

# MadFolk News

## MadFolk returns to Willy Street Sept. 17th

Mad folk returns for the fourth year to Willy Street Fair on September 17th and 18th. Please see our line up and times on the calendar page. Performing on Saturday will be Blake Thomas, Josh Harty, Eric Schwartz, and Cris Plata. Performing on Sunday will be Small Potatoes, Bret & Frisk, Bill & Kate Isles and Moonhouse. The following is a little press performers have been getting, but to really get a true feel of the music, come on down to Willy St and join us for the festival. Opening the weekend of music on the Folk Stage will be long time friends Blake Thomas and Josh Harty, these two are no strangers to Madison or the Willy St Fair. Having recently watched these two play together it takes me back to an old album of mine from the 70's, Loggins and Messina's Best of Friends Album. When these two hit the stage together, you just see the strong friendship as the back each other up with vocals and guitar. Both will be hitting the stage in support of new cds they released this summer.

The third generation of musicians out of the Dakotas, **Josh Harty** is never far from his roots but always inventing new ways to honor the old. His "A Long List of Lies" CD shows it and has garnered a fast following. The eleven tracks are as authentic as American music gets. Maybe that's why "A Long List of Lies" debuted at #8 on the European Americana chart.

Growing up the son of a North Dakota Police Chief and preacher, Harty figured he was either going to jail or going to hell. He was wrong on both fronts and his gentle nature reveals this to all who know him. He's got gratitude written all over him, including thankfulness for the music his father gave him. By the age of 10



Blake Thomas & Josh Harty kickoff the Willy Street Fair Sat. Sept. 17 at 2:00pm.

Harty had sung gospel and country with his father at "just about every Lutheran Church, Eagles Club, and Senior Citizen Center in North and South Dakota." By age 12 Harty had made two records with his dad, collectively selling 10,000 copies. These days the 33-year-old Madison-based artist writes and performs mostly solo but has a knack for surrounding himself with some of the best musicians in the Midwest for his recordings. Still, these are Harty's songs all the way. "A Long List of Lies" was produced, recorded and mastered in Madison's Smart Studios. The project captures Harty's clean guitar attack, a finger style that glistens with a razor's edge. Every track is filled with the honesty of an artist who's in it for the long

haul, who's writing music that channels his past while re-setting the present for what's affectionately called alt-country in the U.S.A. **Blake Thomas** is no stranger to music. Flatlands (2008), his third studio release; The Village Voice (NYC) claims that it "ought to become the Midwest's national anthem." Thomas, born in Minnesota, literally worked his way up from the bottom when, at 19, he moved east and began his career busking in the subways of Boston. He spent the following years traveling, grinding through the club circuit and honing his craft while sharing the stage with Leon Russell, Greg & Pieta Brown, Sara Watkins, Peter Mulvey and others. With a mix of blues, rock and folk, this singer/songwriter captured the

Continued from front page

MAMA for both the Best Male Vocalist (2005) and the Best Folk/Bluegrass/Americana Artist & Album (2006). He is currently touring in support of his 4th studio release, *The Window & The Light* (2011).

**Eric Schwartz** might be the only artist in history reviewed by both "Sing out!" and "Hustler". Schwartz performs at Festivals and folk and comedy clubs all over the country. His music is played on Howard Stern 100, NPR's 'All Things Considered', and Air America as well as YouTube, where his videos have millions of hits and have earned him a die-hard cult following. Sundays in high school were spent listening to two hours of Doctor Ruth followed by two hours of Doctor Demento, a fact which helps to explain the comparisons he has garnered to Lenny Bruce, Pete Seeger, James Taylor, Frank Zappa and Barry Manilow, all of whom Eric counts as influences. He currently resides in Los Angeles, CA, where he is trying his hardest to sell out.

**Cris Plata** was born in South Texas, the son of migrant workers. Those early days of living in different migrant camps and following the harvest from region to region, exposed Cris to a wide range of musical experiences. His early musical experiences reflect his Mexican heritage. This heritage includes Norteno (Northern Mexico border music), conjunto (elements of both European and Mexican music fused by early residents of South Texas), and ranchera (Mexican country) music. Today, Cris describes this as "Mexican root's" music. He has been described by the Isthmus and Wisconsin State Journal as "One of the Midwest's Best Songwriters".

