Volume 40 No. 2 February 2014

Come see Bill Staines at The Brink Mar. 1

Lexington, Massachusetts is known as the site of the first battle of the Revolutionary War and the "Shot heard 'round the world," but should also be billed as the boyhood home of Bill Staines, the "Folksinger heard 'round the world."

And Bill Staines is coming to town. For most lovers of folk and folk-style music, that should be all that need be said to promote this legendary singersongwriter's upcoming show in Madison. One of this country's most beloved and respected traditional-style writers and performers, Bill has traveled the land since the early 1960s, playing about two hundred shows every year to adoring audiences from Alaska to Florida. He has become familiar to thousands via appearance on such national shows as A Prairie Home Companion and Mountain Stage.

"Bill Staines is a prototypical singer/ songwriter, long on the anecdote, quick with the quip, not a stranger to his character's plights and/or escapades." - The New Paper, Providence

"Prototypical singer/songwriter" is a good phrase to use in describing the man, his music, and his concerts, particularly for anyone who has fondness for the likes of Woody Guthrie, Tom Paxton, Ian Tyson, and other great acoustic troubadours who came of age in the 50s and 60s. His songs are so immediately easy to grasp, they give you the feeling you have known them your whole life. This isn't because they are shallow songs; it's because they are expertly crafted by one so steeped in the style of traditional music, writing such enduring songs has become second nature. It is no surprise that eight of his wonderful songs are featured in the great Rise Up Singing songbook. His work appears

in scouting songbooks, hymnals, school music books, and numerous other collections of favorite singable songs. He has had his work recorded by Peter, Paul, and Mary, Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy, The Highwaymen, Mason Williams, Grandpa Jones, Jerry Jeff Walker, Nanci Griffith, Glen Yarborough and countless others.

"[Bill Staines is] a modern day Stephen Foster...his songs will be around 100 years from now." -- composer David Amram

"Folk singer Bill Staines' compositions recall the paintings of Grandma Moses simple, literal and evocative of a bucolic tranquility that modern times have almost erased." - Hartford Courant

The stage presence of Bill Staines is a perfect complement to his songs. He is easy going, sincere, funny, big-hearted, interesting, and you know within the first ten minutes of a show that he has that rare ability to be the same comfortably lovable person on stage as he would be in your breakfast nook. Bill is well represented on YouTube, where this quality comes through very well; do a YouTube search for him, or have a look at this fine interview, with songs, of Bill on Tom May's River City Folk program:

http://youtu.be/VTFSbnX2pZ0

In this interview, Bill explains how, in the early 60s, he would come home from high school, drop off his books, and head for Cambridge to absorb and participate in the golden years of the folk music revival, sharing the times with the Kweskin Jug Band, Ian and Sylvia, Jackie Washington, Joan Baez and the rest. Bill was MC at the incredible Club 47 where so many amazing folk music

careers were launched.

"Bill Staines has been my hero since 1977. He carries on where Woody left off-carrying on the tradition of stories and characters you wish you knew." - Nanci Griffith

Bill is such a captivating presence, such an effortlessly convincing singer, and such a treasured songwriter, it's easy to overlook his wondrous guitar styling. He is left handed but does not string his guitar in a left-handed fashion, but, like Dave Van Ronk, Christine Lavin, and Elizabeth Cotten, he plays the guitar strung normally but held upside-down. You have to look closely to notice this, but he plays the "alternating bass" with his index finger, and the melody mostly with his thumb. Most guitar players find this hard to imagine, let alone accomplish so beautifully.

The credits and accomplishments of Bill Staines could fill a book, and as a matter of fact, he has written a memoir (The Tour: A Life Between the Lines).

Oh, and incidentally, Bill has made 26 recordings and four songbooks of his songs, has won the National Yodeling Championship in Kerrville, Texas, and as far back as 1971 he was named as "Boston's Best Performer" by the Boston Phoenix, and in the folk-performer-rich Boston of 1971, that was saying something!

