

# T SAN DIEGO ROUBADOOR

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



May 2003

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# HATFIELD RAIN



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# welcome mat



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## MISSION

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 folk, country, roots, Americana, gospel, 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.

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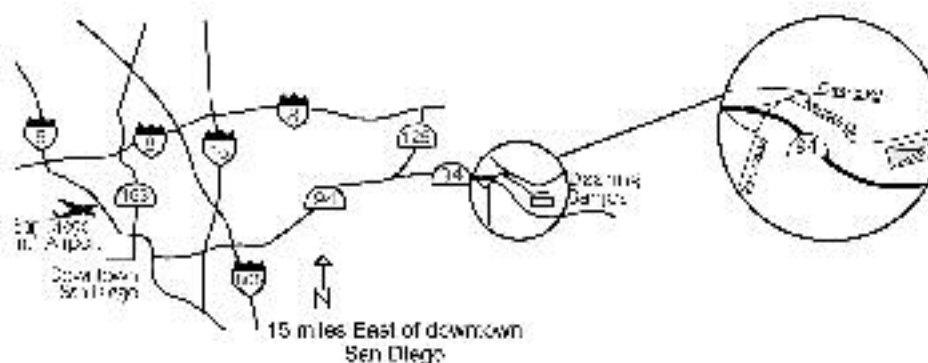
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## full circle

# Indian Joe Stewart: Local Music's Little Big Man

by Lyle Duplessie

Hidden amongst the boulders and brush high atop Mount Woodson is the lodge of one of local civilization's stellar musicians, Joseph Stewart. Those who have made music with him, and there's a heap many musicians who have, know him as Indian Joe. Part musician, part mystic, this noble savage has been a colorful feature in the music scene for many moons.

Born in New Brunswick, Canada of Scottish and Native American parents, Indian Joe learned at an early age to follow his Indian wit and instincts. Joe describes the small, isolated village of his boyhood days as "having more moose than people." When not much older than a papoose, he received his first of many visions. In this vision he saw a guitar, a pool table, and a motorcycle. At the time, of course, he didn't understand it, and there was no tribal shaman around to interpret. When he told his family elders about it, their response was to take the boy to the doctor, who prescribed some big pink pills. So much for white man's medicine! But in time this vision would take Indian Joe down a trail of music and adventure.

Although there was a piano in the parlor of Joe's boyhood home, it was seldom used. In fact his very practical businessman father didn't want his son to have anything to do with music. When about six years old, Joe met a neighbor who lent the youngster a little no-name dime store guitar. It wasn't long before the boy began to discover on his own the musical secrets hidden in that little flat

top. Punished for playing the contraption at inopportune times, which was just about most of the time, the little brave nevertheless felt it was still worth all the risk.

As fate would have it, and though oblivious to it, much of what his father did seemed to direct young Joe more and more toward realizing the musical portion of his vision. Since his family owned a furniture store, he was in one of the few homes for miles around that had a television. With it Joe vividly recalls seeing Elvis' appearance on the *Steve Allen Show*. In 1958 he received a build-it-yourself crystal radio set for Christmas. Soon Joe learned how to pull in rock 'n' roll music from the American side of the U.S.-Canadian border. About 1961 when Joe was 13, his parents reluctantly bought him his own guitar. As he recalls, it was "classically unplayable." Many of us know the kind: inch-high action, flexible non-reinforced neck, impossible to keep in tune. It was just the kind of monster seemingly built with the sole purpose of dissuading any young, aspiring artist from fulfilling a musical dream. Yet Joe learned from this guitar that it was much more about the music in the player's mind and heart than even the playability of the instrument. In time Joe got this guitar to sing as few could have done.

About this time his parents thought Joe needed the civilizing influence of a proper English-style boarding school. Of course they wouldn't let him take his guitar along, but little did they imagine that he would meet plenty of kids at the school with guitars. He soon met a student with a guitar who couldn't

play a lick. Joe struck a deal with the kid—he would teach him how to play in exchange for use of the guitar. Once a day at 5 p.m. the top ten hits would be on the radio. Relying on his Indian ingenuity and keen senses, Joe could listen to a song just one time, then play it note-for-note. Surf guitar instrumentals were the rage at the time, and this music gave Joe plenty of opportunity for exercising his guitar playing skills.



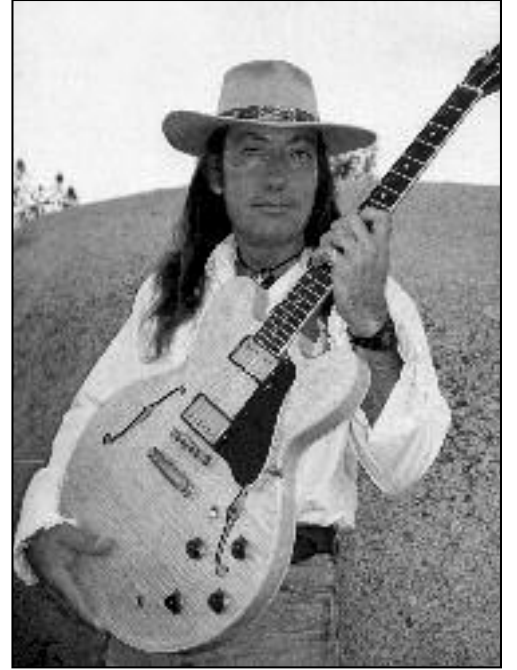
In the spring of 1962 Joe and his parents took a trip to England. That's when he first heard of the Beatles. When their music reached the New World in late '63 and early '64 he was primed, prepped, and prepared for their impact. With the British Invasion, Joe was teach-

ing students at the boarding school music by the Beatles, Stones, Kinks, Dave Clark Five, and others, always in exchange for the use of their instruments.

Also, while at the school, Joe was put in charge of its newly acquired pool table. Experience at the table would provide Joe with a lucrative way to earn some extra wampum down future trails. By the time Joe and the school parted company, he had become legendary for his guitar and pool-playing prowess.

After escaping the reservation-type life of college in the early '70s, Joe realized that music wasn't in his future on the Canadian side of the border. He took to the road on his motorcycle, guitar strapped to his back, and traversed the U.S. He spent time shopping his skills in Nashville and Austin. The culture and timing in those cities weren't right for a long-haired, clear-eyed Indian type like Joe. So rather than making good music, the situation only made for bad medicine. It was time to break camp.

In the summer of '78, Joe set up his teepee in San Diego. He's been here since. He has passed on his considerable skills



as a master guitarist in both technique and theory to countless students around the county. Moreover, he's a quick and clever lyricist, tune smith, and arranger. His absolutely stunning and brilliant ability as a composer and guitarist can be heard by those fortunate enough to get their hands on a copy of his acoustic, finger-picking masterpiece, *Visions of the Southwest*. Over the decades Joe has been a visionary bandleader as well as a solid, faithful partner in such outfits as Ricochet, the Legends, Tumbling Dice, the Hygh Lonesome Band, and Indian Joe and the Chiefs.

If you or someone you know is looking to improve their guitar chops, bone up on theory, or come up with a great solo artist or band for just the right occasion, send Indian Joe a smoke signal or, better yet, e-mail him at [indianjoe1@hotmail.com](mailto:indianjoe1@hotmail.com).

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# Recordially, Lou Curtiss

Well, as you're reading this, the 30th Annual Roots Festival is history, but as I'm writing it, it's still a week and a day away. You're all probably talking about how good everyone was, but I'm mostly going to talk here about a few people that should have been here for Number 30.

**Hank Bradley and Cathie Whitesides:** These are two of the nicest people you'll ever want to know. Hank is, in my opinion and I think a lot of people agree with me, just the best revival old-timey fiddler to come out of my generation yet he hasn't gotten nearly the credit he's got comin'. Cathie is a super Irish and Scottish fiddler. Of course they both play a wide variety of other music, and their work with Frannie Leopold in the Balkan Café Orchestra is something you never get tired of. At least I don't. I want this group to record a CD and make lots of money. Then they'll be so grateful to me for suggesting it that they'll come to the Roots Festival every year into the foreseeable future. They'll be here next year if I have to kick local butt to make it happen. So many others should have been here too, because they've been a big part of this festival's history.

**Sam Hinton** performed at all of the Roots Festivals up until last year (only Curt Bouterse is in that category now), then retired on me. San Diego is certainly poorer for his not perform-

ing any more.

**Del Rey** has been a part of so many festivals and is one of the better blues revival singer/guitarists. She'll be back in the future. Add to that **Utah Phillips, Jon Bartlet, Ray and Ina Patterson, Sam Chatmon**, and so many others who came so many times and always brought something new.

Lately I've been going through all the tapes of those early festivals and playing them on my *Melting Pot* radio show ([www.world-musicwebcast.com](http://www.world-musicwebcast.com)). I'll be doing that throughout this 30th year celebration. Listen in on the Web. This is mighty good stuff. Much of it is by folks who aren't around any more and never got heard enough when they were here. My philosophy has always been that any kind of recording I have should be shared. I'll either sell it at my store or play the videos at our Lestat's Roots Nights on the third Friday of the month. It really rubs me the wrong way when I see collectors who hoard their music. It's the *I have it and you don't* syndrome. Being a music collector is about keeping whatever kind of music you collect out there and alive. If you don't do that, you're not a real collector, you're a hoarder. You don't care about the music, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself. The ones who really gall me are those guys who collect stuff and never listen to it. They don't care about the music, they just

care about how much it's worth and that they have it and you don't. If you're a collector and have what you think is a good collection, you should be taking every opportunity to expose others to your music. I've been doing that most of my life and probably more than a few people have thought I was a pain in the ass (or ear) but a lot more people have been exposed to various kinds of music that they have become fans of and a lot more have become music collectors themselves. It all keeps the music alive and makes you want to hear it.

