Platinum Becomes Her
MARY BLACK IN CONCERT

By J.J. REAN

Although mysteriously absent from mainstream American radio airwaves, Mary Black has been a staple of Ireland’s music scene for over 20 years. Indeed, as a testament to her longevity as an artist, Black won爱尔兰音乐杂志’s Irish Music Award 2003 for Best Contemporary Female artist. Mary Black sprang into the Dublin folk scene of the mid-1970’s, along with her three brothers and sister Frances, as a member of The Black Family. From the beginning, Black’s voice had a quality that sounds both plain and elegant, with a rich and satisfying timbre that easily stands by itself a cappella. However, when she left The Black Family, she began to transition away from traditional Irish singing and toward popular music with a nonetheless distinctly Celtic flavor.

With each album release, her reputation and population have grown. Her 1983 debut album Mary Black, produced by Declan Sinnott, earned her a gold album in Ireland. In 1983, Anthem, her LP with the legendary Celtic group DeDanann, won the Irish Album of the Year award. Her subsequent 1985 release, Without the Fanfare took a distinctly more contemporary musical turn. This further established her expanding solo career, and led to her departure from DeDanann in 1986. Later that year, she received Ireland’s Entertainer of the Year award.

Her biggest commercial success to date came in 1989’s

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Learn Irish Music
A Conversation With Bess Lomax Hawes part 3

PLUS
Keys to the Highway
CD Reviews
The Voices in My Head
and much more...
Welcome to the Celtic issue of FolkWorks. We are dedicating this issue to a fellow who had a great impact on our lives—Johnny Cunningham, whose passing away recently [see www.FolkWorks.org (page 3)]. We got to know Johnny’s music in the early 1980’s when the group he formed with his brother, Silly Wizard, was touring. We were both inspired by the freshness and passion of the band. In the mid-1980’s we were fortunate to see Johnny in what was unintentionally a private concert in Santa Monica. He was in town playing at a bar and no one had done any publicity. The Larman’s on FolkScene were wondering if they would be playing and we followed up on it, told some of our friends and there we were, one on one. Johnny took it stride and played for almost an hour for us and the local bar folk.

Johnny and his brother Phil occasionally toured as a duo. Their musicianship was exceptional and their brotherly banter really amusing. Johnny and Phil had not played together for many years, but this past spring they got together for a reunion. Johnny played several times during the past years at the Kennedy Performing Arts Center in Huntington, CA and there are on-line archives of the shows, including the reunion concert for your free viewing. Johnny will be sorely missed.

We at FolkWorks have a deep love of Celtic music. We provide information about the Celtic happenings in the L.A. area. We often review Celtic CDs that we think are exceptional and have produced concerts of some of our favorite Celtic performers. We are media sponsors of concerts at the Skibar Cultural Center and the Celtic Arts Center. And in this issue, because of St. Paddy’s Day and Johnny, we present several articles with a Celtic focus. Our lead article is about Mary Black, the wonderful singer who was involved with some of our favorite Irish bands.

We also have an article by one of LA’s finest Irish fiddlers as well as a new friend from the San Francisco Bay area. We hope to encourage you to try new things, to listen to new music, to learn an instrument, to take classes in a folk art, in general to be open to new things. If you are a musical bent, try learning to play Irish or Scottish music [page 3]. We have added a new listing for music instruction to get you started [page 8]. Likewise, if you like to dance, L.A. offers many opportunities for you to learn and participate. We would be amiss not to mention that several of the FolkWorks staff can be found playing regularly at the local sessions (or seisiuns, as the Irish call them). Check out page 13 to find one close to you and come on down. If you get tired flipping these pages back and forth, just read the whole issue cover to cover!

Finally, the Internet is a boon to those of us interested in Celtic music and dance. You can find and purchase just about any recording that is in current release. Some of these recordings are easily obtained, others are far sites that specify in the more obscure recordings. If you read music, you can find the written music for just about any tune that you would be interested in learning. There are also on-line museums available. And, for a small price, there is a weekly updated on-line concert. All with your fingers “doing the walking” on your keyboard. Go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FolkWorks and you will find some of the aforementioned Internet resources, and while you are there, join the FolkWorks Group and get updated calendar listings and more.
**So you want to learn Irish music**

By KATHY BUTTS

"The tune inspires me. It stirs things within me which I am then compelled to express through that very tune itself. Irish music contains the inspiration and dreams of generations past and present. The tunes are the seeds of this great collective."

- Martin Hayes

I can’t think of a better way to express why I love this music and feel so utterly compelled to learn it. Here are some tips that may make your learning experience more enjoyable and fruitful even if you’ve been playing a long time.

Let's start then with the question of whether to use written music or “dots.” I learned tunes off sheet music and then tried to memorize them. It took forever and when I went to sessions and played my new tune, people would look at me as if I wasn’t playing Irish music. Well that’s because I really wasn’t.

After realizing that tunes are rarely introduced with dots, my turning point came during a class because I really wasn’t. Well that’s how a tune starts and as a skeletal guide to how a tune goes. What gives a tune life is the subtleties of the ornaments, the rhythm, and the articulation. These are very hard to communicate through sheet music and few sessions look kindly upon dot readers. I heard one person say that reading music at a session is like showing up at a party with a book.

So to start learning by ear, I would suggest the following:

- Take a recording device to sessions and lessons. The Marantz tape allows you to slow things down to half speed and exactly one octave lower. Mini disc players or regular tape players are great. Ask someone to play the tune slowly for you to record.
- Use your computer: Musicmatch Jukebox allows you to transfer music from a CD onto your computer and Amazing Slow Downer allows you to play the tune at any speed without changing the pitch (unless you want to).
- Listen to recordings of people who really know traditional music and have been playing a long time. Ask professionals who play their place in this learning, i.e. as a reminder of the ornaments, the rhythm, and the articulation. These are very hard to communicate through sheet music and few sessions look kindly upon dot readers. I heard one person say that reading music at a session is like showing up at a party with a book.

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How Standard Is Standard Pitch?

By Roger Goodman

Most musicians today use electronic tuners to make sure the instruments are "in tune." Electronic tuners are based on the "standard pitch" of A-440, meaning that the A above middle C vibrates at 440 Hz (Hertz) or cps (cycles per second). The pitch pipes and tuning forks that preceded electronic tuners were also based on the A-440 standard. Have you ever wondered about A-440? What's so special about A-440? Or, who got to decide that it was the magic number? Or why do we have to have a standard pitch anyway? We'll find the answers to these questions as fascinating as I do because in this issue, we are taking a little side road on the Musical Highway to learn about something we simply take for granted.

Humans have probably been communicating with music longer than they have with language. When they first discovered music it is likely that one person at a time created unaccompanied melodies. There was no need to standardize pitch—people just sang where it felt comfortable. When people began to sing with others they still didn't need a standard pitch because a group tends to reach a consensus just by singing together. Even when singing became more complex and methodical as, for example, when the monks developed the liturgical chant or plainsong, there was still no standard pitch. By the time Pope Gregory codified the rules of notation for the chant, some monasteries seemed to center on a particular pitch range but it varied from one monastery to the next.

As a result, manufacturers started tuning their instruments slightly higher to make their instruments brighter, and the pitch kept floating upward. As the pitch went up, the higher A became the pitch of A-440, which by then had been the official pitch of Europe for over 100 years. The higher A was very popular, especially since they were better able to fill larger and larger venues with sound. The higher A-440 pitch quickly replaced the older A-430 tuning because the new instruments were made the bands sound brighter and more brilliant. The new instruments were in the "higher German pitch" which presented the Austrian regiment bands with a full set of beautiful Russian-made instruments. These instruments were in the "higher German pitch" which presented the Austrian regiment bands with a full set of beautiful Russian-made instruments. The standard was achieved at an international conference in London. The original intent was to use the Royal Philharmonic's A-439. The BBC decided to begin regular broadcasts of an electronically produced reference tone. To produce the tone, the BBC used an oscillator controlled by a piezo-electro crystal vibrating at 1 MHz. This was reduced to a frequency of 1 KHz by electronic dividers. It was then electronically multiplied 11 times and divided by 25 producing the frequency of 440 Hz. It turns out that the desired target of 439 is a prime number and as such cannot be reached by dividing and multiplying. So the BBC began broadcasting a reference tone of 440 Hz. This is how we arrived at the magic number of 440 Hz.

If you had assumed it to be a spiritual number that vibrated in resonance with the Universe and was delivered by the hand of God, my deepest apologies. As we have seen it was the result of various science, pseudo-science and practical considerations and it is at best a necessary compromise. For the time being the pitch of A-440 is officially accepted worldwide. However, some scholars and ongoing dissent, most notably from those who play and study historical music. Placed in the current context of our rapidly changing world of technology, the pitch of A-440 is a global standard established without compromise. It remains the world's standard for the orchestra) tuned to A-435 at 59 degrees Fahrenheit will raise to a pitch of A-439 at 68 degrees Fahrenheit. Thus, in 1896 A-439 became the standard pitch in Britain. Elsewhere, including the United States, pitch was still creeping upward.

The arrival of radio brought together music and musicians from all over the world. The lack of a worldwide standard pitch was now an obvious problem. In the 1930's there was a great effort by the broadcasting industry for standardization of concert pitch in North America and Europe, and, in 1939, this was achieved at an international conference in London. The original intent was to use the Royal Philharmonic's A-439. The BBC decided to begin regular broadcasts of an electronically produced reference tone. To produce the tone, the BBC used an oscillator controlled by a piezo-electro crystal vibrating at 1 MHz. This was reduced to a frequency of 1 KHz by electronic dividers. It was then electronically multiplied 11 times and divided by 25 producing the frequency of 440 Hz. It turns out that the desired target of 439 is a prime number and as such cannot be reached by dividing and multiplying. So the BBC began broadcasting a reference tone of 440 Hz. This is how we arrived at the magic number of 440 Hz. This is how we arrived at the magic number of 440 Hz.

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Roger Goodman is a musician, mathematician, punster, reader of esoteric books and sometime writer, none of which pays the mortgage. For that, he is a computer network guy for a law firm. He has been part of the L.A. old-time & contradance music community for over thirty years. While not a dancer, he does play fiddle, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, banjo & spoons. Roger has a penchant for tiwta and ouhca and sometimes tries to explain how the clock works when asked only for the time. He lives with his wife, Monika White, in Santa Monica, CA.
THE VOICES IN MY HEAD
BY JOANNA CAZDEN

UNNATURAL ACTS
OR, WHY BOTHER STUDYING VOICE?

In early March/April 2004 I had the great good fortune to meet two outstanding voice instructors. First, I spent a week with singing teacher and voice scientist Jo Estill. Trained from an early age in bel canto (classical art songs), she spent decades measuring how sound waves change when the muscles of the mouth and throat are used in different configurations.

Ultimately, Estill developed a highly unique system of voice training based on an idea that "she" — tiny isolated movements that, once mastered, allow a singer to produce any style of singing, from opera to bluegrass to "belting" to wispy jazz. Now 82 and nearing retirement, Estill is passing her pioneer’s torch on to a few younger teachers around the country. As I honored vintage singers in my last column, I here pay homage to teachers, and Jo Estill is certainly one who deserves great appreciation.

One of her slogans—which I’ve long had pinned up in my office, for shock value if nothing else—is that SINGING IS AN UNNATURAL ACT. Before the folk police start beating on me with vehement “how dare you! everyone can sing/ don’t be a stupid elitist” bricketts, let me hasten to qualify.

Singing IS natural as an activity enjoyed since the earliest days of evolution of the human family and tribe. Absolutely. It is found in nearly every culture, and is typically learned by osmosis or community experience rather than as a formal practice. Lullabies, work songs, healing chants, courtship songs, and bardic ballads are valued within the folk tradition because of their organic expression of indigenous identity and style.

Singing as a performance form, done for extended periods of time, at high volume, and/or with elaborate ornamentation, does not come naturally to every human being. From the lumper camps of the Northeast USA to the healing ceremonies of the Navajo, and in other non-commercial or pre-commercial settings, certain people have been recognized as having special vocal abilities. When labor becomes specialized, singing emerges as a discreet skill, something to practice with conscious intent and discipline—a somewhat UNnatural act.

Estill’s training system, not surprisingly, felt extremely unnatural at first. It was like learning to dance by practicing 15 rigorous, individual steps to 2 minutes of music, all repeated 15 times. The Praties line-up features tin whistle, bodhrán, hand drums and percussion, and a voice. Instrumentation consists of: guitar, banjo, bass, piano, whistle, bodhrán and other special effects: 818-785-3839 • email: oloughlin@pacbell.net

BUZZWORLD

Southern California’s premiere Celtic-based acoustic/eclectic band. A unique blend of exuberant Irish dance music with classic jazz, surf, and spy music of the 1960s. You’ve heard them on projects as varied as James Cameron’s Titanic to accompanying performers like Ray Charles, David Byrne and Brian Eno. Booking now: concerts, corporate events, private parties, weddings. 818-904-0101 • buzzworld@adelphia.net • http://users.adelphia.net/~grockwood/BUZZWORLD/INDEX.html

CLADDAGH

An Irish folk music band, is a lively quintet noted for their stylish and humorous catch phrases. They are well known for their unique sound. The Praties are a high-energy Irish band, possessing versatility with a sense of whimsy, serving up an assortment of jigs, reels, polkas, and evocative ballads and love songs... Bookings for concerts, weddings and any other special event. 818-363-1526 (Creative Spark) www.claddagband.net

OLD #7

Mississippi native, Cliff Wagner and his band, “The Old #7” are entrenched in preserving Appalachian Bluegrass, the very same music played by The Stanley Brothers, Jimmy Martin, and Larry Sparks to name a few. Old #7’s sound incorporates traditional three part harmonies and excellent instrumental qualities influenced by The Delta Blues and Honky Tonk which gives Cliff Wagner & The Old #7 their unique sound. 310-831-6557 • cliff@oldnumber7.net www.oldnumber7.net

THE PRATIES

The Praties are a high-energy Irish band, possessing versatility with a sense of whimsy, serving up an assortment of jigs, reels, polkas, and evocative ballads and love songs... Bookings for concerts, weddings and any other special event. 818-363-1526 (Creative Spark) www.claddagband.net

MUSIC INSTRUCTION

NICHOLAS BUCKMELTER:

IRISH FLUTE, TIN WHISTLE, LOW WHISTLE.