"One of the most admired and imitated writers on the contemporary folk circuit.. [He writes] pensive, probing narratives made especially memorable by their ability to translate the common details of common lives into songs of uncommon eloquence and beauty." - The Austin American-Statesman

Come see Bill Staines! You'll be glad you did!

Small Potatoes at The Brink Friday February 7th

By their name -- Small Potatoes -- you know without even seeing or hearing this husband and wife duo that they are humble folks with a self effacing sense of humor, confident enough in their abilities they can afford to poke fun at themselves.

Small Potatoes, made up of the irresistibly charismatic, unremittingly charming and impossibly talented couple Jacquie Manning and Rich Prezioso, is all that and more.

"I've never been so fascinated by a singing duo. They're original, funny, energetic, profound, always respectful of the music but always daring to try new things. When they get their hands on music, rhythmically and harmonically, it just takes off. The audience here loves them. It's a stand-up-and-shoult kind of love." -- Phee Sherline, San Diego Folk Heritage Society, San Diego, CA.

Jacquie and Rich are exciting and expressive singers, singly, as backup for the other's solo, two-piece harmonizing, or singing conversational songs in which they take turns singing to each other.

"The one constant in Small Potatoes' unique blend of music is the couple's tightly woven, flawless vocals. Whether singing raucous swing tunes, haunting Celtic ballads, pounding cowboy songs or tender ballads sung a cappella, their voices never falter." -- Laura Hill Vasilion, Chicago Tribune

But not only that, their instrumentation is some of the best on the folk music circuit. Rich Prezioso, originally from Fort Lee, NJ, became fascinated by Bluegrass music in high school. In college he studied classical guitar, which helps explain the rock solid and sophisticated guitar wizardry he is now famous for.

With an emphasis on music, Rich graduated with a liberal arts degree from Hampshire College. After graduation he played in a number of rock 'n' roll and blues bands, further expanding his guitar skills while working on his songwriting talent

In 1986 he moved to Chicago and

found work writing radio and TV jingles. When he met Jacquie Manning, he was "...writing commercials for Cap'n Crunch cereal."

Jacquie says, "Rich was looking for a female voice for a commercial he was doing... He liked my voice and hired me." Rich and Jacquie at that time were both working on their solo acts around the Chicago area.

Jacquie Manning, an equally talented songwriter, had been drawn into music in part by the Girl Scouts. She says she was a Girl Scout until age 30. As a girl at Girl Scout camp, "They always chose me to lead songs. I thought it was because I was loud, not good."

But she was good, and she was enthusiastic. She played the flute in grade school and in 7th grade taught herself how to play the guitar. She went on to forge a solid solo career, becoming a regular at Chicago's Earl of Old Town, Somebody Else's Troubles, and Holstein's. To expand her horizons, she tried country and rock, and for awhile was a member of a 50s revival rock band called Mickey and the Memories. She then dived into Celtic music and joined an Irish band, spending ten years playing Renaissance fairs.

Three years after meeting each other, Jacquie and Rich were married, and eventually became not only a couple, but a musical duo. It is rare to see people comfortable with both of these kinds of relationships, but for them, it works beautifully. From their diverse backgrounds, they have combined all their musical fascinations and talents to form one of the most creative, varied, and flat-out entertaining shows in the business. They write incredible songs but also are not so self involved that they won't interpret existing songs from every imaginable source and genre. "Our music is the result of vears of careful indecision," says Rich. They describe their music as "From Celtic to cowboy."

Madison audiences have always been enthusiastically welcoming for Small Potatoes, and their show here on February 7th is being eagerly anticipated.

"Jacquie Manning and Rich Prezioso combine cleverly witty with powerfully poignant songs, along with well chosen covers to present an unusually entertaining and involving repertoire engagingly delivered." -- Rich Warren, The Midnight Special, WFMT Radio, Chicago.

