

Blackstone River Theatre



Solstice Festival

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JANUARY

- **THANK YOU! Despite the still-challenging economy, Blackstone River Theatre saw more than 6,100 audience members attend nearly 100 concerts, dances, classes and private functions in 2010!** September marked the 10-year anniversary of the reopening of Blackstone River Theatre after more than four years of volunteer renovation efforts from July, 1996, to September, 2000. Since reopening, BRT has now presented more than 1,050 events in front of more than 67,000 audience members!
- **Look for details about another six-week round of fiddle classes** for beginner, continuing beginner/intermediate, advanced intermediate and advanced students with Cathy Clasper-Torch beginning Jan. 25 and Jan. 26.
- **Look for details about six-week classes in beginner mountain dulcimer and clogging** with Aubrey Atwater starting Jan. 13.
- **Look for details about six-week classes in beginner mandolin and also playing tunes on mandolin** with Ben Pearce starting Jan. 24.
- **There will be an exhibit called "Through the Lens: An Exploration in Digital Photography" by Kristin Elliott-Stebenne and Denise Gregoire** in BRT's Art Gallery January 14 through Feb. 19. *There will be an exhibit opening Saturday, Jan. 15 from 6-7:30 p.m.*

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TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, CALL BRT AT: 401-725-9272

Leave your name, number of tickets desired, for which show, your phone number and please let us know if you would like a confirmation phone call.

**Sunday, January 2, 10 AM, Open to the public
MAYOR DANIEL McKEE'S INAUGURATION**

Thursday, January 13

6:30 PM: 6-week class in BEGINNER MOUNTAIN DULCIMER with Aubrey Atwater begins

7:30 PM: 6-week class in CLOGGING with Aubrey Atwater begins

**Saturday, January 15, 8:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show
moira smiley & VOCO - A capella vocals, body percussion and more!**



VOCO is a visionary blend of voices redefining harmony singing with the power and physicality of folksong, the avant-garde fearlessness of Béla Bartók and the vaudevillian accompaniment of cello, banjo, accordion and body percussion. **Moira Smiley** leads a trio of extraordinary musicians who share a passion for powerful, emotional music with lush three-part vocal harmony, performing original improvisation-built songs steeped in Appalachia and Eastern Europe. Joining Moira tonight will be **Emily Eagen** (voice, ukelele, body percussion) and **April Guthrie** (cello,

voice, body percussion). **Named #1 a cappella group in the U.S. in 2007**, VOCO combines the energy of street singing and the elegance of a string quartet. Recently featured on more than 100 radio stations nationwide on NPR's "Harmonia," VOCO has released two critically acclaimed CDs, "Small Worlds" and "Circle, Square, Diamond & Flag." Moira Smiley, singer-composer, leads VOCO, travels the world as a soloist, and creates new work for dance, theatre and film. Her voice can be heard in films, television (BBC, PBS), NPR, and on more than 40 recordings. She has sung with leading ensembles and artists around the world, including Paul Hillier's Theater of Voices, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, and New World Symphony. While studying piano performance and Early Music at Indiana University, Moira toured extensively with her vocal group, VIDA. Praised for her musical depth and noted as a musical "shape-shifter," Moira also explores the depths of early American, Irish and Balkan traditional song. Moira is in high demand as a music director and vocal coach and composes for vocal ensembles around the world - her song "Stand in that River" is performed by thousands of choral ensembles and singers of all stripes. *Join us as we kick off our 2011 season with sweet, hard-driving Americana mixed with crooked eastern European dance and dissonance, all rounded out with body-stompin' percussive movement and hair-raising harmonies!*

Show postponed to Friday, March 25, due to snowstorm!

Friday, January 21, 8:00 PM, \$10.00 advance/\$12.00 day of show

RORY RAVEN - Mentalist and Mindbender



Rory Raven is a mentalist with 15 years of experience reading minds and astonishing audiences. Neither a psychic nor a magician, he offers a compelling kind of entertainment unlike anything audiences have ever seen. With a few simple props (paper and pencil, a pack of playing cards, some paperback books, and the thoughts of some volunteers) Rory involves the audience in a highly unusual - and unusually entertaining - experience. Thoughts are revealed, predictions come true, and perhaps even the spirits are summoned... Rory is well-known for leading people on his Providence Ghost Walk; he has also released three great books, "Haunted Providence: Strange Tales from the Smallest State,"

"Wicked Conduct," and "The Dorr War: Treason, Rebellion and the Fight for Reform in Rhode Island." **Frequently Asked Questions:** *Okay, let's start with that title - what's a mentalist?* A mentalist is a theatrical mind-reader... a performer who, using a variety of techniques, is able to produce results that would only seem possible by psychic or paranormal means. *And those techniques would be...?* They range from a knowledge of subtle psychological principles and the quirks of human behavior, to quick thinking and a good memory. Rory is also interested in things like suggestion, non-verbal communication, and the so-called trance state. And he doesn't hesitate to borrow ideas from the stage magician, either! *So is he psychic or what?* No. Not everyone believes him when he say that, but there's not much he can do about it he explains. People who believe in the paranormal will believe no matter what he tells them, and those who don't believe won't believe no matter what he shows them. But a long time ago Rory realized that everybody's mind is pretty much made up before they came to a show, so it was a fool's errand to try and convince people of the validity of one viewpoint or another. *So we invite you to sit back, concentrate on your mother's maiden name, and enjoy the show...*

SOLD OUT!

Saturday, January 22, 8:00 PM, \$15.00

HANNEKE CASSEL with KIMBERLEY FRASER - Scottish, Cape Breton & original fiddle music



We are thrilled to present these two dynamic performers together in one show. "Exuberant and rhythmic, somehow both wild and innocent, delivered with captivating melodic clarity and an irresistible playfulness," says the Boston Globe about **Hanneke Cassel's** playing. Such charismatic fiddling has brought the native Oregonian many honors and awards. She is the *1997 U.S. National Scottish Fiddle Champion*, she holds a Bachelors of Music in Violin Performance

from Berklee College of Music, and she has performed and taught across North America, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, and China. Hanneke's latest release, "For Reasons Unseen," features an all-star cast of musicians including Alasdair Fraser, Natalie Haas, Rushad Eggleston, Casey Driessen, Brittany Haas, Keith Murphy, and Aoife O'Donovan. Influences from Scotland to China, along with grooves and musical innovations from the hip Boston bluegrass/Americana scene, fuse together to create a uniquely American approach to Scottish music. Simply put, Hanneke creates sounds on the cutting edge of acoustic music, while retaining the integrity and soul of the Scottish tradition. In addition to her solo career, Hanneke tours regularly with Baroque/Celtic group Ensemble Galilei, and has performed with the Cathie Ryan Band, Cherish the Ladies, Alasdair Fraser, and Matt Glaser and the Wayfaring Strangers. She is also an active member of Boston-based band Childsplay and winner of 1st place INSTRUMENTAL and 3rd place OVERALL in the 2008 USA Songwriting Contest.

Kimberley Fraser was born on Cape Breton Island and nurtured within its rich musical heritage. She first began to impress audiences at the age of three with her step-dancing talents. Soon after that she took up both the fiddle and the piano. Like many in Cape Breton, music is not new to Kimberley's family. She proudly owns the fiddle of her great great grandfather, spanning the musical tradition within her family over a hundred years. Though still in her early 20s, Kimberley's career is already a distinguished one having played with Ashley MacIsaac, Natalie MacMaster, Alasdair Fraser, Lunasa and Martin Hayes. A master at the trio of fiddling, step dancing and piano, Kimberley is a much sought after teacher for all three and has been a long-time instructor at the renowned Gaelic College in Cape Breton. Fraser is continuing her music education by attending the acclaimed Berklee College of Music in Boston. Her latest accomplishments includes the release of "Falling on New Ground" which won the 2008 East Coast Music Award for best "Roots/Traditional Album of the Year." *Not to be missed!*

Monday, January 24

6:30 PM: 6-week class in BEGINNER MANDOLIN with Ben Pearce begins

7:30 PM: 6-week class in PLAYING MANDOLIN TUNES with Ben Pearce begins

Tuesday, January 25

5:30 PM: 6-week class in BEGINNER FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

6:30 PM: 6-week class in CONTINUING BEGINNER FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

7:30 PM: 6-week class in ADVANCED BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

Wednesday, January 26

6:30 PM: 6-week class in ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

7:45 PM: 6-week class in ADVANCED FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

Friday, January 28, 8:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show

HARVEY REID - Virtuoso solo guitar, autoharp and vocals



Songwriter and multi-instrumentalist **Harvey Reid** has honed his craft over the last 35 years in countless clubs, festivals, schools and concert halls across the nation. He has been called a "giant of the steel strings" and "one of the true treasures of American acoustic music." Reid has absorbed a vast repertoire of American contemporary and roots music and woven it into his own personal and distinctive style. You'll find elements of the traditional troubadour, the modern poet-songwriter, the American back-porch picker, the classical virtuoso, and even a good bit of Will Rogers style dry humor and satire. You'll hear folk, country, classical, blues,

ragtime, rockabilly, Celtic, bluegrass, and popular music influences. Reid's skills and versatility on the guitar alone mark him as an important voice in acoustic music. He won the 1981 **National Fingerpicking Guitar Competition** and the 1982 **International Autoharp Competition**. Yet he's also a versatile and engaging singer, a powerful lyricist, prolific composer, arranger and songwriter, a solid mandolin and bouzouki player, and a captivating entertainer. He also plays the 6-string banjo and the autoharp like you've never heard before! His "Steel Drivin' Man" CD was voted in 1996 by Acoustic Guitar Magazine as one of the 10 Essential Folk CDs of all time, in company with Woody Guthrie, Joan Baez and other hallowed names. Reid has also made his mark on the acoustic music world in other ways. He is responsible for most of what is known about the partial capo, developed all of the popular partial-capo configurations in use today and was the first to record and publish music for partial capo. In 1980 he co-founded the Third Hand Capo Co. and also wrote the first college textbook for folk guitar, "Modern Folk Guitar," published by Random House. Reid was the person who convinced Fishman Transducers to develop the Acoustic Blender amplification system, worked on the design team, and even wrote the instructions for it. He may have been the first acoustic independent musician to make a CD, and certainly was among the first to make DAT recordings, and helped usher in the new era of direct-to-digital recordings with a series of articles he wrote for acoustic music magazines. He was also the first artist to endorse Taylor Guitars, and began doing promotion for them in 1983. His success "under the radar" has become a role model for a large number of young, independent musicians who want to pursue their careers outside the music industry. *Check out this amazing musician in his first solo appearance at BRT in seven years!*

