

# MadFolk News

## Willy Street Fair - September 18th and 19th

Well it has been a quiet year for MadFolk, but we hope we are able to hold Covid issues at bay and raise our voices at the 2021 Willy Street Fair!!! You can find us both on Saturday and Sunday at approx. 1050 Williamson Street.

We are going to Start Willy Street Fair on Saturday with an in-the-round trio consisting of Jeff Burkhardt, Kaia Fowler, and Nath Dresser. As accomplished as these musicians are in their own writings, for an hour, they will be swapping songs of John Prine. Many of you may know that one of the first musicians we lost to covid back in April of 2020 was the great John Prine. Here is a little about the folks who will be paying homage to him.

Nath Dresser has been playing guitar, writing songs, and performing since he lived in North Carolina decades ago. Over the last twenty-some years he's performed mainly in Wisconsin and neighboring states, in venues such as cafés, bars, house concerts, wineries, and barns, including the Shitty Barn in Spring Green, where he can often be seen wearing a different hat as one of the house photographers. He's been listening to John Prine since vinyl was king and the cassette his queen, and there's no telling how many Prine songs have appeared on his setlists over the last 45 years. You can learn more about him--and his work as both a singer-songwriter and photography--at [www.nathdresser.com](http://www.nathdresser.com).

Kaia Fowler creates music that speaks to the soul. Through song, Kaia evokes transcendence, comfort, encouragement, and connection while witnessing the vast human experience. Kaia's songs feature insightful observations on what it means to be living in relationship with each other and the Earth. A versatile guitarist with mastery of fingerstyle and strumming techniques, Kaia possesses a wide vocal range and performs with passion and presence. Kaia's warm energy and authenticity invite listeners to open their hearts and transcend with her, to soar beyond limitations and co-create

moments of profound beauty and love. Her 2021 single "Life Is So Beautiful" received play on WPR's Simply Folk show. In 2019, Kaia was a featured guest on WORT community radio's Another Green World program. Program hosts Katie Hutchinson & Farmer Shaun offered this review of that performance: "It's apparent—from her impressive guitar-work, beautiful voice, and intentional, evocative lyrics—that Kaia is the real deal when it comes to both singing and songwriting." Kaia credits John Prine with inspiring her to start writing songs when she was eight years old. As part of the John Prine tribute set, Kaia will share her original song "In the Silence," written in memory of Prine on the day of his death.

Madison-based Jeff Burkhardt when not working full time at the Literacy Network has a knack of finding time to play his acoustic guitar, sometimes as a solo and sometimes in a band, could be Cajun, bluegrass or a honky-tonk group. Whatever it is, I encourage you to check him out if you see his name out there playing music!

Playing the middle set of music on Saturday is Mark Dvorak. The last time we saw Mark Dvorak on a MadFolk stage was when we produced the series Folk on State, it is great to have him back on our stage again! The Chicago Tribune has called Mark Dvorak "masterful," and the Fox Valley Folk Festival describes him as "a living archive of song and style." In 2012 WFMT 98.7 fm Midnight Special host Rich Warren named him "Chicago's official troubadour." Mark has given concerts in nearly all of the United States and has made visits to Finland, Canada and Ireland. To date he has released nineteen albums including 2020's "Let Love Go On." Dvorak's song writing has been called "wondrous" and "profound." He has been called a "painter" whose songs express "so many colors and so many moods." WVPE fm 88.1, South Bend IN says he is "One of the elite 'who's who' of the acoustic music scene and someone not to be missed..."

Dvorak has won awards for journalism, children's music, and in 2013 received the FARM Lantern Bearer Award from Folk Alliance International. In 2008 he was honored with the Woodstock Folk Festival Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2013 he published his second collection of essays and poetry, "Bowling For Christmas & Other Tales from the Road."

Closing out the stage on Saturday night will be Brother Rye! This group has been playing their unique blend of boot stompin' Americana music in Madison since 2011. Whether it's opening for Robbie Fulks at the Stoughton Opera House or playing for friends in the backyard these boys are sure to put on a great show! Members include Shad Williams (Guitar, Resonator), Matt Tupper (Upright Bass), Matt Mueller (Guitar, Harmonica, Kazoo), and Mike Weber (drums, percussion)."

