

Mad Folk News

David Francey at The Brink January 22nd: Not to be missed!

by Peter Berryman

"What I've always preferred is just as few instruments as you can get away with, and lyrics that matter, and a melody that might stick in your head." -- *David Francey*

With those few humble goals, David Francey has become one of Canada's most beloved performing songwriters. A construction worker who wrote songs on the side, it took the winning of a Juno award -- Canada's version of a Grammy -- before he took the plunge into a full time music career at age 48.

The Lyrics:

Someone once said that folk music was music "ABOUT something." Maybe it is David Francey's work history, but his lyrics are made of very particular themes and interesting details that ground his songs in the real workaday world. Using this approach, the powerful emotional aspects of his poetry are more convincing, built on such a solid foundation. In his song Mill Towns, for example, which rings hauntingly true to anyone who has spent time in Detroit or Lowell MA or the paper mill towns of our own Fox Valley, there is the line, "Rode my bike up the bridge, looked back at the paper mill..." Bikes, bridges, mills, such are the precise objects and actions that build in his work to finish, in this case, with the evocative lines, "Night still falls but it doesn't make a sound / Long shadows fall, on the streets of the cold mill towns."

Of the poetry of his writing, David says that he was given an early appreciation of the power of words by his father: "Well, my dad was [a] working man, you know -- a factory worker -- but he had this love of poetry. He just adored poetry and Robert Burns' poetry.

So I got this sense that music and poetry were worth something in the world, and I'd like to think that it still is."

The Melodies:

In autobiographies of rock and roll songwriters, often you find that the method involves beginning with a chord progression, then working up a rhythm pattern, and maybe even a bass line, and only then dreaming up some words that work okay with this juggernaut. David Francey's process is almost the exact opposite of this. He has such a strong belief in the importance of melody that he does not even use an instrument when creating one. Sometimes a gorgeous guitar can get in the way of one's judgment when working up a melody, because anything sounds great on it. David completely bypasses this potential hazard and as a result, his melodies would be enchanting even if sung a cappella, and match his lyrics with a precision of mood that is uncanny. When eventually choosing chords and guitar stylings to support the melody line, he very carefully avoids getting too fancy. Everything is there for the sole reason of helping to present the words and melodies.

The Performance:

David Francey is a humble and friendly person, and these qualities come through on stage in a way that boosts the honesty you feel in his lyrics and melodies. And here is Dean Verger of Rasputin's Folk Cafe in Ottawa describing his singing: "His Scottish accent, especially fine song writing, and a rich voice the likes of James Keelaghan, Bobby Watt, or even Garnet Rogers makes him one of the most pleasurable listenable performers today." David Francey himself has this to say about presenting his songs: "The lyrics and the melody are the most important thing and the more you crowd it out, the less chance of those things getting heard."

Sometimes it's risky to recommend searching on YouTube or suggesting a

perusal of a musician's website because what is there is of questionable relevance to the actual upcoming live show. But in the case of David Francey, a look at his videos (search for David Francey on YouTube) and a trip through his website (www.david-francey.com) are highly recommended if you are trying to decide whether to attend this wonderful artist's night of music. And while you're on his site, take a peek at the long list of awards (three Junos, for example) he has acquired in his relatively few years as a touring musician. It's a safe bet that you will be convinced to come, once you have had a glimpse of David Francey and his songs.

Francey's biography is available on his website, but briefly, he was born in Scotland and moved with his family to Canada when he was twelve. Music was always a part of his life but he only started writing seriously after twenty years as a carpenter. And as mentioned, not until he was 48 years old, had won the prestigious Juno, and talked it over with his wife, did he decide to take a chance on the music business.

And you will be glad he did, if you come to his show at the Brink Lounge at 8pm on Saturday, January 22. For good measure, here are a few more testimonials:

"Hands-down the best songwriter working in Canada today." -- *The Times Colonist*, Victoria

"He's the closest thing this country has to Woody Guthrie." -- *The Georgia Strait*, Vancouver

"One of today's finest folk-based singer-songwriters...a working man's poetry" -- *Sing Out!* magazine

MadFolkNews is published monthly by the Madison Folk Music Society, a non-profit, volunteer-led society dedicated to fostering folk music in the Madison area. Contact us at madfolk@charter.net. Learn about concerts, membership, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities at www.madfolk.org.

