
Mad Folk NEWS

Newsletter of the Madison Folk Music Society

Volume 34, No. 4/ April 2008

Nathan Rogers first Madison performance on April 5th

We hope to see you all on April 5th when we present Nathan Rogers to our Madison audience for the first time. I am sure there are many extremely high expectations put upon Rogers being the son of legendary late Stan Rogers, and he does not disappoint. Although there are many similarities to his dad, starting with his looks, he doesn't attempt to mimic his dad; he brings his own style and grace to the table. He is a wonderful guitar player and has a voice that is worth listening to all evening. When he chooses one of his ballads to sing you sit back to listen and sigh at the end. The first time I saw him play, he sang his dad's Northwest Passage, it was mesmerizing. When first looking at the names of his songs on his CD before I had a chance to listen to the CD, I noticed one was called Hibbing, I asked if it was about Dylan and Rogers chuckled and replied "No, that would be too easy, it is about the miners in Hibbing, MN" Rogers takes no easy short cuts with his writing. After hearing his debut CD, it remained in my CD player for weeks, and still remains in rotation for every road trip. The following is a few clips about what others are saying about him.



Nathan Rogers filled the stage with acoustic brilliance. It is safe to say that regardless of the family tree, Nathan stands on his own with his brand of folk. He has magnificent powerfully clear lyrics and instrumentals that filled the stage. With great ease he seemed to effortlessly entertain and delight the audience with songs from his first CD, True Stories.

To give you a glimpse of what his CD holds, Mary's Child is a ballad with impressive lyrics, was inspired by the historical impact of the Jesuit priests who with all good intentions of bringing Christianity to the Huron Indians, also brought small pox, it is a song that also showcases Nathan's powerful vocal range. (Continued on page 3)

Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen team up with Peter and Lou Berryman on April 11.

Of all the wonderful duos on the folk music circuit, there is none more beloved than the partnership of Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen. As solo artists, Steve and Cindy each garnered monumental respect and success prior to their partnership, and could easily have continued dazzling audiences (and do still pursue solo ventures) without ever joining forces. But as a team, their astonishing vocal, instrumental, and songwriting talents intertwine to create a show absolutely bulging with talent, however that's only part of the package. Steve and Cindy -- married and touring together since 1989 -- project a humorous but kind humility with their delivery and patter that leaves the audience with renewed faith in the possibilities of friendship. And this personal warmth of demeanor does not limit itself to between-song commentary, but infuses their music with an infectious charm that, though difficult to describe in words, is enchanting. Sing Out magazine rightly says, "Their voices and styles meld seamlessly with a gentleness and a maturity that is unmatched in the world of folk duos."

Cindy Mangsen began performing professionally in 1976. Her very first album (Long Time Traveling), released in 1983, was chosen one of the Top Folk Albums of the Year by the prestigious Chicago Reader. Her more recent solo album -- Songlines -- released in 1993 was declared by none other than the Boston Globe to be one of the Top Ten Folk Albums of the Year. Cindy's 2005 release, Cat Tales: Songs of the Feline Persuasion is not only a fabulous collection of existing cat songs but proves her songwriting abilities are in company with the best. (Continued on page 3)

Nathan Rogers (continued)

Hibbing, another one of Nathan's songs grounded in folk, paints a picture of the northern Minnesota mining town where the first Greyhound bus terminal was located, really showcases his talents. His song Tuesday Morning, a tribute to the NY firefighters following 9/11; Hold the Line, about soldiers in the First World War and many more to delight you.

Opening the show will be Madison's own Tracy Jane Comer who is now a regular on the Madison music scene when she is not touring nationally. Tracy Jane brings to our stage a voice and writings that has been compared to Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins and Joan Baez and then there is the number of instruments she has mastered. Although at most performances she wields her guitar, you never know when you will see her at the keyboards, behind a cello, violin or a number of other instruments. She has placed or won in many songwriting competitions. Her most current CD is Quietly There, which was nominated for Best Acoustic Album at the 2005 Madison Area Music Awards. Tickets are \$14 in advance and \$16 dos. They are available at Borders Books (east & west) B-Side Music, Orange Tree Imports, Spruce Tree Music and Steep-N-Brew on Odana Rd. **Please don't forget to bring a non-perishable donation for the food pantry**

Gillette/Mangsen/Berryman (continued)

She plays guitar, banjo, and a brilliant concertina, and sings with a unpretentiously natural but expressive delivery. As Rich Warren reports in Sing Out, "Cindy Mangsen combines a magnificent smoky voice with pure intelligence. Intelligence in choosing songs, in writing songs, and understanding of what she sings."

