
Mad Folk NEWS

Newsletter of the Madison Folk Music Society

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Carrie Newcomer, Bill Isles on April 23

There's a singer-songwriter who has chosen to live in southern Indiana who is anything but ordinary when it comes to musical talent and creative songwriting abilities. Her name is Carrie Newcomer and the Madison Folk Music Society will be hosting her concert on April 23 at the First United Methodist Church, 203 Wisconsin Avenue.



Carrie Newcomer

Barbara Kingsolver, author of *The Poisonwood Bible* and *Small Wonder*, says, "Carrie Newcomer is more than a musician. She's a poet, storyteller, good neighbor, friend and lover, minister of the wide-eyed gospel of hope and grace. All this, and she comes with a voice that declares: 'Sit down here a minute and listen.' Who could ask for more?"

Newcomer has released nine critically-acclaimed albums and has shared the stage with Alison Krauss, Bonnie Raitt, and Mary Chapin Carpenter and the string band Nickel Creek covered her song, "I Should've Known Better," on their 2003 Grammy Award Winning CD. She has toured through the USA, Europe, and Alaska.

Carrie's albums explore her philosophy of life and family through

some tough times and happy resolutions. Carrie has a knack for creating complex melodies that don't pin you to the wall like a pop jingle but create permanent grooves in your brain after a few late-night listenings. Carrie's music is intensely personal, positive, emotional, and touching. That warm and versatile voice coupled with her deft songwriting touch will definitely win you over.

Most recently she has come out with a new CD entitled *Betty's Diner: The Best of Carrie Newcomer*. The album exemplifies her simple tastes for the Midwest but more importantly sheds light on her heart for her art.

Carrie's finest moments are just her and the guitar. As a guitarist she has an amazing command of alternate tunings, finger picking, and per-

cussive accompaniment (tapping or slapping the guitar while playing—a hallmark of such genius players as Michael Hedges). Catch her live with just the guitar and her incredible voice, and you won't be disappointed.



Bill Isles will be opening the show. Bill performed his first show of original songs in 25 years in February 2000. Since that time, he has become one of the most well-known

singer/songwriters in the Minnesota acoustic scene and has begun to get national and international attention.

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Savoca/Heitzman house concert

Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman met on a stage, and they've been making music together ever since. Their style is an elusive blend of all the music they love. It's modern folk influenced by pop, soul, rock, jazz, blues, and everything in between.

Karen is an extraordinary and adventurous singer. "Hers is a voice that can move cold stone." She sings with "an inherent sense of fun, drawing the listener willingly into her world, an emotionally charged celebration of life with all its ups and downs." A gifted songwriter, she packs her songs with lasting images, melodies, and characters. Though she writes on a variety of instruments, in live performance Karen plays conga and hand percussion.



Pete Heitzman is a "fiendishly good" guitarist. His style is lyrical, funky and very innovative. He plucks, bends and thwaps astonishing textures and soundscapes from an acoustic guitar or longhorn bass. He's been described as "the aurora borealis of guitar players."

Their live performances are uplifting and hypnotic. For the first time in the 22 history of the Vancouver Folk Festival, 10,000

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Karen Savoca/Pete Heitzman house concert April 30

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people suddenly and inexplicably removed their shoes and waved them over their heads! Karen's songwriting confounds even the staunchest

pigeonholers. A stranger to cliché, she is bravely non-traditional, yet completely accessible.

You may see Karen and Pete on Saturday April 30, at a house concert in Madison. Start time is 8 p.m. Requested donation, \$10. Please call Darlene Buhler at 846-9214 to RSVP and receive directions. You may read more about Karen on her website, www.karensavoca.com.

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LYRA plays Madison on U.S. tour

Six members of the distinguished Russian choir LYRA will give two concerts in Madison during their spring tour in the U.S. Both concerts will be at Grace Episcopal Church, 116 West Washington Avenue.

LYRA will sing on Saturday, April 16 at 7 p.m. A donation of \$15 is suggested. They will also sing during the regular service of worship at 10 a.m. on Sunday, April 17. The public is warmly invited to come on Sunday morning.

The full choir of 25 members, associated with the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, calls itself "a community of professional musicians" dedicated to exploring and presenting traditional Russian folk music and the sacred music of the Russian Orthodox. Their selections date from the 11th century to the 19th century; all are sung a capella.

The singers made a 41-city tour of the U.S. in 2003. This will be their first visit to Madison.



Legendary Jack Williams in house concert

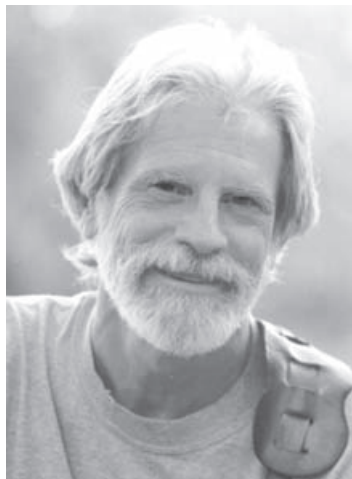
Jack Williams is returning to perform in Madison after an absence of almost a decade. The singer/songwriter/guitarist/storyteller, a 45-year veteran of the road, is based in his home state of South Carolina but spends most of each year driving as much as 70,000 miles annually across his U.S. circuit, which includes 42 states as well as eight other countries. He plays the festivals and the major folk music rooms, but his preference is for the intimacy of the house concert. You can hear Jack on Thursday, April 22 at a house concert on the near west side of Madison.

His songs are a composite of the music he has played professionally for years: jazz, ragtime, rock, R & B, blues, classical, and, since 1964, folk, as a singer of original songs as well as an interpreter of contemporary writers' work and traditional tunes.

In the late '60s, he began exploring his troubadour nature and started to

perform solo, singing and playing a gut-string guitar, and touring coast to coast.

Among acoustic guitarists he is near-legendary. He has accompanied Tom Paxton, Peter Yarrow, Harry Nilsson, Mickey Newbury and many others. *Sing Out!* magazine called him "...one of the strongest guitar-players in contemporary folk."



You can hear Jack Williams up-close-and-personal at a house concert April 22 at 8 p.m. Doors open at 7:15 to allow early arrivals to visit with Jack and the hosts before the concert. You can reserve by calling Tom or Jan at home at 236-9209 or Tom's cell at 320-1236.

Reservations are strongly encouraged. Directions to 205 North Blackhawk Ave. at www.mapquest.com. Suggested donation at the door is \$15/person.

This is a dessert potluck, so bring anything from a box of Little Debbie's to a sacher torte. Coffee, tea, and other beverages will be provided.

Newcomer, Isles

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His first UK tour was in March of 2003.

His songs are poetic reflections of life experiences and often explore adventurous spiritual courses. Admittedly a romantic, many of his lyrics describe emotional and sensual encounters.

His love of life has strong roots in his childhood, but his urgency to tell these stories comes from an experience in 1993 when, with just enough warning to drive himself to the hospital, his heart stopped beating. He arrived with just 10 minutes to spare. After being defibrillated, and before the doctors had time to detect and open a blocked artery in his heart, he made a commitment to himself that, if he survived, he would begin to write again. Those paddles restarted more than his heart.

Please join us for a dynamic night of song with Carrie Newcomer and Bill Isles on April 23. The concert begins at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$14/\$16.