Recordially,  
Lou Curtiss



Lou Curtiss



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## front porch

## A Musical Mountain-Top Experience

by Ellen Duplessie

Upon viewing the promotional material for the world premiere roots musical, *Fire on the Mountain*, which opens May 9 at the Lyceum Theater, several thoughts came to mind. Straight away I took this to be some sort of offshoot of "Down From the Mountain," the musical tour of songs from the Grammy-winning soundtrack of the movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* And then there was the photo of a couple of old-time Appalachian coal miners, bringing my thoughts back to the people and music of the back hills of Kentucky or West Virginia.

I read on to discover that this was something different, namely a roots musical at the San Diego Repertory Theater! Though I'm not usually a big fan of musicals, everything about this show grabbed my attention.

I've seen *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and liked it. But I much preferred *Songcatcher*, a similar type

of movie whose music is so unique to the time and setting of the film and such a welcome change from the perfected production of today's music. What I've seen and read of this new musical so far has conjured up in my mind a realistic story of the American coal miners, with the inseparable connection to the soulful back hills' music of their lives. I suspect that the mood of this musical may be much closer to that of the more realistic *Songcatcher* than to the humorous *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

Just listen to the description written by the producers: "Featuring heart-breaking melodies and stunning fiddle and banjo licks, this sweeping tapestry illuminates the songs and stories of coal miners reaching for their piece of the American Dream. Based on the stories of American miners, *Fire on the Mountain* portrays a vivid picture of mine life in the bluegrass era."

Something within me sparks such a keen interest in the culture of the Appalachians, where the simplicity (and often poverty) of

people's lives were so often expressed and even reconciled with the use of the one medium that has always been free: music. With their God-given vocal chords and mostly homemade instruments, every aspect of the lives of these people was expressed through their music. No one ever tried to write a "hit" song. They just sang, and it was amazing, and it was beautiful.

Backed by the creative genius of Randal Myler (writer/director of *Love, Janis* and co-author/director of *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues*) and his *Blues* co-writer Dan Wheatman, *Fire on the Mountain* is certain to strike an emotional chord in the viewer that is undeniable. Randal Myler's most recent sensation, *Lost Highways: The Music and Legend of Hank Williams*, was met with rave reviews by New York City media.

The show will also feature four of the nation's most talented musicians, including "Mississippi" Charles Bevel and Molly Andrews, both world-renowned talents in their respective genres of blues and bluegrass. In addition, musical

director and co-playwright Dan Wheatman, who will be down in the orchestra pit throughout this musical journey, has displayed incredible versatility on fiddle, banjo, mandolin, harmonica, dobro, and guitar.

In *Fire on the Mountain*, Myler relates songs and stories, many of which were collected from the Smithsonian Institute's Folk Life Center. Myler insists that the songs begged to be joined to the stories.

"You couldn't separate one from the other," Myler explains.

Myler shifts our place in time through musical stories as old as the hills and as current as the headlines; these are the stories of the men, women, and children who helped build America. Like beautifully crafted monologues, the songs tell stories about Appalachian musical history, i.e., how it was brought over to America, how it survived, and how and why the people sang during times of terrible stress and



Molly Andrews from the cast of *Fire on the Mountain*

heartache.

Through the artistry of some of the nation's top roots musicians, the real stories of miners, and the music of a lost generation, audiences will experience the hopes, dreams, and heartache of the American miner. The show previews May 3, opens May 9, and runs through June 3. Order tickets by phone 619/544-1000, on line at [www.sandiegorep.com](http://www.sandiegorep.com), or at the Lyceum box office at 79 Horton Plaza.

## Indie Girl: Angela Correa

by John Philip Wyllie

There was a time not too long ago when singer/songwriter Angela Correa was playing open mic nights and dreaming about having her own show one day.

"I remember thinking, oh my God, this is so amazing, maybe one day I'll get to do a [full-length] show. That would be so cool!" With a year of performing the San Diego coffee-house circuit under her belt, Correa is gaining popularity and receiving radio airplay. She has also just released her first 11-song CD titled *Red Room Songs*. Following a well-received hour-long performance at Twigg's on April 19, the *San Diego Troubadour* sat down with Correa and talked about her past, present, and future.

"I've played music ever since I was little kid [growing up in the rural community of Yuba, California]. When I was younger, it never really occurred to me to play music on my own. I always thought you needed to be part of a band." Correa played in a variety of ensembles and enjoyed a certain measure of success during the mid-'90s as primary songwriter for the Sacramento-based band Chocolate Honey

Monkey. Filled with wanderlust, Correa left the band, packed up her guitar, and lived abroad for several years in places like France, Chile, Russia, and Guatemala. She absorbed her experiences like a sponge, while at the same time honing her guitar and songwriting skills.

"It was a revelation when, after a while here [in San Diego], I got up the courage to be Angela Correa alone on stage accompanying myself on guitar. I was really scared to do that at first. With a band, the responsibility falls on everybody. It's totally different when you're out there by yourself. I'm really glad I did it though. Now, I really enjoy it."

Correa also enjoys the camaraderie that exists among many of San Diego's singer-songwriters.

"At this point I'm sort of the 'newbie' on the block, but the [music] community here in San Diego is really wonderful. It's similar to what they have in Olympia, Washington, where they have a group of small labels and the musicians all work with each other. I've met and I know a few musicians here. It's a really good thing when you're an independent musician and people help you out. I've been playing a lot, trying to forge my way. When people help me out, I am totally grateful." One of those musi-

cians is local rising star Tom Brosseau, who sings on and co-wrote "Play Awhile," one of the songs on her CD.

"*Red Room Songs* was recorded in December and was meant to be a demo," Correa explained. She sent it out to college radio stations across the country, thinking they might be a little more receptive to the music of a relative newcomer. Correa's CD has been warmly received, especially in the Boston area where its frequent airplay led to several live bookings and a radio interview. "I wanted it to sound the way I sound when I play live," Correa said. "It has a sort of intimate feel."

Like most musicians, Correa dislikes being pigeon-holed into any particular category. The sparse, uncluttered arrangements; her vocal range; her edgy and sometimes disturbing lyrics; and her tendency to write songs filled with pain and heartache suggest a strong Jewel influence. Correa bristles at the comparison.

"Sometimes people compare me to Jewel, but I don't really appreciate the comparison," Correa said. "I don't really think that I am like Jewel at all other than the fact that I am a girl who plays a guitar and has a voice with a very big

range. You don't want to be put in a box. It might make it easy for people to comprehend, but I think the music I am doing is a little bit hard to categorize. I know it has got some country influence going on, but in my heart of hearts I feel that it has an indie-rock vibe to it."

Correa's next project will find her in the studio recording something with which she has become fascinated: murder ballads. Despite her musical tendency to dwell upon life's darker side, Correa's real life personality is filled with a youthful enthusiasm, a sense of humor, and a clever wit.

"I don't intentionally write sad songs, it just kind of happens that way. I guess I just tend to reflect more on the sadder things in life. Obviously, I've not been murdered and I'm not going to go out and kill somebody, but once I started listening to [murder ballads] I found them very interesting. I just can't stop playing them. I'm obsessed," she says with a chuckle.

Correa can be found online at: [www.angelacorrea.com](http://www.angelacorrea.com). Her May schedule includes an art opening May 2 for ceramic artist Jennifer Meale in Ocean Beach, a performance May 9 at Café 1134 in Coronado, then a mini-tour of the Northeast, playing several dates in Worcester and Cambridge, Massachusetts. Correa's CDs are available at Lou's Records, M-Theory, Off-the-Record, and online at [cdbaby.com/correa](http://cdbaby.com/correa).



# front porch



## OLD WEST MEETS NEW WEST AT THE SAM HINTON FOLK HERITAGE FESTIVAL

by Tim Day

For many years the San Diego Folk Heritage Festival has been one of the highlights of the local folk scene. Last year the name of the festival was permanently changed to the Sam Hinton Folk Heritage Festival in honor of Sam's lifelong commitment to traditional music and to the folk arts. This year the festival honors the music and poetry of Ken Graydon on Saturday May 10th. The day-long events, held between 9:30am and 5pm, will feature two stages of pickin' and singin' with the best of both local and traveling artists. The evening concert includes performers who will also play during the day. Three tracks of workshops offer instruction in guitar techniques, songwriting, and spoons! The jams, which run all day, include some of the featured musicians. Don't forget to visit the musical instrument petting zoo (not just for kids), sponsored by Deering Banjos and Carvin Guitars, who were generous enough to donate a Carvin C350 mahogany guitar for the raffle. All festival events will take place at the La Jolla

Children's School, 2225 Torrey Pines Road. Admission is \$15 for the day and an additional \$15 for the evening concert. The evening concert, beginning at 7pm, features Ken Graydon, who is as much a part of the West as they come. Raised on a ranch in the San Joaquin Valley, Ken practically lived on horseback for as long as he can remember. His father was a working cowboy in the Seligman, Arizona, area during the 1920s whose antics became grist for Ken's poetry. Although Ken spent his time after school training quarter horses with his father, he didn't go on to become a working cowboy himself. Survival took him toward another kind of horse power: cars, with a specialty in wiring hot rods. Today he writes poetry and ballads and performs in western



Craicmore



Ken Graydon

and historic events. He has four recordings to his credit, including the recently released *The Way I Heard It; Windmill; Coyote Special; and Elissa, Spread Your Wings*.