Nick has been playing and teaching Irish flute and whistle for more than ten years. In 2003 he toured Japan as a traditional musician under the auspices of the Irish Embassy in Tokyo. Over the years he’s had the good fortune to perform with some of the most respected musicians in the Celtic world, including the Chieftains, Dale Russ, Pat O’Connor and the Black Family. He hosts a regular session at Finn McCool’s in Santa Monica.

760-935-4812 or nbuckmelter@hotmail.com
Perhaps it’s because the first feature film was a Western. Perhaps it’s because the specific Railroad arrived from Louisiana and Texas. But the music of the Lone Star State has always been well received here, and its multiple influences are strong. Just ask local band Border Radio.

You see the influence in traditional Western music, and in the traditional and new folk sounds, gifted singer-songwriter writers like Willie Nelson, Tom Russell, Guy Clark, the late Townes Van Zandt, and those remarkably gifted women, Tish Hinojosa and Mollie O'Brien.

We’ll look at both these expressions of Texas influences, in music you can enjoy live and own on CD. First is traditional Western music, and the second is new folk, then we’ll get to the new folk sound of East Texas refugee Michelle Shocked.

The 11th annual Santa Clarita Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival, held March 26-28 in and around the movie-set Courtown at Gene Autry’s old Melody Ranch Motion Picture Studio, is a must-do. Like all good music and folk festivals, it’s the place to explore and discover performers, genres and styles, enjoy old favorites, find new ones, and have a good time. The venue has the best ambiance anywhere, with riders on horseback and narrow, dusty streets of a Western Brigadoon, reborn for the weekend, as each building has its own story.

This year’s performers include, naturally, some Texans. Don Edwards is a festival favorite, playing one of the premium-ticket concerts. He was nominated for a Grammy with Peter Rowan, Tony Rice and Norman Blake for their 2002 CD, High Lonesome Cowboy.

Michelle Shocked, a world-traveled folk-singer-songwriter and recording artist with Texas roots, she delights audiences with storytelling, fine guitar work, and abiding passion in her music. You see the influence in traditional Western lyrics about the bard of Arhma. Others, like Ken Graydon, a singer-songwriter, recording artist and musical historian, weaves Scottish and Mexican into his Western music shows. Paying musical homage to their origins, each one demonstrates 150 years of the “folk process” that produced dozens of favorite cowboy songs. It’s the roots of roots music, often an ocean away.

Festival admission includes dozens of performances. Two evenings and two full days of reserved seat shows are available in addition to new CD sales. Classic Western films are screened. A banquet for inductees to the Western Walk of Stars and a special dinner on the Fillmore & Western Railway also feature music. Call the City of Santa Clarita for information and tickets toll free hotline 1-800-305-0755, or call the festival ticket office: 661-230-4021.

On to our second theme, a notable example of Texas influence in new folk music.

Michelle Shocked might seem to be at opposite poles from the lone prairie, but only those who haven’t treated themselves to a tour of her rich and, yes, eclectic music. Sometimes, she’s on the cutting edge of new folk, sometimes so steeped in traditional roots that a new song sounds ancient, or from some other genre altogether.

Most often, her music is marinated in East Texas-Arkansas-Louisiana influences. But her music invites mixed metaphors, and the tracks on her CDs are as fluid as where land and water meet in the piney wood swamps, unpredictable from one place to the next. That’s apparent in her 2002 CD package, Deep Natural. It includes a second disc, Dub Natural, with her sometimes inspired alternative instrumental improvisations on the first disc’s main titles.

You hear lots of influences in her work. An abundance of blues shows smoothly in and out of strummed string and bowed fiddle themes, as Louisiana jazz and Cajun accents push and pull. Michelle’s plenty of Western Swing in there, and when she blends the horns on the latest augmented-re-release, her Captain Swing CD, it’s only surprising because the world abandoned brass in this genre decades ago. You simply need to remember that in Texas, all music is dance music.

Much of her work is driven by her own acoustic guitar, which she plays with energy, skill and often brilliance, on her compositions and cowboy standards, like (Goodbye) Old Paint.

She says her biggest influences are Clarence “Gatemouth” Brown, Doc Watson and Norman Blake. Her web site includes a map of the landscape of her childhood, with built-in bios and hometowns of 22 of her nearby musical heroes, including Woody Nelson, Leadbelly, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Lightnin’ Hopkins, T-Bone Walker, Lefty Frizzell, and the East Texas Serenaders.

To explain it better, you need to know that Michelle Shocked, born Michelle Johnson, was dragged all over the world as an army brat in a big and poor family, until she left home at age 16. Living like a female Jack Kerouac eventually led her back to Texas, where she put herself through the University in Austin. Her degree is not so much an interpretation of her life, as a kind of rebellion against the materialism of the Reagan years. There are tales of her sleeping each night in an antique bookstore after all-night bus rides. She’s known for her vagabond life on two continents, homelessness, living on a houseboat, and one authoritative music biography source saying her life story must be fiction.

Michelle Shocked’s days on the punk scene are behind her, as is the exploitation she experienced when her first hit record was a pirated field recording made at a Kerrville Folk Festival campfire in the late 1980s. That was followed by hit singles in England and played heavily on the BBC with a mishmash of her song titles, as the Texas Campfire Takes, gifted because the cassette recorder’s batteries were low.

At the time, she hadn’t dreamed of becoming a performing musician, despite some brilliant songwriting. But her first show led directly to her first stage show, ever, at London’s Queen Elizabeth Hall. Then came her life as a travelling minstrel, more exploitation, more songwriting, more experience, and eventually to a determination to take on the record companies. She won a landmark case against Mercury Records, by invoking the 13th Amendment’s protection against slavery. It brought profound implications for countless artists caught in contract limbo. Today, she is the only major artist to own her entire catalogue of songs.

Protest activism that once drove everything is still at the core of her social consciousness. She is a writer who has, in part of her live performance as sharply cogent lyrics in the best folk tradition, delivered with powerful acoustic guitar statements and a fresh fusion of Western and world music.

Headlining a benefit at Kulak’s Woodshed in North Hollywood for striking grocery workers came three days after sharing a stage in Austin with Willie Nelson and some all-star friends. That was a benefit for Democratic Presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich. There, Nelson played his 1972 protest hit, "I Was on the Peace on Earth, and Michelle joined Tish Hinojosa for a duet of the latter’s poignant, "Something in the Rain," about the tragic consequences of the Vietnam War. It was a powerful and heartfelt exposure. Each was cited in the magazine, The Nation, for their sharp social and political music and commentary. It’s Michelle Shocked in her element.

Lately, she’s been adjusting to a divorce, and busy reengineering, remixing, adding songs omitted at the time, and re-releasing each of her previous albums. Many had been scarce or unavailable for years. The new packaging includes art books that reveal additional direction for the artist. The new re-release of the Texas Campfire Takes (the last word subtly changed) is a must for everyone who enjoys great guitar al fresco (here, it’s completely with crickets and frog and bird sounds) and who enjoys long train rides, good stories, and the songs are delightful. It’s a two disc set, one reengineered with amazing sound clarity, the other the complete original field tape with previously unreleased songs and original tape hiss.

Aficionados of new folk with a bluesy edge should go for the expanded re-release of Short Sharp Shocked. Much of what’s here is brilliant and retains its social relevance. And it includes her trademark, Memories of East Texas.

The entire catalogue is available on her web site: www.michellechelsedicted.com. Those wanting to explore the life and career of this fascinating woman and artistic genius can read an extensive biography and countless news stories at an unofficial site: glumbo.cjb.net.
I N T E R V I E W
A Conversation with Bess Lomax Hawes - part 3

INTERVIEWED BY ROSS ALTMAN JULY 10, 2003

A Conversation with Bess Lomax Hawes - part 3

[For those of you who would like to know more about Bess’s work as a folklorist, there is a new DVD entitled, The Films of Bess Lomax Hawes, available for $24.95 plus $6.00 shipping from www.media-generation.com. You will discover that, even in this tough interview, looking back more than half a century, we have only scratched the surface].

FW: I know you’ve been asked this a thousand times and you can just tell me to bugger off. What is your definition of a folksong? With the emphasis on “your.” I’m not asking you to recite the academic definitions in the American Heritage Dictionary, but as you see it.

BLH: I would probably come closer to that than to some of the more folksy ones. I think that folksongs have to have a history, that they have to some past. You can have a song that’s supposed to be going to be a folksong. You can bet on it, I mean I hear something every once in awhile and say “That’s going to make it.” I do think that one of the important things about a folk-song is that it has proved itself through time as having some kind of real importance to the human spectrum. I don’t know. It’s memorable, because nobody ever teaches you these things. They just sing them to you. Then you learn them if you want to. To that is an essential. The topical song I think often becomes a folk-song, but an awful lot of them don’t. Woody, for example, I think his only song that’s become a folksong in any sense is This Land is Your Land and that’s the chorus. Everybody on the picket line sings Union Maid. They don’t know the rest of the words at all and they don’t know whoever wrote it either. But the others haven’t gone into the public domain in the way that I would have thought, myself. I would have thought So Long, It’s Been Good to Know You would have got it, but it didn’t quite. It may come back.

FW: Well, it’s hard to compare other songs to This Land is Your Land . . .

BLH: That’s right. That was taken over.

FW . . . because that’s close to a national anthem.

BLH: Yeah.

FW: But Sam Hinton did collect different versions of Talking D乌lbow some years ago.

BLH: I wouldn’t be surprised.

FW: In California, I mean. Well, that’s interesting. It shows you how hard it is to write a folksong, because if Woody only got one or two, or one and a half, what chance do the rest of us have.

BLH: I think it’s terribly hard. I think it doesn’t matter much. You’re writing a song and you’re writing a song for people to sing it. That’s a little bit different from writing a song for a rock group or a hip group of some kind. That’s written for commercial purposes. That song that you’re writing is because you want to say something. I think those are for just songs. I think a lot of people write songs all the time. I wrote songs for my kids when I was raising them, when they were babies. No one will ever sing them but me.

FW: Would you consider singing one of them here?

BLH: They’re kind of silly.

FW: Well, but kid songs are supposed to be silly. “You stick out your little hand at every woman, kid, and man, and you shake it up and down, how’d you do, how’d you do honja, heegee, heegee, heegee, howjado”—it doesn’t get sillier than that.

BLH: That’s right. Mine were mostly pop song parodies.

FW: Oh really?

BLH: Yeah. Just whatever occurred to me. I was just amusing myself. I ran into so many people who had written poetry and songs of their own, and had them in their own equivalent to a ballad book that they were saving, I think it’s something that Americans do very easily. I think that’s what most of the cowboy songs were. They were songs about what the guys were doing and they were written to keep them from being bored, to pass the time, and because they had something they wanted to say.

FW: What were some of the earliest songs that you actually learned? I would still sing, that meant something to you?

BLH: “Old Chisholm Trail” was one. We used to sing that in the car, “cause that went on forever.

FW: [laughs] “Cause it was long, as long as the trip.”

BLH: Yeah, yeah. That’s right. In fact, that’s what an old cowboy told father about. He said that song is as long as the trail from here to Kansas.

FW: I see.

BLH: And you don’t ever get through with it. He was absolutely right. That’s what they did. They just went on and on and on, piling up things. It was boring being a cowboy, you know.

FW: Would you sing just a verse or two?

BLH: [singing] Come along boys and listen to my tale, tell you of my troubles on the old Chisholm trail. Coma ti yi yippy, yippy yea; ti yi yippy, yippy yea. I started up the trail October 23rd, started up the trail with a two ewe herd. Coma ti yi yippy, yippy yea, yippy yea; ti yi yippy, yippy yea. Stray in the herd and the boss said kill it, so we landed that stray on the bottom of a skillet. Coma ti yi yippy, yippy yea, yippy yea; ti yi yippy, yippy yea. [not singing] I don’t have any voice anymore, but that’s the way it goes.

FW: That’s wonderful.

BLH: It’s just a little verse here and a little verse there.

FW: It’s a little more of a minor key than I heard it off of the record. That’s lovely. Okay: Let me ask you about winning the National Gold Medal of the Arts in 1993. You went to Washington. What was that like? This was during Clinton’s administration.

BLH: Yeah. How did you hear about that? It was in my vita?

FW: It was mentioned in passing, yeah.

BLH: Oh well. What I had been doing after I had finished with the Festival on the Mall, I was eating and got a job over at the office at the National Endowment for the Arts, which was set up by Congress with a specific job of supporting art forms. They were not supposed to do it themselves, but they were supposed to get money to people who were doing good art. There had been a great deal of uproar in the following community about there should be some folklore material in there, there should be some folk singers. It hadn’t happened. They finally put somebody in there. Alan Jabbour got the first job there. Then he went to the Library of Congress and they hired me. I was there for about 20 years. I was there a long time. It was a very fascinating job, because technically speaking what I was supposed to do was to, in the first place, take care of every folk group in the country that was doing something that needed some money. Well, you know, I could maybe get a half a cent out to them. It didn’t make much sense in those terms. I also was supposed to take care of all of the kinds of art. Visual art, dance, storytelling, music, songs, the whole works.

