
Mad Folk NEWS

Newsletter of the Madison Folk Music Society

Volume 34, No. 1/ January 2008

Curtis & Loretta In Concert Jan 5

When working on what the line up will be for the season, I find it exciting to be able to bring back performers who have graced our stages many times over the years, and then I get a little bit more excited when I see a new performer that I will get to introduce to our members for the first time and then there is a new level of excitement when our members introduce someone new to me for the first time, as is the case with our January show, Curtis & Loretta. This duo celebrates two landmark anniversaries this year. They were married (to each other!) 20 years ago, in Santiago, Mexico. But ten years earlier, in the spring of 1977, they chanced to meet each other on the beach just outside Santa Cruz, California. Their best guesstimate of the actual day is sometime in April. Love was born, a duo was formed, and they took to the road, hitchhiking up and down the West Coast, playing in cafes, and on the street.

Over the next three decades, Curtis Teague and Loretta Simonet's harmonies have gotten tighter than ever, their stage presence has blossomed, and they've graduated from the street to dedicated fans at folk clubs across the U.S. They rack up 40,000 miles a year, crisscrossing the country to deliver their own unique brand of folk singer/songwriter music. Their heartfelt original songs have won them fans throughout the U.S. and overseas.

Curtis & Loretta revel in writing songs about the heroism and integrity of real-life, ordinary people, often people they actually



know. "Angel of Bergen-Belsen" is the story of Luba Tryszynska, a holocaust survivor who saved 54 children during World War II. Curtis & Loretta sought her out and met her after writing the song, and have visited her four times at her home in Miami. "Gone Forever" tells the heart wrenching story of Loretta coming to terms with her dad's Alzheimer's. "Elza and Branko (The Siege of Sarajevo)" details the love and bravery of a couple living through the Balkan wars. (continued on page 2)

JAVA NOTES PREMIERES NEW CONCERT SERIES

A new Folk Music Series called Java Notes ~ Concerts For A Better Community, is premiering in Sun Prairie, WI in January 2008.

Java Notes will feature some outstanding musical performances by professional folk artists from around the country in a coffeehouse atmosphere (www.javanotes.org). Funds raised from each concert are used to help people in need through local nonprofit partners. Performances will be held on the second Saturday of the month, January through May, and September through November. The concert series will benefit the residents of Dane County by bringing together all types of people for an evening of great music supporting worthy causes.

Our nonprofit partners have a far reach, touching the lives of youth, families, and homeless residents, those living in poverty, and residents with serious health issues. The events are intended to provide the type of entertainment that is missing from so many of our communities. Entertainment that fosters community and friendship while being structured around a good cause, which presents a win-win situation for everyone involved. (continued on page 2)

Java Notes (continued from page 1)

You are invited to come enjoy the music while providing for those in need in Dane County. Performances will be held at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church, located at 702 North Street, Sun Prairie (5 miles North of Madison). Fair trade coffee, hot chocolate and desserts will be served. Ticket prices are \$15 through mail order or in person, or \$16 with a credit card through online ticket office. Doors will open at 7:15 p.m. with the shows beginning at 8:00 p.m. The first two concerts will benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County.

Java Notes 2008 Schedule (www.javanotes.org)



Sun Prairie United Methodist Church, 702 North Street All shows start at 8:00, doors open at 7:15

January 10 · Scott & Michelle Dalziel

May · 10 John Smith

February 9 · Justin Roth

September 13 · Krista Detor

March 8 · Greg Greenway

October 11 · The Dreamsicles

April 10 · Joe Jencks

November 8 · Ellis

Curtis & Loretta (continued from page 1)

Curtis & Loretta located Elza (now a widow) a couple years ago, and stay in contact with her. And though it's not commonly known, folksingers do want to have fun! The duo's perennial humor shines through, with songs of harp players trying to get into heaven, small spenders on first dates, bugs, and lutefisk! In 2002, City Pages named them "**Best Acoustic Performers of the Twin Cities.**" They've received numerous Minnesota Music Award nominations for Best Acoustic Folk Artist. This past year saw them touring in support of their latest CD, "Just My Heart For You," which is on the "Top Albums of 2006" on folk dj (<http://folkradio.org>). They also made that website's "Top Artists of 2006." In the spring, they spent two months on the West Coast, playing folk clubs from Seattle, to Portland, to Sacramento. In the fall they made their fourth pilgrimage to spend time with Luba in Miami, singing her song at concerts all along the way. In December, a Christmas card and letter arrived from Croatia, written in Elza's hand. Curtis & Loretta live and breathe folk music. It's not something they put away at the end of the day, not something they ever want to "retire from." It's woven inextricably into their lives.

Curtis grew up in Duncanville, Texas, singing harmony in small country churches. He taught himself to play guitar, and everything else he's come across in his ongoing quest for vintage stringed instruments. He has a diploma in Musical Stringed Instrument Repair and Building from Red Wing Technical College in Minnesota. Loretta grew up in Stillwater, the historic river town known as the "birthplace of Minnesota." She sang in church, high school, and college choirs, and graduated from St. Cloud State University in Minnesota with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theater (acting). She currently studies voice with Jeannie Brindley-Barnett.