Steve Gillette also has an honest and unaffected singing style, and is a uniquely gifted guitarist, with a widely respected instructional guitar recording to his credit. His superbly crafted songs are matchless models of study for songwriters everywhere, and have been recorded by over a hundred artists, such as John Denver, Nanci Griffith, Ian and Sylvia, Garth Brooks, Waylon Jennings, and Linda Ronstadt. With a stream of award winning solo and collaborative recordings to his credit, Steve has performed in over 31 countries. He teaches in songwriting, guitar theory, and record production workshops, and authored the definitive book on songwriting, Songwriting and the Creative Process, published by the Sing Out Press in 1995. He has written songs for a number of motion pictures, and has received performance awards from both BMI and ASCAP.

Steve and Cindy have recorded four glorious albums together, and have toured North America and Europe as a duo for almost twenty years. They have an ideal outlook on the draw of the folk music subculture. To quote Steve, "We're very fortunate to play for people who really listen and who come to a concert with a certain sense of history. There's a strong feeling of community about this music."

Sharing the night with their old pals and heroes Steve and Cindy, Lou and Peter Berryman are musical humorists who have delighted nationwide audiences for some thirty years. Frequent comparisons to Tom Lehrer, Flanders and Swann, and Burns and Allen notwithstanding, these two are originals, blending Midwestern culture with intelligent observation in a whimsical and wonderfully accessible performance. They have produced twelve albums and three song books of their original and often funny, quirky, yet oddly profound songs, and have toured the US and Canada to rave reviews. Berryman songs are being sung around the world, by a legion of professional (Continued on page 6)



ACOUSTIC BRILLIANCE; THE LEGEND CONTINUES. . .



NATHAN ROGERS

Opening by Madison's Tracy Jane Comer

Saturday, April 5, 2008

8:00 pm

Wil-Mar Center

953 Jenifer Street

Presented by the MADISON FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

Programming support by WORT 89.9 FM

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

Available at: B-Side Records, Borders Bookshops East & West,
Spruce Tree Music, Orange Tree Imports, Steep & Brew (Odana Rd)

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



Photo: Irene Young



Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen

www.compassrosemusic.com

Steve Gillette is one of the best songwriters in the folk idiom and an equally good performer. --*Broadside*

Cindy Mangsen has, over the years, developed into one of the finest singers in American folk music. -- *Come For To Sing*

and

Lou & Peter Berryman

www.louandpeter.com

Lou and Peter have the rare ability to make us simultaneously laugh at and care about the people they lampoon. --*Boston Globe*

Lou & Peter Berryman are the funniest thing on four legs -- *Christine Lavin*

Friday, April 11, 2008, at 8pm

Wil-Mar Center

953 Jenifer St., Madison

*Presented by the Madison Folk Music Society and
the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse*

Tickets \$14 adv, \$16 day of show, at:

Borders Books East, 2173 Zeier Rd
Borders Books West, 3416 University Ave
B-Side Compact Discs, 436 State St
Orange Tree Imports, 1721 Monroe St
Spruce Tree Music, 851 East Johnson St
Steep-N-Brew, 6656 Odana Rd

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collected for local food banks.*

Info: 608-846-9214 or www.madfolk.org

WORT 89.9 FM

www.wort-fm.org 608-256-2001
118 SOUTH BEDFORD STREET, MADISON WI 53703

Gillette/Mangsen/Berryman (continued)

musicians, including Peter, Paul & Mary, Peggy Seeger, Garrison Keillor, and, yes, Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen, as well as shower singers everywhere. Steve and Cindy and Lou and Peter have shared concert stages before -- most recently to a wildly appreciative audience in Anaheim, CA -- and the chemistry of the two duos' songswapping and chattering has always percolated merrily. If you ever wanted to introduce your friends to the conviviality, vitality, and variety of today's folk music, this show would be the perfect opportunity.

If you'd like more info on either duo, Steve and Cindy's home page is www.compassrosemusic.com and Lou and Peter's home page is : www.louandpeter.com. The show is a joint presentation by MadFolk and Wild Hog in the Woods Coffee House. Tickets are \$14 in advance/ \$16 dos and are available at Borders Books (east & west) B-Side Music, Orange Tree Imports, Spruce Tree Music and Steep-N-Brew on Odana Rd.

Please don't forget to bring a non-perishable donation for the food pantry

CD Reviews by Judy Robinson

Storyhill, Storyhill

Billboard magazine has compared Story Hill to both Simon and Garfunkel and the Indigo Girls. There are certain similarities but Story Hill has a more layered sound than either of those better known duos. John Hermanson and Chris Cunningham blend their remarkable voices flawlessly yet each of their voices stand out individually as well. They accompany their lyrics with guitar work that is at times subtle, almost delicate and can also be high-spirited and buoyant. The overall effect is quite stunning.

