

North Elk Coffee House 2018-2019 Season

September 15, 2018 - Michael Johnathon

The North Elk Coffee House is excited to begin its 2018-19 season with a return performance by veteran folksinger, Michael Johnathon! Michael has dedicated his life to performing American folk music and keeping it alive via his weekly syndicated radio program, The WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour. Michael grew up as a neighbor of Pete Seeger and credits his music as the inspiration for becoming a folksinger. Michael now lives with his wife and family in a log cabin outside of Lexington, Kentucky. After settling in Kentucky, he spent several years traveling the Appalachian Mountain region to learn the music of the people who make their homes there. Then Michael took his music on the road, including shows at colleges, fairs, and shows benefiting the homeless and farm families.

Michael wrote *The Walden Play*, a two-act play about Henry David Thoreau that has been shown on PBS and performed in 42 countries. *The Woody Guthrie Opera* is Michael's fully-orchestrated composition about Woody Guthrie's writing of This Land Is Your Land. And Michael continues to write new music. His most recent releases are *Evening Song* (2017), and *Pirate* (2018), a musical statement about our modern life, world, society and politics. Come help us launch the new season in September and hear Michael for yourself.

You can read more and hear some samples at: <http://michaeljonathon.com>

October 20, 2018 - John Lionarons

In October, we will welcome John Lionarons back to the North Elk. John is a regular at the Coffee House and a virtuoso on the hammered dulcimer. His playing has been awarded several times at the National Hammered Dulcimer Championships in Winfield, Kansas! However, that is just the beginning; John also entertains with his accordion, fiddle, guitar, and bodhran. And he recently learned to play a glass harp he built himself. John is a great story teller, singer and instrumentalist. Come hear him live and you are sure to enjoy his performance!

John's hammered dulcimer music is mesmerizing, as he skillfully glides over the strings. He draws listeners into his songs with stories that relate the history of their composition and their handing down through generations. He also enjoys presenting Early American tunes, which he honed during several years as the guest artist at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. John will switch to a variety of instruments, as the evening goes on: from the dulcimer to the guitar, the fiddle, bodhran, and accordion. John has written and performed music for local theater companies, including People's Light and Theater Company in Malvern, PA. His compositions include original scores for productions of "Beauty and the Beast", "Much Ado About Nothing", and "Through the Looking Glass". John's original music has been nominated twice for Philadelphia's Barrymore Award for Excellence in Theatre. Join us in October for an evening with John Lionarons. Read more and hear some of John's music at: <http://johnlionarons.com>

November 17, 2018 - The Sin City Band

The Sin City Band, legendary performers throughout the Delaware Valley, will stop by for a performance of their eclectic mix of classic American songs and original compositions. We last hosted this group of talented musicians in 2014. They were 40 years in the business back then and even better now! Scott Birney is lead singer and one of the guitarists for the band. The rest of the group is composed of Steve Hobson on electric guitar, David Berry on piano and bass, Jim Ficca on drums, and Alan Berdoulay on pedal steel guitar. Their sound is well-polished and guarantees an evening of great listening!

The Sin City Band has visited bandstands from The Grand Opera House in Wilmington to the Grand Bahamas, from New England to Colorado, from backyards to music festivals. They played their first show in a cozy New Hampshire roadside bar, the night Richard Nixon resigned. That was followed by a year of touring with a repertoire of classic pedal-steel-country music. From there, it was off to Colorado for an urban-cowboy winter before they finally settled in the Delaware Valley in 1976.

Scott, Steve, and David are all original members of the band, playing together since the mid-seventies. Jim signed on in 1985, and Alan has been adding the beloved steel guitar tones since 2008. They have been described as "being retro before retro was cool". We hope you will join us in November, as they continue "The Never-Ending Tour"! You can watch video of the band at its website: www.thesincityband.com

January 19, 2019 - Cosy Sheridan

Cosy Sheridan had been to the North Elk Coffee House two times prior to last season, sharing her philosophy on aging gracefully in *Botox Tango* and her humorous retelling of the Punic Wars in *Hannibal Crossed the Alps*. She also sang her poignant memoir of her grandfather's struggle with aging and the musical legacy he passed on to her, in *George and His 88 Keys*. The plan was to have Cosy make a third trip to North East, but a bad cold had other ideas. Since Cosy's 2017-18 show had to be cancelled, we are happy that she can come back this season! Cosy writes love songs for adults and practical philosophy for a complicated world. And her lyrical dexterity is backed by her distinctive percussive guitar style. Cosy released a collection of songs, titled *Pretty Bird*, which was chosen as one of *Sing Out!* magazine's Great CDs of 2014. This year Cosy released a new collection: *My Fence and My Neighbor*. On the CD are four songs composed by Cosy's singing partner, Charlie Koch. Come to the coffee house next winter and hear songs from this newest release!