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MadFolk Concert Tickets

When you see this symbol – ee – you'll know that you're reading about a Mad Folk sponsored event. Advance tickets for Mad Folk shows are available online at www.madfolk.org and at these outlets:

- Borders Books West, 3416 University Ave.
- Orange Tree Imports, 1721 Monroe Street
- Spruce Tree Music, 851 East Johnson

Purchase tickets ONLINE for Mad Folk concerts via Brown Paper Tickets:

<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/producer/10879>

You can also purchase advance tickets by mail. Send a stamped self-addressed envelope with your check payable to Mad Folk, PO Box 665, Madison, WI 53701. If all else fails, call 608-846-9214 for information.

2011 Winter/Spring Folk Music Classes Offered through UW-Madison

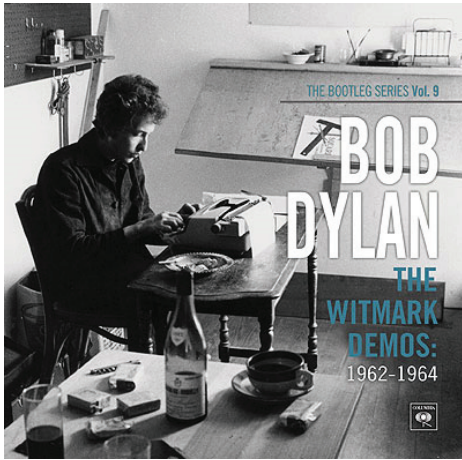
UW-Madison Continuing Studies offers non-credit music skills and enrichment classes designed especially for adult learners by great instructors, including Chris Powers, Amy McFarland, Jim Leary, Brian O'Donnell, Katie LaRaye Waldren, – and many more! For a complete list and descriptions of all our Spring 2011 class offerings, call 263-6670 to receive a catalog or check out the website: <http://www.dcs.wisc.edu/classes/music.htm>. Register online or call 262-2451.

Madison's KG & The Ranger awarded 2010 "Outstanding Entertainer - Duo"

The Western Music Association named Madison's KG & The Ranger "Outstanding Entertainer - Duo" of 2010. Winners are nominated and voted on by the entire WMA membership. The award was presented November 20th in Albuquerque NM at the WMA Awards Banquet, the grande finale of the annual Showcase and Awards Festival. This festival is a gathering of top notch western music performers from around the country and fans from around the world - a "Who's Who" event of cowboy musicians.



**THE WITMARK DEMOS: 1962-1964 THE BOOTLEG SERIES
VOL. 9
BOB DYLAN ~ 2010 COLUMBIA RECORDS**



Review by Kiki Schueler

Bob Dylan has a whopping 54 releases to his name. That number includes studio albums, live records, greatest hits collections and volumes one through eight of the Bootleg Series. Previous releases in the collection have included such treasures as 1966's "The Royal Albert Hall Concert," where Dylan infamously goes electric, and my personal favorite, 1975's Rolling Thunder Revue tour. It's hard to believe there's anything left in the vault, let alone something of this magnitude—47 unreleased tracks, fifteen (15!) of which have never been heard by the general public. The two discs are packaged with an impressive 60-page booklet. As the title states, the songs were recorded between 1962 and 1964, before Dylan even turned 24. It's staggering to realize that he wrote more immortal songs in two years than most artists will write in their entire lives.