"They don't sound like anybody else. I like that. They lay out a blanket and every song is a picnic." -- Warren Nelson, Big Top Chautauqua, Bayfield WI

"Take a bunch of styles of acoustic, folk, western, blues and swing, add very hot guitar work, and vocals so tight you need WD-40 to get them apart, and you have what Rich and Jacquie dazzle audiences with." -- Tom Otte, Fondy Acoustic Music Alliance, Fond du Lac, WI

"SPUDS rule!" -- Meredith Carson, Swallow Hill Music Assoc.. Denver

Don't miss this concert! You'll love

Who: Small Potatoes

What: Concert

When: Friday, February 7, 7pm; doors

open at 6:30.

Where: Brink Nightclub, 701 E. Washin-

ton Ave, Madison

Tickets: \$13 advance, \$16 day of show.

Online (with \$1.45 service chaarge): Go to madfolk.org, click on the Small Potatoes concert details, then click on the

BrownPaterTickets logo.

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You can purchase tickets for shows in advance at these outlets:

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Spruce Tree Music - 851 East Johnson, Madison

By Mail

Send a stamped self-addressed envelope with your check payable to:

Mad Folk, PO Box 665, Madison, WI 537

Peggy Seeger is coming back to Madison!



How do you follow up a farewell tour? Peggy Seeger is doing it with an I Can't Stay Away Tour! Peggy will be doing a driving tour, travelling with her grandson Alex MacColl. Start-

ing in Boston visiting various points in the east coast and on to Chicago, bringing her to Madison on March 23. Peggy's new CD Everything Changes will be released in March 2014.

Born in 1935 in New York, Peggy is Pete Seeger's half-sister and Ruth Crawford Seeger's daughter. Her first life-partner was the Salford playwright and songwriter Ewan MacColl, who wrote First Time Ever I Saw Your Face for her and to whom she bore three children. She has nine grand-children. A multi-instrumentalist, she is known for her excellent renditions of Anglo-American folksongs and for her activist songwriting, especially in the fields of feminism and ecology. Her best-known pieces are Gonna Be an Engineer and The Ballad of Springhill, which latter is rapidly becoming regarded as a traditional song. After living 35 years in England, she re-

turned to the USA in 1994 and took up residence in Asheville, North Carolina. She moved to Boston (USA) in 2006 to take up a teaching job at Northeastern University. She moved back to England (Oxford) in 2010. She tours extensively in the UK and occasionally in the USA, Canada and Australia as a solo concert artist, singing and giving workshops. She has made 22 solo recordings and has participated in more than a hundred recordings with other artists.

February shows at Kiki's Righteous House of Music

February 21 @ 9 pm (doors @ 8) The Westerns Elstons suggested donation \$15

February 22 @ 9 pm (doors @ 8) Loves It!/Winn Dixie suggested donation \$8

I'll be taking reservations for all shows. Once I have confirmed there is space available you can guarantee your spot by sending a check to Kiki Schueler, 1326 MacArthur Rd, Madison WI 53714.

Ana and the Bel-Tones:

Celebrating Women in MidWest Cajun Music Saturday, February 22nd-Just in time for Mardi Gras! Dance instruction & open jam: 6:30

Cajun Dance: 7:30 \$9.00 admission

Join Madison's Prairie Bayou Band as they welcome the kindred all-female, Ana and the Bel-Tones for an open jam, dance lesson and Cajun dance Saturday, February 22nd. Ana and the Bel-Tones have quickly become one of the most active Cajun bands in the Twin Cities, playing traditional Cajun tunes and having a GREAT time doing it! The dance will be preceded by a dance lesson and Cajun jam open to all levels from 6:30-7:30. \$9.00 admission. Sometime during the evening expect a mé·lange of women Cajun musicians from Madison, lowa, Illinois and the Twin Cities (and who knows where else!) sharing the stage with the Bel-tones. Step on over and out onto the dance floor!