FEBRUARY

- **Fiddle classes** for beginner, continuing beginner/intermediate, advanced intermediate and advanced students with Cathy Clasper-Torch continue.
- **Classes in beginner mandolin and also playing tunes on mandolin** with Ben Pearce continue through February 28.
- **The exhibit "Through the Lens: An Exploration in Digital Photography" by Kristin Elliott-Stebenne and Denise Gregoire** is in BRT's Art Gallery through Feb. 19.
- **A photography exhibit by Steve Mason called "Three Mile Radius" will be in BRT's Art Gallery from Feb. 26 through March 31.**

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Saturday, February 5, 8:00 PM, \$13.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show AINE MINOGUE - Celebrating Imbolc: The Feast of Saint Brigid



As traditional Irish music continues to enjoy phenomenal success both here and in Ireland, **Áine Minogue** is an artist who has long explored its themes and who captures its very essence. Her singing reflects the lyricism and richness to be found in Irish music, mythology and poetry with a voice undeniably her own. Born in County Tipperary, Áine's family encouraged her to pursue a number of instruments but it was at age 12 that Áine discovered her true love - the harp - which she decided to pursue in lieu of the others. Áine takes this ancient art form, exploring its underpinnings but adding her own creativity to each piece. With a combination of harping, singing and storytelling with a touch of poetry, her concerts have an intimate "getting away from it all" feel. **Tonight's show celebrates Imbolc - the Feast of Saint Brigid** - celebrated on February 1 which marks the first day of Spring in Ireland. Imbolc is one of the four major "Fire" Festivals on the old Irish Calendar and pre-dates Christianity itself. On Imbolc, the people honored Brigid,

goddess of all creative things. To this day many Irish homes have a St. Brigid's cross for protection - still made from rushes. Before Brigid was a saint with a 'perpetual flame,' she was a fire goddess and is an iconic figure in the Celtic imagination, representing the Celtic aspect of divine femininity. **So who exactly is Brigid?** A lot of confusion stems from the fact that the root of the word Bridgit comes from the word 'Brig' which means 'Exalted One' or 'High One.' It's a title more so than a name and it wasn't exclusive to Ireland - much like the 'Bridgit' the first knights of chivalry chose as their patroness and named their 'brides' after! Says Áine, "When I think of Brigid, I think of three figures: the goddess, who is an amalgamation of several goddess figures from all over the Celtic world; the Saint, who has been greatly mythologized and is one of the three patron saints of Ireland; and the Brigid of folklore, a loving figure, who became woven into the lives of everyday people. It is mostly this Brigid I will be speaking about during the concert." She continues, "And here's where she gets really interesting... This was a woman who walked beside you throughout your day, helped watch over your livestock and feed your children and aided with issues around fertility. While all aspired to be like Mary, if you needed a strong presence to get you through each day, Brigid was your woman! Her concerns reflected the concerns of everyday women and for all that, she was beloved." Áine has done extensive research into the old Celtic calendar, as well as Celtic winter traditions and has unearthed some unusual and haunting selections, as well as having written some original tunes. *Don't miss this fascinating evening of Irish harp music, ethereal vocals, poetry and storytelling by one of BRT's favorite artists!*

Saturday, February 12, 8:00 PM, \$12.00
BERTRAND LAURENCE / OCCIDENTAL GYPSY - CD
release



Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union



French finger-style acoustic guitarist and songwriter **Bertrand Laurence** has become a BRT favorite over the years; he celebrated the release of "6 & 12 String Guitar Music" at BRT in 2009. Laurence is a master of the art of country blues fingerpicking and slide guitar, but he's no purist. His shows feature traditional, contemporary, and original blues but are full of surprises including swing tunes, ragtime, boogie, rockabilly... even blues sung in French! Inspired by childhood

heroes, Laurence tries to recapture in his music the exuberance of Jelly Roll Morton and the rocking guitar style of Big Bill Broonzy. Having spent a number of years as a performance artist, Laurence also knows how to put on a show and his time working at a homeless shelter also taught him the healing power of the blues. "I like to focus on the upside of the blues," he says. "I'm into joy and celebration." Bertrand is joined tonight by **Mark Chênevert** on clarinet. Come out and see two eclectic and incredibly talented musicians doing what they do best... entertain! **Occidental Gypsy** will make their BRT debut as they perform the second half of tonight's split concert and they will also be celebrating a CD release!

Occidental Gypsy is a quartet of musicians who have developed a unique genre probably best defined as "gypsy fusion." The improvisation and arrangement of their music harkens back to the spirit of the European purveyors of gypsy swing, yet they artfully utilize western (ie. Occidental) themes to produce a fresh, yet timeless sound. Their songs represent a revival of sorts, a reminiscence for older listeners and an introduction to the "under 30" crowd of a foreign, yet familiar sound. Is it Jazz? Is it Folk? Is it Roots? No, it is Gypsy Fusion, and audiences can't experience this troupe without moving and smiling. Brothers **Brett** (lead guitar) and **Jeff Feldman**, originally from New York, have been playing gypsy jazz together for more than a decade and within the last two years have teamed up with Boston-based and Berklee-trained singer/rhythm guitarist **Scott Kulman**, as well as Korean-born violinist **Julgi Kang**, currently the concert mistress for the Berklee Jazz String Orchestra. The quartet backs original tunes with timeless Django classics such as Minor Swing, all presented with their unique Occidental arrangements. What really sets this group apart is their jovial camaraderie, edgy charm, and ability to entertain audiences of all ages and musical preferences. Gypsy Swing was popular in its depression-era heyday because of its inherent high-energy excitement. Eighty years later, on the heels of the Great Recession, Occidental Gypsy gives audiences what they want - unabashed enjoyment. *Don't miss a great night of music that's sure to make you smile!*

Sunday, February 13, 2:00 PM, \$20.00 advance/\$25.00 day of show
KELLEY LENNON - A VALENTINE'S CONCERT



We hope you'll join us today for what is sure to be a memorable afternoon of timeless love songs in honor of Valentine's Day as local talent, **Kelley Lennon**, brings some her favorite songs to Blackstone River Theatre. Kelley has been performing professionally for more than 15 years and her wit and banter, along with her warm, genuine personality, make her a crowd favorite. With an extensive repertoire consisting of popular music, Broadway's best, classic jazz tunes, and unforgettable standards, Kelley charms audiences of all ages. She will be joined today by the band **Malloi** featuring Ralph Corsi on piano, Bob Schlink

on guitar, Dave Dicenso on bass, and Grayling Wallace on drums. Some of Kelley's most notable accomplishments over the years have included winning Ed McMahon's NextBigStar competition, being selected as a contestant for CBS' Star Search, and more recently being named "Jazz Act of the Year" by Motif Magazine. Kelley has sung in numerous venues such as Madison Square Garden and The Rainbow Room in New York City and has headlined shows at The Stadium Theatre, Orpheum Theatre, Chan's, and The Verizon Jazz Stage at Waterfire. She is thrilled to be making her debut performance at Blackstone River Theatre in her hometown of Cumberland. Kelley released her first professionally-produced recording, "Always The Music," in 2009 and this holiday season released her second album, "Christmas Memories." Currently, Kelley performs with the R.I.-based band Malloi at weddings, clubs, and corporate functions. An avid sports fan, Kelley has also had the honor of singing the National Anthem at a variety of venues, most notably at Fenway Park for the Boston Red Sox and also for the Boston Celtics. Her incredible work ethic and focus, combined with 100% heart is what drives Kelley to dedicate herself to the one thing she truly loves... performing. For more information, please visit www.kelleylennon.com. Reserve seats today for the perfect gift for your Valentine!

Friday, February 18, 6:30-9:30 PM, \$20.00/\$35.00 for couple
Beer & Wine Tasting Fundraiser/Silent Auction to bring Rachel's Challenge to Cumberland

Sponsored by the PTOs from Cumberland High School, McCourt Middle School and North Cumberland Middle School
To order tickets, contact April Edwards-Haupt at 333-1340 or email aredwards@cox.net

Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for one of the most life-changing school programs in America. Visit www.Rachelschallenge.org. Powerful video/audio footage of Rachel's life and the Columbine tragedy holds students spell-bound during a one hour school presentation that motivates them to positive change in the way they treat others. This is followed by a separate interactive 90-minute training session involving both adult and student leaders that shows how to sustain the momentum created by the assembly. The assembly creates the "want to" or desire for positive change and the training session teaches the "how to" and ensures that the positive impact will continue.

Saturday, February 19, 8:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show
BARRY BROWN / MICHAEL TROY



Barry Brown's repertoire is a reflection of the rich heritage of blues and ragtime, traditional American folksongs, instrumental guitar pieces, and tunes that he has either borrowed from others or written himself. While he has often appeared on the recordings of other musicians, Barry's first solo CD, "Roots & Wings," found him, at long last, in the driver's seat. Growing up in Detroit in the mid-'60s, Barry was part of a fertile community of folk and blues musicians that ran the

gamut from Joni Mitchell to John Lee Hooker. When still in his teens, he moved to the East Coast, quickly establishing himself as a popular performer and guitar teacher. Working as both soloist and back-up guitarist, Barry performed at The Bitter End and Gaslight in NYC, in concerts around New England and in numerous coffeehouses and clubs. He has composed and recorded the soundtrack for "The Sacred Circle of Yoga," and presented several workshops on music as a healing tool. For 14 years, Barry taught more than 3,000 people to play guitar at Bristol Community College in

Massachusetts. Barry's private students include a two-time Grammy winner, an MTV composer and countless living room legends. Acclaimed singer-songwriter **Michael Troy** was born and raised in the rough-and-tumble mill town of Fall River, Mass. Having spent parts of his own life as a mill worker, fisherman, laborer and carpenter, and most of his adult years as a husband and father, Michael has traveled many paths, and the experience and wisdom he's gleaned along the way echoes through his music. Since he was last at BRT, **Michael was named winner of the 2010 Kerrville Folk Festival New Song Contest!** A magical storyteller with a gift for melody, a deep rich voice, and excellent finger-pickin' skills, Michael's plaintive ballads speak of childhood dreams not quite forgotten in the adult quest to make an honest living. Michael's second CD, "Romancing the Moon," continues to celebrate the beauty and intrinsic value of hard work and perseverance, memory and history, love and friendship, and above all, survival. He has won critical acclaim and many other awards including the 2007 New England Songwriting Contest. *Don't miss this special evening which promises to warm up even the coldest winter night! Their split concert sold out last year so reserve your tickets soon!*

SOLD OUT!