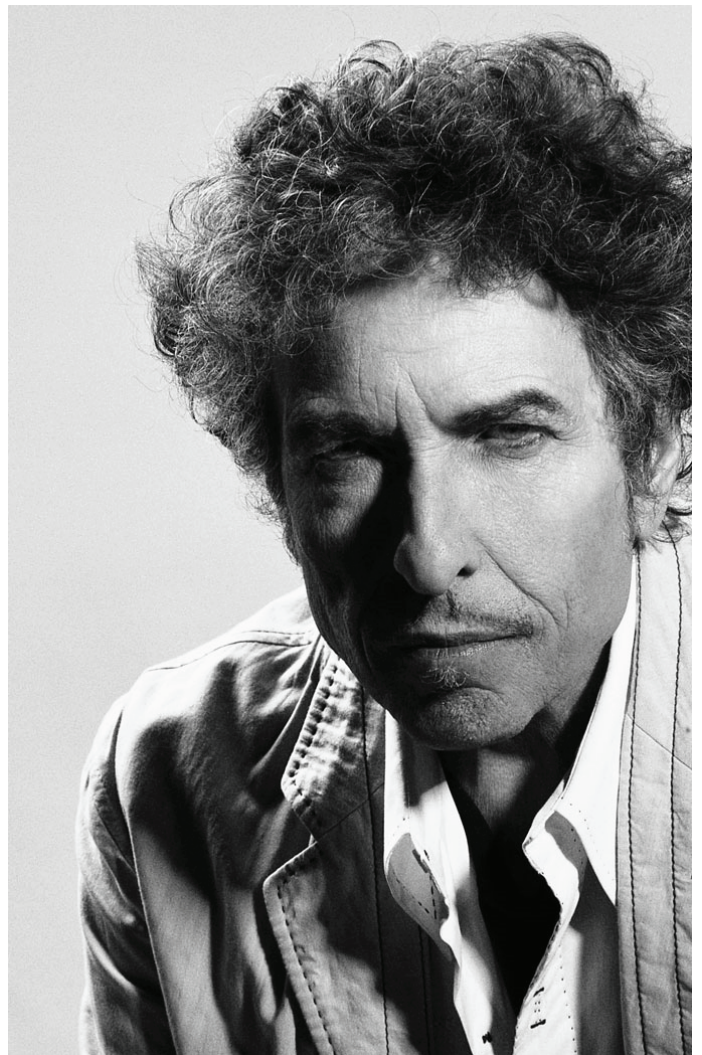
"Blowing in the Wind," "Masters of War," "Don't Think Twice It's Alright," and "The Times They Are A-Changin'" all appear here in their simplest form—just Dylan, his guitar, a piano and surprisingly little harmonica (especially on disc one). His inspired lyrics take center stage. We know many of these landmark songs, yet for the first time we can see—more accurately, hear—the man behind them. And that is what makes *The Witmark Demos* a must-own. Throughout, Dylan introduces songs, comments on them, makes corrections, and, in the case of "Blowing in

the Wind," coughs. This version is miles away from Peter, Paul and Mary's, but it is obvious why they were interested in recording it. This early take of "Talkin' Bear Mountain Picnic Massacre Blues" isn't quite as funny as the laugh-out-loud version that appeared on Volume One, but you can hear someone chuckling in the background anyway. "That's my Calypso tap number," he inexplicably exclaims at the end of "I'd Hate to Be You on That Dreadful Day." Perhaps my favorite is his critique of "Let Me Die in My Footsteps." "Do you want all of this?" he questions, "It's awful long. Well, it's not that long, it's just a drag."

There are revelations everywhere. Somehow I never paid much attention to the bone-chilling "Ballad of Hollis Brown" the hundreds of times I've listened to *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, but every time I hear it here Brown's desperation is palpable, his choice unavoidable. Serious shivers. Alternate lyrics abound; the best of these may be in "I Shall Be Free," where a whole new verse ups the ante on an already hilariously ridiculous song. And then there are those fifteen songs. They aren't identified on the track listing, but I picked them out easily. The best of them include the this-girl's-gonna-kill-me blues number "Hero Blues," his sarcastic take on social injustice, "Long Ago, Far Away," and the

hate-crime murder ballad "The Death of Emmett Till." These are songs that were recorded with the intent to sell them to other artists. After they were committed to tape, the song, along with Dylan's handwritten lyrics, would be converted to sheet music, which explains his comment before "Bound to Lose, Bound to Win." "I can write you out the verses to this later, I can't really remember them now," he says.

Dylan is given credit for killing Tin Pan Alley; for the first time the songwriter was also the singer. While most folksingers from Greenwich Village ended up on the Folkways label, Bob Dylan signed to the mammoth label Columbia, where he was known as "Hammond's Folly," though not for very long. These demos announce his arrival and document a time when songs were spilling out of him faster than they could be released. It's hard to believe they were kept quiet for so long.





Imaginary Diet

Songwriter Stuart Stotts and I were talking recently about how sometimes a song comes out of nowhere, you suddenly become aware you've been singing it, and find that it pertains very precisely to your situation or state of mind. Just today, thinking back on some mildly unpleasant interchange (by now I forget which one), I realized I was singing to myself that great old Girl Scout song, "Nobody likes me, everybody hates me, I'm gonna eat some worms." I have always marveled at that line and how well it represents the way a bad self-image translates into self-destructive (eventually even suicidal) behavior. That little song is a great send-up of this phenomenon, speaking as one who in the past has turned to gin, cigarettes, and nowadays, Maple Nut Goodies when I suffer the common paranoia that nobody likes me everybody hates me.

