

MadFolk News

Caitlin Vitale-Sullivan to Take Remote Lessons on Hardanger d'Amore With Madfolk/Schneyer Scholarship

The Madison Folk Music Society board has awarded a Helen Schneyer Folk Music Lesson Scholarship to Caitlin A Vitale-Sullivan to study remotely with Dan Trueman the Hardanger d'Amore fiddle, of which Dan is a leading proponent. This new and experimental take on the traditional Hardanger fiddle has five sympathetic strings in addition to five playable strings. Although she has been classically trained on the violin, and has played Swedish and Norwegian folk music, she has never had formal training on the Hardanger or Hardanger d'Amore, and has set a goal of creating "music, based on Scandinavian folk tradition, that is creative, organic, and holds within it the wild energy of traditional music." She has agreed to share what she has learned with a future MadFolk audience, once in-person concerts are resumed.

The scholarship honors the memory of the late folksinger Helen Schneyer, who favored traditional – often lugubrious – ballads and gospel tunes. Her sister, Mona Wasow, lives in Madison, and when her sister died,

Mona's colleagues at the UW School of Social Work took up a memorial collection, which in turn, Mona contributed to the Madison Folk Music Society. The board decided to honor her memory by giving scholarships for folk music lessons, to support the next generation of folk musicians, who will one day replace those who have gone on to play in the angel band. The original funds have been supplemented by contributions audience members make at MadFolk concerts, or donate with their membership renewals. The pandemic has forced most music instruction to take place on-line, even for continuing scholarship recipients and their local teachers, but in this case, enables Caitlin to study with a master of an unusual instrument in Princeton, New Jersey. Sweet are the uses of adversity!

Congratulations Caitlin! MadFolk look forward to hearing the wild, energetic music you create with the Hardanger d'Amore!



Social Media Help Wanted

Do you use and enjoy Twitter? Instagram? Facebook? Would you like to help Mad Folk extend our reach doing tasks you can do from anywhere? Mad Folk is forming a DIGITAL MARKETING TEAM. Volunteers might perform simple tasks like "tweeting" or posting on Instagram or Facebook (from Mad Folk's accounts and/or your own accounts) when there are events or news bits to share. We also might have an occasional video meeting to brainstorm ways we might use digital media effectively. To learn more, or to raise a digital hand to volunteer, send email to info@madfolk.org

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<https://www.facebook.com/madisonfolkmusicsociety>

Back to Live Music – The *Behind Our House* Concert Series

Tired of COVID brain? Thrilled at the arrival of better weather? *Now's the time to look ahead to live music.*

After cancelling five indoor concerts last year, we tested out two fall outdoor shows with our neighbors Madeline and Bret, combining our two backyards for one big performance space. Tim and Jan Grimm from Indiana and our local favorites, Harmonious Wail, put on wonderful concerts for our live music-starved crowds. Everything went so well we are ready to leap into more this year. We've got four shows already set up, with more in the planning stages. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs, spread out safely, and join us once again. Here's what's coming *out back*, starting in May:

- **MARK CROFT AND JON VRIESACKER, 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 8 (Sunday, May 9 rain date)**

Mark is one of our favorite Wisconsin singer/songwriters, with a powerhouse guitar and a batch of cool up-tempo songs and lovely ballads. Jon is a violin virtuoso who plays with the Madison Symphony and the super Irish group The Kissers. These two rocked *Our House* twice over the years, and they'll do it again *al fresco*. www.markcroftmusic.com **Cost: \$20 per person.**



- **CRIS PLATA WITH EXTRA HOT, 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 22 (Sunday, May 23 rain date)** Get your dancing shoes on and expect a rollicking good time with Cris, his wife Ann on bass, and their full band. You can call it Tex-Mex, Norteno, Conjunto or Ranchera, it doesn't matter. It's just damn good music. www.crisplata.com **Cost: \$20 per person.**