Craicmore will share the bill with Ken Graydon at the evening concert. The word Craicmore is a blend of *craic*, an Irish word for fun, and *mor*, Irish for big or great, which reflects the group's approach to its music. They draw their words and music from the traditional music of Ireland and Scotland, drawing from influences as diverse as the Bothy Band, the Chieftains, and the Pogues, in addition to rock, country and R&B music. Craicmore's members, John MacAdams on guitar, percussion, and vocals; Nancy Johnston on vocals and bodhran; Dave Soyars on bass and vocals; and Richard Cook on tin whistle and Irish fiddle, came together through



New West

chance meetings at the L.A. Celtic Arts Center's legendary Monday night sessions. In the five years that they've been together, the group has played to enthusiastic audiences at festivals, fairs, and highland games gatherings; in pubs and clubs up and down the West Coast; in Las Vegas; and beyond.

New West, an innovative trio that has garnered praise for their tight harmonies, brilliant instrumentals, and wonderful original songs, includes Michael Fleming on rhythm guitar and vocals; David Jackson on bass and vocals; and Raul Reynoso on lead guitar, mandolin, and vocals. Western music has its roots in the great cattle drives of the nineteenth century and the B-movie westerns of the 1930s and '40s when such artists as the Sons of Pioneers and Gene Autry made their mark. Performing songs that pay tribute to the rancher, the vaquero, and the men and women of the American West, they have won three awards for best songwriting from the Academy of Western Artists

and the Western Music Association and won the 1999 Will Rogers Award for Best Duo/Group in Western Music. They've been featured at the Elko Cowboy Poetry Gathering; the Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas; and the Strawberry Music Festival.

Between acts, Cici Porter will sing. After spending the majority of her adult life turning angst into music, Oceanside-based singer-songwriter Cici Porter knows how to make her demons work for her. "Music was always how I dealt with things and usually I was just coping with bad relationships. But then the music I was writing started dealing with much heavier stuff. When I wrote 'Don't Say a Word,' I remember I wrote it, then threw it aside, and never played it for anyone." Eight years later, the song she couldn't bear to keep is the cornerstone of her yet-unnamed CD. But it has already taught the singer an invaluable lesson: Sometimes you find the song, and sometimes the song finds you.

May 10th promises to be a day of immersion in wonderful music and stories. It's an opportunity to hear some fine performances by some fine musicians. It's also a chance to pick and strum with old-time, bluegrass, and Celtic musicians. Attendees can also pick up tips on playing or else explore an instrument for the first time. For more information and the schedule of events, check the website at [sdfolkheritage.org](http://sdfolkheritage.org).



by Paul Hormick

When they sing, you can hear bits of folk and the blues in their blended voices. Sometimes there is a hint of '50s' doo-wop and maybe even a Beatlesque chord change from time to time. This is the music of Julie Marie and Makeda, a duo whose voices are so strong that you may find it hard to believe that all that music is coming from two people. "Soul, R&B, salsa — we borrow from all forms. In our music there is no color, no class," says Julie Marie, the soprano and instrumentalist of the duo. Makeda, who sings alto, agrees that their musical influences are diverse. "Our inspiration can come from anywhere," she says. "It can come from watching cartoons,"

## Julie Marie and Makeda: GREATER THAN THE SUM OF THEIR PARTS

she adds playfully, emphasizing just how open they are to where they get their inspiration.

Whatever genres of music Julie Marie and Makeda may borrow from, the lyrics are the starting point for all their songs. Julie Marie says that Makeda will give her a poem or lyrics that she has written, and those words serve to inspire the music. Because their music is so hard to pin down and the lyric content so important, they call their repertoire of original compositions an "acoustic poetic sojourn."

That the words come first is no surprise, as Makeda is first a poet. "I still have poems that I wrote in the sixth grade," she says. As a matter of fact, she hadn't considered herself a songwriter until a friend convinced her to try her hand at the craft after reading her poetry. And a performance by Julie Marie and Makeda will usually include spoken readings of her poetry.

Makeda and Julie Marie were performing in Oakland with the all-woman ensemble Spirit Drums Uprising when they noticed that the two of them had a certain musical chemistry, so they decided to form their duo. This chemistry must have been brewing for a long time, as

each one of them has been imbued with music from an early age.

Makeda credits the musical heritage of her family in her musical development. Her father was a preacher in the Church of Christ, where she sang in the church choir. Julie Marie adds that all of her family is artistic in some way. She started playing music in her native Jamaica at "about five with a Mickey Mouse guitar."

Julie Marie still strums the guitar for the duo, although the one she plays now doesn't have big black ears. She also plays a number of other instruments, all of which she taught herself to play. "I play anything — guitar, congas, even spoons," she says. A number of their songs, such as "What About You?," composed for a film about abused women, a meditation on all forms of abuse that we inflict on ourselves and others, are performed either a capella or only with hand claps or percussion as accompaniment.

Makeda sums up what they are trying to achieve as simply "beauty — just being able to share our music, to share our energy with anyone who has a moment to listen."

### WHAT YOU'LL FIND AT THE

### SAM HINTON FOLK HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 10, 9:30am-10pm

The Children's School, 2225 Torrey Pines Rd., La Jolla

#### PERFORMERS

Kent Lee Brisby	9:30am
Dennis Roger Reed	9:30am
New Lost Melody Boys	10:15am
Harmonija	10:15am
Los Californios	11am
Strange Woods	11am
Black Rose	11:45am
Mark Jackson Band	11:45am
Ken and Phee Graydon	12:30pm
Celticana	1:15pm
Andy Hill/Renee Safier	1:15pm
Larry and Joann Sinclair	2pm
Craicmore	2pm
Jim Earp	2:45pm
Raw Courage	2:45pm
New West	3:30pm
Les and LouAnn Preston	3:30pm
Leo Kretzner and Friends	4:15pm
Homeward Bound	4:15pm

#### WORKSHOPS

##### WORKSHOP I

Vintage Video: *Lou Curtiss*  
Fiddle Workshop: *Kevin Carr*  
Piano Accompaniment:  
*Barbara Magone*  
Irish Folk Songs: *Kris Colt*  
Animal Song Swap: *Leo Kretzner*  
Scottish Instruments: *Craicmore*  
TBA: *Ken Graydon and Craicmore*

##### WORKSHOP II

Fiddle Tunes on Guitar & Mandolin:  
*Les Preston*  
Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar:  
*Kent Lee Brisby*  
Using a Microphone: *Greg Gross*  
Stage Presence: *Windbourne*  
Vocal Arranging for Duos:  
*Homeward Bound*

Using a Partial Capo: *Dave Decker*  
Open Tuning: *Bill Dempsey*  
Choosing a First Instrument/Songs for Beginners: *Bill Dempsey, Connie Allen, Windbourne*

##### WORKSHOP III

Swing Songs on Banjo: *Bill Dempsey*  
Songwriting: *Dennis Roger Reed*  
Old Time Music: *New Lost Melody Boys*  
Balkan Yodeling: *Harmonija*  
Songwriting: *Ken Graydon/New West*  
Music for Hambos: *Marci Phelan*  
Saws and Spoons: *Butch Hibben*  
Civil War songs: *Butch and Jean Hibben*

#### STORYTELLING

Tales of Magical Transformations  
Tales to Tickle Your Fancy  
Tales of Old and New  
Riddle Stories  
Tales of the Seaside  
Trickster Tales  
Tales of Lizards and Wizards  
Stories from the Heart  
Storytelling Workshop  
Story Swap: Bring Your Own Story

#### DANCE

Balkan Line Dance  
English Country Dance  
Family Dance  
French Dance  
Contra Dance

#### EVENING CONCERT

Ken Graydon, Craicmore,  
New West, Cici Porter 7pm



## parlor showcase

by Beverly Keel

**A**s Dawn Jackson glances outside the windows of the trendy coffeehouse to see if the cold, dreary rain has finally abated, she's reminded once again that she's not in San Diego anymore.

The tall blonde has ventured across the country, from her home in the warm California paradise to her hometown of Nashville, to continue the growing momentum of her music career. She could be considered Southern-squared, because her musical roots and influences are both in the South and in Southern California. While many aspiring California singer-songwriters are doing their best to mimic the perceived Nashville formula, she's the real thing, a combination of the best of both worlds.

"People say, 'What are you doing out here in California if you want to be in the music business?'" she says. "And I thought, 'Well, yeah...' so I started coming back to Nashville, mainly to turn over some stones and promote our new CD. But I don't feel that Nashville is the right place for me to be, not full time. I'm not Nashville country. Besides, my band is in San Diego."