But I doubt the appearance of this song is just an aesthetic observation being made by the brain to show off how smart it is and how quickly it can draw pointless analogies. My feeling is that there is a restorative reason the Eat Worms song selects itself on the personal jukebox. And my hunch is, in my expert opinion, that the logic of the song is such a hilariously blatant example of a wrongheaded impulse, the analogy helps you see the stupidity of your real situation. Like when you are so mad at the world you decide you're not going to click the damn seat belt. Certain beneficial-metaphor songs must huddle in the folds of gray matter, ready to leap into your consciousness when needed.

In the cranial toolbox there are other handy coping gizmos too, of course: little bits of prose, a few bumper stickers, some Groucho quotes, a phrase you saw needlepointed into Aunt Trudy's toaster cozy twenty ago, a single frame of a Dagwood comic, all mixed in with contrivances of your own imagination.

Given my recent musing about all this, it's not surprising that an article by Eryn Brown from the Los Angeles Times

caught my eye a few days ago. The headline was "Study finds imaginary eating can cut intake." And sure enough, the article described a recent experiment in which it was shown that volunteers who methodically pictured themselves eating their way through 30 M&Ms, when presented afterwards with a real bowl of the little bastards, actually ate half as many as volunteers who had NOT been asked to picture themselves eating M&Ms beforehand.

This study was lead by Carey Morewedge, an assistant professor of "Social and Decision Sciences" (!) at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Soon after reading this article, I heard Ira Flatow, host of National Public Radio's Science Friday, interviewing Mr. Morewedge himself about the study, going into a little more chocolaty detail.

Basically, from my understanding, and to make a long story short, as with most studies like this, the volunteers were purposely misled about the theme of the study. Various groups were asked to imagine eating 3 or 30 M&M's, or 3 or 30 little cheese cubes, or not eating anything but MOVING 30 M&M's, etc. The findings indicated that people who imagined eating 30 M&M's, when later unexpectedly presented with an actual bowl of M&M's, ate far fewer of them than the group who imagined only eating 3 M&M's.

In the group that imagined eating 30 cheese cubes, there was NO difference of consumption from the group that imagined eating 3 cheese cubes, when these groups were presented with bowls of M&M's. The group asked to imagine just moving the M&M's was not influenced at all.

In other words, one apparently has to imagine eating the exact food in question for this anti-indulging effect to work. If you wanted to eat less at thanksgiving, you'd have to imagine gorging on every single food that was to be served. (I can hear it now: "YAMS! I didn't know we were having yams! PASS THE YAMS!!!!")

The study brings many questions to mind (if you imagine only RED M&M's, does it work for yellow ones?), and in the NPR interview, there are more questions answered and in more detail than

in this Whither Zither of course.

But it made me think back to one late afternoon in the early 1980s, very soon after I had managed to kick a pretty tenacious gin habit. I see myself lying on the couch on a particularly difficult day and very deliberately going through the whole process of opening a bottle of Tanqueray and preparing a drink, complete with imagined juniper aroma and the popping sounds of ice cubes as I pictured the gin flowing over them. When I was done with this air-cocktail, my urge to actually booze it up had diminished considerably. Of course, the next morning I had to go through the ordeal of imagining a hangover...

But all this makes me wonder, being a musician, about how often songs are used as this kind of tool? Are there songs that describe the concretion of some desire so well and so specifically that the urge is diminished after listening to it, singing it, or more to the point, having it on rotation in your head?

You have to wonder if folk songs like Pans of Biscuits ("pans of biscuits, bowls of gravy we shall have") actually have the effect of reducing cravings, at least for those particular foods, and if drinking songs which describe the details of boozing actually diminish the urge to an extent. You also have to wonder if violent video games, for example, actually diminish certain violent tendencies through the same process. Strange to consider. As I've mentioned in earlier Whither Zithers, other studies have found, and it feels right, that when you're sad, it helps more to listen to sad songs than happy ones.

So maybe, just maybe, the M&M's trick works with analogies. Maybe a song that goes round and round in your head 30 times is like eating 30 M&Ms, and if the song is an analogy for self-pity, for example, your urge to wallow in that destructive sludge is reduced. Hold the worms! But more studies, please, and by the way, are there any M&M's left?

SOURCES:

National Public Radio:

www.npr.org/2010/12/10/131967496/Thinking-About-Eating-May-Mean-Eating-Less

Los Angeles Times:

articles.latimes.com/2010/dec/09/health/la-he-imaginary-eating-20101210

WZ, Jan '11

One of Canada's best-loved troubadours. - *Greg Quill, Toronto Star*



**Madison Folk Music
Society PRESENTS**

David Francey

Saturday, January 22, 2011

8:00 pm

The Brink Lounge

701 E. Washington, Suite 105

Tickets \$14 advance, \$16 day of show

Available at: www.madfolk.org, Borders Bookshop West,
Spruce Tree Music, Orange Tree Imports

Non-perishable donations of food will be collected for local food banks.