FW: Folk arts in the broadest sense.

BLH: Yeah. We spent ten years working terribly hard on trying to figure out any way to do it at all. We had only a small budget and one of the fellows who ran the endowment said one time, “Every time I sign off on a grant, I know I am making one friend and two hundred enemies.” I always had this sense that when you worked for the government you were working for the people, and you were supposed to take care of the people. I didn’t like to tell people no. I finally, I finally worked out, by the way, a kind of a folk song description of what we were doing that satisfied a lot of people. I said, “You know, you sent us this application for money, because you’re going to do this nice thing.” We get a number of people together—get ten, twelve people together and they all look at all of the things that come in. I said it’s begun to remind me of a potluck supper. Everybody has brought in the very nicest thing they know how to make. They make their special chilli or their special turkey or their whatever. And then the staff comes in and we fix it all up so it was like the parsley and the decoration. Then the people who are on the board have to come in and say, “What am I going to eat for supper?”

FW: Oh, I see.

BLH: “Am I going to have turkey or going to have ham? Can’t eat both of them. I’m going to have to pick the things that seem to me like food that would be a good reason for picking.” They began to kind of catch on to the fact that they weren’t being disgraced when they got turned down. They weren’t being turned down, they just didn’t make it that time. They might have had a perfectly wonderful thing that everybody felt was great, but we didn’t have the money.

FW: So was the medal that was—winning the gold medal— was that in recognition of your work on

BEss LomAx HaWes
This is going to be the debut of my new column format, the first in which I shall the emphasis over to fewer, but longer, reviews. As such I'm going to focus on three releases, all Irish, all with 2003 release dates and all on the same label. Since they all receive the same basic rating, I'm going to list them in order, from least favorite to favorite. The order will surprise some people who have read this column for a while.

The Road Less Traveled, the new one by Danú, [Shanachie] (!) probably falls under the category of 'mild disappointment.' Not that it's a bad record at all, the instrumental tunes still have plenty of fire and new singer Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh has a lovely low alto voice (although I do miss the even lower tenor voice of departed singer Ciaran Ó Gealláin). The song selection, however, is not the equal of their previous releases. Tommy Sands' Co. Down is probably the best of the lot, and the two Irish-language ones are quite pretty, but the American traditional Peg and Avi is taken too slowly, and their version of Fairport Convention's 'Sandy's Farewell' is played pretty straight—it's a great song, they just don't do anything unique or exciting with it. That said, this is still a band of great young players and the instrumental sets are well arranged, including a march/jig featuring piper Donnchadh Gough and a great set of hornpipes featuring guest fiddler John Sheahan. In fact, the final track, a set of reels, is as exciting as anything they've ever done. It's not fair to expect them to be brilliant every time and fortunately this is still plenty good. One other change has been made, guitarist Noel Ryan has left the band, and is replaced here by Donal Clancy.

On the other hand, the new one by Solas, Another Day [Shanachie] (!) is going to please plenty of people disappointed that their last release featured so few traditional sounds. As a band they have long had a desire to explore other, non-Irish and non-traditional forms of music, and it's hard to really blame them. I imagine being masters of the form that they are, it's natural for them to want to seek a new challenge. Hence the contemporary sound of their last CD, which was actually quite tasteful, but disappointed many as the first Solas record ever without that familiar writing credit: "traditional arrangement." But here they're back to their roots, at least to some degree. The best track on it is the first one, the driving reel set Bór'd in the Tree, proving that even after their side trips into contemporary song, they are still supreme traditional players. This is, unfortunately, the only track on which Seamus Egan plays flute, but his fine whistle and guitar playing elsewhere almost makes up for it. There are a few contemporary songs here as well, and those are chosen wisely, with one each by Dougie MacLean, Kieran Goss, Dan Fogelberg (Scarcecrow's Dream, one of his better songs) and new guitarist Eamon McElholm. But it's undeniable that instrumental tunes are still where they truly excel. Better than anyone had a right to expect it would be, and their best recording so far this millennium.

The best of the lot, however, is the solo album by the accordion player in Solas, Mick McAuley, An Ocean's Breadth [Shanachie]. First off, while it's all fairly traditionally styled, it is also tastefully contemporized, with extra richness coming from the standup bass of Steve Beskrone and the very subtle touch of synthesizer programming (by Seamus Egan!). Also, McAuley is not just a box player who sings-he's really good at both. His syncopated rhythms on accordion are great for listening or dancing. As the lead male voice in Solas he usually only sings a song or two per set, here he sings four, all beautifully. He is only the secondary singer in Solas only because their singer Dierdre Scanlan is so good, not because McAuley isn't up to being a lead singer. The songs are mostly American and English, and the version of The House Carpenter is haunting, and completely different from other versions that have been released lately, like the one by ex-Solas singer Karen Casey. It does have a bit of the feel of a Solas record, particularly with four past and present members guesting, but that's not a bad thing. The original tunes are great also, with plenty of diversity, from the Galician styled Colino Forfaso to The Maritime Wife. It's the shortest of the three, but also the most consistently pleasing.

So that's it until next time. I'm not sure what I'll cover next time, but I do think I'll stick with this new format, unless I hear from readers that they liked the old way better. As such and as always, I'd love to know what you think. Feel free to contact me.

RATING SCALE:

[!] Great, one of the year's finest. If you have even a vague interest in the artist, consider this my whole-hearted recommendation that you go out and purchase it immediately.

[!] Very good, with considerable appeal for a fan of the artist(s). If you purchase it, you likely won't be disappointed.

[!] Good/soild, what you would expect.

[!] Avoid. Either ill-conceived, or artistically inept in some way.

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WORLD ENCOUNTERS

By VIOLA GALLOWAY

Artist: USTAD NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN & PARTY: PUKAAR
Title: THE ECHO
Label: NAVRAS

Who is this one, you may wonder? It is not a new release but I was com-
pletely unprepared to hear this CD again. Having seen and experienced
Nusrat several times performing to an almost exclusively Pakistani crowd
which hardly ever stopped dancing, it conveys so magically what ecstatic
sufi (Muslim mystic) singing really means. There are not any of the later
fusion elements to be found here, just two singers: Nusrat, with Ustad Sultan
Khan (from Rajasthan, on saranga) and with Ustad Abdul Sattar Tari (on
tables). Although they met, the two singers never actually performed togeth-
er live. Nusrat died in 1997 and the recording is actually the result of mod-
ern technology. Here they alternate in a seamless blend, starting with
Nusrat’s signature song, Allah-hoo, Allah-hoo, Allah-hoo in an emotional
version. There is only one other song you have to hear in order to understand

Artist: VARIOUS
Title: TRADITIONAL INDIA
Label: WRASSE

One of the few Indian CDs you’ll ever need and one I can listen to every
day. Soul, sufi, classical, and lots of ghazals (poetry) – it’s all here on 2 CDs
which has survived since the 1970’s, mostly thanks to their guitarist
Djennady Tournaka, who has been called Africa’s greatest one. Try the title
track to see whether you agree. This style of music has been called
“Manding swing,” and it now incorporates elements of rock, blues, Cuban,
reggae, and other types of music. The title track, for example, with its
swinging, hypnotic sound, makes for great driving music.

Artist: FAUDEL
Title: ANOTHER SUN
Label: WRASSE

Nagat El Saghira, and Angham.

This recording is not groundbreaking but a continuation of their previous
work. The official train station band of the capital of Mali, this is a group
which has survived since the 1970’s, mostly thanks to their guitarist
Boubacar Traore (from Bamako) worked on their careers, Idrissa
Soumaoro stayed behind and taught music to the visually impaired and
supported his family. The result is that nobody outside Mali knew about
him. That is changing now thanks to a new recording that starts out on a
western listener (meaning that one would hear a different sound in the
Arab music (and film) industry. It was inevitable that the Rough Guide folks
were already interested in these and expected by this label, this double CD comes packed with
informative liner notes and most of all, absolutely interesting
music. It was originally used for court music in Japan and later by Zen monks
for spiritual research, thereby equating the practice of the instrument as
meditation, such as the Kino School. Teruhsa Fukuda has widely collabo-
rated with western musicians and therefore this recording differs from tra-
ditional shakuhachi players.

Artist: VARIOUS
Title: MUSIC OF INDONESIA - MALUKU AND NORTH MALUKU
Label: CELESTIAL HARMONIES

If you have been following the news you may realize that the
music on this recording from 1989 may not exist anymore due to
recent problems in Indonesia (religious fighting, etc). A
former Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch province, the
area consists of many former spice islands.

As local religions were Catholic, Protestant,
Muslim, and nature-spirit based, the music became
an interesting mix of content and instrumentation. As to be
expected by this label, this double CD comes packed with
informative liner notes and most of all, absolutely interesting
and unusual music: Bamboo flutes orchestras with brass trombones and
tuba, performing at rice-stamping or weaving dances, martial
dance songs, “peace-restoring blood-drinking ceremonial
dances,” songs of praise, etc.

Also recommended:
BARBAROS ERKÖSE ENSEMBLE and DEEPAK
RAM (Indian crossover flutist) (both on Golden Horn
Records).

VIOLA’S RESOURCE LIST

Book: World Music, a Very Short Introduction by Philip V. Bohlman
Magazines:
The Beat (American), Songlines (from the UK), and RRoots (formerly Folkroots)

Websites:
www.sternsmusic.com (mostly African music)
www.mondonox.com (all aspects and types of world music)
www.bbc.co.uk (serious musicology plus world music links)
www.aalrop.org (Nordic radio show with links, information on concerts etc.)
www.maqum.com (Arab music)
www.greekmusic.com (Greek music)
www.piranha.de (WOMEX, world music conference)
www.canzone-online.de (labels and releases not available in U.S.)

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Artist: VARIOUS
Title: COLD MOUNTAIN (MUSIC FROM THE MIRAMAX MOTION PICTURE)
Label: DMZ/COLUMBIA/SONY MUSIC SOUNDTRACK

Release Date: DECEMBER 2003

Okay, first let's get some history and politics out of the way. It started in 1897, with Charles Frazier. Frazier's first novel tells the tale of a Confederate soldier in the Civil War who gets seriously wounded. He decides to desert rather than be sent back to the front during the last days of the war. He ventures through the ruined South to return to his beloved on her farm in North Carolina. The book is based on local history and stories told by Frazier's great-great-grandfather.

Roots musicians John Hermann, Dick Powell and Bill Bryson have put together the book to record Songs from the Mountain in 1998. Comprised primarily of their recordings of Civil War era songs, the disc is a strong project and well worth seeking out. Some of the same songs are shared, including Wayfaring Stranger and Fair Margaret and Sweet William, included on Cold Mountain, and Make Way for'));

Artist: ORVILLE JOHNSON
Title: FREEHAND
Label: ORVILLE JOHNSON MUSIC OJM 003
Release Date: JULY 2003

Orville Johnson is a Seattle based multi-instrumentalist with a staggeringly expressive singing voice, and incredible chops on guitar, Dobro™, mandolin, banjo and several other instruments. He's half of the Mongrel Folk duo with Mark Graham, and does session work, movie work and guitar instruction.

Orville's done a few solo recordings, 1997's Orville Johnson & Scott Weiskop, 1998's Blueprint for the Blues, and Slide and Joy, in 1999. Last summer, he booked some studio time and started cutting songs for an uncluttered, professional look to the project. Says Orville, "This one comes closest to fully capturing his eclectic taste and talent. Freehand has a fairly casual gestation. Says Johnson "I hadn't put anything out in a while, so I booked some studio time and started cutting songs I love." The CD opens with a driving take on Pat Braney's Imitation of the Blues, including a nice vibraphone break by Susan Pascal. One of the more取暖ional cuts is Somewhere, Johnson's instrumental take on the West Side Story chestnut. Somewhere features not only Johnson tuneful Bluegrass Wyler, but subtle and compelling guitar. Johnson notes "That's the song I've gotten the most reaction to: I didn't expect that. It's a simple little thing, one of my favorite melodies and I loved what John Knowles played on guitar, understated yet stunning. Cut 4 is Krauss doing The Scarlet Tide, a new number written by Burnett and Elvis Costello. This tune doesn't fit the old time mold nearly as well as Songbird, but Krauss' s rendition has me singing along.

Artist: TOM CORBETT
Title: CLOUDLESS BLUE SKY
Label: ROUNDHOLE RECORDS RIHR - 51262
Release Date: JANUARY 2004

Multi-instrumentalist Tom Corbett is a pretty ubiquitous kind of guy in the Southern California acoustic music scene. He cut his teeth in several of the mandatory bluegrass hotbeds including Sea Upstairs, John McEuen's String Wizards, Border Radio and more. Tom's commanding heavy vocal and stage presence has made him a sought after session singer, and he's got a Who's Who of top flight backing. Tom's debut solo recording, Upstarts at Charlie's was his announcement that he was able to step into the center of the spotlight quite capably. He has a_storehouse of stories and really commanding mandolin picking chops make him a memorable presence. His expertise with guitar and mandolin have made him a sought after session player.