A relative newcomer to the music business, she is quickly establishing herself as a formidable presence in the studio, behind the microphone, and in a conference room. She's a strong triple-threat: a woman who writes, sings, and runs a company.

She's established her own publishing company and record label, Sho-Bud Music, Inc., which has released Hatfield Rain's first CD, *Matter of Time*, a band she also fronts. The pendulum is in motion: The Jackson-penned *Matter of Time's* song "Reflection of You" snagged the top songwriting honors in the San Diego Songwriters Guild's 2003 song contest; "Our Town," written by the band's founder and lead guitar player, Kyle Ince, was recently the number four song in MP3.com's Americana category for four consecutive days; and "I Mean Well" and "Radio Girl" have both received airplay along the California coast.

When she's not creating or promoting Hatfield Rain's music, she's busy boosting the careers of others. She's signed Alabama-based songwriter Ken Johnson to a publishing deal and is busy promoting his Southeast tour. She even took a break from her Nashville meetings with executives from such companies as Sony and EMI to join him onstage in Birmingham, Alabama.



Still a bit weary from the two-hour Sunday drive back from Birmingham to Nashville, Jackson settles into a chair at Fido, a coffee shop about three minutes from the famous Music Row. Surrounded by students with laptops and poets with journals, Jackson sips from her yellow mug as she ponders her future.

"Ultimately, I would love to be a singer-songwriter, playing and touring around with the band, but I also love producing; being in the studio and being on-stage are both where I feel most comfortable. I do enjoy the label and publishing sides of things but more as a means to an end. That and the challenge of it all. I'm kind of enjoying dabbling in all the bits and pieces of it. I want to learn as much as I can. It's not that I want to make a bazillion dollars. I just want to make a comfortable living doing what I love, which is music."

"Everybody talks about how horrible the music business is, and there are certainly aspects of it that are very vicious, but still, I love it," she says. "This is the only thing that I really see myself doing; I don't see that I could go back to doing anything else. Even if it's not as a performer, even if it's another role, I still see myself being in the music business."

Rather than following the traditional route of moving to Nashville in pursuit of a major label deal, Jackson is taking the road less traveled by building a career in San Diego, which will make the music industry take notice. Over the last year, she's made about four or five Tennessee trips to meet with various music industry executives, most of whom have reaffirmed that she's doing it the right way. "I don't want to get a record deal by selling my soul to the devil and doing anything necessary to get it," she says. "The guys in the band have played the label-courting game before and after a year or so of negotiating walked away with a pretty bad taste in their mouths. They always remind me of that when I start talking about record deals."

"That's why I started my own label in the first place. I know it can be done. A lot of people get big record deals early on, and you don't ever hear of them again. They give up everything, their record gets shelved, and then they become bitter artists for the rest of their lives. It's not the label's fault, it's not the artist's fault. It's just the way the business is. (It is a business, after all.) I guess I've learned that if you can create your own stir, they [the bigger labels] will come looking for you. At that point, you're in a position to help one another out and it's more of a win/win situation. If they don't come, that's okay, too. My goal is to live every day doing what I enjoy, which is writing, playing, and working with other artists."

Jackson's determination and accomplishments are even more impressive given the fact that she abandoned a very lucrative career in the health care industry last year to follow a dream that offered no guarantees (or even



Hatfield Rain, left to right: Robert Fedeli, Ted Stern, Dawn Jackson, Bob Sheehan, Kyle Ince, and Mark Tucker

health insurance, for that matter). "Going from that," she says of her previous employment, "to a job where all I've been doing is spending money, yeah, that's scary."

But in some ways, Jackson probably had little choice in her ultimate career path since music is in her blood. Her grandfather, Shot Jackson, played dobro with the Roy Clark Band on the Grand Ole Opry and on the TV show *Hee Haw*. During the 1950s, he and partner Buddy Emmons founded Sho-Bud, which became the leading pedal steel guitar manufacturer for several decades before being bought out by Baldwin, then sold to Gretsch. Shot's handcrafted "ShoBro" now resides in the Country Music Hall of Fame, right next to a Sho-Bud guitar. "He really wasn't much of a business man, but he sure did leave a good legacy," she says. "He flat out knew how to build a guitar and he shared that knowledge with many people who are still incorporating his designs in pedal steel guitars today. I've never heard anyone say a negative thing about him. I thought that would be a

good thing to try and live up to. Plus, I'm proud to be a part of that legacy." Shot probably didn't know his granddaughter would revive the Sho-Bud name in the next century, especially since he was not privy to her interest in music as a child.

"It was really very normal," she says of her upbringing in Nashville. "No one pushed. Even though my grandfather and dad built guitars and the company Christmas parties were with George Jones and Tammy Wynette, no one ever pushed me into the music business. In actuality, they pushed me away from it. Even though I always wanted to sing, it was always something that other people did. I never realized I could do that. It took getting out of Nashville to realize that I could be a musician. I look back and say, 'Hey, why didn't they teach me how to play guitar? Why didn't they have me on the Grand Ole Opry playing?' I think they wanted to keep me as far away from the sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll as possible."

She didn't write her first song until a year after she earned a biology and chemistry degree from Mercer University in Georgia in 1990. "I came back to Nashville after college to be a singer," she says. Thanks to her father's connections, she met with Frances Preston, who was then the head of BMI's Nashville office. "I didn't know how to go about getting

**"Her grandfather, Shot Jackson, played dobro with the Roy Clark Band on the Grand Ole Opry and on Hee Haw."**



## parlor showcase



# HATFIELD RAIN TAKES SAN DIEGO BY STORM

into the music business," she says. "I didn't realize I could just get a guitar and go out and start playing. I thought there was some magical formula to it and somebody could tell me what it was. When I met with Frances, I didn't even know what BMI did; I just wanted to sing. We chatted for about 30 minutes and then I left. I was expecting somebody to give me this answer and they didn't, so I thought, 'I need to get out of Nashville.'"

So she moved to San Diego in 1991 to begin a job in health care software sales for ENVOY Corp and later McKesson Corporation. Although it seems as though such a position might kill the artistic soul, Jackson says it was actually a rewarding experience that offered amazing travel and networking opportunities. "I kept telling myself, 'This is not what I want to be doing,' but in any business, you're selling something. I'm in sales more now than I've ever been."

"The weird thing is that I'm selling myself, which is so much harder than selling someone or something else. It's difficult to do because you feel extremely egotistical. There's a real fine line between believing in yourself and putting yourself out there and being an egomaniac."

She can apply many of the skills she acquired in software sales to her current profession. "One of the main things is just knowing that if you want to talk to someone, you just do it," she says. "Not being afraid of calling the CEO of Cigna, not being afraid to call the CEO of Sony, it's the same thing. It's

all a matter of doing it. It taught me the types of steps you need to take and the necessary perseverance and persistence, because people aren't going to return your phone calls. Half of it is just having the courage to pick up the phone and make the call. And then to pick it up and call again."

She began singing, writing, and learning to play the guitar about five years ago and soon formed a band with several girl friends. "We were just awful," she laughs. "I only knew about three guitar chords. We got better and we had fun, but there was always a lot of drama." The band stayed together for about a

year, but disbanded when it became apparent that everyone was headed in different directions. About that time, Jackson saw an ad in the *San Diego Reader* placed by a band called Usual Suspects who were in search of a singer similar to Lucinda Williams. After she joined the band two years ago they soon changed their name to Hatfield Rain.

The band consists of Jackson on lead vocals and guitar; Robert Fedeli on Hammond organ; Kyle Ince on lead guitar; Bob Sheehan on drums; Ted Stern on violin, pedal steel, and slide guitar; and Mark Tucker on bass. They perform locally once a month or so at venues such as the Hard Rock Cafe, Twiggs, LeStats, Claire de Lune, and the Field. In June, the band will tour the Southeast, hitting such cities as Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga, and Atlanta. They are also currently working on their second album.

The band's music, which can be heard on KPRI, is alt-country with a bit of pop flavoring that pays homage to such influences as the Pretenders, Wilco, Bonnie Raitt, and Sheryl Crow. "We're rock with a slight country flavor," she says. "I think the twang is a huge part of that. When you sing with a twang and you have pedal steel guitar, people just assume you're country. But really we don't follow the country format. If you go to a country song-writing seminar, they'll say, 'Here's how you write a country song,' and we don't exactly follow those guidelines. If anything, Kyle, the other writer in the band, uses those guidelines as to what NOT to follow."

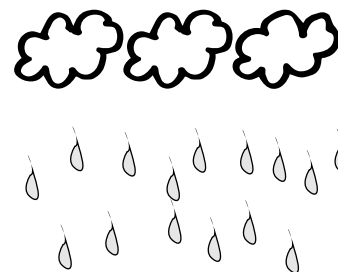
A good example is the song "Reflection of You," which features Stern's pedal steel guitar and a hint of an inescapable twang, but



it certainly doesn't adhere to any country format. "It started out about my mom and really ended up as a sort of ode to my family," she says of the song. "Unfortunately, the Cranberries already had a claim to that song title. It's about a mentor, someone you look up to and sort of fashion yourself after, whether consciously or subconsciously. Even though a certain person might not be around anymore, a part of them still lives through you. That's the theme of the song: 'When people see the good in me, they're simply seeing a reflection of you.'"