Recording their self titled cd was turning point for Storyhill. They met in elementary school and started performing during their junior year in high school. They were originally known as Chris and Johnny and changed their name to Storyhill in 1996. They split up just a year later to pursue separate interests but reunited in 2001. Their reunion show sold out the 500 seat Great American History Theater in Minneapolis. They produced a few albums but it wasn't until they recorded Storyhill that they felt they were making a 'collective effort toward the future of the band.'

Hermanson has noted that 'In the course of our history together my songs tend to be about relationships and the outward world and Chris sort of writes about the inner psychological world.' The selection of songs on the cd prove Hermanson's point; 'Give Up The Ghost' is a half promise, half plea to a loved one who has lost their way. 'Blazing Out Of Sight' reflects on a relationship that ended for reasons that are both known and unknown. 'Paradise Lost' is a protest against the inevitable development of subdivisions with 'streets named after what's gone for good.'

Storyhill was a winner of the 2007 Grassy Hill Kerrville New Folk Award. Experience their artistry firsthand when they come to the Brink Lounge, April 9 at 7:00 p.m. Go to Storyhill.com to buy the cd and find out more about them.

Anthony da Costa, Typical American Tragedy

Anthony da Costa was also a winner of the 2007 Grassy Hill Kerrville New Folk Award; he was actually the youngest winner ever. In 2008, he was nominated for Folk Alliance Emerging Artist of the Year. Pretty impressive, especially considering that he is still in his late teens. In spite of his young age, da Costa is quite prolific, 'Typical American Tragedy' is his 6th release. The cd blends a unique contemporary sound with the best components of traditional folk. 'Ain't Much of a Soldier' is presumably sung from the vantage point of a young man fighting in the current conflict. But the lyrics are timeless; they tell the tale of all young men separated by war from the women they love. The war is evidently a primary concern of da Costa's, his website encourages us to 'make art, not war.' In 'Wall Around Baghdad' he expresses both anger and a belief that 'we could all save ourselves if we stopped being so proud.' In addition to having strong political views, he also has an impressive knowledge of the music industry. He pays homage to Dolly Parton and Porter Wagoner in 'Dolly and Porter' and I would be willing to bet that da Costa is one of very few people his age who realizes the influence that Parton and Wagoner had on future generations of performers. On a more personal note, he professes his attraction to a fellow musician in 'Fiddle Girl' and 'Upstate Living' is a love song to woman who 'doesn't like his records, she listens to punk rock.' He is accompanied by several different musicians and instruments on the cd: Abbie Gardner on dobro and lapsteel, Oliver Hill on fiddle, Andy LaDue on drums and Steve Kirkman on electric guitar. A true man of his times, da Costa has two websites; anthonydacosta.com and myspace.com/anthonydacosta. As of now, he doesn't have any performances scheduled for our area but you can go to either website to learn more about him and buy his cd's.



DAVID FRANCNEY

& Accompanist CRAIG WERTH

Saturday, May 3, 2008

8:00 pm

Wil-Mar Center

953 Jenifer Street

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

Presented by the MADISON FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

Programming support by WORT 89.9 FM

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

Available at: B-Side Records, Borders Bookshops East & West,
Spruce Tree Music, Orange Tree Imports, Steep & Brew (Odana Rd)

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



Folk on ESPN

Bob Beepo: If you've just joined us, I'm Bob Beepo here in the Folk-On-ESPN booth for your song-by-song, and with me is Gene Greens, the Old Folk Cellist, providing color commentary. We're at something of a yellow flag here, while Myrna Mplpaplr changes a string that broke during the Wisconsin Goldrush chantey, **Panning the Mouth of the Rat**.

Gene Greens: What a break it was, Bob. The string BONKS her Kwik Trip shades and somebody finds 'em in their yarn tote. They seem undamaged. She's been with the Kwik Trip team for six years now. Boy, that B string of hers packs a real wallop when it snaps. Let's go to our tech table and have Geeker explain what makes a string break.

Geeker: Gene, D'Addario being a sponsor, Myrna uses the D'Addario Acoustic Phosphor Bronze Environmental Heavies, the B-string having an oh-eighteen diameter and a tension of almost thirty pounds. Strong tone, but can be hard on a lesser instrument and the fingers, and when it breaks, I've seen it go right through a folkie's cheek. It's unusual for a new heavy B to break from fingerpicking, particularly with the flat-striking Dunlop Zookie M-20 thumbpick for which Myrna is spokesperson, unless it has been strung wrong. One of the most common stringing faults is, in wrapping the string around the shank, it kinks by being wrapped over itself. If I had to guess I would say that was the issue here, as it did snap up at the Grover Super Rotomatic -- another Mplpaplr team partner -- though there is always the remote possibility of the string being defective.

