

# MadFolk News

## Claudia Schmidt returns March 12 to the Brink Lounge

by Lou Berryman

We can never get enough of Claudia Schmidt, and MadFolk is presenting a not-to-be-missed, all-too-rare evening with her on March 12 at the Brink Lounge. Claudia is a performer and entertainer of the first order, whose experience and talent supports an infectious enthusiasm which will lift each audience member.

Claudia's music is a quirky and wonderful hodgepodge (her word!) of music, poetry, story, laughter, drama, and celebrating the moment. She has worked in virtually every folk club, theater, and festival in the United States and Canada, as well as extensive appearances on TV and radio, and add very personal versions of the work of others to her own original song writing, and what you get is a unique look at the world from someone who says what she sees with clarity, humor, and wonder. Garrison Keiilor said "when Claudia sings a song, it stays sung"

Claudia Schmidt belongs to the genre of hyper literate songwriters, a word-monger of the first order, sometimes bursting at the boundaries of song form. In addition, she's a firecracker of a singer, irrepressibly emotional, and a radiant, almost overwhelming performer. It's the folksinger trifecta, and in this Schmidt is nearly in a class by herself. Despite a career spanning nearly four decades, her intense, incandescent vocal style shows no sign of dimming.

Numerous glowing reviews of her work say it all:

*Those who keep trying to categorize Claudia Schmidt's music should just give it up and file her under the general category 'TALENT' Big talent.* -Post-Bulletin (Rochester, Mn.)

*Schmidt is a one-woman revitalization movement. .Schmidt is the best at what she does.* --The Tribune (Oakland, Ca.)

*Claudia Schmidt is a true artist-she has*

*talent AND the fire of genius* --The Boston Globe

*She comes at you straight from the shoulder, letting the listener feel the full impact of her delivery, leaving nothing behind.* --David Nathan (AllAboutJazz.com)

*Claudia, Claudia, Claudia, that's all you need to say. .one of the finest folk voices ever to pick up a mic. Chocolatey smooth vocals swirled into jiving notes. Too delicious!* --Border's Books and Music

Opening for Claudia is Carrie Elkin, a soulful singer with a gypsy spirit, a songwriter with a keen eye. Inspired by her travels and the many places she has called home--Ohio, New Mexico, Colorado, Boston, Austin--she documents the human condition with sensitivity and humor, crafting songs that have garnered attention at prestigious song writing contests, including Mountain Stage NewSong and the Falcon Ridge Emerging Artist Showcase.

Carrie got her musical start young, singing in church and playing the saxophone, and she has lived an extremely diverse and active young

life. She competed as a National Champion acro gymnast, which led to an eventual invitation to join the circus. Instead, she studied physiology at Ohio University and became an organic chemist. But music never left her blood, and the attention she was gaining from her song writing quickly stole her away from the academic world, as she began to record and tour across the country.

After settling in Austin, Texas in 2007, she recorded her album *The Jeopardy of Circumstance*, which received rave reviews in the US and the UK. She is currently touring in support of a new album, *Call It My Garden*.

Both of these performers, one a seasoned professional and the other a fresh new voice, have been called "a force of nature". This should be an amazing evening, and MadFolk urges you not to miss it!



# The Outside Track at ICHC Feb. 25

Hailing from Canada, Ireland and Scotland, the five members of The Outside Track will bring a stunning synthesis of virtuosity and energy to their performance at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 25.

The band members – each of whom is an award-winning musician – met while students at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance in Limerick, Ireland. Their eclectic combination of influences and backgrounds “buzz and fizz together,” according to the UK’s Maverick Magazine, resulting in traditional music with a modern twist that is far greater than the

sum of its parts.

Lead vocalist and wooden flute player Norah Rendell, a native of Canada, began her career as a professional recorder player and then turned to folk music, which led to a 2008 nomination as Traditional Singer of the Year by the Canadian Folk Music Awards. She is currently the education director at the Center for Irish Music in St. Paul, Minn.

Canadian Mairi Rankin, a member of the legendary musical Rankin family, plays fiddle, sings backing vocals, and does Cape Breton-style step dancing. She has performed at many of Europe and North America’s most prestigious festivals, including Milwaukee Irish Fest, as a member of the supergroup Beolach.