Saturday, February 26, 8:00 PM, \$12.00/\$15.00 day of show

LONG TIME COURTING / SHEILA FALLS



Take four individually accomplished traditional musicians and singers with fresh attitudes. Combine them and you have the rich, soaring three-part vocal arrangements and fiery Irish jigs and reels that is **Long Time Courting**. This high-energy band brings heavenly harmonies to old and new ballads and also serves up a zesty side of high-

energy dance tunes. Combining the talents of Sarah Blair on fiddle/vocals, Liz Simmons on guitar/vocals, Shannon Heaton on flute/vocals, and Ariel Friedman on cello, this Boston-based ensemble shares a love of traditional Irish and American music, as well as contemporary folk and pop. Together, they bring elements of these various genres to their traditional repertoire with sensitivity, musicality, beauty and a bit of mischief, too! This will be the first BRT appearance for new fiddler **Sarah Blair** who first started fiddling at sessions in Providence and now lives in Vermont; she is known for her incredible playing with The Sevens and as a leader at New England sessions and contra dances. **Liz Simmons** has developed a unique style that incorporates the sounds of Appalachian traditional singing and pop. She is currently the lead singer of Annalivia, a band that infuses a contemporary edge with the traditional sounds of Ireland, Appalachia and Cape Breton. **Shannon Heaton** has toured nationally with her husband, guitarist Matt Heaton, for twelve years and her exquisite Irish flute style has been featured with numerous other Boston groups. **Ariel Friedman** is an inventive folk and classical cellist from Boston, a winner of the American String Teachers Association's 2009 Alternative Styles Award, and also performs and records with Hanneke Cassel and Childsplay. Born and raised in Greenville, R.I., **Sheila Falls** began as an Irish step dancer at the age of five and took violin lessons at age eight. As quickly as her skills developed, fiddle tunes emerged naturally from her playing. By age ten, under the tutelage of Seamus Connolly, Sheila became a *North American Fiddle Champion* and went on to capture the *All-Ireland Fiddle Championship* at the age of fifteen. She was the first from New England to win this title. She earned a Bachelor of Music Degree from the New England Conservatory where she was awarded a fellowship to attend the Tanglewood Music Center. Sheila later joined the music faculty at Wheaton College and in addition to her violin studio, she is Director of the World Music Ensemble. For several years, Falls taught for the Hanafin-Cooley Branch of Comhaltas at Boston College. Making her BRT debut tonight, Sheila is also a member of the fiddle-based band Childsplay and released her debut solo fiddle CD, "All In The Timing," in 2009. *Don't miss a great night of high-energy Irish music!*

Sunday, February 27, 2-3:30 PM, \$6 adults/\$5 students/\$4 for children 3-11
Cumberland Feels the Cold... Help Keep Our Neighbors Warm
"Frank Santos Jr. Hypnotizes for Heat"

The Cumberland Youth Commission is raising funds for its 3rd annual Oil Project. The Youth Commission works with the Office of Children, Youth & Learning (OCYL) to create civic engagement opportunities for high school students while working to improve issues facing Cumberland. The Oil Project began when the youth commission

recognized the growing number of local families unable to afford heat for their homes. Today's program is a fundraiser to help families who cannot keep their homes warm by partnering with local oil companies: McKee Oil and TH Malloy and Sons. The goal is to assist the Cumberland House of Compassion and provide assistance to at least 15 households with children. "Frank Santos Jr. Hypnotizes for Heat" is a comic hypnotist show for all ages. Join the Youth Commission for fantastic raffle prizes; snacks will also be available for purchase. *All proceeds will benefit the Oil Project.* Tickets are available at OCYL in advance or at the door. Individuals and local businesses who cannot attend are encouraged to help keep our neighbors warm by contributing directly to the oil fund. Send contributions made out to OCYL with "oil project" on the memo line to: OCYL, at 1464 Diamond Hill Road, Suite 2, Cumberland. For further information call 475-0929 or email ocyl@cumberlandri.org

MARCH

- **A photography exhibit by Steve Mason called "Three Mile Radius"** will be in BRT's Art Gallery through March 31.
- **Fiddle classes will continue** on Tuesdays and Wednesdays through March 8 and 9.
- **A six-week session of Irish step dance classes for beginner children and adults** with Erika Damiani will begin Sunday, March 27.

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SOLD OUT!

Saturday, March 5, 8 PM, \$15.00

ROBBIE O'CONNELL & AOIFE CLANCY



Singer-songwriter **Robbie O'Connell** was born in Waterford, Ireland, and grew up in Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. In 1977, he joined the Clancy Brothers with whom he recorded 3 albums. With the 1982 release of his first solo album, "Close to the Bone," Robbie emerged as an artist of major stature. Soon after, he began touring with Mick Moloney and Jimmy Keane, and also with Eileen Ivers and Seamus Egan in the Green Fields of America. Robbie

has taught songwriting at the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop in West Virginia and has earned international acclaim as a singer-songwriter by making it quite clear that there's more to being Irish than filling stereotypes. The Boston Globe describes Robbie as "a writer of timeless-sounding, emotionally powerful and often hilarious songs" and places him "among the most respected guitarists, singer and songwriters in Celtic music." **Aoife Clancy** (pronounced "Eefa") brings a refreshing new voice to folk music, one that ranges from traditional Irish songs to ballads and contemporary folk. Aoife also comes from the small town of Carrick-on-Suir, in Co. Tipperary, where her musical career began at an early age. Her father Bobby Clancy placed a guitar in her hands at age ten, and by age fourteen was playing with her father in nearby pubs. She later moved to Dublin, where she studied drama at the Gaiety School of Acting. In 1995 Aoife was asked to join the acclaimed group Cherish the Ladies, one of the most sought-after Irish American groups in history. Since 1999, Aoife has pursued a solo career and clearly established herself as one of the divas of Irish and contemporary folk music.

Friday, March 11, 8 PM, \$20.00 advance/\$24.00 day of show

ROOMFUL OF BLUES - R.I. CD release party!

Advance ticket purchase recommended!



Here's a rare chance to hear this amazing band in an intimate listening room setting! USA Today says **Roomful of Blues** plays "marvelous wall-to-wall grooves... between the wicked guitar work and the brassy horn section, things never stop swinging." For more than four decades, Roomful has celebrated the jump blues, R&B, and early rock 'n' roll music of the horn-powered golden era of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Inspired by the spirit of the groundbreaking bands of the post-World War II decade, the band breathes new life into vintage songs, infusing them with boundless

energy and fiery, swinging solos and vocals. For the last two decades, Roomful has been led by **Chris Vachon**, one of the most underrated guitarists in the blues. For 40 years, their hard-charging horn section has been sparked by **Rich Lataille** on tenor and alto sax. Energizing the band on their new CD, "Hook, Line & Sinker," is their terrific new vocalist, **Phil Pemberton**. Phil's performances showcase his flamboyant, multi-octave voice, fun-loving attitude and his deep understanding of the era when jumping blues bands were fronted by huge-voiced singers like Roy Brown and Big Joe Turner. Remaining together for so long is not simply a matter of survival, but rather a testament to Roomful of Blues' commitment to its originality and its ability to evolve. Over the years, Roomful's lineup has changed but the band has always been one of the tightest, most joyful blues ensembles in the world. Currently an 8-piece unit, Chris, Rich and Phil are joined by bassist **John Turner**, drummer **Ephraim Lowell**, keyboardist **Travis Colby**, baritone and tenor saxophonist **Mark Earley** and trumpet player **Doug Woolverton**. Says Rolling Stone, "Roomful Of Blues plays an inspired, lively and heated brand of rippling, up-tempo, horn-dominated R&B." *Don't miss the Rhode Island release of "Hook, Line & Sinker!"*

Saturday, March 12, 8 PM, \$12.00

TRIPLE SPIRAL - CD release



Led by multi-instrumentalist **Ray Price**, last at BRT with his band Trouz Bras, **Triple Spiral** is a musical ensemble made up of some of the most innovative musicians in the New England area, playing all manner of "world" and "folk" music encompassing English, French, Breton, Scottish and other European styles. This collaboration brings together experts in many varied European musical styles to create a truly joyful fusion of Celtic and Folk music. Tonight will be the CD release of their first project, "Unearthed." **Ray Price** brings his expertise in the

folk music and dance of Brittany, France, Wales (his home country) and England (where he grew up), plus his own contemporary compositions. **Barry Hall**, on fiddle and bouzouki, is experienced in Medieval, Jazz and other "new" musical styles.

Lindsay Adler, on guitar, harp, dulcimer and vocals, is schooled in the American folk tradition along with a "French twist" with her performances on the Hurdy Gurdy. **Beth Hall**, on flute and bodhran, grew up playing Classical music and she also brings the power of the Scottish Highland Bagpipe to the mix. **Sally Sinclair Beckham** injects the songs of the Scottish Highlands and Islands, ensuring that no person will leave a concert dry eyed. All five musicians sing, and their five-part harmonies are a "piece de resistance" in whatever tongue they are performing in. *Join us as Triple Spiral takes you on a fascinating journey through time and place using "Ancient and Imagined" songs and tunes from across Europe and beyond!*

Sunday, March 13, 7 PM, \$15.00

PENDRAGON - Celebrate St. Patrick's Day early!