SUNDAY, SUNDAY, SUNDAY! Kicking off the whole folk stage shebang on Sunday will be local Madison songwriters Lou and Peter Berryman whose first folk band was created in high school in 1964. Their long friendship and musical collaboration has resulted in twenty albums of original music and many zany years of touring the continent from Nova Scotia to California. Featuring the weird combination of accordion and 12-string guitar, their songs range from goofy with a wink to serious with a twist, a good number of them with local Wisconsin references. Retired from cross country touring, they are still writing songs and performing locally for favorite situations like the dear old Willy Street Festival.

We decided to add a round of Bob Dylan tunes this year. I knew right away I would love to see Bill Camplin as part of this set, you may know him best for running the kitchen and doing the intros at Café Carpe (and if you have not been there, you need to put a visit there to hear music on your to-do list) But what you may not know is that Bill actually record a whole CD of Dylan's music and it is a wonderful CD to have in any collec-

Column continued from previous page

tion! Joining Bill will be Madison's own Ken Lonnquist (more about him below) and rounding out the trio will be Lo Marie. Lo Marie's story began with her singing in the church youth choir. From there, it was piano lessons at age 8, voice lessons at age 11, and guitar lessons at age 15. At first, Lo Marie aspired to become an opera singer, but soon found she craved more open artistic expression, can't wait to hear her voice sing some Dylan!

We love when we get that call from Ken Lonnquist saying he is available to play! Many know him for his children's songs and many for his "grown-up" music and folks know him for both. Ken Lon-

nquist has written prolifically for folk, theater, topical and family audiences for 40+ years. He's released dozens of recordings and performed across North America. His latest is a 2-CD set of new love songs due out soon. We are glad to welcome back to our Willy Street Fair stage!

To close our stage this year we wanted a fun band with energy so we asked the performers of the Ad Hoc String Band if they would join us. This band is comprised of: Julie Cherney - banjo & vocals, Mark Felten - mandolin, Adam Tyksinski - guitar & vocals and Brian Hirsh - bass & vocals, a voice you may recognize on WORT on Tuesday mornings. Fun fact: The band

earned their name from a happenstance performance during the 2011 political uprising and occupation in Madison, WI. Mark (mandolin) and Brian (bass) played an impromptu set of music on a Thursday night in the occupied State Capitol Building. They went there with Banjoist Mark Schlutt (of Oak Street Ramblers fame) and were quickly joined by a guitar player and percussionist. This spontaneous quintet played almost an hour long set. A day or two later, a blogger had blogged that an "Ad Hoc String Band" had formed to play for the crowd. A band name was born!

## Willy Street Fair - Set Schedule

### Saturday - the 18th

2:00 - Songs of John Prine in the Round  
-Jeff Burkhart, Kaia Fowler, Nath Dresser  
3:30 - Mark Dvorak  
5:00 - Brother Rye

### Sunday - the 19th

12:00 - Peter & Lou Berryman  
1:00 - Songs of Bob Dylan in the Round  
-Bill Camplain, Ken Lonnquist, Lo Marie  
3:00 - Ken Lonnquist  
5:00 - Ad Hoc String Band

## Hello Midwest Dulcimer Players!

Southern California Dulcimer Heritage (SCDH) presents our 27th annual / 2nd virtual Harvest Festival of Dulcimers, Friday night - Sunday, September 24 - 26, 2021, Pacific Time.

Note that registration closes September 10!

We'll again be Zooming right into your home! It's super easy to use Zoom, especially for students, who need only a free, basic Zoom account.

Featured hammered dulcimer player is Jody Marshall of Virginia

Featured mountain dulcimer player is Aubrey Atwater of Rhode Island

These are two really exceptional players, as you can sample via their links!

Friday night we'll have three free virtual jam groups (levels) to kick things off, and another three of these on Saturday after the workshops.

There are multiple workshops all day Saturday by Jody and Aubrey plus Southern California instructors: Patti Amelotte (HD), Bill Dempsey (Uke; How to Plan/Lead Sing-Alongs), Barbara Gershman (HD), Terry Gucwa (Make a Composite

Music Video), Karen Harvey (HD), Leo Kretzner (MD), Joellen Lapidus (MD) and Patty McCollom (Bodhran; Tinwhistle) - all online.

