South, country-style gospel going for it, reminding the listener that "Jesus still saves." "Eagle Song" is a harmony vocal, different than the other music on the disc, a folk hymn that seems to float, with a nice arrangement that overcomes the harmonies being off just a bit. A couple of church-rocking country-style tunes follow: "Get Up in Jesus' Name" and "Have You Traveled with the Lord Lately?" On the latter, Linda Lee is in best voice on the disc, clear and commanding while she talks up a sermon worth of lyrics as the guitar plays a Creedence riff.

God, of course, loves rock and roll, and "How Long" is a boogie blues that serves as a reminder of just how much both rock and blues owe to the church house, as the gospel lyrics mix with blues. "How long must I wander/before I finally get home?" The Rightsiders pull out all of the stops on the rocker "I'm Loving Life," a highlight that uses keyboards and drums to pound out a beat as Linda Lee leads the vocal charge.

Fans of contemporary Christian music and gospel rock, and of bands like the Gauthier Vocal Band should find much to enjoy on *Living on the Right Side*. The Rightside Band does a good job of getting their message out on some entertaining material. www.rightsideband.com



Christy Bruneau Somewhere in the Middle

by Frank Kocher

San Diego country-rock singer Christy Bruneau has been on hiatus for a while, getting married and having a child. During a break of over four years, she has continued to write music, and her new full length disc, *Somewhere in the Middle*, offers songs written over a decade.

The new CD was recorded locally by Tom Andrews, who co-wrote several of the songs with Bruneau and plays multiple instruments. Bruneau's vocal style is like Shawn Colvin with a bit of country twang; she has also been compared to Natalie Merchant, with an easy, melodic clarity that isn't full of drama. The band here (mostly Andrews, guitarist Andy Lohr, and drummer Nathan Moon Swift) rocks the house with mixed results.

Power guitar chords usher in "Time," while Bruneau tells a slice of life about "past and old friends" and "all the girls getting married and having babies." Not a country song, and the blues-rock edge serves notice that this isn't a soft, folk-oriented affair. "Lay Me Down" is a pleasant country shuffle that would be a highlight, but suffers greatly from an arrangement that features poorly tuned, dissonant steel guitar by Andrews, whose playing is good elsewhere. Sometimes letting a National steel wander a little off will make for rustic authenticity on an old blues tune, but this one sounds all wrong. Everybody's rocking again for "Get You Out of My Mind," as Bruneau gives a drinking lover the heave-ho, nearly swamped by the layered sound of wah-wahs, background singers, and keyboards. The vibe for "2 a.m." is much quieter, as she is mixed hot over a nice, mysterious sounding acoustic guitar and drums. The atmosphere for her tale of dark thoughts in the dark of night is perfect.

The disc is unevenly mastered, and the recording mix is muddy on several tracks. On others, it is sharp and clear with good separation.

A good example of the crossover style of the music overall is "She Says," a good country ballad given a bit of rock-up. The storyline, about female friends who sing "Hey, I'm not a mess/I just want one kiss/Is there anything wrong with this?" The song works. "Angels of Mercy" is mastered for some reason at a volume level so far down that listeners will be grabbing their stereo dials. After that, the song has a catchy hook. On "Hey Now," Bruneau's vocal, buried in the previous tune, is almost too hot as she is singing a song probably best realized as a soft folk ballad. An acoustic version of "Time" closes matters, a good idea as the words hit home more without a band to compete with.

Fans of country-rock and female vocalists should find much of interest on *Somewhere in the Middle*. This aptly named crossover-style disc shows that Christy Bruneau has written some good music and promises to do more of the same.



Colin Clyne Doricana

by Frank Kocher

Folk-rocker Colin Clyne is originally from Scotland and though he has relocated to Southern California, the roots of his music remain in the green highlands. His new CD is *Doricana*, a title that says a lot – the style of the music and the sound of the singer blend elements from both sides of the pond.

The 13 songs on the disc were recorded local producer/engineer Alan Sanderson, a veteran whose board talents help Clyne achieve the most from his material. The overall sound is primarily acoustic, with steady guitar support by James Hood throughout and judicious use of percussion, keys, and Dennis Caplinger's banjo and fiddle touches. Clyne wrote all of the tunes, with help on one from Hood, and they are a mix of stories, observations, and love messages – sung to country/folk ballads in his strong Celtic accent.

"Pockets and Envelopes" has interesting lyrics, about how the "tramps on the streets well known as lords," but there are stretches where it is difficult to decipher the words – printed lyrics would have helped. On "Traditional Song," Clyne sings about his homeland, following strong acoustic guitar figures by Hood to chant the chorus.