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A MUSICAL JOURNEY

BY BETTO ARCOS

Cuban sacred drums, Peruvian roots music, Venezuelan music, Fado meets Brazilian music, and the rhythms, Venezuelan country music, Fado meets Brazilian music, and the latest record by Flamenco giant Paco de Lucia. Wemilere: Santeria-Sacred Drums (Long Distance). Wemilere is a sacred Yoruban word which means “party,” and this ensemble brings all the elements of a Rumba party into this recording of sacred music. Under the leadership of Wemilere, one of Cuba’s most famous marimba players, Wemilere takes you right into the heart of this centuries-old music tradition and proves that the African roots continue to thrive to this day in Cuba. At the center of this music are three sacred Bata drums, called Okonkolo, Irole and Yaya. The Bata are double-headed drums considered sacred instruments and played at many of the rituals of the Yoruba religion. The piece that stands out is a rare and gorgeous version of the classic Son de Cuba, Pensamiento and Obsesion performed by Cuba Bolerita. Both of these pieces are considered standards and have been recorded over and over by all the great bolero singers, but Wemilere’s treatment makes us re-imagine the songs, offering us the beauty and simplicity of the melody.

Panco Quinto: Rumba Sin Fronteras (Riverboat/World Music Network). The second recording by one of Cuba’s master percussionists is an exploration of Rumba angeria. This fusion of traditions is backed by none other than Cuba’s Omar Sosa on piano and marimba and Maria Laura and John Santos on percussion, and Enrique Fernandez on saxophone, among others. Unlike Wemilere, which is all about preserving the Yoruba tradition, Pancho Quinto’s album is all about the driving force of improvisation and opening up the Rumba to create a new sound, as the title suggests, a Rumba without borders.

El Sot de Cuba: various artists (Iris Musique). Cuban music compilations abound and you probably don’t need another one in your collection. But if you’re interested in listening and dancing to the many styles of Cuban son, this could be for you. Son is the foundation of all Cuban music, from son came everything that we know today as Cuban music, including Salsa. This collection has some very good selections and a few classics. Among the artists included in this 2 CD set are the legendary Septeto Nacional de Ignacio Pinoeiro, Guillermo Portabales and Company, Los Antiguos Cuban orchestras of Cheo Marquetti, Orquesta Aragon and Beny More; and a few of the bands that helped to revitalize son in the last two decades, Elio Reeve y su Charangon, Adalberto Alvarez y su Son, and Frakters. There are a few songs by four artists of the Nueva Trova Cubana that do not fit in the son category but you get the sense that their style is certainly influenced by the Son tradition. [Editor’s note: see FolkWorks Nov/Dec issue for more history on son in Cuba].

El Bolero Mexicano: Humanidad-1931-45, various artists (Iris Musique). The Bolero style began in Cuba over a century ago. When it came to Mexico years later, it was transformed into a very popular style, especially during the early radio days of the 1930’s and 1940’s. Boleros are the equivalent of American standards and like its US counterpart there is a sort of “Bolero songbook” from which hundreds of artists draw for their recordings and performances. There are many styles of accompanying Boleros, with guitars and small percussion; with a small ensemble; and with a big orchestra. This recording is a rare collection of Boleros that give you an idea of the popularity of this music and its major figures. The period covered here, 1931-1945, highlights the big orchestras and some of the great singers of this romantic era: Pedro Vargas, Toña La Negra, Hermansanas Hernandez, Amparo Montes, Lupita Palomera and Juan Arvizu.

The Rough Guide to Venezuela: various artists (World Music Network). Venezuela has one of the most diverse musical cultures in the Americas. With a large and varied landscape of Andean mountains, the Caribbean coast and the Amazon jungle, Venezuelan music is rich in folk traditions and hundreds of musical styles. This exceptional introduction to the “musica llanera” or music of the plains, Afro-Venezuelan music, and the many ensembles and artists that have popularized it at home and abroad. Some of my favorite selections are: Andres Lopez and Soul Versa’s Las Tres Dumas; harpist Hugo Blanco’s Moliendo Café; the legendary Simon Diaz and his classic Caballo Fuego, and the genius Cheo Hurtado y Bandolos de Venezuela’s Pajarillo Revuelto. One added incentive: you can never go wrong with the Rough Guide, they know how to find good music and how to present it.

Peru Negro: Jolgorio (Times Square). [Editor’s note: see FolkWorks Jan/Feb issue for more about Peru Negro] Afro-Peruvian music is experiencing a revival and the new recording by the leading dance and music ensemble Peru Negro is a fine example of the vibrancy and beauty of this tradition. Like most of the musical styles of Latin America, Afro-Peruvian music is a confluence of Spanish and African cultures as well as Indigenous. Among the styles of Afro-Peruvian music are the Festejo, Lando, Alcatraz and Tondero. This CD includes all of them and more. The highlights include Son de los Dibujos, a traditional carnival dance; Negro, a Habanera by one of the legends of Afro-Peruvian music Niconomos Santa Cruz; and De España, a Tondero about the legacy of slavery by the giant of Peruvian song Cesar Calvo. With more than 30 years of performance behind it, Peru Negro has become an institution of music and dance. Under the direction of Tony Campos, son of the founder Ronaldo Campos, this is roots music at its very best.

María Teresa: O Mar (Le Chant Du Monde). The ocean that divides Brazil and Portugal serves as a metaphorical link in the songs of this recording by the Paris-based Portuguese singer Maria Teresa. Her selection of Portuguese and Brazilian songs, her unique approach in singing them, and the band’s treatment offer us a glimpse of the common thread on both sides of the Atlantic. But besides the sultry voice of Maria Teresa, the most exciting aspect of this recording is the wide array of percussion played by Ze Luis Nascimento. My personal favorites are the Portuguese popular songs Fadinho da tia Maria Benta and Laurindinha in a Brazilian Forro style and the Chico Buarque classic Fado Tropical, sung in French by Maria Teresa with lyrics by Georges Moustaki.

Paco del Pozo: Vestido de Luces (Harmonia Mundi). Every few years a new flamenco voice emerges, offering a personal approach to this musical tradition. At the age of 12, Paco del Pozo received his first prize as Mejor Cantor Revelacion of Madrid. Today, at age 30, Paco del Pozo sings with the intensity of an old cantor. In this recording, a tribute to the Ordezhoy dynasty of Andalucian bullfighters, del Pozo covers a wide range of Flamenco Cantes, including Tangos, Alegrias, Fandangos and a Siguiriya. He is accompanied by Jeronimo Maya on guitar; long-time Paco de Lucia collaborators Jorge Pardo on flutes and alto sax and Carlos Benavent on bass, and a strong ensemble supporting them on claps, percussion and background vocals. This is a remarkable recording of Flamenco, by a singer who has had a brilliant beginning and promises to have a bright future ahead.

Fosforito. Paco de Lucia and Victor Manuel: Antologia del Cante Flamenco (Iris Music). Here’s a welcomed reissue of the legendary recording of the two Flamenco giants: singer Antonio Fernandez Diaz, better known as Fosforito, and the most important Flamenco guitarist of the second half of the 20th century, Paco de Lucia. This new release offers a good biography of the masters, but no information on when the music was recorded, how the artists came together, nor an explanation of the Flamenco styles. Still, the value of this 2 CD set is the rich diversity of Palos or styles covered in the 48 tracks: Saetas, Martinezes, Seguiriyas, Fandangos, Granainas, Tientos, Soleas, it’s all here. Now, that’s an anthology.

Paco de Lucia: Costitas Buenas (Verve/Blue Thumb). Paco is back. After a number of recordings focusing on fast arpeggios and scales demonstrating his technical ability and incredible speed, Paco de Lucia says, “Now, I want to go to the essence of my music, and I prefer to be less concerned with the appeal that I have worldwide and more concerned about being authentic to my musical roots.” And his approach is so different in sound that the electric bass and saxophone and flute are missing entirely from this recording. Instead, what he offers is a number of fabulous singers joining him on a number of Cantos. Singers such as Potto, Diego el Cigala, Montse Cortes and a resurrected Camaron de la Isla. Coming from such an iconic figure, Costitas Buenas revitalizes and nurtures the Flamenco tradition. But Paco de Lucia is still interested in fusing common traditions, and he closes this recording with special guest Jerry Gonzalez on trumpet, perhaps hinting at a future collaboration of Latin jazz and Flamenco.

Betto Arcos is an independent music promoter in Los Angeles. He is a former KPFK music director who conceived and created the daily world music program Global Village.

PHOTO BY RUBÉN MONDELO
IRISH SEISIÚN RULES

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Any complaints and other useful comments can be sent to Cáit at caitreed@aol.com. Please see disclaimer at the bottom.

1. No Whining.
2. There is no rule #2.
3. If you don’t know the tune, don’t play unless:
   a. You can play really, really quietly.
   b. You can clearly hear the tune being played.
   c. You respect the music... Otherwise, go fuck off.
4. If you play guitar or bodhrán, please re-read rules #1 & #3.
5. Flute players, whistle players (and pipers) should refrain from drooling on the fiddlers and vasa versa.
6. Fiddle players should only start tunes in the keys of Bb, C, A, F, E and 5.
7. Punters should pay attention to the music as well as to each other.
8. Jokes and conversation and good-natured antics, except when someone is singing, are happily tolerated.
9. Fiddlers will please endeavor:
   a. Not to take over by banding together in large groups and playing endless Gm tunes and other obvious fiddle tunes unless they are the only ones left because they have already alienated the woodwind players in some other fashion. In such a case, they should continue to play until they are kicked out or the whisky runs out, whichever comes first.
   b. Not to speed up the tune.
   c. Not to kick over other people’s pints of beer in their haste to get to the bags.
10. All players should strive to play at a speed at which they can successfully EXECUTE, as opposed to MURDER, the tune.
11. Guitarists are allowed to play very hard not to noodle [Noodling- an inebriated form of flat, half-baked playing with neither beginning nor end] They do enough of that at home. If they must noodle, they should try to play very quietly, so as not to disturb the delicate silences between sets of tunes or to confuse other players into thinking they have just started a tune they intend to finish.
12. Pipers should try to keep their enthusiasm for pipes, popping straps, bop measurements, bellows, ivory (and other body parts from endangered species), complicated out-of-rhythm ornamentation and need-making in check and should refrain from playing together in groups of one or more unless:
   a. Their pipes (and drones) are in tune with each other and themselves, preferably at A-440 concert pitch. (But then one might be worrying about the fact that hell has indeed finally frozen over).
   b. There are only pipers and/or other deaf people listening.
   c. Prior arrangements have been made to politely alienate other musicians by playing on flat sets at the other end of the room and therefore having at least appeared to have made allowances for non-piper’s sensibilities.
13. Pianists, harpists, flautists, and violinists should watch, listen and learn.
14. Pianos, bodhrán and hammered dulcimer players will be not be tolerated for long unless:
   a. Their instrument is in tune.
   b. The player actually knows and likes the music.
   c. The player can play quietly and with sensitivity to the fact that they will most likely be drowning out the other instruments in the session. PLEASE NOTE: On certain rare occasions this may be called for if the band really sucks or if there are severe rhythm or acoustic problems.
15. Accordions and concertina players who insist on bringing Eb instruments and who expect everyone to tune up a half-step, or to sit there quietly and reverently as the player plays tune after tune in a key that no one else (except guitarists with capos) can play in. In the former case they should buy several rounds for the other players to make up for the wear and tear on strings and causing the whistle players to have to haul extra whistles in funny keys. In the latter case they should just fuck off and play somewhere else.
16. It is appropriate for a singer to offer a few songs during the evening. This is a signal:
   a. For the punters and musicians to quiet down. Shushing can really work due to the guilt factor, especially if the song is unaccompanied.
   b. For the rest of the players to make a mad dash for the bar and the bags.
17. Gun-carrying guitar players should refrain from beating their instruments about the head and shoulders in order to hear themselves, otherwise known as Assault and Battery. This type of behavior can be tolerable if there is only one guitarist playing, but unfortunately mob rule can take over when multiple guitarists band together to form a guitar gang.
   REMINDER: Believe me when I say that everyone else in the room can hear you better than you can hear yourself!
18. Beware! Traditional musicians should be on the lookout for counterfeit seisiún and should make themselves aware of the difference between a seisiún, and a band rehearsal or performance posing as a seisiún. In the case of it being a band rehearsal or performance posing as a seisiún, this should be made clear from the outset to avoid offending even more people than usual.
19. Some tips on taping and other recording etiquette:
   a. Always ask permission to record, even though most players play much worse once they know they’re being recorded. Fortunately, they’ll forget soon enough if the taping is done in a subtle fashion.
   b. The use of handheld overhead mic-booms, fancy multitrack digital programs and other obtrusive equipment are likely to get one labeled as an “ubergeek,” which is not considered a flattering term amongst Irish traditional musicians.
   c. Try not to edit as you go, as this draws attention to the recording process and away from the music. Hint: It is especially offensive to make a show of starting and stopping recordings mid-set as it might give impression that you don’t want to waste tape (or digital space) on someone’s heartfelt performance. Really the best way is to carry a small recording device and a small mic in a bag that is disguised either as a purse, a whistle-bag or other fashion accessory.

WARNING: These rules are intended as guidelines and the author is not responsible for any fights that might break out in the enforcement of said rules.

Cáit has been mad about Irish Traditional Music since she had the good fortune to hear and play with Joe Cooley (of Peterswell, County Galway) and Kevin Keegan (of Galway Town) when they and other distinguished guests would come “up the country” to visit her and her friends and coconspirators for weekends at a ranch in Cloverdale called Preston. Those were rare seisiúns; lasting entire weekends, played by firelight and kerosene lamp in the old wooden church with the old clock beating out the hour and the half-hour Cáit has been playing and teaching since 1970. Her Web site (www.caitreed.com) is under construction and her first solo album, The Rolling Wave will be released any minute now.