New England has long had a rich tradition of Celtic-inspired music. Having celebrated their 27th anniversary in September, Pendragon has embraced that tradition and created a timeless sound of its own, performing roots music with an unmistakable contemporary edge. Pendragon is step dancer and

percussionist **Kevin Doyle**, **Bob Drouin** on fiddle, bouzouki and tenor banjo, **Russell Gusetti** on guitar and concertina; **Josh Kane** on flute and whistles and **Mary Lee Partington** on vocals. Pendragon's music celebrates the lives and lore of generations

of New Englanders who brought traditions from Ireland, Scotland, French Canada and other distant shores to the banks of the Blackstone River. The band performs their original songs and dance tunes on an exciting combination of fiddle, flute, bouzouki, concertina, banjo, guitar, whistle, and percussion. Past tributes include three straight Boston Music Award nominations for Outstanding Celtic Act and a Governor's Tourism Award. Pendragon has been voted Rhode Island's Best Celtic Act in the 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006 and 2005 Motif Magazine's Best Music Poll. Pendragon has also been voted Best Local Folk Act of the Year in the Providence Phoenix' Best Music Poll eight times.

SOLD OUT!

Sunday, March 20, 7 PM, \$22.00 advance/\$25.00 day of show

LUNASA

Advanced ticket purchase strongly recommended!



Named for a Celtic harvest festival in honor of the Irish god Lugh, patron of the arts, **Lúnasa** is indeed a gathering of some of the top musical talents in Ireland. Its members have formed the backbone of some of the greatest Irish groups of the decade. Bassist **Trevor Hutchinson** was a key member of The Waterboys. **Kevin Crawford**, considered to be among the finest flutists in Ireland, played with Moving Cloud and piper **Cillian Vallely** comes from the same talented musical family as brother Niall of Buille and the Karan Casey Band. Guitarist **Paul Meehan** performed for years as a member of Karan Casey's Band. Replacing Sean Smyth on this tour (Sean is a doctor and has an

important exam to prepare for and take March 22 in the UK) is multi-instrumentalist **Colin Farrell**, who holds All-Ireland titles in both the fiddle and tin whistle. Inspired by the legendary Irish group The Bothy Band, Lúnasa uses melodic interweaving of wind and string instruments pairing flutes, fiddle, whistle and pipes in breathtaking arrangements. Their newest CD, *Lá Nua* (Irish for 'new day') was released to incredible critical acclaim last year. *Don't miss an amazing night of Irish music!*

Thursday, March 24, 6-9:00 PM

PRIVATE PARTY

Friday, March 25, 8:00 PM, \$10.00 advance/\$12.00 day of show

RORY RAVEN - Mentalist and Mindbender



Rory Raven is a mentalist with 15 years of experience reading minds and astonishing audiences. Neither a psychic nor a magician, he offers a compelling kind of entertainment unlike anything audiences have ever seen. With a few simple props (paper and pencil, a pack of playing cards, some paperback books, and the thoughts of some volunteers) Rory involves the audience in a highly unusual - and unusually entertaining - experience. Thoughts are revealed, predictions come true, and perhaps even the spirits are summoned... Rory is well-known for leading people on his Providence Ghost Walk; he has also released three great books, "Haunted Providence: Strange Tales from the Smallest State,"

"Wicked Conduct," and "The Dorr War: Treason, Rebellion and the Fight for Reform in Rhode Island." **Frequently Asked Questions:** Okay, let's start with that title - what's a mentalist? A mentalist is a theatrical mind-reader... a performer who, using a variety of techniques, is able to produce results that would only seem possible by psychic or paranormal means. And those techniques would be...? They range from a knowledge of subtle psychological principles and the quirks of human behavior, to quick thinking and a good memory. Rory is also interested in things like suggestion, non-verbal communication, and the so-called trance state. And he doesn't hesitate to borrow ideas from the stage magician, either! So is he psychic or what? No. Not everyone believes him when he says that, but there's not much he can do about it he explains. People who believe in the paranormal will believe no matter what he tells them, and those who don't believe won't believe no matter what he shows them. But a long time ago Rory realized that everybody's mind is pretty much made up before they came to a show, so it was a fool's errand to try and convince people of the validity of one viewpoint or another. *So we invite you to sit back, concentrate on your mother's maiden name, and enjoy the show...*

Saturday, March 26, 8 PM, \$12.00

JON CAMPBELL & EVERETT BROWN / GEOFF KAUFMAN



Unlike most folk artists who look to far off places for the inspiration behind their music, **Jon Campbell** writes from a strong sense of place. His music reflects on the uniqueness of life in coastal New England, and is brought forth from his personal experience and

great familiarity with his subject matter. At times humorous, at times poignant, these songs and poems are a glimpse into life as it is lived where the sea and land meet. Increasingly, his material is being performed and recorded by singers from Cape Cod to Cape Disappointment, and beyond to Ireland, and he himself has taken these songs to stages as far away as Alaska. This performance will be one of the few during which he won't have a direct line of sight to salt water, and it will also be the first after his return from The Astoria Fisher Poets Gathering. He'll be joined tonight by **Everett Brown**, on fiddle and accordion, best known for his work with The Wickford Express, Compass Rose and his current band, Barnacle. For the past 28 years, **Geoff Kaufman** has been leading audiences to find truth, humor, and beauty in folk music. Whether singing sailor songs with his quartet, Forebitter or environmental songs on board the Sloop Clearwater in the Hudson River, or in solo performances throughout the Northeast and festivals in Europe, Geoff has entertained and touched audiences near and far. Songs of the sea, songs of the earth, songs of the heart and the spirit—all of these are in Geoff's repertoire of ancient ballads, work songs, songs of love, and insights into history—all likely to be woven into one of Geoff's concerts. Above all, at the core of Geoff's performance is his rich tenor voice and an exuberant love of singing. And part of that love is to entice audiences to sing along, to share in the exhilaration of full-throated vocalization if they wish. In this age of electronic overload, Geoff likes to stress the "live" in live performance, promoting participation, be it by voice or heart or mind. *We hope you'll join us for a great split concert featuring sea music and more!*

APRIL

- **Look for details about another six-week round of fiddle classes** for beginner, continuing beginner/intermediate, advanced intermediate and advanced students with Cathy Clasper-Torch beginning April 5 and April 6.
- **A six-week session of Irish step dance classes for beginner children and adults continues on Sundays** with Erika Damiani.
- **There will be a clogging class and a mountain dulcimer** class with Aubrey Atwater on Thursday, April 28
- **A photography exhibit by Steve Mason called "Three Mile Radius"** will be in BRT's Art Gallery through April 30

NOTE: If a show at BRT has an advance price & a day-of-show price it means: If you pre-pay OR call in your reservation any time before the show date, you get the advance price. *If you show up at the door with no reservations OR call in your reservations on the day of the show, you will pay the day of show price.*

TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, CALL BRT AT: 401-725-9272

Leave your name, number of tickets desired, for which show, your phone number and please let us know if you would like a confirmation phone call.

Friday, April 1, 8 PM

Fundraiser to support "The Legend of the Fairy Melusine"

Tonight's event is a fundraiser to support the ongoing creation of **Steven Jobe's "The Legend of the Fairy Melusine."** There will be no admission, but there will be a pitch for financial support during the course of the evening. Expect good company, some light fare, and a short concert of "Melusine" music to whet your appetite for the May performances. Soprano **Kara Lund** will sing a section from Act I, "Storytelling

Woman," accompanied by the Melusine ensemble: **Rob Bethel** - cello, **Hyunjung Choi** - harp; **Dawn Chung** - keyboard, and **Laura Gulley** violin. There will be a preview of Vanessa Gilbert's video score of "Architectural Aria" from Act II. And there will be exotic instrumentation - **Chris Turner** on bagpipes and harmonica, and the infamous Bosch Hurdy-Gurdy will also make an appearance! "Melusine's" non-profit is The What Cheer Art Company, and through that entity Steven Jobe can receive tax-deductible donations by check or online through his business Paypal account. Please visit www.melusineopera.com for information and to make an online donation if you wish.

Saturday, April 2, 8 PM, \$15.00

PEPPINO D'AGOSTINO - Virtuoso acoustic guitarist

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union



Peppino D'Agostino doesn't just play the guitar. He composes, arranges, improvises and has even been known to sing a song here and there in both English and Italian. A native of Italy, D'Agostino has made his considerable international mark as a musical artist on the guitar since he arrived in America a little more than 25 years ago. The readers of *Guitar Player* voted him "Best Acoustic Guitarist" in 2007, and the following year in Acoustic Guitar's People's Choice Awards, he won a Bronze medal for "Best Acoustic Album of All Time" for his 2002 release "Every Step of The Way" (tying with Leo Kottke, one of his prime inspirations.) But the music Peppino does create on the guitar

makes the difference between simply playing and truly making music apparent in the most wonderful ways. D'Agostino has been hailed as "a guitarist's guitarist" by *Acoustic Guitar* magazine as well as "a giant of the acoustic guitar" and he holds many other top guitarist awards, but the *San Francisco Chronicle* encapsulated the essential difference that distinguishes D'Agostino's music when it dubbed him "a poet." That poetic eloquence, grace and magic suffuses "Nine White Kites," his first album of new compositions for the guitar in a decade. *Don't miss one of this generations most amazing guitarists in an intimate listening room setting!*

Sunday, April 3

THE BEE EATERS

The Bee Eaters CD release concert scheduled for April 3 has been postponed due to a delay in the mastering of the CD. A new date for this event will be announced soon!

Saturday, April 9, 8 PM, \$15.00

CRAOBH RUA - Irish traditional music

Supported by Imagine Ireland, an initiative of Culture Ireland



Craobh Rua (pronounced Crave Roo-ah) translates from Irish to "Red Branch" and is a name that is well known in Celtic history from The Red Branch Knights of Ulster. This Belfast-based band has given concert and festival performances throughout the USA, Canada, Australia, Germany, England, Scotland, Wales and beyond and their music has earned them wide acclaim and recognition; they are now regarded around the world as one of the finest

ambassadors of Irish Traditional Music. Craobh Rua's impeccable musicians bring their own individual experience to the group and fuse their talents to bring life to a wide array of instruments such as banjo, mandolin, fiddle, uilleann pipes, tin whistle, guitar and vocals. Members include founding member **Brian Connolly** on banjo and mandolin; **Jim Rainey** on guitar and vocals; **Conor Caldwell** on fiddle; and **Aaron Hagan** on uilleann pipes and tin whistle. Craobh Rua has released five albums to date, their most recent called "If Ida Been Here Ida Been There." The band has performed at the Millennium Stage Live Internet Broadcast concert series from the Kennedy Center, Washington, DC. and their performance for the Smithsonian Concert Series, Washington, DC was recorded and broadcast worldwide on Voice of America.