Opening the show will be Jan Krist. Some readers may have seen Jan this past year when she performed here with Kitty Donohoe and Claudia Schmidt as part of the "The Biddies". Detroit born Jan Krist is a well established veteran of the acoustic music scene. Jan's musical gifts have been recognized by Billboard Magazine, Entertainment Weekly Magazine, Dirty Linen, Image Journal, and others. With 13 nominations and 4 Detroit Metro Music Awards under her belt, Krist has proven herself to be a Detroit area favorite. She can also claim the honor of being a finalist at the Kerrville song writing competition, in Kerrville TX, an annual event which helped to launch the careers of Lyle Lovett and Nancy Griffith. Krist takes her ordinary, plain Jane demeanor and all the elements we've learned to take for granted (6 strings and common time) and lets us know, this is not your ordinary woman with a guitar, *even if it is*.

So whether this duo is an old favorite of yours, or if, as for me, it will be an exciting evening of new music, please come and join the Mad Folk community for an evening of music. The show starts at 8:00 at the Wil-Mar Center. Tickets are available in advance for \$14 at the Mad Folk outlets: Borders East and West, B-Side Compact Discs and Tapes, Orange Tree Imports, Spruce Tree Music and Steep and Brew's Odana Road location. Tickets will also be available at the door for \$16. We will be collecting food for the WilMar Center's food pantry, **please remember to bring a non-perishable food item to donate** .

THANK YOU

The Madison Folk Music Society would like to thank the following organizations and businesses for their support in 2007:

Borders Books - East and West

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Steep and Brew (Odana Rd)

Orange Tree Imports

WORT 89.9 FM

Lakeside Press

Wisconsin Public Radio

CD Reviews by Judy Robinson

Thea Hopkins 'Chickasaw'

The songs on Thea Hopkins' second cd 'Chickasaw', bear witness to many different aspects of human nature. The title track tells of a spurned woman who takes revenge on her unfaithful lover. 'Jenny Danced' is the story of a young girl who learns to cope with an unhappy home by using dance as a means of escape. 'Newspaper Wings' is a reflection on how far you can sometimes go by pursuing childhoods dreams. 'River of Fire' is an anti-war song; it protests not only the war but the close-mindedness of those who continue to view it as the salvation of democracy. 'Jesus Is On The Wire' is about Matthew Shepard's murder and is dedicated to his memory. Hopkins' lyrics are very simple yet they evoke the communal horror and shame we felt when he was murdered. Peter, Paul and Mary included the song on their album 'In These Times' and stated "...This is one of the most important songs we have sung in recent years." Hopkins' velvety voice and perfect phrasing provide a riveting contrast to the seriousness of her subject matter; her voice soothes while her lyrics electrify you. Hopkins is from Boston and won 2nd place in the 2004 Boston Folk Festival songwriter contest. The nationally syndicated radio program "Acoustic Café" selected her as 'One To Watch' in February 2005 for their monthly feature devoted to new artists.

Go to www.theahopkins.com to hear her music and buy both her debut cd 'Birds of Mystery' and 'Chickasaw.'

Peter Mulvey 'Notes From Elsewhere'

'Notes from Elsewhere' could almost be considered the essential Peter Mulvey cd. It contains many of his most brilliant songs and the songs were written between 1991 and 2005 so it encompasses a large portion of his career. More importantly, it is an acoustic album that strips the songs down to their bare essence. The simplicity of the arrangements enhance both his consistently dazzling guitar work and his erudite lyrics.

I'm a devoted fan of Mulvey's; I've heard almost all of these songs live and have heard more elaborate recordings of each of them on his other cd's. So I knew that I would like this cd but was surprised by how different the acoustic versions sounded. The subject matter is as wide ranging as Mulvey's between song musings at his live shows; 'Shirt' is about growing older and how the more things change, the more they stay the same. 'Old Simon Stimson' is a testimony to Mulvey's deep love of and tremendous skill with language. 'The Trouble With Poets' contemplates the higher level of awareness that artistic people are presumed to have. 'Knuckleball Suite' is a tribute to Ft Atkinson's Café Carpe where Mulvey frequently performs. The cd is a treasure trove of songs his fans know and love. If you are not familiar with his work, this is an ideal choice for a first purchase.

Listening to the cd made me think of seeing familiar and cherished paintings out of their frames. The minimized presentation somehow magnified their ingeniousness, finesse and beauty. His cd's, dvd and are available at petermulvey.com along with biographical and other info.



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Did you know???

You can now renew your membership or print out a membership form ONLINE at www.madfolk.org



Many Mad Folk memberships expire in December.

Please check your mailing label and see if it's time to renew so you'll know about all the great music coming in 2008! THANK YOU!

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Madison Folk Music Society

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Time to renew? Don't want to cut up your newsletter? Just be sure your name is on your check and mail it to address shown. Enclose a note if your info has changed.