PlasticMeltdown Records PMCD 192

REED has created a warm, winsome, quietly acoustic collection of Greens Point-like uncompiled folk songs about real life respect. A celebratory story of the fading of rural America and a vanishing way of life. One of the year’s best.

Mike Boston, Los Angeles Times

“A honest and refreshing collection of songs about real people. Jim Leo, Dirty Linen

The music has a relaxed yet lively feel, fueled by the pure clean sound of American stringed instruments. Reed’s songwriting has an immediate appeal, passion and clarity, its message clear and plain-spoken.

Chris Power, WORTFM, Madison, Wisconsin

$13 (postage paid) from dennis@dennisrogerreed.com

Also available from amazon.com, folkweb.com, ticcoupleofrecords.com, themerchant.com, duummusic.com and other fine internet retailers.
MARCH-APRIL 2004
FOLKWORKS
Page 13

ON-GOING MUSIC HAPPENINGS
MUSIC, MUSIC AND MORE MUSIC

ACOUSTIC MUSIC SERIES
Contact Name: R. Stockfleth
Phone: 626-791-0411
Email: r.stockfleth@gte.net

BRIGHT MOMENTS IN A COMMON PLACE

THE TEDROW'S
RYAN GUITAR'S

Agoura Hills / Westlake Village

RUSS & JULIE'S HOUSE CONCERTS

Agoura Hills Bodie
Email: Bodie@aol.com

These are informal, intimate special events that people...

MARCH-APRIL 2004
FolkWorks

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MARCH-APRIL 2004
FolkWorks
FOlk happenings at a glance

March 2004

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

1. Bakers (OGD) International (OGD) Irish (OGD)
2. International (OGD)
3. Open Mike (OGM)
4. JAMIE BROWN (OGM)
5. ANGELO GUTRUS (OGM)
6. Open Mike (OGM)
7. ANGELO GUTRUS (OGM)
8. International (OGD)
9. Open Mike (OGM)
10. International (OGD)
11. IRISH SET DANCING WORKSHOP (OGD)
12. International (OGD)
13. Open Mike (OGM)
14. Irish Session (OGM)
15. Open Mike (OGM)
16. International (OGD)
17. Polish (OGD)
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31. Irish Session (OGM)

FOLK DANCES AT A GLANCE

Check out details by following the page references:
OGM: On-going Music - page 13
OGD: On-going Dance - page 16
SE: Special Events - page 28
### Folk Happenings at a Glance

**Check out details by following the page references:**

- **OGM**: On-going Music - page 13
- **OGD**: On-going Dance - page 16
- **SE**: Special Events - page 28

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MARY BLACK continued from page 1

No Frontiers, which went triple platinum. It is an artistic tour de force, with arresting instrumentation and crisp production emphasizing the well-chosen and beautifully delivered lyrics. The exceptional Waiting for Columbus, written by master lyricist Noel Brazil, showcases Black’s stunningly controlled and impassioned voice. Like Joan Baez, she has a long, cello-like vibrato ending her lines like a last long draw across the strings of a violin. Also highly successful, Black’s next album, Babies in the Woods, came two years later, with several beautiful songs by Australian poet Howard Shane, and the title track by Noel Brazil. It was Ireland’s number one album for six weeks that summer.

With Black’s 1993 release, The Holy Ground, Billboard featured her on the cover, heralding her as “a firm favorite to join the heavy-hitting ranks of such artists as Enya, Sinead O’Connor and Clannad’s Maire Brennan in the international marketplace.” Unfortunately, none of the songs received much airplay, as they never got onto the ever-elusive Abrams top-play rotation (a fate so many fine folk artists have long endured). Mary Black did, however, receive awards for Best Irish Female Vocalist and Best Irish Album that year at the Irish Recorded Music Awards.

In 1994, she was featured in the groundbreaking women’s compilation A Woman’s Heart, which also included performances by Maire Brennan, Eleanor McEvoy, Dolores Keane, Sharon Shannon, and her sister, Frances Black. The album was a huge success, and sales were strong—enough for each household in Ireland to own at least one copy. Mary Black has worked very hard not to be described as a Celtic or Irish singer. On her website www.mary-black.net, she is quoted as saying, “I started in folk music, but never felt there should be any boundaries in music. Fortunately, here in Ireland there’s an openness about music that allows you to step outside the categories.” Indeed, some of her songs almost seem like a musical missing link, a perfect blend between Celtic and American folk, with more than a nod to American country and swing. Perhaps the nearest term you could use is Pan Celtic.

Her songs do, however, often deal with traditionally Celtic themes like mysticism and the magic found in nature. For example, in Bright Blue Rose, the Jimmy McCarthy song on Babies in the Woods, she sings:

And it is a holy thing, and it is a precious time.
And it is the only way.
Forget-me-nots in the snow,
It’s always been and so it goes
To ponder his death and his life eternally.

This lovely delicate dirge, part jazz and part Celt in flavor, is not haunting in the Celtic sense. However it stays with you, and you find yourself thinking about it long afterwards. It’s not surprising that Babies in the Woods was voted one of the top 10 albums of the year by Britain’s Today Newspaper. What is surprising is that such an excellent work received so little airplay in the United States.

Throughout her career, Mary Black has drawn from a pool of amazing lyricists, including Noel Brazil, Thom Moore, Jimmy McCarthy, and Howard Shane. Her choice of covers encompasses an eclectic range of female songwriters, and includes Joni Mitchell’s Urge for Going, and Mary Chapin Carpenter’s Moon and St. Christopher. She has joined Joan Baez for Ring Them Bells, which they performed together live at New York’s Bottom Line Club.

The topics addressed on Black’s songs tend toward the intellectual. Some are political, others heartfelt. She broaches difficult subjects with a straightforward delivery. Much to her credit, the choice of songs expresses a politically active sensibility, and in the folk tradition, strives to educate by the lyrics she sings. What sets her apart is that she does so without seeming preachy or heavy. On songs like The Shadow, which laments the horror and waste of religious entanglements in Northern Ireland, Mary avoids any overt dramatics. Instead, her delivery is straightforward and expository. It is articulated calmly and directly to the listener, so that you are free to derive any meaning and conclusion on your own. A key element of Mary Black’s success is her ability to find the heart of the song, that elusive quality of making you feel it just by closing your eyes and listening.

Mary Black has 18 solo albums — 9 platinum — and has performed with the groups DeDannan, The Black Family, Arcady and General Humbert. Her albums typically borrow from diverse sources and rhythms, with some surprising use of salsa, Breton folk cadences, and even American country. Her influences range from Fairport Convention to Billie Holiday and the Beatles. The instrumentation she employs is refreshing and unique, with simple bodhrán and a light folk guitar, often synthesized with whimsical clarinet and sparingly used Celtic fiddles in the background.

Mary Black’s current tour brings her to Los Angeles for two shows in March. So, open your daytimer, and circle March 25th for Carpenter Center in Long Beach and March 26th for UCLA’s Royce Hall. Whether or not you’re familiar with Mary Black’s work, seeing her perform live is sure to be a satisfying experience.

If you can’t go to her shows, go to www.mary-black.net and check out last year’s Mary Black Live for an excellent overview of her career. Along with the CD, you receive video clips on VHS or DVD. Also available at the website is a limited edition of Women’s Heart Trilogy. A nice feature of this website is that at checkout, there is a space provided for the purchaser to choose whether or not they would like Ms. Black to autograph their purchase.

J.J. Ryan has been a features writer for 30 years and has been published in Little Bit Magazine, The Reader, City Pages, Mpls./St Paul magazine and Sweet Potato Magazine in Minneapolis. She has also performed as lyricist and lead singer for her own band.
WHAT YOU SAY IS WHAT YOU GET

Y
ears ago, at my third or fourth con-
trance, a man approached me smiling
and holding out his hand. He said
something, too, but, with all the between-dance
chatter and tuning noises, I couldn’t hear it. “It’s
okay,” I thought, “he’s obviously asking me to
dance” so I smiled brightly and said “Yes.”

His hand dropped and his smile faded. “Too
bad” he said, and walked away.

I was stunned – was it my sweaty tee shirt? My
peach shampoo? The garlic? Could he tell I was
directionally disabled? I knew instinctively I should
have taken that proffered hand though, so, when
the next man appeared and shouted “Wanna dance?” I
snatched up his hand lest he, too, be a tease.

We joined a set just one couple away from the
first man. That was bad, but it got worse. The dance
had a shadow swing and my shadow was this man
who had so clearly found me unacceptable at close
range. We swung silently, inexorably, once a meas-
ure, he eyeing me sternly and I wondering how he
was dealing with the garlic.

Afterwards he took me aside and said “I know
you’re new so you probably don’t know that it’s
considered rude to refuse one person and then
dance with another.”

“But I said ‘yes’”, I protested, “and you walked
away. I call that rude.”

He looked a little puzzled, then asked, “What
did you think I said?”

“Do you want to dance?” What else?”

“I asked ‘do you have a partner?’ You said ‘yes’
so I left.”

We laughed and became friends, but it was a
near thing. I’d always thought that communication
was just about words but now it seemed that in
dancing, with all the motion and ambient noise,
body language was as powerful as words and often
more so.

I was astounded by the art of leading and to this
day can’t fathom how men work their magic without
words. I have caught onto a lot of other non-verbal
cues, though. I’ve learned, for instance, to snag a
partner at thirty feet just by catching his eye. It does
n’t matter who’s got a hand on him, if your eyes
meet, he’s yours; it’s that simple. Conversely, if you
don’t make eye contact, you may not be invited to
dance at all, a fact equally worth remembering.

We get things going with the smile and the
inviting hand, then keep them going with other
simple, wordless signals: the slightly tilted head
indicating the passing side, the receptive hand
raised and waiting in contra corners, and, of course,
giving weight. We trust these signals so well that, if
we reach for a chain instead of going into a hey, we
create chaos because everyone will follow us.

More esoteric gestures can be misconstrued if
not augmented with words. For example, while
dancing a schottische to painfully lethargic music,
I saw the dancer in front of me make what looked
like a rude thumb gesture to the fiddler.

“What’s that about?” I asked my partner.

“He thinks he’s telling them ‘faster’,” he said,
but he’s actually saying ‘looser’. Watch.”

Sure enough, the musicians leaned earnestly
into their instruments, the music got looser but no
faster, and the now irate dancer stomped off the
floor, tired of trying to do the fast turn in slow
motion. Had he called out ‘faster’ with his garbled
signal, he could have kept dancing.

Then, too, sometimes nothing works and it’s
time for more education. My partner in a lively
Scandinavian dance kept a good tempo through-
out but finally began slowing down. I stepped out
firmly to keep up the speed. He dragged, I
juggled. He muttered something that sounded like
“retarded!” so I turned on him furiously and said,
“I’m not quick but I’m certainly not retarded!”

“True,” he said, smoothly and unapologeti-
cally, “you’re just ignorant. Ritard is an Italian
musical term meaning “slow down at the end of a
piece’.”

Scandinavian dancers, even though the normal
hold allows comfortable conversation, usually
dance silently, concentrating on technique and on
the elusive beat. Contra dancers, however, change
positions often and would do well to maintain a
similar silence, but conversation’s so tempting.

Besides, it’s a challenge to read lips that twirl away
in mid-sentence and to reconstruct mangled phrases.

I met this challenge on a recent Saturday night.

“How have you been?” [allemagne left]

“Chicago; did you miss me?” [ladies’ chain]

“Why Mississippi?” [hey for four]

“Flip’s better but no bikes for awhile.” [swing]

“Four miles? Good news.” [circle left]

“Yeah, great musicians.” [final swing]

“Nice dance!”

“Thanks.” [music stops; silence] I got them at
Walmart.”

“Huh?”

But the basics were there – eye contact, warm
smiles, love of the dance – so who’s to say we
didn’t understand each other?

Valerie Cooley lives in West Los Angeles and loves
folk music, dancing, and crafts. She co-chairs the
Banner Committee for the CTMS Summer Solstice
Festival where she is able to indulge her love of
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Banner Committee for the CTMS Summer Solstice
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Banner Committee for the CTMS Summer Solstice
Festival where she is able to indulge her love of
folk music, dancing, and crafts.
AUDITIONS for NEW VOCAL-BASED GROUP – I seek two to three SUPERB, UNUSUAL VOCALISTS (Male or Female) who know world-music or folk-music stylings, are able to sight read, sing right-on harmony, and like to move. It is important that each vocalist knows how to be part of a creative team, as well as a strong soloist. Also seeking a BANJO player who is willing to do unusual styles. Also seeking a CELLO or ACOUSTIC BASS player. I AM A VERSATILE, DYNAMIC VOCALIST/COMPOSER who puts together incredible vocals, and writes music that is deeply informed by Irish, Balkan and Appalachian traditional singing styles – as well as old Gospel, old Country and Southern African vocal traditions. I’ve toured extensively with world-class ensembles, and led my a cappella group, VIDA into the top performing circuits – Lincoln Center, UCLA Live, Knitting Factory, and critical acclaim (Billboard, Village Voice, Dirty Linen). THE ESSENTIAL SOUNDS of this group: complex and playful rhythm, vocal grit as well as polish, humor, and lyrics that mean it! I want this group to move people. This group will tour. A few influences I see coming out in this group: Bobby McFerrin, Zap Mama, Ani Difranco, Steve Reich, Billy Holiday, Bjork, Baaba Maal, Gillian Welch.

Send us your community news, musical instruments for sale, non profit organization announcements, weddings, births, etc. May be edited for space available.