Imagine Ireland is a year-long season of Irish arts in America in 2011, an initiative of Culture Ireland, with funding from the Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Visit: www.imagineireland.ie Culture Ireland is the state agency for the promotion of Irish arts worldwide, working under the aegis of the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport. Culture Ireland creates and supports opportunities for Irish artists to present

their work at strategic international festivals, venues, showcases and arts markets.
Visit www.cultureireland.gov.ie

SOLD OUT!

Sunday, April 10, 7 PM, \$17.00 advance/\$20.00 day of show

ARCHIE FISHER AND GARNET ROGERS



At long last, two original songwriters who work within deep traditions of place and song come together again. In the summer of 1985, Scottish folk singer Archie Fisher and Garnet Rogers (younger brother of the late Stan Rogers) teamed up to tour Canada and America. This hugely successful tour yielded a highly influential recording, "Off the Map."

Garnet Rogers tells detailed stories of people from all walks of life and their small, everyday victories. He can shift from

seriousness to razor-sharp wit in a heartbeat, and no two of his shows are the same. Says Dirty Linen: "He knows and captures what is real and lasting - the joyous, contradictory poetry of living." Master guitarist, singer and songwriter **Archie Fisher** is Scotland's foremost troubadour and is known throughout the country as the host of BBC Radio Scotland's award-winning "Travelling Folk" show, which he has presented for more than 25 years. Recognized for his contributions to Scottish folk music, he was inducted into the Scots Traditional Music Hall of Fame and in 2006 was awarded an MBE, (Distinguished Member of the British Empire), a prestigious honor nominated by his peers and bestowed by Queen Elizabeth for services to traditional music in 2007. Archie was born in Glasgow into a large singing family, which yielded three professional singers - Archie and his sisters Ray and Cilla Fisher. Fisher's first self-titled album was recorded in 1968. During the mid-1970s he formed a long-term partnership with Dundee musician Allan Barty, and later joined the revived pairing of Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy. As well as performing as a backing musician and arranger for Makem & Clancy, he also produced a series of albums with them and got involved in record production with the dynamic Scottish band Silly Wizard. His current "Windward Away" release on Red House, a collection of introspective ballads that evoke the wild and rough beauty of the Scottish Border country, has already achieved widespread acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. *Don't miss this incredible show featuring two brilliant performers, together again - advanced ticket purchase is highly recommended!*

Friday, April 15, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show

TEMPEST - Celtic Rock



Tempest released their newest CD, "Another Dawn," in March, 2010... their first studio album of new material in four years. Since forming in 1988, Tempest has delivered a hybrid of high-energy folk rock fusing Irish reels, Scottish ballads, Norwegian influences and other world music elements. The last 20 years have seen the San Francisco Bay Area based act release 12 critically acclaimed CDs and play more than 2,000 gigs. Tempest has enjoyed an evolving line-up that's enabled its musicianship and

creativity to rise with each new member. Hailing from Oslo, Norway, founding member and lead singer/electric mandolinist, **Lief Sorbye**, is recognized as a driving force in the modern folk-rock movement. Fiddler **Michael Mullen**, a favorite with the fans, is the original fiddler for Tempest. Bassist **Damien Gonzalez** is an accomplished drummer and didgeridoo player. Native of Devon, England, and a former member of the UK's folk-rock band Equation, guitarist **James Crocker** combines a deep-rooted British folk sensibility with a life-long rock experience. Cuban-born drummer **Adolfo Lazo**, also an original Tempest member, colors the band's sound with inventive percussion. Tempest is regularly featured at prestigious festivals including The Philadelphia Folk Festival, Denmark's Skagen Festival, Britain's Cropredy Festival and The Winnipeg Folk Festival in Canada as well as countless American Celtic festivals. *If you like your Celtic music loud, this will be the place to be!*

Saturday, April 16, 8 PM, \$15.00

ATWATER-DONNELLY TRIO



BRT favorites **Aubrey Atwater** and **Elwood Donnelly** return with **Cathy Clasper-Torch** on fiddle, cello and vocals to present an engaging concert of traditional American and Celtic American folk songs, a cappella pieces, hymns, poetry, dance tunes, and original works. Elwood and Aubrey blend unusual harmonies and play guitar, Appalachian mountain dulcimer, Irish tin whistle, harmonica, old-time banjo, bones, limberjacks and other musical surprises. Their performance is appealing to all ages, and with humor, audience participation and a highly relaxed stage presence, Aubrey and Elwood also explain song origins to give more relevance to the material. Atwater-Donnelly performs widely in the Northeast and other parts of the United States and Great Britain and their recordings receive international airplay. They have performed and researched folk music extensively in New England, Ireland, England, Prince Edward Island, the Ozarks, and Appalachia. Atwater-Donnelly has recorded eleven albums including their most recent, "The Weaver's Bonny."

Saturday, April 23, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show
MARJORIE THOMPSON / TOBY WALKER



When folk and blues singer/songwriter **Marjorie Thompson** takes to the stage, tiny and blonde and bearing a smile that carries just a hint of shyness, her demeanor scarcely prepares her audience for what comes next. The audience can be forgiven for wondering almost at once how so much power - in guitar playing, in singing, in the songs themselves -

can come from such a small person. Though happy to learn the music of the blues and country blues masters, she was also driven to write her own songs. People who heard them, loved them. She was encouraged to perform and to go on tour and she has kept that pace ever since while also recording five studio CDs. Her 2007 CD, "Right By Me," was released to critical acclaim and her most recent double CD, "Good, Fast & Cheap," is her most innovative yet. Touring has taken her around the United States as well as Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. She has appeared on numerous radio and television programs, and most notably was featured on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." Much has been made of the fact that in addition to her musical accomplishments, she has a Ph.D in biology, is a dean at Brown University, and is the proud mother of seven children. But with a modest smile, she downplays those things, "People don't come to see the singing dean, or the mother who writes songs," she says. "They come to hear, and I owe them good music." She'll be joined tonight by **Toby Walker**, a unique, accomplished fingerstyle guitar virtuoso adept at blues, rags and hot country picking, coaxing more out of a guitar than anyone can imagine. He is also a skilled singer and songwriter who draws inspiration from traditional and contemporary music. Toby's passion for the blues and other traditional American music sent him into the deep south where he tracked down old time musicians of an earlier era, learning directly at the feet of Etta Baker, Jack Owens and many others. He shares this music and the stories of his travels in each of his performances and takes this foundation and creates something uniquely his own, making you shake with laughter or bringing a tear to your eye. Among Toby's credits are teaching in the schools for Carnegie Hall, instructing guitar at Jorma Kaukonen's Fur Peace Ranch in Ohio (as does Marjorie) and winning the prestigious International Blues Challenge Award in Memphis. He has twice been featured in the New York Times and has appeared on the main stage at the famous Philadelphia Folk Festival.

Saturday, April 30, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show
RUNA - Contemporary Celtic music



RUNA burst onto the music scene during the summer of 2008 and has been taking audiences by storm ever since including a great show at BRT in 2010! Drawing on the diverse musical backgrounds of its band members, RUNA brings a contemporary and refreshing experience to traditional and more recently composed Celtic material. Through their repertoire of both highly energetic and graceful, acoustic melodies, along with their fusion of music from Ireland, Scotland, the Shetland Islands, Canada, and the U.S., this vocal and instrumental ensemble gives its arrangements of traditional songs and

tunes a fresh sound. RUNA consists of vocalist **Shannon Lambert-Ryan** of Philadelphia, Dublin-born guitarist, **Fionán de Barra**, **Cheryl Prashker**, of Canada, on percussion, and **Tomoko Omura** on the fiddle. Members of RUNA have played with Solas, Riverdance, Clannad, Fiddlers' Bid, Moya Brennan, Eileen Ivers, Full Frontal Folk, and the Guy Mendilow Band. They have just released a new project, "Stretched on Your Grave." Don't miss this amazing young band!

MAY

- **There will be a clogging class and a mountain dulcimer class** with Aubrey Atwater on Thursdays, May 12 and May 26.
- **Fiddle classes** for beginner, continuing beginner/intermediate, advanced intermediate and advanced students with Cathy Clasper-Torch continue Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- **Irish step dance classes for beginner children and beginner adults continues on Sundays** with Erika Damiani on May 1 and May 15.

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TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, CALL BRT AT: 401-725-9272

Leave your name, number of tickets desired, for which show, your phone number and please let us know if you would like a confirmation phone call.

Thursday, May 5, 6:30-8:30 PM

CUMBERLAND LAND TRUST EVENING OF DONOR APPRECIATION

Friday, May 6, 8:00 PM, \$8 students & seniors/\$10 adult

BENEFIT FUNDRAISER: Performance of CHS play "Tonight We Begin Again"



The one-hour play "Tonight We Begin Again" was Cumberland High School's entry in the Rhode Island State Drama Festival. **The show was selected to represent Rhode Island at the International Thespian Festival this June in Lincoln, Nebraska.** It is a great honor, but the trip is a costly one for CHS students and with all funds due by early May, the students and directors are scrambling to fundraise in order to lower each individual's total cost in an attempt to ensure that anyone who wants to go will be able to participate. "Tonight We Begin Again" is an original comedic drama written by John Lincoln. In the evening after graduation, a group of new graduates are stuck on

the Williamson High School campus recording testimonials for Allison's tardy senior project. They use the time in between these filmed sessions to reflect on their relationships, ponder their future, and banter with their friends. Each individual has their own vision of how the world should be, and that vision does not always mesh with that of those closest to them. This is a story of discovery, a story of transition, and a story of what happens when two immature young men won't stop tackling each other for no good reason.