Allie Robertson from Edinburgh, Scotland, plays the clarsach (Gaelic for harp) and is also highly regarded as a composer, arranger, teacher and improviser. Recent awards included first prize at the inaugural London Harp Competition. She has performed for Queen Elizabeth II as a soloist for Yehudi Menuhin’s Live Music Now!

Piano accordionist Fiona Black developed a love for music and dance while growing up in the Scottish Highlands. Her distinctive rhythm and vibrant style intertwines influences from Scotland, Sweden and Cape Breton.

Guitarist and vocalist Cillian O’Dálaigh was born in Germany and moved to Ireland as a child, where his Irish father formed the family band Trazz. O’Dálaigh has played guitar and flute with Trazz since he was 14 and has

toured extensively in Ireland, the United Kingdom, Germany and France.

“Simply a consummate blend of skill, talent, flair and intensity. Best of the best! The perfect blend.” – Folkwords


Tickets for the show are \$19 in advance and \$23 the day of concert with discounts for students and groups. To order online, visit [ichc.net](http://ichc.net). Tickets may also be ordered by calling (414) 345-8800.

*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](mailto:madfolk@charter.net). Learn about concerts, membership, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities at [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org).

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## MadFolk Concert Tickets

When you see this symbol –  – 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](http://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.

# Peter Mulvey comes to Kiki's House of Righteous Music Feb. 20!

by Kiki Schueler

Peter Mulvey's 2009 release *Letters from a Flying Machine* combines two of his greatest talents- songwriting and storytelling. While anyone who's familiar with any of his twelve records knows his talent for the former, it used to be that you had to see him play to realize his gift for the latter. In the guise of letters written to his young nieces and nephews, he takes some of his best stories and intersperses them between songs. Some I'd heard before, the always amusing tale of Dynamite Bill and the introspective musings of Vlad the astrophysicist, whom Mulvey befriended based on a mutual love of music, astrophysics and beer, and some I hadn't, like the inquisition of Uncle Peter concerning death and DNA by the 6-year-old Lucy.

In any case, I hadn't heard any of them presented in this inspired format prior to Mulvey's first appearance at the House of Righteous Music. For that show he plugged his iPod into the PA to provide the hum of the airplane engine that backs each of the letters, and recited them from memory. It's hard to imagine a venue other than the unparalleled Café Carpe in Fort Atkinson where he could do a show like this for such a rapt and completely silent audience. It's an honor to welcome Mulvey back for what is sure to be another remarkable show.

I first discovered Peter Mulvey in the basement of the Pres House in a venue called the Catacombs. It was 1998 or '99, and Mulvey was playing a show in support of his recent release *Glencree*, which was recorded live in Ireland. After spending time in Dublin years earlier learning the trade of street

musician, he has continued to tour the country frequently. I'm not quite sure exactly how I came to be at this show, but it was a fortuitous decision. I can recall only a few occasions where I have been so amazed by my introduction to a performer. He concluded what had already been a mind-blowing musical experience with a surprising encore of the Waterboys' "Whole of the Moon," one of my favorite songs. I was officially in love.

I haven't missed many opportunities to see him since. He no longer plays "Whole of the Moon," but he still complements his now extensive catalog with inspired covers ranging from Hoagy Carmichael to Greg Brown. His 2002 release *Ten Thousand Mornings* captures some of his favorites played live in a Boston subway station. As dem-

onstrated on *Letters* and other terrific CDs like 2006's *Knuckleball Suite* and '04's *Kitchen Radio*, his songwriting is smart and intuitive. His guitar playing, accented by his distinctive jangly sound, is stunning. That much you can get from the records, but you haven't really heard him till you have seen him live, where his quick wit and encyclopedic knowledge make his shows immensely entertaining and always memorable.

Usually when Mulvey comes to town he headlines the High Noon Saloon or appears on a bill at the Barrymore or Majestic Theaters. To see him in such an intimate space will be a treat. Mulvey's friend Pamela Means will open. You can get more information about the show, which will be Sunday, February 20 at 8 PM, by contacting me at [righteousmusicmgmt@gmail.com](mailto:righteousmusicmgmt@gmail.com).