An online concert Saturday evening will feature headliners Aubrey Atwater and Jody Marshall plus local multi-instrumentalists Patti Amelotte and Brenda Hunter and Joellen Lapidus on mountain dulcimer. Aubrey will be joined by multi-instrumentalist Elwood Donnelly and Jody will be accompanied by Jim Queen on fiddle. See Concert flyer, attached.

Sunday: Focus Workshops, smaller group sessions with the featured performers, will be for four hours on Sunday, September 26. See here and here.

Our website, below, has Zoom basics, and festival details. Our online (or mail-in) registration / payment system will be posted closer to the festival. For questions, see contact options below.

Please share this information with your friends and local players!!

Hope to see you on screen the weekend of September 24th!

For SCDH,  
Leo Kretzner

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[dulcimer@scdh.org](mailto:dulcimer@scdh.org)  
714-534-2855

## Arlo's Jug Tracks

My music partner Lou and I send out an email every now and then when we put up a new song or make a CD or something. Recently we sent out notice of an odd little music video we made for the fun of it. I got a nice note back about it from our old pal **Arlo Leach**. Arlo is, as far as I'm concerned, the world's #1 expert in all facets of Jug Band Music. I've mentioned Arlo a few times over the Whither Zither years and wrote an entire episode about him in February of 2013, still available in the MadFolk Newsletter Archives (link at bottom of this page).

Briefly, Arlo writes jug band songs, plays various instruments in jug bands, organizes jug band festivals, writes jug band apps and other fabulous band software, produces benefits to pay for gravestones for legendary jug banders buried in paupers' graves, and generally continues to honor in countless ways the almost forgotten Black geniuses who created and perfected the whole genre back in the early years of the twentieth century.

We met Arlo when he lived in Madison and kept in touch when he moved to Chicago to teach Jug Band at the Old Town School of Folk Music (Mark Guarino wrote in the Tribune for November 11 of 2009, "If the recent jug band movement in Chicago can be summed up in a single person, it is Arlo Leach.") For a number of years now he has lived in Portland Oregon and has done the same for jug band music in that region that he did for greater Chicago.

Anyway, in his recent email, he asked if I had noticed his latest project. I hadn't, and went online to have a look at it. As with so many of his earlier projects, this blew me away. He has taken a healthy bunch of traditional jug band songs as performed by the Memphis Jug Band and other ancient groups and has meticulously gone over each song, figuring out the exact part each instrument plays. He has then re-recorded each track, playing all the parts by himself, with only a few guest artists helping out. These parts have been recorded individually and put back together in such a way that you can fade in and out each instrument as it plays, or completely solo or completely mute any instrument.

Arlo describes it thus: "An online song library and multi-track player for studying jug band arrangements." As one who has

spent hours trying to understand the lyrics or hear a subtle kazoo riff or guitar run on some of the old jug band recordings, this just made everything a thousand times easier. Moreover, it highlights the subtle musical skills of these musicians as improvisors of the finest kind. It helps one understand how jug band music, and (in my opinion) "traditional jazz" (Dixieland) creates that rollicking feeling, with each musician sashaying in or standing back to add exciting pulsations to the rhythms and dynamics of the original melody.

Each diagram is introduced with notes about the original recording including date of recording, names of the players and comments about their contributions, general observations about the original piece, and the few changes (such as key changes) made in this new re-creation. Here's one example, though it's really sorta silly for me to reproduce this in this fashion, but I just wanted to give you an idea of what I'm talking about. You really have to go to the website and experience it. This (below) is for "Aunt Caroline Dye" by the Memphis Jug Band, recorded in 1930. The bloke pictured is Arlo Leach himself.

To get here, follow the link below for "Jug Tracks," or go to [ARLOTONE.COM](http://ARLOTONE.COM) and find "Side Projects" then "Jug Tracks."

Individual track controls: [Mute](#) [Solo](#) [Volume](#)



WZ for September 2021

**LINKS:** Arlo's home page: <http://www.arlotone.com/>

Arlo's "Jug Tracks": <http://jugtracks.arlotone.com/> (Go to this page and click on a song title in the left-hand column)

MadFolk Newsletter Archive: <https://madfolk.org/newsletters/2013-02mfmsNews739.pdf> (page 4)