Inside Llewen Davis Soundtrack 2013 Nonesuch Records



Review by Kiki Schueler

You don't have to have seen "Inside on "The Auld Triangle" for some Llewyn Davis" to enjoy the soundtrack, gorgeous harmonies with Chris but it does help put this collection of folk Thile, Chris Eldridge, Gabe Witchsongs in context. The new Coen broth- er and Timberlake. Together they ers movie focuses on the waning days of sound as authentically Irish as the traditional folk music in New York City, Clancy Brothers. an era that ended both in the movie and laced Sands turns in a stunning historically with the arrival of Bob Dylan version of Tom Paxton's "The and his original tunes. It likely isn't going Last Thing on My Mind," but even to do for folk what "O Brother, Where Art more memorable is "Five Hundred Thou?" (whose soundtrack sold nearly Miles," on which he, Timberlake eight million copies) did for bluegrass, and Carey Mulligan out-Peter, but Inside Llewyn Davis is every bit as Paul & Mary (the trio who made good. Like Brother, its music was over- it famous). The actress, the realseen by the genius of T Bone Burnett, life Mrs. Mumford, acquits herself and he makes some inspired choices. well. The Coen brothers certainly The story is said to be loosely based on chose wisely when casting, which the life of Dave Van Ronk; the fact that is never more obvious than when he released a record titled Inside Dave Isaac is playing. Van Ronk lends credence to this theo- He sings all these songs, notably ry. His version of "Green, Green Rocky the heartbreaking tragedy "The Road," the only previously released Death of Queen Jane," as though track, closes the record and plays over his livelihood, and maybe his life, the movie credits. The penultimate track depends on it. comes from Dylan himself. In one of The soundtrack's only original the final scenes we see the back of a song should be taking home an hunched figure quietly playing the un- Oscar. "Please Mr. Kennedy" is released version of "Farewell" included an intentionally hilarious novelty here, and we can sense, as perhaps song, and the recording session is Llewyn does too, that things are about one of the highlights of the movie. to change.

"It's never new, and it never gets old, it's ater, watch this clip on YouTube a folk song," he jokes after playing the now.) Davis is clearly put off by record's first track, "Hang Me, Oh Hang the silly lyrics and being asked to Me," for an attentive club audience. He's stutter, "I'm grateful for the gig, but

only half right, because the rest of the soundtrack consists of new versions of traditional songs recorded by an allstar cast. Some appear in the movielike Stark Sands, (an underutilized) Justin Timberlake, and Oscar Isaac as Llewyn Davis-while others only on record. There are two versions of "Fare Thee Well (Dink's Song)" here, one with Isaac singing the mournful tune solo, the second a more lighthearted duet with Marcus Mumford. It isn't until you see the movie that you understand why. Mumford, who was also associate producer, returns

The straight-

(Even if you don't go to the the-

who wrote this?" he asks with eye-rolling exasperation. "I did," responds a visibly hurt Timberlake, who plays Jim of the duo Jim & Jenny. As the deepvoiced third member of "The John Glenn Singers," Adam Driver makes the most of his limited screen time with scene-chewing zeal. The rest of the tracks here are gorgeous, but this is the one that gets stuck in your head. OK, so maybe you don't necessarily need to see the movie to enjoy this collection, but you should see it anyway. Because you like folk music, right?

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. Learnaboutconcerts, membership, sc holarships, and volunteer opportuniti es at www.madfolk.org.

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Red Sky At Night, Sailors Happy

Recently I came across a research report* with the evocative title BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK CONJOINTLY (?): Rhyme as Reason in Aphorisms. The question mark is not mine; it was in the original title. I like that question mark. There aren't enough research studies with question marks in parenthesis in their title. But also, since this study dealt with rhyme, it interested me as a so-called lyricist.

The study was conducted and the report written by Matthew S. McGlone and Jessica Tofighbakhsh of Lafayette College in Easton, PA. The abstract of this report begins with this line: "We explored the role that poetic form can play in people's perceptions of the accuracy of aphorisms as descriptions of human behavior."