Cosy Sheridan first played on the national circuit in 1992 when she won songwriting contests at the Kerrville Folk Festival and the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, and released her critically acclaimed CD, *Quietly Led* on Waterbug Records. Since then she's been on the road, traveling from her former home in Utah and her current home in Boston, playing at clubs, concert halls and coffee houses. For the past 25 years Cosy has also taught classes in songwriting,

performance and guitar, at workshops and adult music camps across the country. In fact, Charlie was one of her students! Acoustic Guitar Magazine wrote, "If I were going to throw an all-girl dinner party at which I wanted to laugh and cry from the hors d'oeuvres to the chocolate pudding, Cosy Sheridan is the first woman I'd invite." And the Boston Globe raves: "She is a wonderfully lively, very funny and enormously amiable entertainer..." But don't take their word for it. Come hear Cosy for yourself in January. Read more at: www.cosysheridan.com

February 16, 2019 - The Pam Ortiz Band

Pam and her band last played on our stage during the 2015-16 season so we thought it was time to bring these popular performers back to North East. From her website: "Pam Ortiz is that rare songwriter who can touch people where they feel deeply, where they laugh and where they cry." Pam's songs were showcased in the three albums, produced by the Baltimore/Washington band Terra Nova, in the 1990's. She writes "songs that speak of who we are, what we've won and lost, how we love and live." The band also includes Pam's husband, Bob Ortiz, on percussion and guitar, Ford Schumann on guitar, Nevin Dawson on viola and violin and Philip Dutton on piano and keyboards. With Pam out front on vocals and this talented group of musicians accompanying, the music will be special!

Pam writes songs that speak to the issues of our time, addressing social justice, freedom, and respect for all. In fact, she and the band presented a series of seven concerts in 2017 titled: *. They collected more than \$18,000 to support Songs for Our Future - A Concert Series to Protect Important Rights and Vulnerable People* organizations that work for these rights. A year before that, Pam collaborated with playwright, Robert Earl Price, on an original production entitled *Red Devil Moon*. This musical was invited to be part of the NYC Fringe Festival in 2016. Read more about The Pam Ortiz Band at: <http://www.pamortizmusic.com/> and hear them live in February.

March 16, 2019 - Gathering Sparks

Eve Goldberg has sung and played her songs for us as a solo act before. She has now joined with Jane Lewis, another musician from Ontario, in a duo called Gathering Sparks. Eve and Jane are "musical friends who bonded over finely tuned harmonies and the craft of songwriting. Their inclusive approach embraces folk, pop, blues and gospel influences tastefully played on acoustic guitar, piano, accordion, and ukulele." Their voices will blend in beautiful harmonies, as they sing songs from their CD, nominated for a 2014 Canadian Folk Music Award for Vocal Group of the Year!

In addition to their concerts, Eve and Jane both present workshops for adults in vocal music and harmony, songwriting, ukulele and guitar. They also lead sing-along concerts and have performed their original songs with community choirs at festivals and other events. In fact, on her last visit, we had fun joining Eve on the chorus of her song, *Pebble in the Water*. If you love great folk music and the chance to exercise your vocal chords, be sure to come to the North Elk this month! Read more about gathering Sparks at: <http://www.gatheringsparks.com/>

April 27, 2019 - Shawna Caspi

Since the Easter Vigil takes place on April 20, we will move our show to April 27. But the extra week will be worth the wait. We are happy to be welcoming Shawna Caspi to the Coffee House for this show, her first time in North East! Like Gathering Sparks, Shawna is another Toronto-based performer. Shawna plays finger picking style guitar to accompany her original songs, most recently recording a collection titled *Forest Fire* in 2017. She will present songs from this album as well as her newest compositions. In the words of Andy Frank, of *Roots Music Canada*, "Shawna Caspi has the rare gift of presence, a warm presence that immediately invites audience engagement, from the first strum of her skilled guitar playing to the last exquisite note she sings. Her songs are beautiful stories that stay with listeners long after the gig is over." We are very excited to be able to bring you an evening of music with Shawna Caspi!

In addition to songwriting, Shawna has a love of painting. She does landscapes of places she photographs while on tour with her music. On her website, you can see some of her work, and she will bring some paintings to display at her show. Maybe she will even start on a landscape of the North East River or the historic St. Mary Anne's Church! We hope you can join us to hear Shawna this month. Read more at: <http://www.shawnacaspi.com/>

May 18, 2019 - Rupert Wates

Two seasons ago we first presented a performance by Rupert Wates. We were amazed by his songs and his dazzling guitar playing. So we are happy that he will be returning to close out our season in May! Rupert is a guitarist and singer born in London, who spent time in Paris, before moving to the United States in 2006. Rupert's acoustic music is a mix of melodic art/folk, with flavors of jazz, vaudeville and cabaret. His regularly plays at venues throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. His frequent house concerts make him the perfect choice for our intimate setting.

Rupert has recorded nine solo albums. When he last came to the Coffee House, he played songs from *Colorado Mornings*, a collection of love songs released in 2016. This time around, Rupert will be performing songs from his newest CD, *The Lights of Paris*. They center on "the dangers, disillusionments and cruelties of today's world, in which the lights of Paris offer a symbol of love, beauty and hope." As Jim Abbott of the Orlando Sentinel writes: "[Rupert's] narrative storytelling is superb -- even by the highest folk music standards." Please join us for what we expect to be another great evening of heartfelt songs, featuring Rupert's signature fluid finger style guitar and his distinctive vocals! Learn more about Rupert Wates and hear his music at: <http://www.rupertwatesmusic.com/>