**Jacque Manning and Rich Prezioso**, the Chicago-area duo known as **Small Potatoes**, decided to hit the road. "In one year, we quit our jobs, bought a house, bought a car, and became full-time folk singers. Not exactly the best combination, financially speaking. It wasn't the best business plan, we didn't exactly throw darts at a map, but we might as well have." What they did have were great songs and musicianship, and the ability to put on a show. Sixteen years, a million miles, 3000 shows, and four Dodge Caravans later, they are listed as a "favorite act" by many coffeehouses, clubs

and house concerts across the U.S. They have made repeat appearances at major folk festivals, including the Kerrville Folk Festival, the Walnut Valley Folk Festival, and Philadelphia Folk Festival. From the start, they've called themselves eclectic-maniacs and described their music as "Celtic to Cowboy". Like their business plan, it hasn't steered them wrong. They say it has taken them "years of careful indecision" to come up with a mix of music that ranges from country, blues, and swing to Irish, with songwriting that touches on all of those styles and more. Their four recordings, "Alive!", "Waltz of the Wallflowers", "Time Flies" and "Raw" demonstrate that "indecision" can be wonderfully entertaining.

**Bret and Frisk** will be celebrating 20 years as performing as a duo in 2012. This acoustic duo began in Breckenridge Colorado in 1992 and has become a staple in Wisconsin Northwoods where they reside and enjoy raising their two children. Their show consists of acoustic guitar, keyboards, harmonica, and vocals. They play a variety of genres but emphasize folk and acoustic rock. No drum machines here. Over 500 memorized songs and vocals that are guaranteed to lift your spirits! When you sit down for this set, you know you're going to end up singing along to some of your favorites.

**Bill & Kate Isles** are a nationally-touring singer/songwriter duo based in Duluth. It's been over eighteen years since Bill was a rare survivor of Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Instead of ending his life, it jump-started his creative energies, resulting in a 150 show-per-year itinerary, presenting his profoundly meaningful songs. He is joined by his wife of seven years, co-writer and musical collaborator, Kate. Her gentle presence, luscious vocals and intuitive harmonies have endeared her to audiences. Words like "Transcendent" and "Mesmerizing" and "Slapstick" are among the descriptions of their concerts and fans of all ages tell of listening to their albums over and over again. Their concerts are a mix of storytelling, articulate vocals and comedy. Come find out what's leaving audiences smiling long after the show is over.

**Moonhouse** is a four piece folkadelic band. They have a unique sound that combines traditional and original songs with extended keyboard and guitar improvisations. Moonhouse is fronted by Richard "Blackhawk" Kapusta on 12 string guitar and vocals. He has sold over 50,000 albums as a solo artist. He started Moonhouse 11 years ago with Jefferson Hickey. Many musicians have played with Moonhouse through the years. The current line up includes Dave Bachol on bass, Jaime Cash on keyboard, and Nick Avery-Bucher on guitar.

*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).

Madison Folk Music Society Board

- Darlene Buhler.....President, Concerts, Advertising  
846-9214 ~ [dbuhler@charter.net](mailto:dbuhler@charter.net)
- Peg Michel.....Treasurer  
831-1876 ~ [pm6627@charter.net](mailto:pm6627@charter.net)
- Tracy Comer ..... Membership & Web Site  
276-8192 ~ [tracy@tracycomer.com](mailto:tracy@tracycomer.com)
- Norbert Wodke.....Secretary  
836-8422 ~ [nfwodke@chorus.net](mailto:nfwodke@chorus.net)
- Dede Goldberg.....Newsletter distribution  
246-4332 ~ [speedydd99@yahoo.com](mailto:speedydd99@yahoo.com)
- Neil Morris.....Newsletter editor  
358-5855 ~ [nwmorris@wisc.edu](mailto:nwmorris@wisc.edu)
- Meg Skinner..... Scholarship  
238-6950 ~ [askinner@wisc.edu](mailto:askinner@wisc.edu)
- Ron Dennis .....  
226-9472 ~ [rondenpho@aol.com](mailto:rondenpho@aol.com)
- Vicky Jones .....  
215-7621 ~ [mail@vickyjones.com](mailto:mail@vickyjones.com)