- **WILLY PORTER, 7 p.m. on Saturday, June 26 (Sunday, June 27 rain date)** The man with the magical fingers and the incredible guitar chops rolls in from Milwaukee. After years of trying, we're thrilled to bring Willy to *Our House*. He's a true musical wizard, known all over the US, Canada and Europe for his phenomenal talent. Don't miss this chance to catch this super artist up close, in our backyard. www.willyporter.com **Cost: \$25 per person.**



- **THE ROUGH AND TUMBLE, 7 p.m. on Friday, July 16 (Sunday, July 18 rain date)** This Nashville-based Americana folk duo of Mallory Graham and Scott Tyler has been on a roll since they started touring 10 years ago. Their beautiful song *The Hardest Part* won the Independent Music Awards Best Song in 2019. Then they were chosen the Best Artist of the Year in the Listening Room Network contest. They'll be touring the Midwest this summer with a stop at *Our House*. Check out this dynamic duo! www.theroughandtumble.com **Cost: \$20 per person.**



CONCERT DETAILS: All proceeds go to our musicians. To reserve your spaces, send or drop off your check or cash to Anne and David, 451 N. Few Street, Madison, WI 53703 (check payable to David Wallner). Contact us if you want to use PayPal, Venmo or Cash app. Current Dane County physical distancing guidelines will be followed. We'll have beer, soda, and mineral water (in individual cans and bottles) for sale. Capacity is limited and we anticipate sold-out concerts, so don't hesitate to make your plans. *Questions? Contact A & D at annedave@chorus.net.*

David Wallner, Anne Katz, Madeline Kasper and Bret Schluederberg

1975 - NO-NO BOY

2021 - SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS



Review by Kiki Schueler

Hooray for the Google search. At a loss for what to review this month, I typed in “new folk releases.” What I found was No-No Boy, and what a find it was. The moniker chosen by Nashville born Vietnamese-American Julian Saporiti refers to John Okada’s 1957 novel of the same name, which tells the tale of an American born man of Japanese descent returning home to Seattle after being interred in a camp during WWII for answering “no” to two questions. One, will you denounce the emperor? And two, will you fight for the US military? On his Folkways debut 1975, named for the year Saigon fell marking the end of the Vietnam War, Saporiti combines his own family’s experiences with his years of doctoral research at Brown and interviews with real life no-no boys to craft a truly remarkable record. Not only is it smart as hell, it’s also immensely listenable. You can spend hours reading up on every unrecognized reference (what the heck is a balikbayan box?), or you can just get caught up in these engaging melodies and his hypnotic voice. A word of warning, doing the former will force you to acknowledge some pretty ugly moments in this country’s history.

Two of the most tragic are paralleled in “Where the Sand Creek meets the Arkansas.” The Sand Creek Massacre and the Amache Internment Camp were separated by eighty years, but

geographically they were basically on top of each other. “Mr. Yellow Wolf, here meet Tomoki Ogata. Two ghosts caught in a jet lag,” he sings, naming the Cheyenne chief killed in the bloodbath and a prisoner who hung himself in the camp. Kristin Weber’s violin flows through the song, her backing vocals begging “Hold me, lover, tell me lies,” even as you realize some events should not be forgotten. He visits another camp in “The Best God Damn Band in Wyoming.” This time it’s Heart Mountain just north of Cody, and the victims are the nisei (second generation immigrants) musicians in the “best band you never did see, locked up in prison camps for no fuckin’ reason.” It’s a ridiculously catchy tune, with trumpets toodle-ing and horns oompahing, reminiscent of the Mountain Goats equally infectious “Foreign Object,” and it unabashedly begs you to sing along. Next stop, Oahu and another camp, “Honouliuli.” Gentle and dreamy, it points out there’s “a little more to paradise.” Its historical references are subtler than elsewhere, but no less powerful.