(In Wikipedia, this "rhyme-as-reason" effect is also called the "Eaton-Rosen phenomenon," though I can't find any other reference to this name for it. Maybe someone made it up who had trouble spelling Tofighbakhsh.)

A lot of papers like this are a slow slog for someone not up on the area of discussion or of the conventions of research reports in general. This one is pretty clearly written for the lay person (me), though it does have lines like "This experiment employed a 2 x 2 x 2 design with aphorism type (extant rhyming or non-rhyming) and version (original or modified) as within-subjects factors and instruction condition (control or warning) as a between-subjects factor." This may be crystal clear to folks in the know, but to me it took a bit of parsing.

If I understand the setup correctly, they started with 30 rhyming aphorisms and 30 non-rhyming aphorisms. For each of these 60 aphorisms, they created a version that was identical but had one word replaced by a synonym. For the rhyming aphorisms, the resulting version had the same meaning as the original, but did not rhyme. For the non-rhyming aphorisms, the resulting version had the

same meaning as the original, and still did not rhyme. Their examples:

Original rhyming aphorism: "What sobriety conceals, alcohol reveals."

New non-rhyming version: "What sobriety conceals, alcohol unmasks."

Original non-rhyming aphorism: "Benefaction is the most difficult weapon to conquer."

New (still non-rhyming) version: "Benefaction is the most difficult weapon to **overcome**."

These "Benefaction is..." originally nonrhyming aphorisms were used as a sort of control, to help show that the results of the study were not skewed by mere word-replacement, but were indeed based upon rhyme vs. non-rhyme.

To make a long story short, they divided up a bunch of volunteers and gave them selections of aphorisms. They were asked to rate each aphorism as "an accurate description of human behavior on a scale from 1 (not at all accurate) to 9 (very accurate)."

Half of the volunteers were given no particular instruction at the outset. The OTHER half were told in boldface type, to base their judgements "only on the claim that the statement makes about behavior, not the poetic quality of the statement's wording."

There are more details to this study than I'm representing, but the upshot was, those WARNED to NOT be swayed by the rhyming of the aphorism were much more likely to judge all aphorisms to have about the same accuracy. In contrast, those NOT WARNED about the influence of the rhyming component were much more likely to say that the rhyming aphorisms were more of an "accurate description of human behavior" than the non-rhyming aphorisms.

IN OTHER WORDS (mine), if you aren't WARNED to take into consideration the subconsciously convincing effect of rhymes, you may be giving a rhymed statement more credit than it deserves, truth-wise. The example they give of the power of rhyme and its bearing on ap-

parent truth is the effectiveness of the statement "If the gloves don't fit, you must acquit," in the O.J. Simpson trial in 1995 (this paper appeared in 2000, so the memory of the trial was pretty fresh). This is conjecture, of course, but it is interesting to think about.

McGlone and Tofighbakhsh wrap things up by suggesting that the results of their study might be due to the "enhanced processing fluency" afforded by rhymed phrases when compared to non-rhymed but similar phrases, and that this increased fluency has the effect of making something seem more true. Could be.

Anyway, moving on, it's not Simpson's lawyer Johnny Cochran who first used rhyme to bump up the perceived accuracy of a statement. Advertisers and politicians have known this forever. Consider "Winston tastes good like a cigarette should," "You'll wonder where the yellow went when you brush your teeth with Pepsodent." "Plop, plop, fizz, fizz, oh what a relief it is." "I like Ike." "All the way with LBJ." "See the USA in your Chevrolet."

Then there are the scads of advisories like "An apple a day keeps the doctor away," "Haste makes waste," and my favorite, "Liar liar pants on fire."