Saturday, May 7, 8 PM, \$15.00 advance/\$17.00 day of show
SUNNY & HER JOY BOYS featuring DUKE ROBILLARD



Award-winning guitarist **Duke Robillard** has traveled the world over for the last 40 years entertaining audiences with his special blend of blues and classic jazz. He's recorded with, played with, or produced many of the most important artists of the last several decades including Bob Dylan, Tom Waits, Ruth Brown, and the Fabulous Thunderbirds. With 20 albums under his own name and many more as guitarist with countless artists, Duke has achieved what many only dream of - working

with many of his legendary musical heroes. But there is one project that had been in the back of Duke's mind since he heard Ivie Anderson, Helen Humes and Billie Holiday nearly 40 years ago - to celebrate the rich era of women song stylists from the thirties to the fifties - women who brought poise and class to the great American songs of the time, and who interpreted the best lyrics of the American master songwriters with depth, sincerity, and a personal flair that's all but forgotten today. That project has never been realized until late 2007 when he heard **Sunny Crownover** sing at a show at Harvard University. Duke says "Her relaxed style and natural stage presence started the wheels turning. I felt I had finally found the vocalist I had been hoping to discover for so many years." Duke wasted no time finding material and enlisting a crew of great musicians to join forces, and **Sunny and Her Joy Boys** were born. **Billy Novick** joined in on clarinet and alto sax. An acknowledged master of his instruments. Billy has toured for 35 years, has been a member of the acclaimed New Black Eagle Jazz Band for two decades, and has five solo CDs and nine duo CDs with Guy Van Duser. Bassist **Jesse Williams** has played and recorded with Duke for six years. He is also currently recording and performing with Al Kooper and Jay Geils. Guitarist **Paul Kolesnikow** and Duke have been playing together in duo, trio and quartet situations for many years now and he helps with the group's arrangements. Duke is proud of and excited about this musical venture, which for him is the realization of a lifelong dream. Duke and Sunny have now collaborated on three projects - the critically acclaimed debut "Introducing Sunny and Her Joy Boys," "Stomp! the Blues Tonight," and 2010's "Tales from the Tiki Lounge." Says Duke, "Sunny Crownover and her Joy Boys are bound to make you feel happy with a soft yet powerful rhythm reminiscent of the heyday of jazz of the 30s. Sunny's beautiful voice will entrance you and for a little while, the world is a beautiful place and real American music is alive and very well!"

Saturday, May 14, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show
NORTH SEA GAS - Music from Scotland



Don't miss the return of Scotland's **North Sea Gas**, a Scottish folk band who have now been performing for 30 years. With a combination of fiddle, guitar, mandolin, bodhran and bouzouki, complementing strong vocal harmonies and a keen sense of humor, an entertaining evening is always guaranteed! Over the years North Sea Gas has recorded 14 albums and played to audiences all over Great Britain, Europe, Scandinavia, the U.S. and Canada... this

marks their 7th appearance at BRT. The band is led by founder **Dave Gilfillan** on lead vocals, guitar and banjo, well-known for his tongue-in-cheek humor. **Ronnie MacDonald** on lead and harmony vocals, guitar and bouzouki is joined by the dynamic **Grant Simpson** on high-energy fiddle and vocals. For a number of years North Sea Gas has attracted large audiences to concerts held at the Edinburgh Festival. The band received a Gold Disc award from the Scottish Music Industry for their album "Caledonian Connection," which American author, Diana Gabaldon, writer of Scottish historical novels, referenced as one of her sources when researching Scottish speech patterns for her books. Additionally, Silver Disc awards have been received for "Keltic Heritage," "Live from Edinburgh," "Scottish Destiny," "Spirit of Scotland" and "Dark Island." *Poignant and rousing songs, great instrumentals, history, humor and more!*

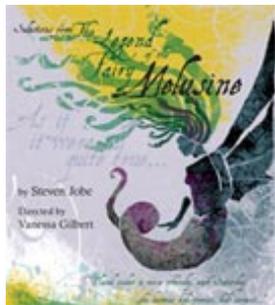
Saturday, May 21, 8 PM AND

Sunday, May 22, 2 PM and 7 PM, \$15.00

SELECTIONS FROM "THE LEGEND OF THE FAIRY MELUSINE" BY STEVEN JOBE

Visit www.melusineopera.com for online ticket purchase

or send check payable to: "The What Cheer Art Co." to BRT address



Rhode Island-based composer **Steven Jobe**, who presented the debut of his opera "Joan of Arc" last May at Cumberland's Blackstone River Theatre, is creating a new piece, "**The Legend of the Fairy Melusine.**" A

supernatural story filled with romance and mystery, "The Legend of the Fairy Melusine" is a perfect vehicle for Jobe's music, particularly his tone color experiments in glass bells and wheel fiddles. To enhance the narrative of the story, Jobe is working in collaboration with director **Vanessa Gilbert**, artistic director of Perishable Theatre, who is merging a video component with Jobe's music. The performances of Selections from "The Legend of the Fairy Melusine" will consist of an instrumental overture and six song selections from the story. Soprano **Julia Steinbok** will sing the role of Melusine with tenor **Fredric Scheff** singing the role of the male lead, Raimondin. Soprano **Kara Lund** will introduce the proceedings, singing the aria "Storytelling Woman," and Providence-based soprano **Ellen Santaniello** will join her for a piece entitled, "The Swans." Many of Jobe's longtime musical collaborators are part of the ensemble - **Laura Gulley** on violin, **Rob Bethel** on cello, **Hyunjung Choi** on orchestral harp, **Dawn Chung** on keyboard, and **Chris Turner** on harmonica and bagpipes. Jobe himself will play the various hurdy gurdys used throughout the piece. For the one-of-a-kind Bosch Hurdy Gurdy, Jobe on Chanter keyboard will be joined by **Chris Monti** on Chanter and Bass wheels, and **Chris Sadlers** on Trompette wheel. Other ensemble musicians will include **Doug Tella** on vibraphone, **Catherine Hawkes** on tromba marina and recorder, **Flannery Brown** on cello, and tenor **Joel McCoy** and baritone **Corey Mulvey**.

Jobe's approach to the Melusine story is loosely based on "Roman de Mēlusine" by Jean d'Arras (late 14th c.) which is itself derived from European folktales. The Melusine story is filled with romance, mystery, and shape shifting. Half-fairy by birth, Melusine appears most of the time as a human. But, because of a curse, once a week she transforms into half-woman, half-serpent - a secret she keeps from her mortal husband, Raimondin. When Raimondin eventually catches her in her supernatural state, Melusine completes her transformation to full dragon and flies out of Raimondin's life. In Jobe's retelling, Raimondin and Melusine are reunited through Raimondin's epiphany: that love transcends our physical form. Indeed, Jobe's telling of the story focuses almost entirely on the relationship between Melusine and Raimondin wherein, amid all manner of deception and illusion, they endeavor to know and understand each other. For a story such as this that involves elements of magic, it is easy enough to introduce a fairy character such as Melusine, but for the audience to suspend its disbelief and invest in the character is a very different challenge. Looking to create the wonder that fairy folk instill, **director Vanessa Gilbert** is creating a video component that operates alternately as interior monologue and scenery. Combined with the orchestral score, singing, and story elements, the video component is designed to add to the sensation of the impossible. The last selection on the program is entitled, "Caccia," a large chase scene where the hero pursues a wild boar. For this piece, Jobe will employ all of the instruments at his disposal, including four different types of wheel-fiddle: the traditional hurdy-gurdy, a 7-foot-long Drone Machine and the 10-foot-long Bosch Hurdy-Gurdy, designed by Jobe and so named because it is based on an image from a painting by Hieronymus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. With a full range of sounds in the bass and contrabass range, the instrument has been integral to Jobe's work since its completion in 2006. The droning effects of these instruments are a central part of the sound world he is creating for "The Legend of the Fairy Melusine." In addition to the large-scale instruments, Jobe will also utilize a dozen small-scale wheel-fiddles called **Shriekers**. To design and make the Shriekers, Steve is collaborating with RI-based musician, **Bob Aspirinio**. The Shriekers concept is based on a design Jobe saw used by the Bread and Puppet Theatre in the late 1980s. Made from olive oil cans, it was initially intended as an exotic sound effect for outdoor theatre. But Jobe and Aspirinio, believing that there are unexplored musical possibilities, will use them as true, pitched instruments, contributing a new dynamic to a carefully balanced musical texture. *Selections from "The Legend of the Fairy Melusine" is supported by the Sigurd I. & Jarmila H. Rislov Foundation.*



Funded in part by a grant from the MetLife Creative Connections program of Meet the Composer, Inc. and the New England Foundation for the Arts, with additional support from the six New England state arts agencies and the National Endowment for the Arts.

JUNE

Sundays, June 5 and June 26, 1:00-3:30 PM, \$60.00 per class
Intermediate/advanced blues and swing guitar with Duke Robillard

Thursday, June 8, 3:00-4:30 PM, Registration required
Orientation Session for Rhode Island Cultural Data Project

The Rhode Island Cultural Data Project (Rhode Island CDP) to be launched May 2, will be a powerful online financial management and reporting tool for arts and cultural organizations in Rhode Island. The CDP will provide your organization with an array of tools to understand, analyze and report on your own performance. Over time, the CDP will make it easy for you to benchmark and compare your own information to aggregate records from other cultural organizations in the state. And it will help all of us in the nonprofit cultural community to make our case - to board members, potential donors, advocates, and policy-makers - for investment in our sector. ***The Rhode Island CDP will be provided to all nonprofit cultural organizations in Rhode Islands by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and The Rhode Island Foundation, with additional support from The Kresge Foundation.*** For more information, visit the national CDP website <http://www.riculturaldata.org> today!

Saturday, June 11, \$5.00 children/\$10 adults, NON-COMPETITIVE

9 AM: Irish step dance workshop for beginner/continuing beginner children ages 6-10

10 AM: Irish step dance workshop for beginner/continuing beginner adults and older children

11 AM: Irish step dance workshop for advanced beginner adults and older children

These once-a-month Irish step and ceili dance workshop classes are designed to keep current students dancing over the summer months before we start up with an 8-week session in the Fall again. *It is also a great chance for past BRT students or dancers with experience elsewhere to meet BRT's new instructor Erika Damiani! Come on down and start dancing!*

Saturday, June 18, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Rain date: Sunday, June 19th)

BLACKSTONE RIVER THEATRE SUMMER SOLSTICE FESTIVAL

**BLACKSTONE
RIVER
THEATRE
SUMMER
SOLSTICE
FESTIVAL**

at Diamond Hill Park, Rte. 114, Cumberland, RI

Tickets: \$15 adults, \$10 seniors, children \$5, kids under-5 free!