Whatever they see—singer, songwriter, producer, business woman—there's one thing they'll certainly see when they look at Jackson for many years to come: a Californian with a group of extremely talented 'California' musicians backing her up. "A big part of my heart is still in Nashville and I love it here and I love coming back here, but mainly in the spring and the fall," she says with a grin. "I guess I'm a fair-weather Nashvillian now."

Jackson immediately corrects herself, "I'm a San Diegan now. Either way, I'm still a Southerner."



*"When you sing with a twang and you have pedal steel guitar, people just assume you're country."*



## WHERE HATFIELD RAIN GOT ITS NAME



San Diegans may be surprised to learn that at the turn of the century (the 20th century, that is), the city hired its very own rainmaker. His name: Charles Hatfield.

Referring to himself a "moisture accelerator," he was regarded as a folk hero by many Southern Californians. Having studied and researched meteorology, he conducted experiments with chemicals and evaporating tanks and was actually successful in fulfilling hundreds of rainmaking contracts in Los Angeles and throughout the Central and San Joaquin Valleys.

In 1915 the city of San Diego hired Hatfield to fill the Morena Dam, which was barely one-third full, a problem for a city whose growth hinged on an ample water supply. They agreed to pay him \$10,000 once the reservoir filled up. So, with the help of Hatfield's younger brother Joel, he went to work building a 20-foot tower base with an

eight-foot extension for his tanks and other gear next to Morena Dam, 60 miles east of San Diego.

When it finally began to rain, it rained hard. Five days later it poured and kept on raining for five more days. The downpour caused dozens of cancellations, including the opening day races at the new Agua Caliente Race Rack in Tijuana. Dry river beds filled so fast that some of the smaller bridges disappeared. Rising waters marooned a Santa Fe train just north of the city. Homes flooded. Muddy waters covered farms and ranches.

Hatfield never got his money. In fact, three and a half million dollars worth of lawsuits followed. In two court decisions, the flood was ruled an act of God, not Hatfield.

Hatfield died in 1958, his secret rainmaking formula with him. That same year, *The Rainmaker*, was released, which starred Burt Lancaster as a character patterned after Hatfield.



ramblin'

# Bluegrass Corner



by D. Dwight Worden

## Upcoming Bluegrass Events

Here is a quick rundown on just some of the local bluegrass resources, jams, and coming bluegrass music events. Get out and hear some great music or, better yet, take your instrument to one of the jams and join in. You won't regret it!

Sponsored by the **San Diego Bluegrass Society**, the following regular events present a featured band, open mic, bluegrass karaoke (you pick the tune and play/sing with the SDBS **Full Deck** band), and lots of informal jamming. Events are free with a suggested \$5 donation. If you haven't been to one, its time!

**Fuddruckers** (La Mesa)  
5500 Grossmont Center Drive  
La Mesa

**Bluegrass Jam** on second Tuesday, 7-10pm. Featured band for May is **Cliff Wagner**.

**Fuddruckers** (Chula Vista)  
340 3rd Ave., Chula Vista  
**Bluegrass Jam** on third Tuesday 7-10pm

**Shirley's Kitchen**  
7868 El Cajon Blvd., La Mesa

**Bluegrass Jam** on fourth Tuesday. Open mic, 7-8pm

**Bluegrass Music for Fun with Banjo Bob Cox** at:

**New York Pizza**  
1-5 and Santa Fe Dr., Encinitas  
Thursdays, 7-9pm  
\$5 donation includes pizza.  
All players welcome. Call 619/481-2100 for info.

The **North County Bluegrass and Folk Club** meets monthly at:

**Round Table Pizza**  
1161 E. Washington Ave., Escondido

Featured bands for May are **Celia Lawley** and **Harmony Hill** at 7:30 and the **Bluegrass Redliners**, who will play at 8pm.

**California State Old Time Fiddlers' Association** meets monthly on the second and fourth Sunday, noon-4pm. Call 619/441-1680 for info.

**Wells Park Center**  
1153 E. Madison Ave., El Cajon.

**Bluegrass Information Resources**  
Want to keep informed about what's happening in San Diego's bluegrass world? Try these:

**San Diego Bluegrass Society and Bluegrass Association of Southern**

**California** web site:  
<http://members.aol.com/intune-news/regevents.html#anchor722619>.

This site has a searchable listing of concerts; jams; pickin' parties; bands; and band contacts by region, date, and type. It's easy to find where your favorite band is playing next, what's happening this month in your area, or where to locate a band to book for your next party.

For great bluegrass music on local radio, don't miss **The Bluegrass Special**, hosted by Wayne Rice every Sunday night, 10-midnight on KSON 97.3-FM. Check out Wayne's **Bluegrass Special** Web page to see what's playing: [www.kson.com/jox/bluegrass\\_special.cfm](http://www.kson.com/jox/bluegrass_special.cfm). You should also take a look at his **Bluegrass Bulletin Board**, a great source for local happenings: [www.waynerice.com/kson/bgevents.htm](http://www.waynerice.com/kson/bgevents.htm).



# RADIO DAZE

by Jim McInnes

## HOW IT ALL BEGAN

When I was 14 I received a Sony AM/Shortwave radio for Christmas. The short-wave portion was alien to me, because all I used to listen to were the two competing Chicago Top 40 AM stations: WLS and WCFL. One day, out of sheer boredom, I switched the radio to the shortwave bands. Wow! I was hearing radio stations broadcasting from Bulgaria, Ecuador, South Africa, and all around the globe! I was hooked. I'd send reception reports to the stations I'd heard and they'd send back spiffy collectible cards, buttons, etc.

I also began to tune into the amateur, or "ham," signals. Listening to a couple of guys who were hundreds (or thousands) of miles apart carrying on a conversation was cool...subversive, even. I thought, "I gotta find out how to do this! I wanna send MY voice into the sky!"

After a trip to the library and a bit of research, I discovered that I needed an FCC license. To get the license, I had to take a friggin' TEST and be able to understand MORSE CODE!

I took the test and did the code and at age 15, I was on the air. I was now an official NERD. I joined the ham radio club at high school. These guys were the social retards: the tall skinny guy who pulled out his own hair when he was upset; the fat kid with the "schpeechss" impediment; the braniac with the pocket protector for his slide



Jim McInnes

rule; the mad scientist who loved making bottle rockets; the homely girl hoping to meet homely boys; and me, the perfect human with no faults whatsoever.



After high school I needed more POWER than ham radio could offer, so I studied broadcasting. I graduated from Southern Illinois University with the aptly-named B.S. in communications and began my illustrious career almost immediately.

I am currently out of commercial radio (er . . . between engagements), but I am STILL a HAM!!!



McInnes and fellow nerds in high school Amateur Ham Radio Club

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# Hosing Down

by José Sinatra

The practice of necrophilia and bestiality among celebrities has been receiving increased attention in the news lately. As food for thought, it may indeed make for some mighty good eatin', but I'm not about to let its questionable nutrients taint my monthly meditation.

Instead, I'd like to focus on a recent personal setback, which would have been monumentally tragic had it happened to a lesser superstar than The Hose.

No sooner had my most recent single "Bush Lovers and Saddamites (A Plea for Unity)" begun to climb the Iraqi pop charts, than war started and the radio stations shut down. I decided to carry three or four hundred copies over there to personally distribute, only to find that Princess Cruises doesn't even make any stops anywhere in that country for reasons they refuse to disclose.

Rather than lose myself in the gooey mud of frustration (which is murder on the

complexion), I began to focus on those less fortunate than *moi même*. And in short order I was once again able to do my happy dance and make out with my mirror.

I had imagined what it must be like to be covering in some unknown place, trying to devise a way to stay alive while my pursuers ruthlessly, relentlessly hunt me in all corners of a land I had proudly called my own. Then, while the whole world watches, they pull down my favorite statue of myself and party like it's 2099. Now I really know what it's like to be dissed. How terribly embarrassing. Rosanne at the Murph had nothing on this. I've become impotent . . .

My reverie quickly halted. My empathy can be prodigious but is unable to grasp the concept of impotency or similar ideas alien to my personal biological constitution. It was funny while it lasted, though.

Suddenly my own situation didn't seem that bad after all. Hell, there'll be other radio stations in Iraq



The inimitable Mr. Sinatra

someday. And *Women in Love*, *King of Kings*, and *Day for Night* have all just come out in superb, extras-packed DVD versions. And there's an amazing new James Bond doll that is a miniature George Lazerby. And Blind Melon's has asked me to host their Rock Star Karaoke Orgies (Tuesdays at 9pm, 710 Garnet Ave., Pacific Beach). Be there! And Elaina inches closer to 18 . . .

*What foods these morsels be!*



# Reconsidering Digital Audio Tape

by Paul Abbott

DATs (digital audio tapes) have caught a lot of flack over the past few years. As random access media (the hard drive) becomes more ubiquitous and affordable for music, digital audio tape seems to be going the way of the Dodo. However, there may still be a few advantages to using DAT, even when compared with computer media's major selling points: convenience, reliability, and quality. So if you're one of the many musicians whose DAT machine is collecting dust, read on.