FOR SALE OLD VIOLIN with following printed inside Violin “Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis Fecit Anno 1774” - Case holds rosin box with Inscription “Caldophane Number 5131” – Asking $1,500. Given as gift 50 years ago in Argentina advised probably was made in Germany. Serious Buyers Only. 310-276 5547.

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Send us your community news, musical instruments for sale, non profit organization announcements, weddings, births, etc. May be edited for space available.

Send us your community news, musical instruments for sale, non profit organization announcements, weddings, births, etc. May be edited for space available.

NEVENKA FOLK CHORUS SEEKING SOPRANO Nevenka, a L.A.-based women’s folk chorus, is seeking a soprano. Previous experience and familiarity with Eastern European folk music and vocal style is preferred. To audition, call Trudy Israel at 818-907-7340 or trudyisrael@earthlink.net.

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SEND US YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE, NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION ANNOUNCEMENTS, WEDDINGS, BIRTHS, ETC. MAY BE EDITED FOR SPACE AVAILABLE.
PASSING THROUGH ON THE PICKET LINE

"I saw Adam leave the garden with an apple in his hand, I said. 'Now you're out, what are you gonna do?' 'Plant my crop and pray for rain, maybe raise a little Cain. I'm an orphan now, and I'm only passing through!'"

There's a phone message from Eric Gordon, the dynamic director of The Workmen's Circle, on Robertson Boulevard, right here in our neighborhood. The Workmen's Circle is a cultural Jewish organization, focusing on the arts, political issues, and always, social action.

This call is definitely for social action.

We want you to bring your guitar to Pico and Fairfax on Monday night from six to seven, and sing with the grocery strikers, while we bring them sandwiches, and picket with them.

"Sing what?"

"Those old union songs you know so many of….You know—Roll the Union On, Union Maid….you know—we'll sing with you!"

"But the strikers won't. They'll think I'm nuts!"

"No, they won't. They'll love it! See you there!"

So here I am, at six o'clock walking around the entrance of Vons, playing my guitar, and singing.

"Passing through…passing through, Sometimes happy, sometimes blue, Sure glad I ran into you."

"Tell the people that you saw me passing through!"

As I feared, most of the strikers are chewing away on their sandwiches and staring at me. Eric is singing with me, and two other members of the Workmen's Circle are singing with me. My husband, Stan, is many feet away from me, holding a picket sign and pretending not to see me.

I try another verse and chorus.

"Oh, I spent the night with George And his boys at Valley Forge, Why do the men all shiver like they do?"

He said, "Folks will freeze and fight, Even die for what is right, Even though they know they're only passing through!"

I have been adapting and changing the words to folk and political songs since I was sixteen….I have just changed "men" to "folks," and it is the first of many, many Monday night musical modifications!

Uncle Ruthie is a singer, songwriter, storyteller, recording artist, Special Education music teacher for blind children and a poet. Her radio show Halfway Down The Stairs can be heard every Sunday morning at 10:00 am on KPFP 90.7 FM. In her spare time she will be writing this column and sharing her thoughts on music and life with our readers.

Two lovely young strikers come up to me, smiling.

"Join in on the chorus," I beg, and they do!

I sing a verse about Jesus having no time to hate because there is so little time and he's only passing through. The chorus has grown to seven, and Stan has joined us and I can actually hear him singing!

Then we sing a favorite old strike song.

"If you want a raise in pay, all you have to do is go and ask the boss for it, and he will give it to you."

I sing all the verses—everyone joins in on the chorus!

"Put it on the ground, spread it all around, Dig it with a hoe—it will make your flowers grow!"

We sing Roll the Union On. We sing We Shall Not Be Moved in English and Spanish….and when it's time to leave, they invite me to come back next Monday and sing. I promise I will, but I still think they are just being friendly and polite, and appreciative of the sandwiches.

The next week I am silenced by laryngitis. Eric tells me everyone was asking for me. I can't believe it, but when I show up the following Monday I am greeted by cheers from a huge group of the strikers.

I launch right into Union Maid…oops! a problem! One verse tells the "girls" to "marry a man with a union card and join the Ladies Auxiliary." I make the world's fastest change:

"Now, sisters, if you wanna be free, Just take a tip from me. Get yourself a union card Cause there's no more Ladies Auxiliary!"

Eric sings The International and the growing group asks for song sheets next time. We print them and after a few weeks we have a real informal chorus that sounds great. Shoppers who support the strike are joining us. One has a singing dog that joins in.

We talk to shoppers who are about to enter the store. We ask them not to cross the picket line and a few actually turn and leave, accompanied by our cheers. By now I am writing new verses to all the old songs:

"I used to shop at Vons a lot, but lately I do not, They don't treat their workers in a way I like— So, if you're a friend of mine, you won't cross that picket line, Until these strikers all have won their fight!"

The strikers give us hugs and home-made cookies. The song sheets have over twenty songs, including a round written by Eric. When was the last time you heard strikers singing three part rounds? When we leave each week at seven, they all thank us. "We thank you, too," we reply, "It is an honor for us to be here with you.

We are singing old folk songs with new words, old hymns with new words and updated union songs of the thirties and forties. All are welcome to join us every Monday evening from six to seven at Pico and Fairfax.

"Passing through, passing through, Sometimes happy, sometimes blue, Sure glad I ran into you!"

Tell the people that you saw me passing through!"
THE FOLLOWING ARTISTS AND RECORD LABELS HAVE DONATED CDS FOR MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS. PLEASE JOIN THEM WITH YOUR SUPPORT.

(SEE BELOW FOR MEMBER BENEFITS)

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Ara G, Let's Party
Bakhsho Boys, The Bakhsho Boys
Randal Bays, Out of the Woods
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Kathy Buys, Mapless Journey
Liz Carroll, Lake Effect
Rodney Crowell, The Hudson Kid
Lila Downe, Border
FolkScene V3
For Old Times Sake
Green Linnet, 25 Years of Celtic Music
Green Man, Green Man
Richard Greene, All Across the Pond
Kate and Kathy, Sleepless Nights
Jim Lauderdale & Ralph Stanley, I Feel Singing Today

Michael Nelson, A Fiddler's Notebook
Katy Moffatt, Greatest Show on Earth
Bruce Molsky, Lost Boy
Bruce Molsky, Poor Man's Trouble
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Kristina Olsen, The Truth of a Woman
The Privy Tippers, Under the Crescent Moon
Dobie Gray, Little Sparrow
Dennis Roger Reed, Little King of Dreams
Round House Band, Round the House
Round the House, 'til the wee hours
Chris Stuart, Angels of Mineral Springs
Sol Y Guadalupe, Todo Momento
Yuvale Ron Ensemble, Under the Olive Tree

Sleepless Nights
Richard Greene, All Across the Pond
Kathy Buys, Mapless Journey
Liz Carroll, Lake Effect
Rodney Crowell, The Hudson Kid
Lila Downe, Border

Sleepless Nights, Richard Greene,
25 Years of Celtic Music
FolkScene V3
Kathy Buys, Mapless Journey
Liz Carroll, Lake Effect
Rodney Crowell, The Hudson Kid
Lila Downe, Border

FolkWorks is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, dedicated to promoting Folk and Traditional arts (music, dance, storytelling and folk art) throughout the greater Los Angeles area. This is accomplished in a variety of ways, but foremost through the publication of this newspaper. FolkWorks also presents concerts and produces an annual weekend dance festival and has formed partnerships with many like-minded organizations in support of the entire community.

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Carpal Tunnel Syndrome affects millions of people and it runs close to back pain as one of the leading causes of lost productivity and decreased quality of life. It is a totally preventable disorder! Most maladies of the wrist are due to repetitive motion. Vocational and leisure activities both contribute to problems of the wrist and hand.

In the last issue we discussed the shoulder. Many problems with the wrist begin with shoulder dysfunction whereby the arm and hand need to work harder when there’s an ailing shoulder. Most directly related, however, is the condition of the muscles of the forearm. Hand movement is controlled by the forearm flexors and extensors. If these muscles are tight or over used, then there is greater stress in the wrist and muscle attachments in the hand. The more you repeatedly use your hand, the tighter your forearm becomes. In essence, tight forearm muscles compress the wrist and affect the passage on the palm side of your wrist where tendons, blood vessels, and the median nerve pass. This compression creates friction with repetitive use and leads to inflammation, which results in pain and loss of function.

Musicians are particularly prone to wrist and hand problems because of fine motor movements, holding a pick or bow for prolonged periods, odd hand positions coupled with various forces, and playing for long periods. Combine this with work related activities that stress the arm/hand (computer work) and sleeping postures which place the wrist in extreme flexion or extension, and your wrist will scream that it has had enough abuse.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT**

Probably the easiest and best option is to take frequent breaks from any sustained activity in order to minimize or prevent wrist discomfort. Remember to keep your wrist in a neutral position whenever possible. Avoid extreme forward or backward bending of the wrist, especially with pressure or weight behind it. If a medical practitioner has prescribed a wrist brace for an overuse injury, it is usually better to wear this while sleeping to avoid extreme positions. There is abundant research that suggests light movement involving full range of motion during the day can prevent atrophy of the forearm muscles.

The following stretches are effective for the prevention of wrist pain:

In general, repetitive use of the hands and arms creates overly tight forearm muscles. Once the flexor and extensor muscles of the forearm tighten, there is considerable pull on the fingers and wrist. Daily flexibility exercises before, during, and after the repetitive activity can totally prevent and/or rehabilitate most cumulative trauma disorders of the wrist.

**WRIST FLEXOR STRETCHES**

Starting Position: Standing straight, let your arms hang freely at your sides. Inhale.

Action: While exhaling, raise your straight arm forward and up to shoulder level, palm down. Move your fingertips down so the palm faces back. Assist this stretch by using your opposite hand. Stretch to light irritation and hold for two seconds. Inhale while you return to the starting position. Repeat four to ten times. Repeat for other arm.

**WRIST EXTENSOR STRETCHES**

Starting Position: Standing straight, let your arms hang freely at your sides. Inhale.

Action: While exhaling, raise your straight arm forward and up to shoulder level, palm down. Move your fingerspans away so the palm faces back. Assist this stretch by using your opposite hand. Stretch to light irritation and hold for two seconds. Inhale while you return to the starting position. Repeat four to ten times. Repeat for other arm.

Jerry Weinert is a health educator, nurse massage therapist and string bass player from Tucson, AZ. He is co-author of two health and wellness books. The stretching illustrations are from his first book, Head To Toe: A Manual of Wellness & Flexibility. Southwest Wellness Educators: 1-888-527-2200.
The Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena has a show opening in March entitled, Kampai! The Arts of Japanese Sake. Sake, brewed from a special variety of rice, is a 2,000 year-old factor in Japanese social and religious rituals. “Kampai!” is a traditional Japanese toast meaning, “to the bottom of the cup,” and the museum will be launching their exhibition of sake-related objects and art with a lecture and sake-tasting led by the foremost non-Japanese authority on sake, John Gautier (who writes a weekly column on sake for the popular Japanese newspaper, Yomiuri Shimbun, is the author of several books on the subject, and runs the website, www.sake-world.com). The exhibit itself (containing items from the collections of the Pacific Asia Museum, LACMA, Scripps College, Claremont, and several local private collections) covers three general themes, according to the curator, Meher McArthur the museum’s curator of East Asian Art. The first part serves as an introduction to sake - how it is produced, marketed and presented. Brewing sake is a more complicated process than making wine or beer in that it employs a double system of breaking down the rice starch into glucose with the use of a microbe known as koji, as well as fermentation with yeast and water.

Traditionally, the process is presided over by a Toji, or brewery master, who lives on-site and manages every area of the process, including the well-being and morale of the workers. There are some examples of the equipment used in its production (including a sake bag for squeezing and filtering the mash), and a modern ceramic model illustrating the process of sake production. Additionally, there are shop signs, labels, and other marketing devices. A special feature of the show is the inclusion of Dr. James Roorda’s large private collection of sake-related ceramics.

The second theme is that of sharing sake, either with gods and supernatural beings or with friends. Sake has traditionally been used in Japan as an offering in household or public shrines, and as a component of ceremonies, celebrations and festivals. This includes weddings, New Year’s, Cherry Blossom and Girls’ Day festivities to name a few. The New Year’s sake-drinking custom involves steeping the sake in a mixture of specified herbs. The sake cups for this are stacked in graduated size, with smaller ones on top, and everyone in the family drinks the special sake to ensure good health through the coming year. Lastly, you thought that this show was completely pro-bouzing, the last section is devoted to satirical warnings against overindulgence. One of the images portrays an energetic demon playing the shamisen (a reference to geisha) with a sake cup at its feet, which Ms. McArthur playfully termed a warning against the evils of “sex, drugs and rock & roll!”

On Saturday, March 13, the curator will be leading an informative walk-through of the galleries, and on Saturday, April 3rd Hollis Goodall, Associate Curator of Japanese Art at LACMA, will be giving a slide lecture, Introduction to Decorative Arts of Japan.

By BROOKE ALBERTS

Broke Alberts is a member of the Irish band, The Praties, and has a Masters degree in Medieval Studies.

Now, if you’re more interested in wine tasting and would like to bid on Navajo rugs, the Southwest Museum’s third annual Navajo rug auction will be held at the Museum of the American West (formerly the Autry Museum) in Griffith Park on Friday March 26 and Saturday March 27. That Friday, from 5:00 to 7:00pm, there will be previewing of the rugs and memorabilia to be sold and a tasting of wine from Fess Parker’s Los Olivos winery. Selected rugs and memorabilia will be auctioned from 7:00 to 11:00pm, and then on Saturday, from 10:00 to 3:00pm, the remaining rugs will be auctioned. [FolkWorks has a limited number of Museum Passes. Call 818-785-3839 or email Mail@FolkWorks.org to receive your pass for two].