The structure on these tunes is similar to many of the others on the disc; after he sings a couple of verses over subdued guitar licks, the simple, repeated chorus line comes, sometimes with a "na na na" or a "la la la" melody scat. Repeat, and after repeating the third chorus, end. One problem with songs with a similar beat, structure, and vocal sound is that it can become like a visit to the ice cream store, getting many different minor variations on the same flavor. Thanks to Clyne and the musicians, that flavor isn't vanilla.

The single on this disc is "Into My Garden," and it is a catchy treat. This tune is about how Clyne has opened up his life to a new love, with good imagery. The sound is fuller and more robust than other tracks on the disc, thanks to organ and full band, and the hammered-home chorus sticks with the listener. While Clyne generally avoids using any Doric dialect on the disc, he comes closest on "Crying at the Sky," which has a Celtic folk vibe. "Dance with Her" is slower, a folk lament that delivers a simple, haunting melody, and amounts to a sleeper highlight. "Hey I Miss You Too" comes after some slower filler tracks with cello and keys, turning things around with banjo and cajon-pounding percussion, as a studio crowd claps along.

Doricana has its feet in two worlds. It is Americana roots music, pleasant folk with country underpinnings. Add Colin Clyne's distinct taste of Scotland to the music and the combination is unusual and distinctive.



Peter Sprague Calling Me Home

by Bart Mendoza

There is no doubt that guitarist Peter Sprague is one of the most important musicians to emerge from San Diego's music scene over the past 30 or so years. Amazingly prolific, in addition to his solo career, he's a popular sideman and an accomplished producer, resulting in one seriously impressive discography that's seen him work with everyone from Sean Watkins of Nickel Creek to trumpeter Gilbert Castellanos, pianist Mike Wofford to busking popsters the Wrong Trousers.

Known for his instrumental prowess, Sprague's new album, *Calling Me Home*, is also a collaborative effort, a theme album of sorts, centering around vocal-led songs rather than guitar. A true all-star project, the disc features ten Sprague originals, given voice by some of his favorite singers: Kevyn Lettau, Allison Adams Tucker, Leonard Patton, Lisa Hightower, and Kate Fuller. That the backing musicians include Sprague, drummer Duncan Moore, bassist Gunnar Biggs, pianist Josh Nelson, and conga player Tom Aros (Fattburger), gives an indication of the caliber of musicianship on display here.

Stylistically, *Calling Me Home* is an eclectic album. Ballads rub shoulders with Brazilian samba, rock with jazz, and it's all tied together by Sprague's stellar playing. While the main focus here is the vocals/lyrics, fans of Sprague's fretwork won't be disappointed. Indeed, the album is a wonderful display of his talent. He offers up nylon string, understated counter melody, in one of the album's best tracks, the samba flavored "Cantar." Topped by a wonderfully rhythmic guitar solo, the song ends on a terrific bit of scat singing from Lettau.

The title track is also of particular note. Spargue is the rare guitarist that truly understands the magic of arrangements and that sometimes, less is more, the tune focusing on Patton's soulful vocals and Nelson's piano, including the solo. But it's Sprague who shades the mood with just the right chords and some nice picking. As nostalgic a tune as its title implies, Patton's vocals bring out every bit of sentiment in the lyrics by Randy Phillips (who contributes to six songs on the disc). This sounds like a lost classic, a ballad with a timeless feel that would play well in a jazz bar circa 1961 or 2010.

A bit more left field is "The Power of Rock," an uptempo number featuring shared lead vocals from Patton and Hightower, with Sprague on electric guitar. Apparently inspired by a Jack Black quote, the album features lyrics along the line of "I ain't no rocket scientist, I got the power to rock," making for a nice sonic, as well as lyrical, shift on the album and a track that's a lot of fun.

Whether you're a longtime fan of Sprague's work, or of guitar in its various forms, *Calling Me Home* is a solid album, a worthy addition to his recorded canon and your music collection.