## CONVENIENCE

Probably the biggest issue people have with DATs today is their slower, manual-style interface. This is because the architecture is modeled after an analog cassette: not necessarily cutting-edge. If you think about it, though, this is as much a benefit as a liability. Has anyone ever accidentally deleted a computer file? I have on numerous occasions, and when I think about how it happened, the answer is usually that I was too impulsive to take a moment and think before acting. However, if I'd been forced to take a tape out of its case, read the label and insert it into a machine (not to mention flipping the copy-protection tab), that moment I didn't have with my computer may have given me pause to think about what I was doing instead of just doing it. Basically, the "inconvenience" of physical media puts in a dummy-proof layer that doesn't exist in the immediate world of computers

## RELIABILITY

Many critics claim that DAT mix-downs done years ago have been compromised over time through digital dropouts. With tape, this occurs as the media oxidizes and physically loses some of its information. While incidents like this do occur, all of my DATs – from varying manufacturers dating back to 1990 – are in good working condition. And they haven't spent the past 13 years in dry storage, either. They've moved across the country a few times and spent most of their lives in a shoebox in the garage! This



Paul Abbott

doesn't mean you should overlook digital audio tape's potential reliability issues, but realize that all media – including hard drives and CDRs – is susceptible to error. Just out of curiosity: does anyone have a hard drive from 1990 that still works?

## QUALITY

Probably the biggest issue that signaled the end for digital audio tape is the lower resolution and fairly flat sound compared to modern, higher density formats. While 16-bit is not today's preferred resolution for mix-down, it's now fairly common knowledge that the sound quality of those early era DATs had to do with the analog-to-digital converters, not just the bit rate/sampling frequency. As proof of this, I commonly receive current 16-bit mixes at ZenMastering that sound as good – if not better – than some 24-bit files. This is because resolution only captures what a human being has created. And if you know how to make a great recording, the bit rate, resolution and mix-down format are all secondary issues.

Now I'm not suggesting that people stop using computers for audio mixes, or that they go out and buy a new DAT machine. Tape-based media certainly has more limitations than hard drives. But realize that along with those limitations come some inherent design advantages that don't exist in a computer. In the technological race called progress, sometimes the baby is tossed out with the bath water.

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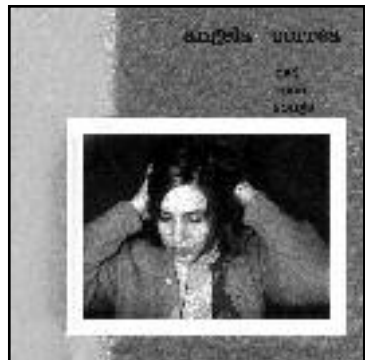
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## of note



### Angela Correa Red Room Songs

by Phil Harmonic

No one knows what musical trend *lies in waiting* around future's corner. We seem to be in the middle of a singer-songwriter renaissance that started in the '90s and continues to grow. As terms like "new grass" appear (Nickel Creek), I'll coin the phrase "new folk." This wonderful surge of writers has been like a contagious disease spawning an abundance of creativity. Now that's one disease I wouldn't mind becoming *chronic*. With such a plethora of creators, it has reached the point where it has become too difficult to judge what you hear; you can only know if it appeals to you or not. Listening to Angela Correa's new CD is quite appealing and becomes more so with each listening. She writes highly intelligent lyrics and has a knack for phrasing her poetry to music. Natalie Merchant of 10,000 Maniacs, whose poetry was expertly transferred to the musical song style, is a perfect example of how phrasing can make the lyric much more powerful and effective. Correa's "Too Drunk" and "Only a Word" emit a sound reminiscent of Merchant and the Maniacs.

In "Only a Word," a favorite of mine, Correa states, "that one little phrase could ease my ache, fascinate and tempt me to lose it all." Correa writes about *letting go* on "glorybelt" and about *expressing yourself* in "South San Juan" and how you *can't win for losing* in "Consent/Coercion."

She is even current with forensic science, using traces of gun powder that she can't get rid of as a metaphor to the memory of an ex-love, which will never go away.

Correa is one talented writer and songwriter and since "birds of a feather flock together," who else but Tom Brosseau, another rising talent, should appear on tracks "Play Awhile" and "If You Hear Music," the latter being *pure Brosseau*. When you hear their harmonies, you'll definitely crave more. When they sing, "if you hear music, clap your hands," listen closely and you will still hear me applauding the talent of this singer-songwriter.



### Taylor Street Self-titled Advance Copy

by Chuck Deluxe

This energetic CD opens with "The Crooked Mile," getting right down to business with acoustic guitar, smart lyrics, and ambitious vocal harmonies.

Two people can make a lot of noise, and this San Diego-based duo most certainly does. With enthusiasm and confidence, their readings are simple, containing complex themes and occasional unexpected solutions that suggest an astute grasp of the creative musical process. "Searching for Destiny" is a poignant moment, which casts Lisa Pollack as the heartfelt street-wise folk poet over the top of a "Dust in the Wind-ish" set of better guitar changes and thematic ideas.

"Rain" is a sonic riposte with a piano introduction, again featuring Lisa's solo vocals in a way that summons the melancholy influence of Tori Amos while reminding me of local vocal powerhouse Laura Preble and her "Mystery" take.

One of the most interesting things on *Taylor Street* is the use of counterpoint vocals. These are articulate designs, with impeccable executions by Thomas Lee who, meanwhile, maintains a steady handling of smart guitar. For the most part, you can expect the rock/folky guitar with an occasional salt and pepper of jazzier harmonic routes, which are refreshing in that they allow the vocals new avenues of their own. And this duo is not at all afraid of this sort of adventure.

"On the Moon" is a dreamy little number that defies the likely pretensions of 'common' writing. Instead it seems to come from a strong inspiration, nurtured to ensure fulfillment of its true individual beauty, thus demonstrating a rare maturity and a delicious lightness. Its elegance suggests the elements of timelessness [in fact it is a delight to review and report such a thing...].

With sparse arrangements in a glossless, no-frills production, *Taylor Street* displays a loyalty to the medium and a respect for those who influenced them. And that's perfect because they're doing the music very right.



### Grey de Lisle Home Wrecker

by Chuck Deluxe

Here's a girl who's perfectly comfortable driving her country-time tractor lyrically through the city streets of production value. Grey de Lisle's *Home Wrecker* sounds kind of "country," especially in terms of the lyrics that demonstrate a graceful knack for the metaphoric irony that goes into the country hook equation. And she does so right off the bat in "Borrowed and Blue."

*Something old, something new. Baby you're still borrowed, and I'm still blue.*

However, while the bones of this song (and the rest of the CD) are country, the boots are very slick and surreal in terms of the arrangement and clean production. A strong theatrical quality permeates the overall feel of this collection of well-written tunes while maintaining a variety of sonic scapes.

In "Black Cat," de Lisle stretches out a bit with a sexy grind that would have been a cool addition to the *Superfly* soundtrack. What's impressive is the honesty of this vocal take, which allows us to meet the *lady*. Here she relies more on emotion than calculation in a way that Joan Osborne might handle things. Although she is mostly a calculating singer, make no mistake: here is a highly-trained singer with a pristine voice.

"Home Wrecker," in all its honky-tonk "Elvis-ness," would be better off with a little more anarchy, even though it features fun performances by Benmont Trench (Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers), Rami Jaffe (Wallflowers), and her husband, Old 97's bassist, Murray Hammond. "The Hole" seems a distracting departure from the CD's overall musical center of gravity but manages a novel stroll through L.A.'s metal shop sensibilities, if you can imagine that. "Twas her Hunger" is a charming gem that again embodies something earthy and real within a theatrical sound quality. I can almost envision the play it might support. The lyrics and feel serve as one of the CD's brighter moments.

This CD tries some new and some not-so-new things. It's safe, making it perfect for mornings when you're in the mood for a mellow start of a nice day.



### Frank Williamson Under the Circumstances

by Tom Paine

If you like your songs smart, dark, and funny, you're in for a treat. And if San Diego is already internationally known as a hot bed of great songwriters, then this record is like a bucket of gasoline. Here's a heads-up for all the other songwriters in town: the bar just got raised. A lot.

Frank Williamson's debut release, *Under the Circumstances*, is an artful display of just how powerful good songwriting can be. In 12 taut, tight tour de forces, Williamson conveys the hungers and frustrations of life with startlingly vivid imagery and heart-breaking wit. Utterly free of the manipulative, phony sentiment and pointless nostalgia so common in most country music, *Under the Circumstances* is a vivid illustration of why alternative country is pushing its way further and further into the mainstream. Like Lucinda Williams and Steve Earle, Williamson finds redemption and grace in the deep cracks of the broken lives of his characters . . . all within the compact potency of the pop song format.