# Butch Hancock at Kiki's House of Righteous Music Sept. 13, 8pm

by Kiki Schueler

If West Texas legends the Flatlanders were the Beatles, Butch Hancock would be “the quiet one.” While Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Joe Ely are the Lennon and McCartney types, Hancock is more like Harrison, releasing fewer records, touring less frequently. Harrison wrote “While My Guitar Gently Weeps”; Hancock wrote “If You Were a Bluebird,” a gorgeous song covered by both Ely and Emmy Lou Harris. But the comparisons end there since Hancock has actually been the most prolific songwriter of the three. Over the years, his Flatlander bandmates have drawn heavily from his catalog. Gilmore’s gorgeous “Not the Wave, Just the Water” from *Spinning Around the Sun*—that’s Hancock’s. The epic “Leo & Leona” from Ely’s brand new *Satisfied at Last*—that’s his too. In fact, it’s hard to find a record from either of them that doesn’t include one or more Hancock compositions. When you listen to the Flatlanders, it’s easy to pick out Gilmore’s distinctive warble and Ely’s smooth croon, but if you listen you realize that it’s Hancock who anchors them and holds it all together.

Live, Hancock is as much a storyteller as he is a songwriter, and his shows are filled with anecdotes about West Texas and his Flatlander buddies. I still find it hard to believe that Hancock’s booking agent found me, since most of Madison still doesn’t know about Kiki’s House of Righteous Music. I usually say that I don’t book bands I haven’t seen (having learned that lesson the hard way), but I jumped at the chance to host Hancock. I’d be crazy not to. His show in Madison is the farthest north he’s traveling; the next closest show is Des Moines or St. Louis. Both are also house concerts on either side of a Flatlanders appearance at the Roots & Blues BBQ Fest in Columbia, MO. This may be a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see the legendary Texas songwriter in a basement—my basement. Don’t miss it.

For more information about the show, which will take place Tuesday, September 13 at 8 PM, contact me at [righteousmusicmgmt@gmail.com](mailto:righteousmusicmgmt@gmail.com).



## Brother Sun coming to FUS Sept. 4th Sun- day Services

by Joseph Jencks

Brother Sun will be performing in Madison on Sunday September 4th, 2011. They will be singing Sunday services at the First Unitarian Society of Madison (9 & 11 am) and at 7:30 pm they will be performing a house concert at the home of Carol Harrington.

Pat Wictor, Greg Greenway, and Joe Jencks have formed a dynamic new male trio - Brother Sun. Their self-titled debut album has been well received – debuting at #2 on the FolkDJ Chart in July. Their harmonies and lyrics tell what they are about: warm as a campfire, stirring as a gospel church, rousing as a call to arms. Calling upon contemporary songwriting, and informed by the deep roots of gospel, blues, and folk, the trio weaves a tapestry of vocal harmonies that are brilliantly fresh and yet familiar. Their combined musical skills make for an unforgettable experience.

For more information on Brother Sun’s upcoming performances visit their website at [www.brother-sunmusic.com](http://www.brother-sunmusic.com).

## THE WINDOW AND THE LIGHT BLAKE THOMAS ~ 2011



Review by Kiki Schueler

Blake Thomas moved to Minneapolis in October after spending six years, more or less, in Madison. During those years, the longest stretch he's lived anywhere since he left home, he released his first three records, and made a lot of friends. These friends make up the hometown all-star band that backed him on his fourth release, *The Window and the Light*. Thomas is the center of every song, with his guitar and honey-whiskey voice, but the other dozen (almost) musicians involved in the project truly make it a group effort. The core band features skilled guitarist Josh Harty, who also lends backing vocals, notably on "The Last Thing." The rhythm section includes the understated and oft-intriguing drummer Chris Sasman and multi-instrumentalist Louka Patenaude. The story goes that, while tuning the bass prior to recording, Patenaude broke a string. Rather than risk throwing off the sound of the instrument by adding a new string to the older ones, he played the whole record with only three strings. You would never guess. Other notable guests include Teddy Pedriana, who adds his psychedelic keyboards to several tracks (most remarkably on "Cradle to the Ground"), and Mary Gaines, who contributes lovely backing vocals and cello.