Five entertainment stages plus food and craft vendors!

Annalivia • Atwater-Donnelly Trio • Burning Bridget Cleary • Aoife Clancy • Fellswater • Genticorum • The Gnomes • Matt & Shannon Heaton • Robbie O'Connell • Pendragon • Triple Spiral

Call (401) 725-9272 for information. or visit

<http://www.riverfolk.org/brtssf/>

We are looking for craft vendors!

Saturday, June 25 AND Sunday, June 26, 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM
CELTIC STONECARVING IN LIMESTONE FOR BEGINNERS

JULY

Saturday, July 9, \$5.00 children/\$10 adults, NON-COMPETITIVE

9 AM: Irish step dance workshop for beginner/continuing beginner children ages 6-10

10 AM: Irish step dance workshop for beginner/continuing beginner adults

and older children

11 AM: Irish step dance workshop for advanced beginner adults and older children

These once-a-month Irish step and ceili dance workshop classes are designed to keep current students dancing over the summer months before we start up with an 8-week session in the Fall again. *It is also a great chance for past BRT students or dancers with experience elsewhere to meet BRT's new instructor Erika Damiani! Come on down and start dancing!*

Sundays, July 17 and July 31, 1:00-3:30 PM, \$60.00 per class
Intermediate/advanced blues and swing guitar with Duke Robillard

AUGUST

Mondays, August 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 6:30-7:30 PM, \$5.00 per class
ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER

Saturday, August 13
Private Event

Saturday, August 20, \$5.00 children/\$10 adults, NON-COMPETITIVE

9 AM: Irish step dance workshop for beginner/continuing beginner children ages 6-10

10 AM: Irish step dance workshop for beginner/continuing beginner adults and older children

11 AM: Irish step dance workshop for advanced beginner adults and older children

These once-a-month Irish step and ceili dance workshop classes are designed to keep current students dancing over the summer months before we start up with an 8-week session in the Fall again. *It is also a great chance for past BRT students or dancers with experience elsewhere to meet BRT's new instructor Erika Damiani! Come on down and start dancing!*

SEPTEMBER

NOTE: If a show at BRT has an advance price & a day-of-show price it means:

If you pre-pay OR call in your reservation any time before the show date, you get the advance price. *If you show up at the door with no reservations OR call in your reservations on the day of the show, you will pay the day of show price.*

TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, CALL BRT AT: 401-725-9272

Leave your name, number of tickets desired, for which show, your phone number and please let us know if you would like a confirmation phone call.

Tuesday, September 6

5:30 PM: 6-week class in BEGINNER FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

6:30 PM: 6-week class in CONTINUING BEGINNER FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

7:30 PM: 6-week class in ADV. BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

Wednesday, September 7

6:30 PM: 6-week class in ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

7:45 PM: 6-week class in ADVANCED FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

Saturday, September 10, 8 PM, \$28.00 advance / \$32.00 day of show
MEDIAEVAL BAEBES

Combining 14th century poetry with the talents & sensibilities of 21st century women

Limited seating; advance ticket purchase highly recommended!



The allure is undeniable... Six talented, attractive women breathe renewed life into the rich texts of medieval songs and poetry and their hauntingly beautiful music captures the imagination and devotion of modern audiences. They are the **Mediaeval Baebes**, the UK's number one selling classical vocal group, and in 15 years they have placed three albums into the top of the UK classical charts and performed before enthusiastic audiences in the UK, Canada, Europe and the U.S. Yet their music defies any traditional classification and people of all ages, backgrounds and musical tastes become fans of the Baebes. This 9-date U.S. tour

will mark the Baebes' first time back since 2009. Originally formed in 1996, the all-female Mediaeval Baebes lineup has evolved over the years and currently consists of musical director **Katharine Blake** alongside **Esther Dee, Sarah Kayte Foster, Clare Edmondson, Tanya Jackson and Jo Burke** who will be accompanied by three additional touring musicians. The Baebes sing in a variety of medieval languages including French, Spanish, English, Italian, Gaelic, and Swedish. Their original music evokes an earlier time, but is accessible to a modern audience as the medieval themes of nature, the life cycle, love and longing are as relevant in 2011 as they were in 1411. Pulling lyrics from medieval texts and setting them to original scores using medieval and classical instruments, the Baebes truly offer a sound that is unique.

Their first album, "Salva Nos," became Virgin Classics' fastest selling debut album. Their 1998 follow-up, "Worldes Blysse," blazed to number one in the Classical charts and their contribution to the BBC production of "The Virgin Queen" (composed by Martin Phipps) resulted in a 2007 Ivor Novello award for best television soundtrack. Their most recent studio album 'Illumination' takes a fresher contemporary direction while retaining the ethereal beauty of the Baebes' historical and musical influences. In a 2002 NPR interview, host John Nielsen asked Blake what specifically drew them to the medieval texts. Blake replied, "I think it was one of the last periods in Western history where mythology and history were inextricably bound. The people lived in a world where you thought fairies and dragons were real... that so much fantasy was hardwired into everyone's daily thinking intrigues me. It's that combination of fantasy and a very gritty, mundane existence which is a fascinating juxtaposition." For more, visit: <http://www.youtube.com/user/MediaevalBaebesTV#p/a/u/2/k7aOPviHZeQ>
...Don't miss their Rhode Island debut as we kick off our 11th season with a show that is sure to be unforgettable!

**Mondays, September 12, 19, 26, \$5.00 per class; \$8.00 if both same night
6:30-7:30 PM - ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER
7:45-8:30 PM - ZUMBA TONE CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

**Saturday, September 17
9:00 AM: 8-week class in BEGINNER IRISH STEP DANCE FOR CHILDREN 6-10 with Erika Damiani begins
10:00 AM: 8-week class in BEGINNER IRISH STEP DANCE FOR ADULTS with Erika Damiani begins
11:00 AM: 8-week class in ADVANCED BEGINNER IRISH STEP DANCE FOR ADULTS with Erika Damiani begins**

**Thursday, September 22, 8:00 PM, \$25.00 advance / \$30.00 day of show
PAUL BRADY - Legendary Irish songwriter/performer**



Singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist **Paul Brady** is one of Ireland's most highly-regarded and successful artists, and the pre-eminent Irish singer-songwriter of his generation. His versions of great ballads like "Arthur McBride" and "The Lakes Of Pontchartrain" were definitive and are still being asked for by audiences today. Brady, making his first Rhode Island concert appearance, has spent his career crossing borders of style while holding fast to substance, developing a wide array of songs

that smartly traverse folk and rock over a span of more than 40 years. A songwriter's songwriter if ever there was one, Paul Brady has amassed a body of work that stands comparison with that of either Van Morrison or Jackson Browne. Indeed, he has seen his work covered by artists as diverse as Bonnie Raitt, Lucy Kaplansky, Tina Turner, Cher and Carlos Santana.

"Probably the best melody writer I can think of." - Bonnie Raitt

"Some guys got it down,... Leonard Cohen, Paul Brady, Lou Reed,... my secret heroes." - Bob Dylan

"The iron fist in the velvet glove of Irish Music." - Bono

Paul Brady continues to push the boundaries not only of his own talent but of Irish contemporary music and other styles in the new millennium... *don't miss his Rhode Island debut!*

Saturday, September 24, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance/\$15.00 day of

THE BEE EATERS - CD release

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union

With opening set by guest vocalist Jefferson Hamer



No tricks. Four instrumental voices, united in their musical exploration. **The Bee Eaters** trace their roots back to musical traditions as diverse as bluegrass, Celtic, jazz and old-time. While today's new breed often produces an amalgamation of sounds and styles based on a distant view, the Bee Eaters were raised embedded in these traditions... raised to meld, shape them and carry them forward, leaving their own indelible marks in the process. Brother-sister duo **Tristan and Tashina Clarridge**, long known and lauded by those steeped in the American fiddle

tradition, are joined by hammer dulcimer virtuoso **Simon Chrisman** and mandolin virtuoso **Dominick Leslie**. Tashina, the 2005 Grand National Fiddle Champion, has toured with Mark O'Connor and Tony Trischka and has performed at Carnegie Hall as a part of MacArthur Fellow/Grammy-winning bassist Edgar Meyer's Young Artists program. Multi-instrumentalist brother Tristan is a truly innovative cellist and 5-time Grand National Fiddle Champion. His talents have been sought by Darol Anger, Bruce Molsky and Natalie MacMaster. In addition to performing with the Bee Eaters, he tours internationally with Crooked Still. Hammer dulcimer virtuoso Simon Chrisman brings an unusual style to (what has heretofore been thought of as) an instrument of limited range and technique. His inventive virtuosic touch and sophisticated rhythmic sensibilities are redefining the instrument. He has performed with Darol Anger and Mike Marshall. Though only 21 years old, new member Dominick Leslie has spent his young life immersed in bluegrass and acoustic music, and his innovative style is informed by these deep roots. He has studied with mandolin masters David Grisman and Mike Marshall, won numerous mandolin championships, and performed in France as a member of Mike Marshall's Young American Mandolin Ensemble. Since their formation in 2008 (with original member Wesley Corbett), the Bee Eaters ensemble work has taken on mature, textured and nuanced tones, as their compositions have become more thoughtful and intricate. With Tashina's delicate fiddle and Tristan's grounding cello wrapped around Simon's ethereal dulcimer and Dominick's driving mandolin, they have created a never-before-heard sound in American music. Indeed, listening to the Bee Eaters is like eavesdropping on a spirited, private conversation. Their melodic lines and rhythmic phrases dance over, under and around each other; there is sometimes dissonance, but always an ultimate harmony. With their new CD, "OddFellows Road," set for release tonight, the Bee Eaters continue to travel the country, evangelists for their new American acoustic sound. Perhaps Tony Trischka said it best: "Their impressive ensemble work leaves me breathless. Their music excites, heals and enriches. Listen often." *They will be joined by special guest vocalist Jefferson Hamer who will also perform a 15-minute opening set. Hamer is a Brooklyn-based singer/guitarist who has performed his original and traditional music at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival and many other top festivals.*

OCTOBER

- **BRT will offer a 4-week session of classes on Thursdays in October in both mountain dulcimer and clogging with Aubrey Atwater and bodhran**



(Irish drum) with Aoife Clancy.