# SOUTHERN WISCONSIN'S MOST CHARMING THEATRE

The meticulously restored Stoughton Opera House is one of Wisconsin's premiere live music theaters and the Spring 2011 season includes so much more! See legendary performers in the intimate atmosphere of an era gone by.



## EXCITING SHOWS IN FEBRUARY AT STOUGHTON OPERA HOUSE!



### ***Dan Newton Café Accordion Orchestra—Feb 11***

“Berets and Bongos” describes the Cafe Accordion experience, a loungy, eclectic mix, full of French flare, Latin heat and Bohemian attitude. The group complements musettes with swing, ballads, tangos, cha chas, rumbas, and cumbias infused with good humor and expressive abandon.



### ***Bonnie Koloc—Feb 12***

Crossing the boundaries of folk, jazz and blues, Bonnie Koloc was a mainstay in folk circles. With her crystalline voice and exquisite songs, she is renowned for her warm, powerful voice, stage presence and music which has elements of Folk, Gospel, and Blues in the spirit of Alberta Hunter. Don't miss this show, Bonnie will enchant you.



### ***An Evening with The Kruger Brothers—Feb 13***

Intense and tranquil; classic, classy and classical; jazzy and grassy—all at the same time! Theirs is a music that celebrates the best of what music can be: exciting, engaging, intelligent, and delightful. This show benefits the Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Association & Stoughton Opera House.



### ***Four Bitchin' Babes***

#### ***Hormonal Imbalance ...A Mood Swinging Musical Revue—Feb 26***

Spend an evening with these outrageously funny and multi-talented musicians as they examine, and ultimately celebrate, the lives of today's women. With sorority sister chemistry they offer both poignant views and unbridled comedic commentary on the joys and dilemmas of everyday life including struggles to balance careers and family, chocolate obsessions and low carb inner peace, CNN and TV Land, and more.



VISIT [WWW.STOUGHTONOPERAHOUSE.COM](http://WWW.STOUGHTONOPERAHOUSE.COM) FOR  
MORE EXCITING ADDITIONS TO OUR SEASON!

608-877-4400  
381 E. Main Street  
Stoughton, WI 53589



## Write About Dogs

Well, my wife Kristi and I had to have our dog Isabel euthanized last Thursday. Her kidneys had finally decided to call it quits and to make a long story short, Izzie had stopped eating entirely and was begging to bow out (bow-wow out?), you could tell. It's a tough decision, to put it mildly, based eventually on one more of those heartbreaking lines you have to draw yourself in this world.

A thousand articles, a thousand web sites, probably whole books and entire lifetimes have been dedicated to the idea of songs about dogs, and here's another one, as a sort of catharsis for yours truly.

A dog song had something to do with my learning about the concept of the folk song as being malleable and without fixed lyrics or melody. I think I've mentioned before that my mom worked as a writer for a radio station and used to bring home albums that had been sent to that station but rejected. WHBY in Appleton was very middle-of-the-road, so she brought home a LOT of music, even including that incendiary genre, folk music. Fortunately for me, even Burl Ives and Jimmie Driftwood were too mind-blowing for the early 1960s ears of Appleton. And it was from a Burl Ives album that I learned to sing, and to play on my baritone uke, his version of Old Blue.

*I had an old dog, his name was Blue  
& I bet you five dollars he's a good dog too  
Sayin' come on Blue, you good dog you...*

The dog croaks in this sad song, a nice depressing twist for a glum teenager like me:

*I dug his grave, with a silver spade  
I lowered him down with a golden chain  
Saying go on Blue, you good dog you...*

Gosh, it still makes me misty, typing those lines now as an old geezer. But anyway, my brother Jeff, who was ahead

of me in the exploration of folk music, already playing a Gibson guitar and listening to more obscure sources, played and sang a version Old Blue for me that was not my Burl Ives version, and I remember actually saying, "That's not how it goes." Even as I said it, I realized at that moment there is no "how it goes" with true folk music in the traditional sense. "How it goes" is "how you go it," you might say, or how you remember it, or how you last heard it, or how you read the lyrics in an old British gum wrapper from 1768, or how your tone deaf babysitter sang it to you in the kitchen in Louisiana in 1956.