Demonstrating again and again his mastery of language and an instinct for the perfect chord change, Williamson leads his crack band right into the sweet spot every time. Recorded at Big Rock Studios in Escondido by coproducer Andy Machin, *Under the Circumstances* features Kevin Hennessy on bass; Duncan Moore on drums; Andrew De Grasse on keyboards; and the ubiquitous Dennis Caplinger on fiddle, dobro, mandolin and electric guitar. Also on board are Peter Bolland on lap steel guitar, acoustic slide guitar, and backing vocals, a chore he shares with his long-time collaborator Marcia Staub. At the center of it all is Williamson's high-impact guitar work and his lonesome, evocative voice. The crisp, focused mix and mastering by Andy Machin bring out the numerous shimmering strengths of the band. They rock, they

*continued on next column* ►



### Cactus Can't Stop Campin'

by Emily Davidson

If you love to soak up the sun or are planning a road trip soon, *Can't Stop Campin'*, is for you. You will feel inspired to pack up your gear, crank up the stereo, and head down that long, windy road. This CD is filled with songs written "during desert and mountain camping trips or in anticipation of trips," which is easily recognized due to song titles like "Mountain Mike," "Cacti, Go Wild," and "Buttes Pass Road."

Simple rhyme schemes and interesting guitar arrangements are featured throughout the mix. "Hey Hey Hey" shows off the band's strong vocal harmonies although sound effects, as heard in "Chariot Canyon," seem unnecessary and detract away from the song. Elements of humor are found both in the lyrics and instrumentation choices. This is best displayed in "Bullhead City," which features Jeff Larson's stylized vocals.

San Diego is blessed with temperate climate and diverse landscape. The next time you head out on the open highway, consider Cactus as a traveling companion.

*continued from previous column*

swing, they pull you in, but they never lose sight of the focal point: Williamson's poignant, powerful songs.

At once traditional and thoroughly contemporary, a timeless sense of beauty permeates this record, making it very appealing to a wide range of audiences.

Like John Hiatt, Bruce Cockburn, Neil Young, Jackson Browne, Bruce Springsteen, and a hundred other masters of the genre, Williamson works in familiar territory, yet manages, like those other writers, to find something totally new and vital. And here's the thing, when you've got *Under the Circumstances* turned up loud, and you're tracing the veins of gold through the musical landscape Williamson creates, you won't remember any of those other artists. *Under the Circumstances* is available at [www.frankwilliamson.com](http://www.frankwilliamson.com).

# 'round about



## Local Yokels

### A HAYSEED'S MUSIC PICKS FOR MAY

by Gus T. Williker



Gus and his trucker hat. (Editor's note: Look closely. You can see a signed nudie girl photo in the background. What a frickin' perve!)

#### READER LETTER

You are a pin-up star! I took a look, hee hee! Yeah, it was pretty cool. And ah ha! You're the Troubadour guy! I thought your picture looked familiar. I'll have to pull out a few back issues and check out your column. I read the first one or two front to back, now I just scan for people I know. Is that lame? Show dates, I look at show dates.

—G. Stylee

#### WRITER RESPONSE

If iGus iSmashed his iMac into the iWall, would anyone iHear an iFrickin' iSound?!!!!

—Gus T. Williker

Show dates...show dates...show dates. Okay, shore, my column is mostly 'bout show dates, but does anyone give a flyin' rat's ass 'bout the rest of my column?! NO! Cuz I plead and beg and bribe and piss and moan, and NO ONE E-MAILS! Kin a bubba git some love 'round

here, or whut?!

Hello...lo.....lo.....lo. Anybuddy out thar...out thar.....out thar.....out thar?

Gus@WhiteHotTrash.com

That wus the last piss...and the last moan\*. NOW FOR SOME SHOW DATES!

The **7th Day Buskers** are playin' at Claire de Lune on Friday, May 3. This is hi-quality bluegrass/hillbilly music that demands yer attention. This is an all-ages event, of course, and all they want is a measly \$2-\$5 donation. Now sprinkle a lil' Gold Bond into yer shoes and make the trek down there, ya big stinker!

Looks like the **P.B. Block Party** might be worth goin' to this year. Oh shore, yer gonna hafta wade through backwards-capped beer-belly boys (yup, that barbed wire arm band that DOES make him tough). And don't fergit the boozed-up bare-ass broads (uh-huh, she did hafta shave her naw-T parts to wear those pants!). BUT, the payoff is some decent quality acts like **Convoy, Lee Rocker, Royal Crown Revue, Hot Rod Lincoln, Steve Poltz**, and more. It goes from 9am-6pm on Saturday, May 10.

Or, skip that whole circus and save up yer energy fer **Buddy Blue's** CD release party at Tio Leo's Lounge. The old guy is certainly prolific in his twilight years, so git out there and support him (his padded underpants shore don't!). Yeah, the show is Saturday nite, May 10!

If yer throwin' around praise fer country folk artists, **Gillian Welch** should catch much of whut flies. Her music is bare and beautiful, and something to behold. You like Lucinda...you like Krauss? Gillian is yer gal too. She's at the Belly Up Tavern on Tuesday, May 13.

**Cowboy Nation** is comin' to Tio Leo's Lounge on Saturday, May 17. They don't make it down to San Diego but every few months, so try to take it in. They've got a lonesome cowboy sound that's just awesome.

**Deke Dickerson** and **Big Rig Deluxe** are playin' Tio Leo's on Saturday, May 24. I've yakked 'bout Deke plenty before, but I'm not sure if I've mentioned BRD. Well, it's the side project of **Hot Rod Lincoln** bassist Johnny D'Artenay, and it's that deep-throated "Convoy" sorta country. Purdy aw rite.

Finally, I owe my buddy **Jack Johnson** a super shout. No, not that over-played wishwash blues artist, but the local country singer. He's doin' his **Hank Williams** Tribute Show at the Pine Hills Lodge and Dinner Theatre on Friday and Saturday, May 30 and 31. The Lodge is located at 2960 La Posada Way in Julian. To make reservations, call 760/765-1100, or go to his Web site, <http://www.hankshow.com>.

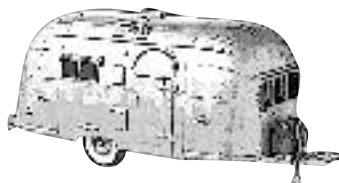
Oh yeah, and if you want a trucker hat that spans other trucker hats like **Sir Mix A-Lot** did/does booties, go to my Web site and click on the link that pops up.

<http://www.WhiteHotTrash.com>

xoxo,

Gu\$

\*Subject to change



## Asylum Street Spankers

You'll Laugh, You'll Cry, You'll Pee Your Pants!



by Liz Abbott

On Saturday, May 17, San Diegans will have only one chance to see the wonderfully wacky Asylum Street Spankers, a seven-member group from the musical mecca of Austin, Texas. With a name derived from a combination of the former name of Austin's Guadalupe Street, and *spanker*, a descriptive term for a vigorous style of acoustic guitar playing and an allusion to the birthday spankings they've been known to give to audience members, the Asylum Street Spankers was formed when Christina Marrs, the group's only female, Guy Forsyth, and slam-poet Wammo all met at a party in the early '90s. Since then, the number of members has waxed and waned over the years; there have been as many as ten and as few as three.


This amazing, fun-loving group delivers a hybrid mix of 1920's jazz, jug band, blues, honky-tonk, ragtime, and swing music, played on a collection of instruments that include

dobro, banjo, ukulele, steel guitar, stand-up bass, mandolin, fiddle, saw, kazoo, clarinet, saxophone, train whistle, harmonica, and washboard. Something akin to an old vaudeville show, carnival, or band of merry pranksters, the Spankers perform mostly original songs from their huge repertoire, displaying an incredible wit and irreverent humor with songs like "Startin' to Hate Country," "Winning the War on Drugs," and "Smells Like Thirty Something," as well as naughty, tongue-in-cheek ditties like "I'm a Bear in a Lady's Boudoir" thrown in for good measure. The group isn't just about being funny, however. These talented multi-instrumentalists take their music seriously and want people to respect the music as much as they do. As members take turns singing lead and swapping instruments with each other between songs, they reveal a virtuosity and versatility that expands their musical boundaries. They can play sweet and nostalgic, then switch to gutsy and growling in a heart beat; the style in which they play changes from one song to the next. What's more, they are fiercely committed to playing music as "God intended it," namely without any kind of amplification whatsoever. However you want to describe these guys, once you see them live, you'll never forget it. Don't miss the Asylum Street Spankers at 101 Artists Colony, 25 East E St., Encinitas, May 17, 8pm. Tickets are \$12.50 in advance, \$15 at the door. Call 760/944-6027 for further info.



Founding members Forsyth, Marrs, Wammo

*June Award Winner*  
**Ray Bonneville**



"A guide to American rock shyness," **Ray Bonneville's** music involves laying down a surprisingly compact guitar groove, rock-solid keyboard percussion, intricate but understated harmonic riffs, and weathered vocals that are always end but never alien. He often streamlines his act, accompanying himself on guitar, rock harmonies, and footbats. His song style usually appeals to the **evocative songwriting** that won Bonneville a 1998 Juno Award, the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy, for his third album, *Sister of Kind*.

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# 'round about

## MAY MUSIC CALENDAR

### thursday • 1

**Kevin Tinkle**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Hatfield Rain**, Acoustic Indie Night, Music Mart, Solana Beach, 8:45pm.  
**Berkley Hart**, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, 9:30pm.

### friday • 2

**Modern Rhythm**, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, 6-8pm.  
**Mark Jackson Band**, Bailey's Barbecue, Main St., Julian, 8pm.  
**Leigh Taylor Band**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.  
**Christopher Prim/Bikini Manifesto/Andy Lohr & Christy Bruneau/Peter Bolland**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Angela Correa**, Claytime Ceramics, 1863 Bacon St., 8:30pm.