# FREAKONS

2021 - FLUFF AND GRAVY RECORDS



Review by Kiki Schueler

What do you get when you cross British post-punkers the Mekons with Kentucky alt-country mavens Freakwater? Why Freakons of course (Meekwater being decidedly less cool). Their story begins in 2013 when members of the former (Jon Langford and Sally Timms) got together with the frontwomen of the latter (Catherine Irwin and Janet Bean) to play a few gigs. Four years later the group reconvened at the Hideout in Chicago to play a couple more shows and simultaneously record an album. Another four years elapsed, and the self-titled Freakons record has finally arrived. Apparently, what the two bands bonded over was the tyranny of the coal industry, a subject that links the UK to Appalachia. The Mekons might never have made it past the early Eighties if they hadn't been reenergized by the shows they played to support the striking miners in 1984 and 85. And while the coal industry in Kentucky isn't what it once was, Mountaintop Removal Mining is still a major threat to the state's environment. Fittingly, their self-titled release will benefit Kentuckians for the Commonwealth who "organize for a fair economy, a healthy environment, new safe energy, and an honest democracy."

Feeling good about yourself for supporting a good cause isn't the only reason to get the record, there's also Jo Clauwaert's emblematic coal mining art. Oh, and it's also addictively listenable. The four afore-mentioned band members were joined for the shows and recording by vio-

linists Anna Krippenstapel, another Kentuckian, and Jean Cook, who is also part of Langford's Skull Orchard project. Both add lovely vocals to what is already an abundance of gorgeous voices. James Elington added guitar and John Abbey played bass, but their involvement isn't nearly as obvious. The song collection includes traditionals, songs written by each band, and the opening track credited to the Freakons. That song, "Dark Lord of the Mines," gives you a look inside the recording process as an initial attempt to sing "Dick Cavett, New York, 1980" in unison devolves into giggles.

I encourage you to follow the sung instructions to "Google Richard Burton," because hearing his interview with Cavett informs the song. Even though Burton was "the first in his family to not go underground," he speaks of the miners as if they were superheroes. Not to take anything away from the Freakons, but all the best lines in the song are Burton's. Langford's always charming accent is a worthy substitute for his fellow Welshman's smooth baritone.

Freakwater brings their signature Carter Family style vocals to the tracks they penned, which feature smart, fiery lyrics. Each is an angry indictment of the environmental effect of mining. "Chestnut Blight" observes "The water in the well's not clean to drink, it burns like acid and it's blacker than a lawyer's ink. Jesus walked on water in the bible, now the creek's so filled with slag even I won't sink." "Phoebe Snow" is even more livid, accusing, "You're burning a hole in my ozone," and asking "Kentucky, West Virginia, what was that fuckin' X you signed?" Meanwhile, the exquisite tune "Judy Belle Thompson" salutes the activist who fought back. Langford's trio of tunes are equally profound. He sings with conviction on "Never Thought I'd See the Day" about the re-opening of the mines after the strike failed, while the violin-swathed "Canaries" has a timelessness. The Freakons ver-

sion of "Abernant 84/85" sounds like classic Fear & Whiskey era Mekons, thanks to Bean's rollicking melodica. Sally Timms just may have the most stunning voice in music, and it is on full display on Scottish folk singer Matthew McGinn's miner's lullaby "Corrie Doon." Even if the lyrics aren't particularly comforting, the harmonies are amazing.

Despite the record's seemingly narrow subject matter, there's not a weak track here. Unfortunately, the only way to get your hands on a copy right now is at a show, and those are pretty rare these days.

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](mailto:madfolk@charter.net). Learn about concerts, membership, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities at [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org).

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## Stuart Stotts

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[facebook.com/stuart.stotts](https://facebook.com/stuart.stotts)



## Common Chord

• Sat, Sept 4, 5:00 pm: Common Chord @ Paoli Mill Park, Paoli

## Wild Hog In The Woods

Contact Kim at 608-233-5687 or [info@wildhoginthewoods.org](mailto:info@wildhoginthewoods.org)  
953 Jenifer St, Madison, WI

• Fri, Sept 10th, @7:30pm - KG & The Ranger - [kg@kgandtheranger.com](mailto:kg@kgandtheranger.com)

## The Brink Lounge

701 E Washington Ave, Madison, WI

• Tue, Sept 28th, @7:30pm - Blato Zlato - \$10/person (Pay at the door)

**"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](http://www.madfolk.org). If you have questions about your membership in the meantime, send email to [info@madfolk.org](mailto:info@madfolk.org). Thanks for your membership and support of Mad Folk!

**Way #1 – online**

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