For Strangers & Wardens Retrograde

by Mike Alvarez

For Strangers and Wardens is a collaboration between English-born singer/songwriter Tim Mudd and Wisconsin transplant Cody Williams. The group's unusual name is taken from a placard in Boston's Old North Church. The church's interior layout features box pews that were reserved for the local families who came to worship, but there was one that was designated for the use of visitors and wanderers. The sign on that particular box simply reads "For Wardens and Strangers". The impression it made on Mudd was profound and it stayed with him when he came back to San Diego. When he and Williams started performing and writing a couple of years ago, he felt that it was an apt name for the group because, as he explains, "This is who our music is for. Whether you're a fan of music or simply looking for a little comfort in song, we write and perform these songs for you. Our only hope is that you take from the experience whatever brings you the most peace and understanding. Nothing more, nothing less." And true to his word, the vibe is contemplative and soothing, the words reflective. Their first release is an EP-length recording comprised of five songs in the Americana genre. The sound is predominantly acoustic and the arrangements are spare, more than ably fulfilling their function of showcasing the vocals and lyrics. Mudd's guitar and Williams' mandolin are the main instruments, backed by the rhythm section of David R. Nordgren on bass and Clayton B. Payne on drums. Vocalist Jessica Hull rounds out the studio lineup.

The country-inflected "Stay With Me" kicks off the CD, setting the tone with its mid-tempo beat and natural, unforced vocal performance. As it progresses, the arrangement swells into a full band sound with some electric guitar licks sprinkled in for flavoring. Williams' mandolin takes the lead in "Blame and Alternatives," a song propelled by a train-like rhythm. As the words tell of the various paths life can take and their consequences, subtle organ chords behind the band provide mood and texture. A slow and dramatic intro sets the tone for "Wish I Knew," a song that relies heavily upon the bass for its anchor. It progresses through a number of rhythmic changes and has a subtle backing vocal arrangement that perfectly complements the mandolin melodies that run throughout. The leisurely pace continues on "Missed You," a plaintive waltz-time ballad whose main theme is nicely summed up in the title. It's all too apparent that the singer is speaking from personal experience. "Carry On" is a very apt note to end on. The sound is uplifting even though the lyrics still retain a certain poignancy. After a leisurely beginning, the tempo picks up to reflect the hope and acceptance that is being expressed.

This is honest and straightforward music, stated directly. While relaxed in sound, it is meticulously arranged. Every part counts. Fans of folk, country, Americana, and acoustic music in general will find much to appreciate. This online-only CD and a couple of bonus tracks can be heard for free at: <http://www.myspace.com/forstrangersandwardens>.





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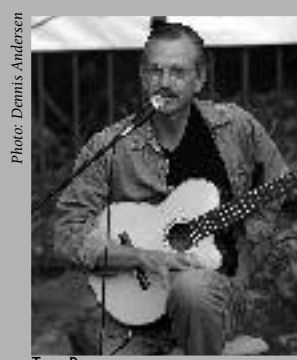
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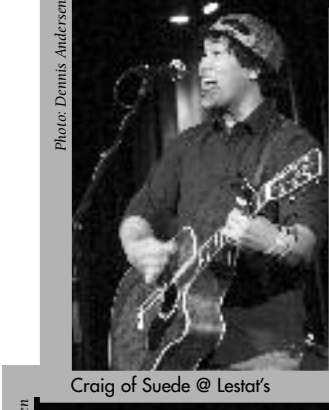
Faultline @ monthly NCBFC meeting



Rosi Golan @ Lestat's



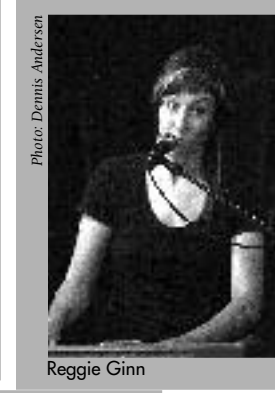
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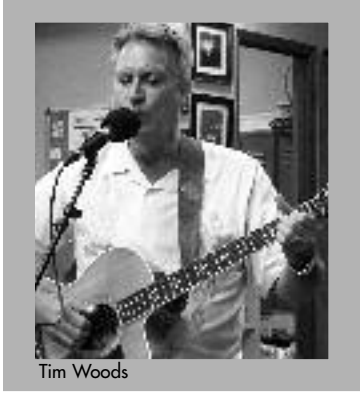


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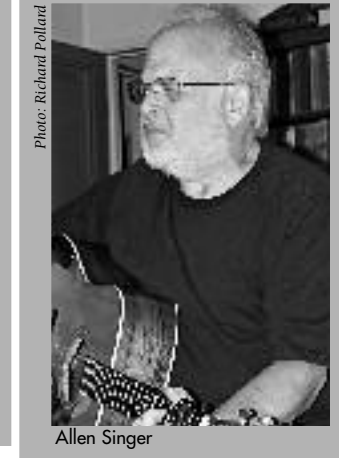
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