I have always wondered if when you vividly remember some seemingly insignificant and mundane moment in your life, it might indicate that the moment was actually NOT that insignificant and was actually one more little kick up the slope of enlightenment. I may have read about or otherwise been superficially aware of the idea of folk music as a collection of ever-developing works, but if so, I never really felt it in my guts until I made a fool statement like that to my smarter older brother. From that moment on I knew: there is no "how it goes."

As a boy I never had a dog. We had cats, we had birds, we had a few depressed fish, we had a hamster who chewed his way through 3/4 inch pine to escape and eventually die beneath the strings of the baby grand (maybe during a rousing version of Toot Toot Tootsie Good Bye as played by my mom, accompanying my tone-deaf dad on his tenor banjo).

But I never had a dog, and never lived with one until Kristi and I got together in the late 70s. She had a Doberman named Tara, whom I learned to love surprisingly quickly, and I haven't been dogless since. Even now, we still have Sophie, our second Rat Terrier, a bit lonesome now for her pal Izzie but still keeping us in perspective and in stitches.

There's a George Booth cartoon that says it all. Booth is one of my all time favorite cartoonists. In this one, a worn down middle aged frumpy man sits at his

typewriter on the weatherbeaten porch, arms folded, a blank piece of paper in the carriage. His equally frumpy wife stands in the doorway, looking out at him, while dozens of dogs of infinite and scuzzy variety hang out everywhere. The wife says, "Write about dogs!"

That's pretty much how I came to write about dogs, during one of those don't-bother-me-Sophie-I-have-to-think-of-something-to-write-about moments. I have written half a dozen songs about dogs, and am probably one of only a few songwriters who has had a dog song featured on a cat album.

A dog becomes like a compartment of your brain that stands back and eyeballs the whole situation somewhat but not totally dispassionately. I like the way Daisy the dog is portrayed in the Dagwood strip, as reacting with a related but secondary perspective to the main action. The use of dog in this strip reminds me of the use of a bridge in a song; it takes you away just far enough from the main action to give you a second philosophical peek at the situation, putting it all in perspective. George Booth often uses dogs in his cartoons in that same way. This particular cartoon notwithstanding, the dogs in Booth's cartoons are usually not necessary to the main action, but contribute greatly to the impact. Which is, in a way, how dogs figure into real life, at least on my weatherbeaten porch.

So to try and tie this all together, a dog's perceived perception is one more version of "how it goes," and so is one more reminder that there really is no fundamental "how it goes," and that things are what you make of them. How some situation appeared to Izzie was often not how it appeared to Sophie. And what is a song but, like a pet, one more version of "how it goes," which, you might say, is the whole reason for art in the first place: Perspective.

Or at least that's one old dog's opinion of how it goes.

*In loving memory of Isabel, 1997-2011*

*WZ, Feb '11*

# The Mad Folk Refrigerator Cover

February 2011

## Mad Folk Events



**Madison Folk Music Society** Claudia Schmidt w/ Carrie Elkin  
Sat, 3/12 -- 8:00pm at the Brink Lounge, 701 E. Washington

## 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

- Feb 1 Musikanto 6 pm  
Ryan Mauer & the Angry Fix 7 p.m.
- Feb 15 Thistle & the Thorns 6 p.m.  
The Shtetlblasters 7 p.m.



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

**Cafe Carpe**  
All shows at 8:30pm unless indicated otherwise

- Sat, Feb. 5 -- **Dorothy Scott** -- \$10
- Fri, Feb. 11 -- Colin O'Brien -- \$7.50
- Sat, Feb. 12 -- Garnet Rogers -- \$15 advance
- Thu, Feb. 17 -- Antje Duvekot -- \$10 -- @ 8:00pm
- Fri, Feb. 18 -- Casey Driessen & The Colorfools / The Tillers -- \$15 advance
- Sun, Feb. 20 -- Bill Staines -- \$15 -- @ 7:00pm
- Fri, Feb 25 -- Peggy James -- \$7.50
- Sat, Feb. 26 -- Big Bang String Thing -- \$10