And across town, the Craft and Folk Art Museum is having two overlapping shows involving handmade signs. The first, Hand-Painted Signs From Ghana begins in February and goes until early May. The actual signs from shops in Ghana will be on display and will give the flavor of the streets of West Africa. The other, Signs of Our Time: Sign Painting of Los Angeles, begins in March and runs until June. This one is a photograph exhibit drawing on signs hand-painted on buildings locally. This will provide an interesting comparison.

PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM
46 No. Robles Ave., Pasadena - 626-449-2742
Kampai! The Arts of Japanese Sake March 5-June 20.
- All About Sake- Friday March 5, 7:00-9:00pm. Reservations ext.40. Lecture, book signing and sake tasting with John Gautier $35 ($25 for members of the Pacific Asia Museum, the Japan America Society and the Asia Society).
- Curator’s Tour- Saturday March 13, 2:00pm. Free with museum admission.
- Slide lecture: Introduction to Japanese Decorative Arts- Saturday April 10, 11:00am Free with museum admission. Reservations, ext. 40.

MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN WEST (formerly the Autry Museum)
4700 Western Heritage Way, Los Angeles 323-221-2164 www.museumoftheamericanwest.org
Navajo Rug Auction Friday March 26 and Saturday March 27 - For information, contact Jo Valiulis ext.226 - Catalogue available online after Feb 25 at www.southwestmuseum.org

CRAFT & FOLK ART MUSEUM
5814 Wilshire Blvd., L.A. 323-937-4230 www.cafam.org
Open Wed-Sun. 11:00-5:00 - Ages 12 and under, free - First Wed. of the month free admission

Brooke Alberts is a member of the Irish band, The Praties, and has a Masters degree in Medieval Studies.

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A Genuine alcohol-free Ceilidh Cooze for St. Broon’s Day for ages 12 and up
BESS LOMAX HAWES: continued from page 7

BLH: Uh-huh. It was pretty widespread. We funded projects in every state, in every one of the islands of Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and all of the islands out further in the Pacific that still had American interests there or some relationship with the government. We figured out one time that we had funded grants in 282 different languages.

FW: Wow.

BLH: I didn’t think there were that many. FW: This is all within the continental U.S.? BLH: Yeah.

FW: Wow. And Alaska?

BLH: Alaska.

FW: And Hawaii.

BLH: Hawaii and so on. People would come in to me, come into the office and say, “You know, I’m a…” What were some of the terms they gave me? I can’t think. “I’m some kind of an Italian and I’m just fed up with being pushed in together with all of those folks from Napoli. We don’t have anyboards making like each other. We’re different. We want to have our own way. We want to show you what we do.” They had their own thing, indeed. They wanted to have that record-ed, or they wanted to do it, or they wanted to just have somebody know it was there. It was a fascinating job. I never did anything so interesting in my life.

FW: Were the choices that you had, did they reflect some of your deepest interests as a folklorist? Did you find people doing stuff out in the country that you thought was worth putting money into?

BLH: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Absolutely. We set up a program called the National Heritage Foundation and gave awards to representatives of all these different kinds of art forms.

FW: They’re still getting awards today.

BLH: Oh yeah.

FW: They were just in the L.A. Times.

BLH: Right. We had… I think I might have a book here that had a little bit on that. I could show you if you want to.

FW: Okay.

BLH: Just a second. You can see how complicated it all was. Sorry, I’ve been stiff. I have to lean on things. Here we go, [inaudible, not into microphone] This is an exhibit of cowboy culture from Hawaii. They have their own cowboy culture, their own songs, their own costumes and things that they use, their own way of making saddles.

FW: Oh. I see. Oh, gee whiz.

BLH: It’s very complex—sort of flip through it, because it’s got beautiful pictures in it. This was done by one of the state programs that we got going.

FW: I see.

BLH: Historical pictures.

FW: This is extraordinary.

BLH: It was— it absolutely knocked my eye out when I first saw it. I want you to see the cow-boys. The saddles are beautiful.

FW: Hawaiian cowboys with Hawaiian cowboy hats with leis on them.

BLH: That’s right.

FW: Who would have thought it?

BLH: Who would have thought it?

FW: Not in a John Wayne movie.

BLH: That’s right. There was just all this kind of stuff was lying around and they were just delighted to show it.

FW: Wow.

BLH: Most of us didn’t have any idea it was there.

FW: These are beautiful instruments, too.

BLH: Yeah.

FW: This was something that was created and funded through the NEA while you were working with the NEA?

BLH: Yes. Well, the people who put that book together.

FW: Oh, I see. Sponsors—National Endowment for the Arts. So you must be concerned today about the de-funding of state and federal arts programs.

BLH: I’m sure am. We’re going to lose a lot. This book is the history of this program. FW: Oh, I see. Masters of Traditional Arts, volume 1, A to J; and Masters of Traditional Arts, volume 2, K to Z; a biographical dictionary.

BLH: Yeah.

FW: And these came out of the NEA?

BLH: No. The material came out of the NEA. This was funded by an educational company. They sell it to libraries.

FW: Oh, I see.

BLH: Especially high school libraries, where it’s apparently been very successful.

FW: It’s beautiful. “To Bess Lomax Hawes, friend and colleague, who encouraged me early on and has continued to inspire me through the years with immense gratitude and deep appreciation” — Al Gwynn, Heifer author.

BLH: Yeah. He did all the work. Horrible work. Very difficult. If you, you can just see how many different kinds of folks there were.

FW: Of art forms.

BLH: And art forms are just endless. You can tell…

FW: Anglo-American Ozark fiddler. Asian-American singer. Laotian. Wow, this really is a melting pot when you look at it through these eyes here.

BLH: That’s right. That’s right. Each one of these people are just as different. They get along beautifully. They love each other. We have a great time in Washington when we bring them all in.

FW: When you bring them in. And there’s Bessie Jones, the last one in the book.

BLH: There is Bessie. We had her the first time. She was one of the first ones. She and Sonny Terry.

FW: Oh, Sonny Terry.

BLH: We managed to get him in it. See. It comes with $5,000 so it’s nice to get.

FW: I was just listening to him this morning.

BLH: Yeah.

FW: Didn’t you know him before you met him there?

BLH: Oh yeah. Yeah, I met him. He was in New York. He came up to the hoots all the time.

FW: This was during the Almanac days?

BLH: Uh-huh. We had hootenannies, which were Sunday afternoon concerts. You paid at the door a variable amount and you could go in and out. When we got to the end of it, we put all of the money in a bundle and dealt it out to the people who had played.

FW: Oh. So you didn’t pay the rent with that money?

BLH: No.

FW: That wasn’t a rent party or something.

BLH: No. Every once in awhile we had to, but most of the time we tried to get it back to the singers.

FW: So Sonny and Brownie played there, too.

BLH: Yeah. Josh White had played there, too. Josh was a little sophisticated for us, though. I think he thought we could do it a little better.

FW: Was there any connection or association you had in the late ’40’s with People’s Songs and the investigations coming out of Washington with the House Committee on un-American activities? Did that affect the work going on?

BLH: I was in Boston by that time and then out here. I was kind of the back area where things were taking place. It’s impossible to say how much that affected things. I think it affect-ed things a great deal, because it scared people. It scared people about their kids. They were scared that their kids might suffer. They’ve always kind of tried to keep the kids out of things.

FW: I see.

BLH: I don’t think that’s good for children not to be in on everything.

FW: I see.

BLH: But in terms of the specific damages, you know, different people lost their jobs and some didn’t. It’s hard to tell on that kind of thing. It was a disgraceful period. Absolutely disgrace-ful, because it’s all for money. It wasn’t for any-thing but money.

FW: Oh.

BLH: Nothing but the money. Same thing that is going on now, frankly. This is all about money, this war.

FW: The war in Iraq?

BLH: Yeah, yeah. We just found out that the president lied over and over to tell us we should go in there. And now he’s admitting that he lied. I don’t think he’s going to sleep one bit less soundly for it.

End of Part 3
A Texas cowboy in the White House launches a huge military build-up to wage an all-out controversial war in a distant land with no end in sight. The country is divided down the middle, antivar demonstration in the streets, and Russia and China are against us. We are invading a tiny country ruled by a tin-horn dictator we needed both them, and Bob would soon be moving on, rejecting the “finger-painting songs” of his Woody Guthrie period.

Phil became the poet of the antiwar movement, who summed up his aesthetic in one memorable phrase: “Ah, but in such an ugly time, the true protest is beauty.” With a gift for melody as well as phrase: “Ah, but in such an ugly time, the true protest is beauty.”

Behind Dylan, though, loomed a larger shadow, and Phil kept his eyes on the prize, Woody Guthrie’s This Land Is Your Land, composed a quarter century before at the tail end of the Great Depression, “with the wheat fields waving, and the dust clouds rolling.” That’s the song Phil was chasing when he added the words to the melody Sonny had heard him composing on his bed, to create The Power and the Glory: “Come and take a walk with me, through this green and growing land…”

Bob had written Song to Woody for his first album; Phil wrote, Bound for Glory, his own tribute to Guthrie. Now he wanted a song to match Woody’s finest: “Here is a land full of power and glory/Beauty that words cannot recall/But her power shall rest on the strength of her freedom/Glory shall rest on us all.”

For all the protest songs, however, and a patriotic anthem that even Anita Bryant would eventually record, Phil never lost sight of his credo: “The true protest is beauty.” His most powerful songs may ironically be his quiet secular hymns—There But for Fortune, a hymn to compassion, Changes, a hymn to a lost love, and When I’m Gone, a hymn to a committed life in the here and now: “No, and I won’t be laughing at the lies when I’m gone/And I can’t question how or when or why when I’m gone/I won’t be laughing at the lies when I’m gone/And I guess I’ll have to do it while I’m here.”

Phil has been gone now for twenty-seven years, but some of us know better. We are trying to build a democracy here at home.

It is 1965, the war is in Vietnam, and I am in San Francisco at an antiwar demonstration, listening to Phil Ochs sing I Ain’t Marching Anymore, and Cops of the World. If Dylan was the King of Protest, Phil Ochs was the Crown Prince, Lou Gehrig to Bob Dylan’s Ruth. We needed both them, and Bob would soon be moving on, rejecting the “finger-painting songs” of his Woody Guthrie period.

Phil became the poet of the antiwar movement, who summed up his aesthetic in one memorable phrase: “Ah, but in such an ugly time, the true protest is beauty.” With a gift for melody as well as phrase: “Ah, but in such an ugly time, the true protest is beauty.”

Behind Dylan, though, loomed a larger shadow, and Phil kept his eyes on the prize, Woody Guthrie’s This Land Is Your Land, composed a quarter century before at the tail end of the Great Depression, “with the wheat fields waving, and the dust clouds rolling.” That’s the song Phil was chasing when he added the words to the melody Sonny had heard him composing on his bed, to create The Power and the Glory: “Come and take a walk with me, through this green and growing land…”

Bob had written Song to Woody for his first album; Phil wrote, Bound for Glory, his own tribute to Guthrie. Now he wanted a song to match Woody’s finest: “Here is a land full of power and glory/Beauty that words cannot recall/But her power shall rest on the strength of her freedom/Glory shall rest on us all.”

For all the protest songs, however, and a patriotic anthem that even Anita Bryant would eventually record, Phil never lost sight of his credo: “The true protest is beauty.” His most powerful songs may ironically be his quiet secular hymns—There But for Fortune, a hymn to compassion, Changes, a hymn to a lost love, and When I’m Gone, a hymn to a committed life in the here and now: “No, and I won’t be laughing at the lies when I’m gone/And I can’t question how or when or why when I’m gone/I won’t be laughing at the lies when I’m gone/And I guess I’ll have to do it while I’m here.”

Phil has been gone now for twenty-seven years, and it’s nearly forty years since I heard him in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park, to protest the Vietnam War. Of all the words I heard that day, including those of Zen philosopher Alan Watts, the only ones I remember are Phil’s plain question: “For it’s always the old to lead us to the wars/Always the young to fall/Look at all we’ve won with a saber and a gun/Tell me was it worth it all?”

Forty years later—and there is another Texas cowboy in the White House, another wave of aggression with imperial ambitions masked by humanitarian rhetoric, and we can still turn to Phil Ochs’ songs for illumination and inspiration. For four decades they have stood like sentinels at the barricades of struggles for peace and social justice here and abroad.

When songs really mattered, he told it like it was, and his songs still tell it like it is. Like the Lone Ranger, Phil Ochs rides again.

With a word of appreciation to Dorais Keyser, for many years the head of The Topanga Banjo Fiddle Contest, who called and left me a message that it was time to start listening to Phil Ochs again. Thanks, Dorais, and I hope you like this column.

Ross Altman has a Ph.D. in English. Before becoming a full-time folk singer he taught college English and Speech. He now sings around California for libraries, unions, schools, political groups and folk festivals.

LEARN IRISH MUSIC

Continued from page 3

your instrument who they’d recommend. Find recordings with tunes that you are being taught at the session, you aspire to play with. Listening is half of learning, especially with Celtic music.

• Go to or form a slow session where learners are welcomed and challenged to play by ear. Listening is half of learning, especially with Celtic music.