Other songs examine the plight of today’s immigrant, and what it means to be American. “Close Your Eyes and Dream of Flowers” turns its focus to the US Mexico border. A Spanish spoken word segment translates to “At the border you realize that the story tends to repeat itself: A child is a child, a cage is a cage,” especially poignant as the number of unaccompanied minors attempting to cross explodes. “Khemerica” sketches the Cambodia-American experience, and how radically different it can be, “Some kids move because their parents take new jobs, some kids move cause of Napalm.” “St Denis or Bangkok, from a Hotel Balcony” and “Tell Hanoi I Love Her” draw from his own history. The first as the child of an immigrant, “Before the Banh Mi trucks were cool, lunch

table embarrassment,” with whirling music box-esque accompaniment, while the second dreams of a country he will never call home but will always be a part of him, backed by a light-hearted melody and “do do do’s.”

I’m pretty sure I’ve learned more from 1975 than I ever did in a history class. If No-No Boy had been a teacher, it probably would have been my major. Oh, and a balikbayan box is a package shipped to the Philippines by a Filipino living overseas.

Mad Folk News is published monthly by the Madison Folk Music Society, a non-profit, volunteer-led society dedicated to fostering folk music in the Madison area. Contact us at madfolk@charter.net. Learn about concerts, membership, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities at www.madfolk.org. www.facebook.com/pages/Madison-Folk-Music-Society/34497984835

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Ah, Coffee

My dear dog-park friend T.A., a construction magician who can turn a chicken coop into a prize winning retirement villa, recently brought to the park a gorgeous piece of a wooden pole about 18" long and 4" in diameter. This was of a heavy and hard wood, with extremely fine growth rings which his wife counted to number 48. He is in the middle of a year-long project remodeling a one hundred and fifty year old tobacco drying warehouse somewhere near Stoughton, where he found dozens of these poles, each about sixteen feet long. He used a couple of them to make gorgeous handrails for the stairways.

Meanwhile he got to talking with an old-timer (and I know my old-timers, being 74 myself) who lived nearby and years ago worked hanging tobacco on these poles in this very warehouse. My friend asked him what the three or four sturdy metal staples were for, arranged along one side of the poles. The old boy said, cackling, "That's where we hung the WACKY tobacco!" So things have always been interesting around here.

Anyway, I knew a tiny bit about the Stoughton area and tobacco and its relationship to wagon-manufacturing, because I had written a waltz about it for one of our performances at the amazing Stoughton Opera House about a dozen years ago. The most peculiar outcome of this relationship was that the coffee break was said to have been invented as a result, as is explained in our song. I researched this info at the Stoughton Public Library and worked it up into a somewhat tedious lyric, which I've reproduced here.

We've never recorded it (though I did quote one verse in the Whither Zither for June 2012 called "Small Town Songs.") When I heard about

these strange gorgeous long hardwood poles that my friend found, I had to wonder if these weren't originally meant for wagon spokes and axles.

Here's a quote from an article in the Stoughton Courier for September 16th, 1881, in a discussion of the Stoughton Wagon Works:

"West of the main building is the latest addition to the Works—a Hub and Spoke Factory... When finished, this will be as complete a factory of the kind as can be found

in the State. The timber used is second-growth white oak, grown on the Wisconsin river bottoms, and no better can be found in the country."

We have sent a chunk of this wood away to be analyzed as to species, and of course us dog park denizens have placed some bets. My \$5 is on White Oak. Below, I've reprinted the lyrics to this odd historical ditty. My music partner Lou is currently rewriting the melody for the fun of it, but meanwhile it can be sung to the tune of that good ol' standard, *Abdul Abulbul Amir*:

Stoughton and the Coffee Break

©2010 L&P Berryman

The chances are good a Wisconsin invention has found you wherever you are
The hamburger, typewriter, outboard, Republican party, electric guitar
And one from the Norwegian village of Stoughton whose impact was second to none
For Stoughton gave birth to the coffee break (!) in 18 and 71

Ah, coffee. Ah, coffee. (This is the optional chorus, repeated after every verse)

The story commences in Stoughton with one Mr Gunderson wracking his brain
For all was not well at the warehouse he owned on the Coffee Street corner of Main
All full of tobacco but empty of workers to process the valuable plant
For all the Stoughtonian men were employed making wagons for one Mr. Mandt