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

**High Noon Saloon**

- Tue, Feb. 1 -- The Dirty Shirts -- 6:30pm -- \$4 -- 21+
- Sat, Feb. 12 -- Justin Townes Earle / Jessica Lea Mayfield -- 9:30pm -- \$13adv. \$15 d.o.s.
- Mon, Feb. 14 -- Bobby Long -- 8pm -- \$12
- Sun, Feb. 20 -- Asylum Street Spankers -- 8pm -- \$18
- Fri, Feb. 25 -- Tret Fure (CD Release Party) -- 6:30pm -- \$15
- Sun, Feb. 27 -- Animals In Human Attire -- 8:30pm -- \$5 -- 18+

Brocagh Irish Pub  
7 W. Main Street  
Madison, WI  
brocagh.com  
608-255-2013

**Brocagh Irish Pub**

- **Sundays** - Live Irish Music at 5 PM; various artists
- **Tuesdays** - Open Mic, 8:30 PM Upstairs; all performers receive one complimentary draught beer
- **Wednesdays** - Live Irish Music Session with Madison's best Irish musicians, 8:30 PM
- **1st and 3rd Thursday Nights** - Live Bluegrass w/ The Old Tin Can String Band, 9pm
- **Fridays** - Live Traditional Irish Music w/ The Currach, 5:30pm



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

**Wild Hog in the Woods**  
*Weekly Friday night folk music in intimate setting*

- Feb 4 -- Skip Jones 8 pm
- Feb 11 -- Clare Norelle 8 pm
- Feb 18 -- Greg Boerner 8 pm
- Feb 25 -- Jim Schwall 8 pm

Stoughton Opera House  
381 E. Main Street  
Stoughton, WI  
stoughtonoperahouse.com  
608-877-4400

**Stoughton Opera House**

- Fri, Feb 11 -- Dan Newton's Café Accordion Orchestra -- \$20 -- @7:30pm
- Sat, Feb 12 -- Bonnie Koloc -- \$25 -- @7:30pm
- Sat, Feb 26 -- Four Bitchin' Babes - Hormonal Imbalance -- \$35 -- @7:30 pm

## Misc

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

## Gigs

### Oak Street Ramblers

• Sat, 2/5 at the Alchemy Cafe, 1980 Atwood Ave. -- bluegrass @ 9:00pm -- 608-204-7644

### 10th Annual United Way Bluegrass Benefit

• Sun, 2/13 at the Barrymore Theatre, 2090 Atwood Ave. -- Starring Sparetime Bluegrass / Cork 'n Bottle String Band / Oak Street Ramblers

### The Outside Track

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

### Jim Schwall

- Saturday, 2/12, Acorn Theater, Three Oaks MI -- Siegel-Schwall
- Monday 2/14, Crystal Corner, 9:30 -- Bar Time Lovers, no cover
- Feb. 16 -- 19 -- Jim at Folk Alliance International, Memphis TN -- playing showcases Friday, 10:50 PM and Saturday 2:40 PM.
- Friday, 2/25, Wild Hog in the Woods, Wilmar Center, 8:00 -- Jim solo.
- Sunday, 2/27, Harmony Bar & Grill, 7:00 -- Cajun Strangers.
- Monday, 2/28, Crystal Corner, 9:30 -- Jim solo, no cover.

## On the Air



wpr.org

**Simply Folk** on Wisconsin Public Radio w/ Stephanie Elkins,  
Interim Host  
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](http://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*
- Mon - **Global Revolutions** (folk from the world over) w/ David & Martin Alvarado & Eugenia Highland
- Tue -- **For the Sake of the Song** (traditional American folk) w/Jim Schwall
- Wed -- **Back to the Country** (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

- **Cajun Dance** -- Sun 02/27 - Dance Instruction at 6:20 PM, Dance 7:00 - 10:00 PM -- Harmony Bar, 2210 Atwood Ave, Madison, WI - Cover \$7 -- Music by The Cajun Strangers Band

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

- **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](http://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, intermediate 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

Make sure to check your label to see if it is time to renew your membership with MadFolk!

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

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 Regular \$12 \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Friend \$25 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Madison Folk Music Society

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