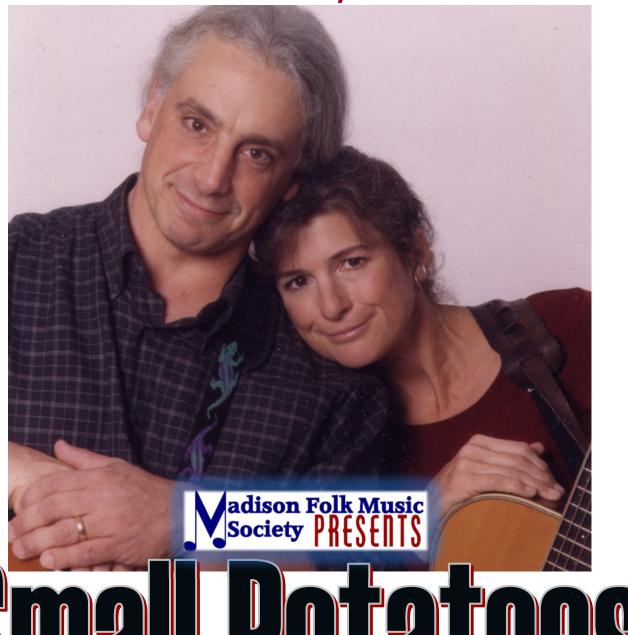
And maybe it's because of that "enhanced processing fluency" that rhymed aphorisms work well as mnemonic devices. I'll always remember my high school chemistry teacher Gus Ediger's advice, "Do as you oughta, add acid to water." Then, on to English class: "I before E except after C." Not to mention "Thirty days have September, April June and November..."

All this makes me wonder if -- taking "aphorisms" out of this quote and replacing it with "lyrics" -- there may be a "...role that poetic form can play in people's perceptions of the accuracy of [lyrics] as descriptions of human behavior." Whether this is because of the "increased processing fluency" of rhymed language or not, and whether other esthetic considerations, like meter and melody, also increase this fluency and, as a result, the perceived truthfulness of a lyric, is a whole 'nother Wither Zither.

*Psychological Science, Vol. 11, No. 5, September 2000

-WZ, February 2014

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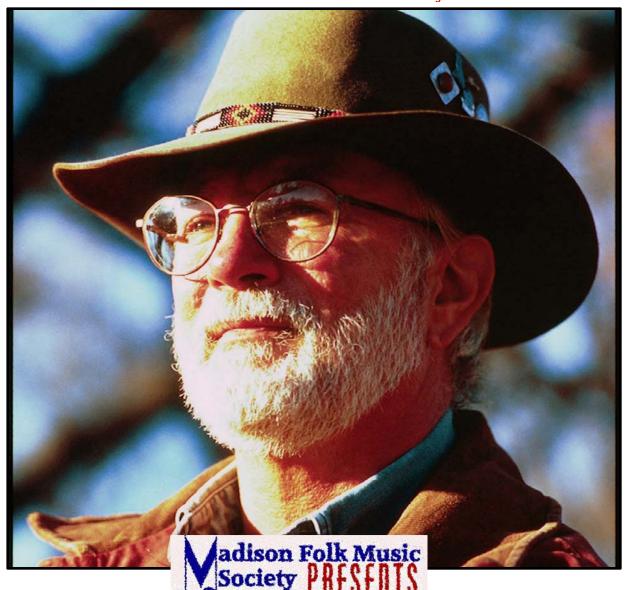
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"...my hero since 1977. He carries on where Woody left off." Nanci Griffith



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February 2014



ison Small Potatoes

• Friday, Febuary 7, show starts at 7, doors at 6:30 At the Brink Lounge-\$13 advance, \$16 day of show

♪ Bill Staines

• Saturday, March 1, show starts at 7, doors at 6:30 At the Brink Lounge-\$15 advance, \$17 day of show

♪ Peggy Seeger

• Sunday, March 23, show starts at 7, doors at 6:30 At the Brink Lounge, \$16 advance \$19 day of show

♪♪ Ellis

• Thursday, April 10, show starts at 7, doors at 6:30 At the Brink Lounge, \$14 advance \$17 day of show

♪♪ April Verch

• Saturday, April 14, show starts at 7, doors at 6:30 At the Brink Lounge-\$15 advance, \$17 day of show