Bob: Don't let D'Addario hear you say that. And the special edition Myrna Mplpaplr Cudahy Cutaway Archtop Guitar has no problem with heavy strings, as you have heard Myrna explain on those Cudahy radio spots. She has now brought the new string into tune, using a Sabine AX-3000 Magnapad Contact Autotuner on her pickguard, being under contract with Sabine since Tuesday. You can see the Sabine patch above the Faygo logo on her Wranglers.

Gene: Yakking all the while, Myrna makes it look easy to change a string. I think a woman has an advantage here, if there's anything to the multitasking stats. About her string, I wouldn't say it's impossible that it was on correctly but her hard style wore it through. She is no PDM; she is a robust picker. 'Course the string could have been hit by a tiny meteor, too. You never know.

Bob: PDM? What's a PDM, Gene?

Gene: PDM: Pale Drooping Maiden. Stephen Foster. It's from **Hard Times**: "There's a pale drooping maiden who toils her life away..." There are Pale Drooping Dudes on the circuit too but it's not such a common folk style for guys. Maybe in punk. But she's no PDM, not with her confident style passed on from her parents. Her mother is a farrier for the horse loggers up by Pembine and raised Myrna on logging hollers. Myrna's father owns a tropical fish and small engine outfit, but he's known in the folk arena for his killer mouth-bow improvisation.

Bob: Mplpaplr is away on her next piece. We're going through a few instrumental measures here... and off into the first verse of **Ball and Pin**, the trad Oconomowoc bowling rework of the old standard, **Peg and Awl**. Myrna's stenorian delivery is made for this song.

Gene: Did you know bowling balls are made of polyester? That's why they don't wrinkle. By the way, notice the footwork here. She's wearing Frye boots, being a rep for Frye. I always loved that sound, Frye on plywood. Or I guess that's beaverboard. Home Depot is affiliated with the Mplpaplr organization so she can take her pick. Those risers are like resonators. I know that some venues like to carpet the riser but I like the timbre of the stomping on wood. Gives that same BOOMP you get from a washtub bass, but being more pitch-neutral, it works in every key.

Bob: The timbre of the timber. Here we are at the end of the second verse... oh my, a modulation! Mplpaplr modulates down a half step into D. Now that is a spine tingler. Often you hear rising modulations, but that gets obvious. This could add a thousand hits on YouTube.

Gene: It loses bass on the tonic in D because you can't play the low E, but the stomping makes up for that. And the

key of D, when it goes to the subdominant, can have you thumbing down to the low E, which is a sixth of the G chord, but that fits in the run. Now, something I wanted to say about the last song. The Rat River opens into the mouth of the Wolf up by Orihula, right before the Wolf dumps into Poygan. I don't know if anyone pans up there, but my wife's family pontoons the mouth of the Rat. I understand Myrna's father has part interest in a bait shop up there; not sure how that fits with the tropical fish biz.

Bob: One of Wisconsin's treasures, the Rat. And we're looking at another Wisconsin treasure, as Myrna Mplpaplr takes it back up into E for verse four. She overlays the modulation with a blip of falsetto on the word "gutterball". Some would call that a miscalculation.

Gene: Well, it works for me philosophically. Brings the focus from the melody back to the words, and underlines the Oops factor in bowling.

Bob: And here's an instrumental, similar to the intro vamp but with that extra parallel harmony on the G. Here are the stats on that modulation by the way: This is only the fourth time a descending modulation has been used in an acoustic bowling song since the 92 season when this statistic was first kept, and only the second time in the Great Lakes Region. Hey! Myrna is standing up off her stool for the last verse! I assume it's the last verse, though that would mean she's not going for a bridge.

Gene: An instrumental that strong can serve as a bridge. But one problem of standing is it's harder to keep the boot pounding. For any length of time anyway, unless you're like Natalie McMaster or John Hartford and can clog while frying an egg no doubt. But Myrna is keeping it thumping with her heel now instead of her toe which can be more effective anyway.

Bob: And there we have the classic abrupt finish, and Myrna's trademark beaming smile and backhand wave, a nod to Kaukauna Tooth and Nail, the coloration people whose contract with Myrna runs until next summer. We'll be back with a post-set interview with Myrna after these words from Milk Duds, the folkster chew underwriting this spectacular 2008 Area Code 920 Mplpaplr Tour.



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