The songs on *Flatlands*, his previous release, spilled out of him in a very short amount of time, the product of an uncertain and emotional time in his life. In contrast, the songs on this new CD were years in the making. While they don't have the same emotional punch as the confessionals on *Flatlands*, they are just as strong and demonstrate an increased range in his songwriting. This is a different Blake Thomas than the sensitive singer-songwriter we'd

gotten to know over the course of three records. For one, he likes to rock a lot more. The record makes that clear from the opening track, the incendiary "Fire and Bones," which features the intense electric guitar of the Blueheels' Justin Bricco. It's followed by the oldest of this batch of songs, another rocker "Keeping Score," buoyed by Chris Wagoner's expert fiddle. A song of resignation, "I don't know who the winner is 'cause I stopped keeping score, and I just don't care like I did before," it also gives us some interesting imagery, like "that man's a low down, sawed off son of a bitch, he has a heart just like a harpoon." I don't really know what that means, but it tells me what I need to know about "a man named Jones."

The title track is unlike anything he's done before: an extended jam that swells toward the eight-minute mark as it closes the record. When I reviewed Thomas's first release, *Real Like Theater* (recorded with backing band the Downtown Brown), I compared him (favorably) to David Gray—a comparison I initially thought he was upset about, only to find out later that he had been listening to Gray's pre-fame record, *A Century Ends*, a lot prior to recording that record. Over the years that voice hadn't seemed as obvious, but I hear it again loud and clear in this song. The record is also unusual in that it includes two covers, and on one Thomas doesn't even sing

lead. For years he shared the microphone at Mickey's Tavern every Tuesday night with another of Madison's best songwriters, Jeremiah Nelson. When Nelson decided not to include the once-bitten, twice-shy lament "Bad Love" on his record, Thomas liberated it. Nelson also gets a shout-out in one of Blake's songs, "Tell Jerry he can have the Mossman when exhaustion takes me." The Mossman in question is the gorgeous, and rare, acoustic guitar Thomas plays. Coming as a bit of a surprise, the sweet-voiced Mary Fox sings lead on "Let Me Play in Your Show," a song that Fox, who is also Thomas's fiancé, wrote about him many years ago.

The song that sounds most like the Thomas of previous records is the beautiful lullaby "Maybelle." Presumably written for his future daughter, the song opines "Maybelle oh Maybelle, I can't wait to meet you with your mother's brown eyes and a voice of champagne." It's perhaps the most tender song he's ever written, and that's saying something. If you are looking for more songs like this guitar-and-mandolin tune, I point you to the soundtrack to *Our Town*, which he recorded earlier this year. The collection of traditional covers from Thomas and Fox, on which he plays every instrument, was recorded in conjunction with a play they both starred in earlier this year. It's just another reminder of what a diversely talented artist Blake Thomas is.





# The Madfolk Refrigerator Cover

September 2011

## Madfolk Events



### Willy Street Fair

SATURDAY- Sept 17

2:00 - Blake Thomas & Josh Harty  
3:30 - Eric Schwartz  
5:30 - Cris Plata

SUNDAY - Sept 18

12:00 Small Potatoes  
<http://www.smallpotatoesmusic.com/>  
2:00 - Bret & Frisk  
<http://bretandfrisk.com/home.html>  
3:30 - Bill & Kate Isles  
<http://www.billisles.com/>  
5:00 Moonhouse