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Venues



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The Brink Lounge

- Saturday, February 1, Graminy, 7pm, \$10 donation
- Wednesday, February 5, Aaron Williams and the Hoodoo w/guest, Alison Margaret, 8pm, no cover
- Tuesday, February 11, Robert J acoustic solo, 6:30pm, no
- Wednesday, February 19, Aaron Williams and the Hoodoo 8pm, no cover
- •Tuesday, February 25, On the Road and in the Round Singer/songwriter Showcase 7pm, \$10



18 S. Water St. Ft. Atkinson, WI cafecarpe.com 920-563-9391

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All shows at 8:00pm unless indicated otherwise

- Thursday, February 6, Dan Navarro \$15 •Friday, February 7, Ernie Hendrickson, \$8 •Saturday, February 8, Loneseome Bill Camplin \$7.50 •Thursday, February 13, The New Pioneers, 7pm, \$9 •Friday, February 14, The Pines w/ Mike and Ruthy \$15 Sundaay, February 16, Ellis Paui \$20 advance pay •Friday, February 21st, The Foma, donation
- Saturday, February 22nd, Bill Camplin Band \$9

Irish Cultural & Heritage Center ICHC 2133 W Wisconsin Ave

Milwaukee, WI -- ichc.net 414-345-8800

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Fri, Mar 21-- Solas

7:30pm -- \$29 adv. / \$33 d.o.s. -- Students \$10 w/ ID

Fri, Apr 11-- Moya Brennan

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Mother Fool's Coffeehouse 1101 Williamson St. motherfools.com 608-259-1030

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3210 Cty Hwy BB Dodgeville, WI folklorevillage.org 608-924-4000

- Saturday, February 1- Barn Dance with "Ladies of the Lake", Amy McFarland & Maria Terres and caller Carol Ormand & Old-Time Jam
- Tuesday, February 4-Open Mic
- Saturday, February 22-Cajun Dance: Ana and the Bel-Tones: Celebrating Women in Midwest Cajun Music Dance workshop/open jam preceding. \$9 for adults and \$5 for teens and children

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Cajun jam held every first Sunday 2 p.m.-5 p.m. At the Froth House: 11 N. Allen St., Madison We welcome all levels of experience with instruments and Cajun music.

kcholden@wisc.edu for more info. www.prairiebayoucajun.com





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Weekdays 9:00am-noon

- · Mon Global Revolutions (folk from the world over) w/ David & Martin Alvarado & Eugenia Highland
- Tue -- For the Sake of the Song (traditional American folk) w/Jim Schwall
- Wed -- Back to the Country (country music on a theme) w/Bill Malone
- Thur -- Diaspora (folk and international) w/Terry O'
- Fri -- Mud Acres (bluegrass and acoustic) w/Chris **Powers**

Madison Dance. African/African-American Dance classes with live drumming -- Sun, 7:00-9:00pm --Metro Dance, 3009 University Ave. -- 255-3677 / 251-4311

- SpiritMoves Ecstatic Dance 2nd and 4th Weds, 7:00-9:00 pm -- The Center for Conscious Living, 849 East Washington Ave. -- \$7 min. donation
- English Country Dance taught -- 1st and 3rd Mon, 7:30-9:30pm -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 238-9951 or 238-9951
- International Dancing -- Wed and Sun; classes 7:30-8:30pm, request dancing 8:30-11:00pm -- The Crossing, 1127 University Ave. -- 241-3655
- Irish Dancing -- Monthly Ceili and set dance events are posted at celticmadison.org/dance
- Italian Dancing -- Tue, 7:00-9:00pm, no experience or partner necessary -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 838-9403 (Philana)
- Madison Contra Dance Cooperative -- Tue; 7:30 jam band practice, intermediate level dancing 7:45-9:40pm -- \$5 for non-members -- Gates of Heaven, 302 E. Gorham --238-3394 (Steve)
- Morris Dancing -- Wed, 7:00pm -- call for location -- 238-9951
- Scottish Country Dancing -- Sun, 7:00pm -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 835-0914

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