WORT 89.9 FM

The Mad Folk Refrigerator Cover

January 2011

Mad Folk Events



David Francey
Sat, 1/22 --8:00pm at the Brink Lounge , 701 E. Washing -
ton

Claudia Schmidt w/ Carrie Elkin
Sat, 3/12 -- 8:00pm at the Brink Lounge, 701 E. Washing -
ton

Venues



Mad Toast Live! at the The Brink Lounge

Tuesdays -- Music, talk and variety show hosted by Chris
Wagoner and Mary Gaines -- 6:00pm -- \$10

- 1/04 -- Willie Porter
- 1/18 -- Purgatory Hill(Pat McDonald & Mealanie Jane



18 S. Water St.
Ft. Atkinson, WI
cafecarpe.com
920-563-9391

Cafe Carpe

- Saturday, Jan. 1 -- The New Pioneers -- \$10
- Friday, Jan. 7 -- TBA
- Saturday, Jan 8 -- TBA
- Friday, Jan. 14 -- OPEN STAGE
- Saturday, Jan. 15 -- OPEN STAGE
- Wednesday, Jan. 19 -- David Francey -- \$10
- Friday, Jan. 21 -- TBA
- Saturday, Jan. 22 -- TBA
- Friday, Jan 28 -- TBA
- Saturday, Jan. 29 -- Small Potatoes -- \$10



701A E. Washington
www.high-noon.com
608-268-1122

High Noon Saloon

- Tue., January 4 - The Dirty Shirts - 6:30pm - \$4
- Thu., January 6 - Rana Santacruz - 6pm - \$7
- Tue., January 11 - Winn Dixie / Cork n' Bottle String
Band - 6pm - \$5
- Wed., January 19 - Dale Watson / Brown Derby - 8pm -
\$12
- Wed., January 26 - Foghorn String Band / (This Is The)
Squirrel Hunters -
8pm - \$10
- Fri., January 28 - Freedy Johnston / Darden Smith -
6:30pm - \$12 & \$10 advance

Folklore Village
3210 Cry Hwy BB
Dodgeville, WI
folklorevillage.org
608-924-4000

Folklore Village

- Sat, 12/04 -- Old Time Barn Dance -- 6:30pm --
potluck -- \$6 Adults -- \$4 Seniors & Teens -- \$3 Kids
- Tue, 12/07 -- First Tuesday Open Mic & Jam Session
-- 7:00pm -- Donations Appreciated
- Sat, 12/11 -- Scandanavian Activities for kids &
Families -- 3pm -- \$4/person
- Sat, 12/11 -- St. Lucia Evenings Program -- 6:30pm --
potluck -- \$6 Adults -- \$4 Seniors & Teens -- \$3 Kids
- Fri, 12/17 -- Holiday Concert and Tree Lighting, Feat.
The Monroe Swiss Singers -- 7pm -- \$6 Adults -- \$4
Seniors & Teens -- \$3 Kids
- Sat, 12/18 -- German Tree Lighting & Social --
6:30pm -- potluck -- \$6 Adults -- \$4 Seniors & Teens
-- \$3 Kids
- Dec 28 - Jan 1 -- 63rd Festival of Christmas &
Midwinter Traditions -- Reservations Required. Full
and Part Time Options.



Wil-Mar Center
953 Jenifer St.
wildhuginthewoods.org
608-233-5687

This month's Wild Hog events are listed on the
next page.

Gigs

Jim Schwall

• Cajun Dance - Sun 01/16 - Instruction at 6:20 PM, Dance 7:00 - 10:00 PM -- \$7 -- Harmony
Bar, 2210 Atwood Ave, Madison Wis. -- Music by The Cajun Strangers

• Monday, January 24, Crystal Corner, 9:30 -- Jim solo, no cover.