### saturday • 3

**Mark Jackson Band**, Cinco de Mayo con Orgullo Parade & Festival, County Admin. Bldg., 10am-4pm.  
**Valley Center Art & Music Festival**, Valley Center, 11am-6pm.  
**7th Day Buskers**, Claire de Lune, 8pm.  
**Ryan BlueAngela Correa & Friends**, Hot Monkey Love Cafe, 8pm.  
**Christopher Prim/Kelly/Rob Carona**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### sunday • 4

**Cherchez Les Femmes w/ Sue Palmer Quintet/Romy Kaye Trio et al.**, El Cortez Hotel, 4-9pm. \$75.

### tuesday • 6

**Celia Lawley/Harmony Hill/Bluegrass Redliners**, Round Table Pizza, 1161 E. Washington Ave., Escondido, 7:30pm. Call 760/489-0191 for info.

### wednesday • 7

**Essex Green/Oranges Band/Rookie Card**, Casbah. Call for info.

### thursday • 8

**Hatfield Rain**, S.D. Songwriters Guild, Claire de Lune, 9pm.

### friday • 9

**Sue Palmer & her Motel Swing Orchestra**, Concerts on the Green, El Cajon, 5:30-7:30pm.  
**Angela Correa**, Cafe 1134, Coronado, 7:30pm.  
**Radim Zenkl**, mandolin virtuoso, Dizzy's, 8pm.  
**Peter Sprague**, Roxy Restaurant, 517 First Ave., Encinitas, 8pm.  
**3 Simple Words/Joel Ackerson/Seth Horan/Holiday & the Adventure Pop Collective**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Mark Jackson Band**, Hooley's Irish Pub, 2955 Jamacha Rd., Rancho San Diego, 9pm.  
**Rooke Card/Essex Green/Oranges**, Casbah, 9pm.

### saturday • 10

**Sam Hinton Folk Festival**, 2225 Torrey Pines Rd., 9:30am-10pm.  
**Pacific Beach Block Party**, Garnet St., all day.  
**Mark Jackson Band/Derek Duplessie**, Red Barn, Julian, 6-9pm.  
**Peter Sprague & Blurring the Edges meet the Beatles**, Dizzy's, 344 Seventh Ave., 8pm.  
**Prince Myshkins**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Taylor Street**, Cafe Crema, Pacific Beach, 9pm.

### sunday • 11

**Peter Sprague Group**, Coyote Bar & Grill, Carlsbad, 5-9pm.

**Peter Bolland & Broken Hills/Bruce Fitzsimmons & Shadowdogs**, Lestats, 8pm.

### tuesday • 13

**Angela Correa**, KSDT radio (<http://ksdtradio.org>), 8pm.  
**Gillian Welch**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 9pm.

### wednesday • 14

**Richard Thompson**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

### thursday • 15

**Mosaic**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### friday • 16

**Garrett Thomas/Taylor Street/Corinne**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**The Paladins**, Casbah, 8:30pm.  
**Sue Palmer & her Motel Swing Orchestra**, Croce's Top Hat, Fifth Ave. at F St., 9pm.  
**Modern Rhythm**, The Tiki House, 1152 Garnet, 9pm.

### saturday • 17

**Asylum Street Spankers**, 101 Artists Colony, 25 E. E st., Encinitas, 8pm.  
**Mark Jackson Band**, Golden Goose, 10001 Maine St., Lakeside, 8pm.  
**Declue & Decman/Alix Olson/Pamela Means**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Cowboy Nation**, Tio Leo's, 9pm.  
**Ziggy Marley**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 9:15pm.

### sunday • 18

**Derek Duplessie & the Desert Poets**, North Park Street Fair, 4-6pm.  
**John Hammond**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 7:30pm.

**Ray Bonneville**, Dark-Thirty Productions, 7:30pm. Call 619/443-9622 for reservations.

**John Mayall/Jimmie Vaughan**, 4th & B, 8pm.

**Jason Mraz**, RIMAC Arena, UCSD. Call 858/534-8497 for info.

### wednesday • 14

**Lighthouse**, Golden Goose, 10001 Maine St., Lakeside, 7pm.

### thursday • 22

**Drew Norman**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### friday • 23

**Valley Center Western Days**, Valley Center, 5pm-midnight.  
**Peter Sprague & Pass the Drum**, Dizzy's, 344 Seventh Ave., 8pm.  
**Kevin Tinkle**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Berkley Hart**, Lestats, 9pm.  
**Hatfield Rain**, Hard Rock Cafe, La Jolla, 9:30pm.

### saturday • 24

**Valley Center Western Days**, Valley Center, 7am-1am.  
**Bob Fest**, annual Bob Dylan birthday tribute featuring local artists, Dizzy's, 344 Seventh Ave., 8pm.  
**Randi Driscoll**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Taylor Street**, Hot Java Cafe.

### sunday • 25

**Valley Center Western Days**, Valley Center, 8am-midnight.

### monday • 26

**Tin Hat Trio**, Dizzy's, 344 Seventh Ave., 8pm.

### friday • 30

**The Hank Show**, Pine Hills Lodge, 2960 La Posada Way, Julian, 6:30pm. Call 760/765-1100 for info.  
**Harp Concert for Peace**, Ray and Joan Croc Corps Community Center, 6845 University Ave., 7:30pm.  
**Q<sup>2</sup>**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### saturday • 31

**Bobby Fantasy/Jefferson Jay & the Family**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Baja Blues Boys**, Cafe Crema, 9-11pm.  
**Mark Jackson Band**, Olaf Wieghorst Museum, 131 Rea Ave., El Cajon. Call 619/590-3431 for info.  
**The Hank Show**, Pine Hills Lodge, 2960 La Posada Way, Julian, 6:30pm. Call 760/765-1100 for info.  
**Q<sup>2</sup>**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.

### WEEKLY

#### every sunday

**7th Day Buskers**, Hillcrest Farmer's Market/DMV parking lot, 10am-1pm.  
**Steve White**, Elijah's, La Jolla, 11:30am.  
**Celtic Ensemble**, Twiggs, 4pm.  
**Extreme Country**, hosted by **Mike Vlack**, 7-10pm, KSON (97.3 FM).  
**Jazz Roots**, hosted by **Lou Curtiss**, 9-10:30pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).  
**The Bluegrass Special**, hosted by **Wayne Rice**, 10-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

#### every monday

**Swing Dancing**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6-8pm.  
**Tango Dancing**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8pm.  
**Open Mic Night**, Lestats. Call 619/282-0437 for info.

#### every tuesday

**Zydeco Tuesdays**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6:30pm.

#### every wednesday

**Open Mic Night**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.  
**Open Mic Night**, Twiggs. Sign-ups at 6:30pm.  
**Hatchet Brothers**, The Ould Sod, 9pm.  
**Sue Palmer Trio w/ Deeja Marie**, Bayou Bar & Grill, 329 Market St., 6-8pm.

#### every thursday

**Will Edwards' Music Show**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.  
**Hot Rod Lincoln**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., Call for info.  
**Sue Palmer & Friends**, Calypso Restaurant, Leucadia, 7:30pm.



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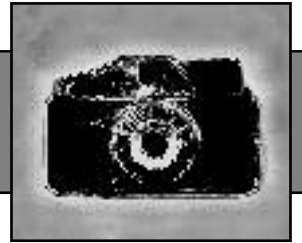
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# the local seen



## ADAMS AVENUE ROOTS FESTIVAL 2003



Photo: Paul Grupp

7th Day Buskers



Photo: Millie Moreno

Tom Brosseau and Angela Correa



Photo: Ellen Duplessie

Scottsville Squirrel Barkers



Photo: Paul Grupp

W.B. Reid



Photo: Millie Moreno

The Stairwell Sisters



Photo: Paul Grupp

Ginny Hawker



"Mississippi" Charles Bevel



Photo: Millie Moreno

The Delta Sisters



Photo: Paul Grupp

Faith Petric



Photo: Paul Grupp

Chris Stuart and Backcountry



Chris Hillman performs with Derek Duplessie at Carlsbad pre-show



Photo: Paul Grupp

Impromptu Jam Session



Photo: Bill Herzog

Ellen, Kent, and Liz selling tee shirts at Troubadour booth

# World Premiere Musical

May 3 - June 8

# FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

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Directed by Randal Myler

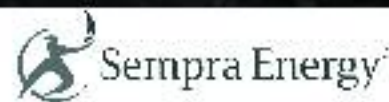
Musical Direction by Dan Wheetman

Featuring Dan Wheetman, "Mississippi" Charles Bevel and Molly Andrews

Get down to the REP for a musical tapestry of the American coal mining experience from the Tony-nominated team of Randal Myler (*Love, Janis, It Ain't Nothin' But The Blues*) and Dan Wheetman (*"Blues"*). *Fire on the Mountain* is the story of a region, a community, and a generation of the resilient workers who built America. Told through moving Roots music of the Appalachian region, *Fire* weaves tales of hardship, heartbreak and danger with hope and triumphant human spirit. Their stories are as old as the hills and as current as today's headlines. Don't miss this world premiere only at the REP!

In association with The Cerritos Center

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REP



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