• SET DANCES, SLIDES AND HORNPIPES
• WALTZES
• REELS
• JIGS
But most of all have fun! Here’s a list of tunes that you can use as a starting point:

• THE ROAD TO LISDOONVARNA (SLIDE)
• KING OF THE FAIRIES (SET DANCE)
• THE SNOWY PATH
• CASTLE KELLY
• MARGARET’S WALTZ
• SI BEAG, SI MOR
• ASHOKAN FAREWELL
• SOURGRASS AND GRANITE
• TOSST THE FEATHERS
• COOLEY’S REEL
• THE BUTTERFLY
• THE SWAGGERING JIG
• THE SNOWY PATH
• SET DANCES, SLIDES AND HORNPIPES
• KING OF THE FAIRIES (set dance)
• OFF TO CALIFORNIA (hornpipe)
• THE ROAD TO LISDOONVARNA (slide)
• These should definitely get you started! Good luck and enjoy!

Kathy Boys is a full-time and music therapist in San Francisco, CA. She recently released her debut album, Mapless Journey. To read more about Kathy and to hear samples of the album, visit www.dragondance.net.
Johnny Cunningham August 27, 1957 - December 15, 2003

Celtic world mourns at passing of Scottish fiddle great

Johnny Cunningham's records join the Celtic music world in mourning the passing of Scottish fiddler Johnny Cunningham, who passed away last night, December 15, 2003, in New York City, of a heart attack. He was 46 years old. Johnny leaves behind a great body of work and a huge legacy in Scottish and Celtic music of the late 20th century. He was a founding member of many seminal Scottish and Celtic groups, including Silly Wizard, Relativity, Nightnoise and The Celtic Fiddle Festival.

Johnny played a large role at Green Linnet, appearing on more than a dozen albums including his solo Fan Warning (SL 1047) as well as producing albums by Cherish the Ladies, Orealis and Brooks Williams. “Johnny was a huge life force, and a brilliant musical intelligence,” says Green Linnet owner Wendy Newton. “He was a friend for more than 20 years. A great light has gone from our lives.”

Johnny will be remembered for his musicianship, his compositions, and for his larger-than-life personality. He was beloved on both sides of the Atlantic for his exquisite musicianship as well as for his renowned wit and warmth. An outrageously funny man and a gifted storyteller, he held audiences either rapt in attention at his virtuoso playing, or falling over in laughter at his stories.

Born in Scotland on August 27, 1957, Johnny began playing fiddle at age seven. He was a founding member of legendary Scottish band Silly Wizard, along with his brother Phil on accordion and singer Andy M. Stewart. The band is credited with playing a strong role in Scotland's traditional music revival. Johnny and Phil also founded Relativity, an acappled group with Irish brother-and-sister musicians Triona and Michael Ó Dhomhnaill of The Bothy Band. He and O Dhomhnaill later formed the new age group Nightnoise. Johnny was a member of the renowned Celtic Fiddle Festival with Irish fiddler Kevin Burke and Breton musician Christian Lemaître, who made three albums together. (The group was scheduled for an American tour this December 3rd this year.)

Most recently, Johnny had worked with Irish singer Susan McKeown on a seasonal album called A Winter Tailsman. The two had just finished an American tour this week.

A widely-read man, Johnny's skills and interests were far-ranging. He wrote the music and lyrics for a theatrical version of Peter Pan, Peter and Wendy, produced by New York City's Mabou Mines Theater Company. This musical was a critical and popular success, winning two OBIE awards and touring America as well as Ireland. He founded the rock group The Raindogs in the 1980s, releasing two albums on Atlantic, and toured with such artists as Bob Dylan, Don Henson, Warren Zevon, Hall & Oates, and Bonnie Raitt. He collaborated with best-selling author Thomas Moore on a CD and book set, The Soul Of Christmas, a spiritual exploration of Celtic culture and the Christmas tradition. He also produced such artists as award-winning Irish band Solas.

Johnny resided in New Bedford, Mass. He is survived by his mother Mary, his sister Laura, his brother Phil, and his grandmother Martha Knowles, all of Scotland. Our sympathies are with his family and loved ones.

Remembrances may be sent in care of: Green Linnet Records P.O. Box 1905 Danbury, CT 06813 USA www.greenlinnet.com www.greenlinnet.com. Contact: Judith Joiner Green Linnet Records Danbury, CT USA 203-730-0333 x 15 judith@greenlinnet.com

JOHNNY CUNNINGHAM REST IN PEACE

By: John Cuttsiffe (www.jctime.com)

It was Liverpool in the late 1970's or early 1980's and I was a teenager on one of my first voyages abroad. At least it seemed abroad. It was just across the channel to England but for me it was a huge city and the home of the Beatles and was exciting and wonderful. For March the weather was still cold I remember for St. Patrick's Day we headed to the Liverpool Irish center to break all the rules and listen to some Scottish band with the odd name Silly Wizard.

That was a show that still sticks in my mind as one of the best and most exciting things I have ever heard on the music world. The band was incredible. I had no idea that traditional music could be played with such fun and fervor on even that music like this came out of Scotland. It was totally blown away. I became a long time fan of Silly Wizard and was sad to see the day they went their separate ways.

Of course I was happy to see that the various members of the band went on to wonderful solo careers and the sweet fiddling sounds of Johnny Cunningham wasn't too far away. He would pop up in various projects over the years. He toured as a duo with his brother and fellow wizard Phil and they both played with the amazing Relativity with Micheal O'Dhomhnaill and Triona Ni Dhomhnaill of The Bothy Band.

Johnny was also in great demand as a producer and also even played with such uniquely souls as Hall and Oates. He also collaborated with bands like Solas and Cherish the Ladies. In recent years he has been part of the amazing The Celtic Fiddle Festival with fiddlers Kevin Burke (Ireland) and Christian Le Maitre (Brittany). For many, this is seen as one of the most important music collaborations in traditional music.

The sad news came in today that Johnny passed away yesterday at his apartment in New York's East Village. This is a huge loss to all who loved music. Johnny was by all accounts was one of the nicest people in the business and to people like myself a great musical inspiration. He will be greatly missed.

So wherever you are tonight Johnny, we will raise a glass in toast to someone who gave us all so much beautiful music.

Slainte.

Thanks to Alice Farrell who also pointed me to these video clips of Johnny from shows at the Kennedy Center one as recently as December 3rd this year.

Joan LaBarbara, vocals, with harmony by Cheryl White of the country stalwarts the Whites, are fine. Eriksson and Baugus return for cut 5, a nice call and response take on the old chestnut The Cuckoo, again with lively backing by Duncan and Powell. Sitting on Top of the World is cut 6, with Jack White singing. Part of this tune's lyrics can arguably be traced back to a pop tune done by Al Jolson in the 1920s, again with Johnny's unique arrangement. White returns with High Great Mountain, then Gabriel Yared's four orchestral pieces for the movie O Brother, and The Sacred Harp Singers at Liberty Church close out the CD with I Remember.

It's a great, sprawling piece of work. Questions do arise. Why the dependence on White, why the new songs when so many excellent period pieces exist? Why Sting? Obviously, the movie business, like the music business, is dependent on sales. Thanks to Alice Farrell for the reference on White, why the new songs when so many excellent period pieces exist? Why Sting? Obviously, the movie business, like the music business, is dependent on sales.

The Sacred Harp Singers at Liberty Church. The sound of shape note singing is amazing, and this soundtrack will no doubt spur interest in this style of a cappella vocals. Drawing from a tradition that stretches back to the English parish countryside, shape note’s four part harmony was a part of New England culture in the 1700’s, but the tradition took hold and rooted in Appalachia, the Piedmont or even the South, where it remained today. Largely supplanted by the development of gospel music, shape note has a haunting, other-worldly quality.

Jack White’s original Never Far Away follows. This doesn’t fit the traditional music boundaries too well, though it’s not a bad song. It’s not featured on the film, but possibly on the cutting room floor. White, Riley Baugus and Brendan Gleeson follow with Christmas Time Will Soon Be Over, with spirited backing from Powell, Blake and Duncan. Cut 12 is Ruby With The Eyes That Sparkle, an instrumental duet between Duncan and Powell, and is followed by a strong a cappella version of Lady Margaret by Cassie Franklin, another tune that is missing from the film. White returns with Great High Mountain, then Gabriel Yared’s four orchestral pieces for the movie O Brother, and The Sacred Harp Singers at Liberty Church close out the CD with I Remember.

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FolkWorks PICKS

MARCH

SPECIAL EVENTS
continued from page 28

SATURDAY APRIL 17
11:00am PURBA Y AN CHATTERJEE and ANEESH PRADHAN
8:00pm DA VE STAMEY [www.davestamey.com]
8:00pm STACY EARLE & MARK STUART $15
8:00pm TIM TEDROW & TERRY VREELAND
7:30pm KATE MacLEOD $12/$10 TLT member

TUESDAY APRIL 20
8:00pm BAKSHEESH BOYS $8

SUNDAY APRIL 25
11:00am MARY BLACK • Thursday March 25 & Friday March 26
8:00pm ANEESH PRADHAN [www.maryblack.com]
8:00pm JIM CUSACK [www.jimcusack.com] $25
8:00pm BAMA MAAL (Senegalese singer)

APRIL

Darryl Black • Thursday March 25 & Friday March 26
Mary Black has become Ireland’s best-selling pop vocalist, and has cruised traditional borders, garnering applause of all and performing with the likes of Eamonn Gilmore, Mary Chapin Carpenter, John Bask and Van Morrison. Mary Black’s distinguished career has spanned over 20 years from her early days in Dublin folk clubs through award-winning success with now platinum sales albums. With “a voice to die for” – New York Post

WICKED THUNER • Saturday March 27
There’s something to be said for the approach to Scottish music that consists of pipes and percussions. It’s definitely FIDDLE (Fairee Hardner Leader), and it’s quite literally. This is Carilie music, her sister is pimp-up traditional Celtic music. T. J. McGuinn in Dirty Gown said of Hammond that “there’s nothing public, or wrong about these pipes” – the third seeing kids from Austria with a collection of Highland bagpipes and assorted drums, having a bit of the singing and drumming of some traditional Scottish, Irish, Welsh, hopers, and marches. Cat Eddington, Green Max Restor

SANTA CLARITA COMEDY POETRY & MUSIC FESTIVAL • Saturday March 27 & Sunday March 28
The 11th annual Santa Clarita Comedy Poetry and Music Festival, held March 27-28 in and around the western-cut Cowtown at Gene Autry’s old Melody Ranch Motion Picture Studio, is a must! All good music and folk festivals, it’s the place to explore and discover performers, genres and styles. Enjoy old favorites, find new ones, and hear the prevailing genre. This one has the best ambiance anywhere, with riders on horseback and horses, dainty streets of a Western Brigadoon, return for the weekend, as various building-in's come to life – Larry Whites, Tidaback

TUESDAY APRIL 27
5:00pm ANNY CELSI [annycelsi.com]
8:00pm BUONG SUONG $20-23/$17 JACCC members

WEDNESDAY APRIL 28
8:30 pm DENNIS ROGER REED

SUNDAY APRIL 25
11:00am MARY BLACK • Thursday March 25 & Friday March 26
8:00pm ANEESH PRADHAN [www.maryblack.com]
8:00pm JIM CUSACK [www.jimcusack.com] $25
8:00pm BAMA MAAL (Senegalese singer)

Folk Music Center
Ireland’s Own Social Club
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Coffee Gallery Backstage
with DANA COOPER
16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance • 310-660-3748

El Camino College Center for the Arts (Marsee Theatre)

Orange County Performing Arts Center (Founders Hall)

The El Rey Theatre • 5515 Wilshire Blvd., L. A. • 323-936-6400

The George & Sakaye Aratani Japan America Theatre

Hillcrest Park Recreation Center

Paramount Movie Ranch, Agoura Hills

• INTERNATIONAL DANCING - All live music! Watch or join in?
• 3 PROFESSIONAL BANDS: DESERT SAGE (Bluegrass Band)
• 4 STAGES • WESTERN MOVIE SETS  • SINGING/PLAYING CONTESTANTS • FREE PARKING AND SHUTTLE BUS

HEART OF ‘GRASS (Bluegrass, that is!)
DESERT SAGE (Bluegrass Band)

Celtic music. T. J. McGrinn in Dirty Gown said of Hammond that “there’s nothing public, or wrong about these pipes” – the third seeing kids from Austria with a collection of Highland bagpipes and assorted drums, having a bit of the singing and drumming of some traditional Scottish, Irish, Welsh, hopers, and marches. Cat Eddington, Green Max Restor

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KELLY McCUNE & BORDER RADIO (Western String Band)
DESSERT SAGE (Bluegrass Band)
HEART OF ‘GRASS (Bluegrass, that is!)
• INTERNATIONAL DANCING - All live music! Watch or join in?
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• FREE PARKING AND SHUTTLE BUS

Monday, May 16 • 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
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CHILDREN UNDER 10 FREE
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - GET IN FREE!
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### SPECIAL EVENTS

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<th>Date</th>
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<td><strong>TUESDAY MARCH 3</strong></td>
<td>7:30pm VICTORIA'S GRAND BALL</td>
<td>McCabe's Guitar Shop</td>
<td>709 North Orange St., Fullerton, CA 92833</td>
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<td>7:30pm GRACE</td>
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<td>7:30pm JANIS JOPLIN</td>
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<td>7:30pm LUCINDA WILSON</td>
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<td>7:30pm KEEP THE LONE STAR ALIVE</td>
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<td>7:30pm WAGONHEEL</td>
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<td><strong>TUESDAY MARCH 3</strong></td>
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**LISTING UPGRADE NOW AVAILABLE**

Have your Special Event listed in larger font

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