David Francey

• Sun, 1/16, at the Irish Fest Center, 1532 Wauwatosa Ave., Milwaukee -- 3 PM -- \$15

The Outside Track

• Sat, 2/25, at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwau-
kee, at 7:30 PM-- \$19 in advance, \$23 day of show

On the Air



wpr.org

Simply Folk on Wisconsin Public Radio w/Tom Martin -
Erickson

Sun 5:00-8:00pm

Concerts recorded in Wisconsin, music and dance of people
the world over. For playlists, calendars, station listings, and
more, visit www.wpr.org/simplyfolk.



wort-fm.org

WORT 89.9 FM community radio

Sun -- 3:00-5:00pm

- **On the Horizon** (world music) w/Ford Blackwell, Paul
Novak & Dan Talmo
- Weekdays 9:00am-noon*
- Sun -- **World Book of Records** (folk from the world over)
w/Tracy Doreen
- Tue -- **Pastures of Plenty** (traditional American folk)
w/John Fabke
- Wed -- **Back to the County** (country music on a theme)
w/Bill Malone
- Thur -- **Diaspora** (folk and international) w/Terry O'
- Fri -- **Mud Acres** (bluegrass and acoustic) w/Chris Powers

Madison Dance

African/African-American Dance classes with live drumming -- Sun,
7:00-9:00pm -- Metro Dance, 3009 University Ave. -- 255-3677 / 251-4311

English Country Dance taught -- 1st and 3rd Mon, 7:30-9:30pm -- Wil-Mar
Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 238-9951 or 238-9951

Cajun Dance taught -- Sun 5/09 -- instruction at 6:15pm, dance 7:00-10:00pm --
Harmony Bar & Grill, 2201 Atwood Ave -- 249-4333

International Dancing -- Wed and Sun; classes 7:30-8:30pm, request dancing
8:30-11:00pm -- The Crossing, 1127 University Ave. -- 241-3655

Irish Dancing -- Monthly Ceili and set dance events are posted at
celticmadison.org/dance

Italian Dancing -- Tue, 7:00-9:00pm, no experience or partner necessary --
Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 838-9403 (Philana)

Madison Contra Dance Cooperative -- Tue; 7:30 jam band practice, intermedi-
ate level dancing 7:45-9:40pm -- \$5 for non-members -- Gates of Heaven, 302 E.
Gorham -- 238-3394 (Steve)

Morris Dancing -- Wed, 7:00pm -- call for location -- 238-9951

Ecstatic Dance -- Sat, 8:00pm -- The Center for Conscious Living -- 843-7740

Scottish Country Dancing -- Sun, 7:00pm -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. --
835-0914

Misc

Madison Ukulele Club -- Singalongs 1st and 3rd Weds 7:00-9:00pm -- call for
location -- 246-8205 (Andrew)

Wild Hog in the Woods January Events:

Fri Jan. 7 -- 7:30pm

Chris Powers will present a cavalcade of American musical and vocal styles, accompanying himself on mandolin, guitar and bouzouki. Chris hosts the Mud Acres Bluegrass Special Friday mornings on WORT. He also hosts bluegrass jams at Indie Cake, plays in the Old Tin Can String Band at Brocaxh and in Graminy (See Jan.28).

Admission is \$3 for general public, \$2 for members.

Fri Jan. 14 -- 7:30pm

Rich Baumann is a folksinger-songwriter-storyteller-teacher. His audiences include everyone from preschoolers to seniors. He has played at schools, community centers, libraries, senior centers, retirement homes and folk clubs. He accompanies himself on guitar, fiddle and other instruments. More at www.richbaumann.com.

Admission is \$3 for general public, \$2 for members.

Fri Jan. 21 -- 7:30pm

Luther "The Jet" Gette grew up amidst the steam of Pennsylvania Railroad locomotives in western Pennsylvania. He spent the best part of his lifetime riding the rails across the USA and in 1995 was elected King of the Hoboes at the National Hobo Convention in Britt, Iowa. He sings songs and tells stories based on his and others' experiences riding the rails. He holds degrees in French literature from Penn State and Wisconsin.

Admission is \$3 for general public, \$2 for members.

Fri Jan. 28 -- 7:30pm

Graminy is a "class-grass" ensemble from Madison, bringing together classical and grass-roots musical traditions. They compose all of their own music, play from a written score and improvise quite a bit. They are Chris Wagoner on fiddle, Mary Gaines on cello and vocal, Shauncey Ali on fiddle and viola, Mike Bell composer and mandolin player and Chris Powers on guitar and mandolin. See www.graminy.net

Admission is \$3 for general public, \$2 for members.

Send your check, payable to MFMS to: Mad Folk c/o Tracy Comer, P.O. Box 930446, Verona, WI 53593-0446

Choose membership category: Senior \$8
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Madison Folk Music Society

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