### Joel Mabus

Saturday Nov 5  
Wil-Mar Center -- 953 Jenifer St -- 8pm

## Venues



18 S. Water St.  
Ft. Atkinson, WI  
[cafecarpe.com](http://cafecarpe.com)  
920-563-9391

### Cafe Carpe

All shows at 8:30pm unless indicated otherwise

- Sept 8, 2011 @ 7:00 pm -- THE NEW PIONEERS
- Sept 9, 2011 -- BIG BANG STRING THING
- Sept 16, 2011 -- JAMES LEE STANLEY
- Sept 17, 2011 -- CARMEL MIKOL
- Sept 22, 2011 @ 8:00 pm -- JEFFREY FOUCAULT
- Sept 23, 2011 -- PAMELA MEANS/ BILL CAMPLIN
- Sept 24, 2011 -- JEFFREY FOUCAULT



### Mad Toast Live! at the The Brink Lounge

Music, talk and variety show hosted by Chris Wagoner and Mary Gaines

Wed Sept 7 - \$18 d.o.s.

-- Mountain Heart 8pm  
--The McDougals 7pm

Tues Sept 20 - \$12 d.o.s.

-- Lee Murdock 7pm  
-- Mark Dvorak 8pm

### High Noon Saloon

- Thurs. Sept. 8th - Katie Powderly - 6pm - Free outdoor show on our patio
- Sun. Sept. 11th -  
- Yid Vicious w/ Reptile Palace Orch. @ 2pm - tbd  
- Eastern Blok @ 7:30pm -- \$8
- Tue. Sept. 13th -  
- Cork n' Bottle String Band @ 6pm -- \$4
- Thu. Sept. 15th - Oak Street Ramblers @ 6pm - Free outdoor show on our patio
- Wed. Sept. 21st - Fishtank Ensemble @ 8pm -- \$10 adv / \$12 d.o.s.
- Thu. Sept. 22nd - Ryan Mauer w/ Mark Croft @ 7pm -- \$5 sugg. donation
- Fri. Sept. 30th - Pert' Near Sandstone @ 9:30pm -- \$10 adv / \$12 d.o.s.



701A E. Washington  
[www.high-noon.com](http://www.high-noon.com)  
608-268-1122

## Misc

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

**Please Join us on September 8th for Madfolk Annual Board Meeting  
6:30 - 8:30 at the Willy St Coop Community Room  
1221 Williamson St**

**Please come listen to what we are looking at doing with  
madfolk for the next year, come with your suggestions too!  
Interested in joining the madfolk board? We are interested  
in having you join, please contact any of the board members  
and join us on September 8th!**

## Gigs

### Brother Sun

Sunday, September 4, 9am & 11am -- First Unitarian Society  
900 University Bay Madison  
7:30pm -- Concert @ the home of Carol Harrington

### Butch Hancock

Tuesday, September 13, 8:00 pm, Kiki's House of Righteous Music  
[righteousmusicgmt@gmail.com](mailto:righteousmusicgmt@gmail.com)

### Poor Howard

Monday, September 24, 7:30 pm. The Upkeep (Sue & Ed Gilbert's house)  
3314 Ridgeway Ave. Madison 608.213.1107

Sept 15 - The Pines @ Majestic Theater

Sept 15 Gordon Lightfoot @ Overture Center

Sept 24 Ani Difranco @ The Barrymore Theatre

## On the Air



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 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'  
Powers
- 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
- SpiritMoves Ecstatic Dance 2nd and 4th Weds, 7:00-9:00 pm -- The Center for  
Conscious Living, 849 East Washington Ave. -- \$7 min. donation
- 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, 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

**Is this your last copy of Mad Folk News?**

There are two ways to renew your tax-deductible membership

**Way #1 – online**

Visit [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org) and click on "Join MFMS"

**Way #2 – unplugged**

Complete, clip, and mail this form

Madison Folk Music Society

join  renew

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Choose membership category: Senior \$8 \_\_\_\_\_

Student \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

Regular \$12 \_\_\_\_\_

Family \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Friend \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Life \$500 \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarship fund donation (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

Madison Folk Music Society

P.O. Box 665, Madison, WI 53701

Address Service Requested

.....

Renew your membership today at

[www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org)

Permit No. 2278

Nonprofit Org  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Madison, WI