Now Coffee Street really was only the nickname that came from its pungent bouquet
For there for their families the women were all roasting coffee beans during the day
As budgets were meager in spite of their husbands' employment they bought the bean green
And thus they were frugal but kept up their full Scandinavian dose of caffeine

So anyway back at the warehouse our poor Mr. Gunderson wallowed in gloom
Till over the tang of tobacco there floated the Coffee Street coffee perfume
The odors combined in the Gunderson brain and the next thing he heard himself say
Was maybe the Coffee Street women would wanna come work in my warehouse for pay

Impulsively Gunderson flew from his building and followed his nose with his feet
Rap-tapping on doors and extending his offer to all of the wives up the street
And after he left them they gathered together, the pros and the cons to assess
The verdict was yes, altho on one condition / on one condition, it's yes

A strong delegation of Coffee Street women with their stipulation in ink
Marched into the warehouse, presented their terms and said Gunderson what do you think
Not counting our lunch you allow us the time to go home again two times a day
Midmorning and midafternoon for a smidgeon of coffee, now what do you say

Well our Mr Gunderson had to agree and before long he probably found
That as the new custom caught on across town it was better for things all around
For as there was time for more Stoughton tobacco cigars in the daily routine
No doubt Mr Mandt got more orders for wagons for hauling the leaf and the bean

So here's to the Coffee Street women of Stoughton Wisconsin for taking a stand
That launched a tradition improving conditions for workers all over the land
Some say their invention contributed more to the good of the country by far
Than the hamburger, typewriter, outboard, Republican party, electric guitar

WZ for May 2021

On the Air

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Simply Folk on Wisconsin Public Radio w/ Dan Robinson, Host

Sun 5:00-8:00pm

Concerts recorded in Wisconsin, music and dance of people the world over. For playlists, calendars, station listings, and more, visit www.wpr.org/simplyfolk



WORT 89.9 FM community radio visit <https://wortfm.org> for more info!

- Weekdays 9:00am - noon - "On the Horizon" w/ Ford Blackwell, Paul Novak, Gloria Hays & Helena White
- Mon - Global Revolutions (folk from the world over) w/ Dan Talmo & Martin Alvarado
- Tue - Another Green Morning w/ Mac Robertson & Brian Hirsch
- Wed - Back to the Country (country music on a theme) w/ Bill Malone
- Thur - Diaspora (folk and international) w/ Terry O'
- Fri - Mud Acres (bluegrass and acoustic) w/ Chris Powers



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Stuart Stotts

Weekly new song Facebook Live event. Song Premiere on Tuesday (SPOT) at 11AM
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Gigs

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Common Chord

- June 5 (Sat), 1-4pm: Common Chord @ Paoli Mill Park, Paoli WI (www.commonchord.us)
- July 8 (Thu), 5:30-8pm: Common Chord @ Verona Concerts in the Park, Harriet Park, Verona WI (www.commonchord.us)
- July 11 (Sun), 2-4pm: Common Chord @ Brix Cider, Mt. Horeb, WI (www.commonchord.us)
- Aug 12 (Thu), 6pm: Common Chord @ Gazebo Musikk, Stoughton, WI (www.commonchord.us)
- Sep 4 (Sat), 5-8pm: Common Chord @ Paoli Mill Park, Paoli WI (www.commonchord.us)

"WHEN IS MY RENEWAL DUE?"

(Hint: It is NOT the date on the mailing label!)

The date shown on the mailing label is NOT your membership expiration date! There has been some confusion lately, and we apologize for that. The date is just the date the labels were printed, as new cost-saving postal procedures do not allow us to include expiration dates there anymore. When it is time to renew, we will send you a personal notice by mail or email. At that point you will be able to either mail a check or renew online at www.madfolk.org. If you have questions about your membership in the meantime, send email to info@madfolk.org. Thanks for your membership and support of Mad Folk!

Way #1 – online

Visit www.madfolk.org and click on "Join MFMS"

Way #2 – unplugged

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