- **Irish step dance classes with Erika Damiani** continue on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon, throughout October.
- **Five levels of fiddle classes with Cathy Clasper Torch** continue on Tuesdays and Wednesdays through Oct. 11 & 12. **A new six-week session begins Oct. 25 and 26!**
- **Zumba and Zumba Tone classes with April Hilliker** continue on Mondays throughout October.

NOTE: If a show at BRT has an advance price & a day-of-show price it means: If you pre-pay OR call in your reservation any time before the show date, you get the advance price. *If you show up at the door with no reservations OR call in your reservations on the day of the show, you will pay the day of show price.*

TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, CALL BRT AT: 401-725-9272

Leave your name, number of tickets desired, for which show, your phone number and please let us know if you would like a confirmation phone call.

**Saturday, October 1, 7:30 PM lessons; dance at 8:00 PM, \$14.00
MAGNOLIA - CAJUN DANCE PARTY!**



Includes a half hour of dance instruction at 7:30 PM. Known throughout New England for their irresistible Cajun two-steps and sultry waltzes with French lyrics, **Magnolia Cajun Band** is sure to make you feel welcomed whether you are an experienced dancer or have always wanted to learn. Since 1989, Magnolia has been New England's hometown Cajun band. Learning their music from Louisiana's finest has earned them a solid reputation at home and recognition in the Cajun heartland. Their dance lessons and music have helped build a strong sense

of community at festivals and fais-do-dos all over Northeast. Playing high-energy two steps and waltzes, the band's twin fiddles, accordion, guitar, bass, and rich vocals keep the audience on its feet long into the night. And true to the tradition, Magnolia's seven members create a party wherever they perform! Magnolia Cajun Band is **Alan Bradbury, Michelle Kaminsky, Chris Ash, Martin Grosswendt, Maggie Moniz, Richard Moniz and Jack Ezikovich.** Magnolia was voted the 2009 Motif Magazine Folk Act of the Year in the Americana category.

**Sunday, October 2, 1-4 PM
PRIVATE PARTY**

**Sunday, October 2, 8 PM, \$15.00
COMAS - From Ireland**
Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union



When you hear **Comas** you'll know that their choice of name was no mere coincidence. Translating from Irish Gaelic as "power," that is exactly what this band is all about. The individual members of Comas come from diverse backgrounds - **Jackie Moran** (US), **Sylvain Barou** (Brittany), **Aidan Burke** (Ireland) and **Philip Masure** (Belgium). One of Europe's most sensational Celtic bands, Comas brings together the skills of four of the most exciting musicians of their generation. Born of

Irish parents, Aidan Burke was brought up in the Irish culture of music, dance, and song. Having Kevin Burke (Patrick Street, Bothy Band) as his cousin, he was destined to play the fiddle. *Aidan has won over 20 All-Ireland championships on the fiddle.* The mastery of Philip Masure from Belgium on guitar is also evident as he has become one of the most sought-after guitarists on the Celtic scene and is also in demand as a studio musician. Breton virtuoso Sylvain Barou is on flute, whistle, and uilleann pipes. Acclaimed by Dónal Lunny "the greatest flute player of his generation," his playing is based on the 'open' style of uilleann pipes of travelling pipers such as Paddy Keenan. Playing bodhrán - on which he is considered among the world's best - is Jackie Moran.

Displaying the intense zeal of a natural born musician, he was firmly ensconced in the Chicago Irish music scene by the age of 14 and has toured with Riverdance and recorded and performed with Bua, Kevin Burke, Martin Hayes and Paddy Keenan. Comas are a band firmly rooted in Irish music, but with enough space to mix in original compositions. Open to new influences but with a respectful eye on the past is what brings Comas to the fore-front of what traditional music is about today. *Don't miss the Rhode Island debut of this exciting band!*

**Mondays, October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 \$5.00 per class; \$8.00 if both same night
6:30-7:30 PM - ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER
7:45-8:30 PM - ZUMBA TONE CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

Thursdays, October 6-27

**6-6:50 PM: 4-week class in CLOGGING with Aubrey Atwater begins Oct. 6
7-8:30 PM: 4-week class in CONTINUING MOUNTAIN DULCIMER with Aubrey Atwater begins Oct. 6**

Thursdays, October 6-27, (Upstairs level of BRT)

7-7:50 PM: 4-week class in BODHRAN FOR BEGINNERS with Aoife Clancy begins Oct. 6

8-8:50 PM: 4-week class in BODHRAN FOR ADVANCED BEGINNERS with Aoife Clancy begins Oct. 6

**Saturday, October 8 AND Sunday, October 9, 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM
CELTIC STONECARVING IN LIMESTONE FOR BEGINNERS (Two-day class)**

**Saturday, October 8, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance/\$15.00 day of
AMERICAN GUITAR MASTERS featuring PETER JANSON and LARRY PATTIS**



American Guitar Masters artists **Peter Janson** and **Larry Pattis** are two acclaimed American fingerstyle acoustic guitarists whose solo careers encompass nearly 50 years of performing and recording. They both have numerous recordings to their credit and have performed widely across North America, from large concert stages, to elite clubs, to intimate house concerts. American Guitar Masters artists Peter Janson and Larry Pattis share a mutual devotion to the heart and soul

of guitar music. Their common vision is in bringing forth the highest level of emotive qualities of the acoustic guitar; their common goal is to delight the audience with landscape and mood of the life experiences that are the foundation of their music. *Named one of the "Top 10 Best Acoustic Music Artists of the Decade"* by the International Acoustic Music Awards, Larry Pattis has been a featured headline performer at such illustrious venues as the Montreal International Jazz Festival and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Millennium Stage in Washington DC. A winner of numerous awards, in 2008 Pattis was awarded First Prize for "Best Instrumental" in the IAMA competition. Considered a "gifted acoustic fingerstyle guitar player" (Dirty Linen), and the winner of the "Best Contemporary Instrumental Album" in the 2006 NAR Lifestyle Music Awards, Peter Janson's brand of American fingerstyle music brings world-class solo guitar playing to the concert stage. Combining elements of American Folk guitar, Celtic guitar, and American Roots music, Janson's original and compelling contemporary style is filled with artistry, technical mastery, and heartfelt passion. With critical acclaim such as "perfection... highly creative," "a true artist's soul," and "perhaps the leading contemporary fingerstyle guitarist today" there's no doubt that Janson has bridged a gap bringing together the every-day music fan with die-hard guitar fans.

**Saturday, October 15, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance/\$15.00 day of
THE GNOMES - World Folk Fusion/Cathy Clasper-Torch solo CD release!**



Come and enjoy the World Folk Fusion of The Gnomes and also celebrate the release of Cathy Clasper-Torch's first solo CD, "Here Between," an instrumental offering of spirituals & traditionals on violin, piano, erhu and cello. The Gnomes special brand of World-Folk-Fusion is sure to get you on your feet and dancing! The band features **Phil Edmonds, Cathy Clasper-Torch, Peter Breen, Mike Fischman** and **Ron Schmitt** who combine their varied and extensive musical backgrounds into arrangements that have been described as "exotic,

fresh, and unique." Instrumentation includes fiddle, Irish whistles, erhu, accordion, guitar, mandolin, bass, percussion, keyboard, and vocals. Their spirited music takes you around the world, encompassing Celtic, klezmer, Scandinavian, Carribean, Asian and Latin styles. Winners of the 2008 Motif Magazine Music Award for Folk/World performance, you can't help but "Get Gnomed" when you hear them play! Says Cathy of her solo CD project, "These hymns, spirituals and melodies I have chosen for the strength and comfort they've give me over the years. They span decades of my life - and continents - from north, south, east and west. This is my musical reflection on 'journey,' of the space "here between," which ultimately, as Rumi writes, "leads neither east nor west, but in."

**Sunday, October 16, 8 PM, \$18.00 advance/\$20.00 day of
BATTLEFIELD BAND - Music from Scotland**



"What the internationally renowned Irish band, the Chieftains, have done for traditional Irish music, Battlefield Band are doing for the music of Scotland..." - BILLBOARD. Under their banner 'Forward with Scotland's Past', **Battlefield Band** have been performing on the international scene for four decades, inspired by their rich heritage of Celtic music and fired by the strength of the modern Scottish cultural scene. The band, who

pioneered the integration of bagpipes with fiddle, keyboards, guitar and voice, mix the old songs and tunes with new self-penned material, playing them on a unique fusion of ancient and modern instruments. Over the years new members have brought with them new ideas, new music and instruments, and new attitudes and influences leading to continued creativity, freshness and enthusiasm. Founded by a group of friends in 1969 and named after the 'Battlefield' area of Glasgow, Battlefield Band perform throughout the world, playing to audiences in Europe, Australia, Asia, the Middle East & Canada, as well as more than 60 cities annually in the United States. Their music is played regularly on NPR's Thistle and Shamrock program, and they are frequent guests on "A Prairie Home Companion." At the inaugural Scots Trad Music Awards, Battlefield Band were awarded "Best Live Act." These respected awards celebrate Scotland's thriving traditional musical scene; the nominees are chosen by a panel of Scotland's traditional music experts, and the winners chosen by popular public vote, so the band feels very honored to be the first artists to receive this award. Battlefield Band are: **Mike Katz** on Highland Bagpipes, Small Pipes, whistles and more. He played in Ceolbeg before joining Battlefield Band in 1997 and has earned himself a deserved reputation on the scene as a truly excellent 'musician's musician' and tunesmith. **Alasdair White** on fiddle, whistle and bouzouki comes from the Isle of Lewis, one of the Gaelic speaking Outer Hebrides where music and culture remain strong daily forces. He joined Battlefield Band at the age of 18, and has toured the world several times over and worked on many fine albums including a highly acclaimed debut solo CD.

Guitarist/vocalist **Sean O'Donnell** was born in Derry, Northern Ireland and joined Battlefield Band in 2005, becoming a keystone of the group's sound: his soulful vocals and driving rhythmic guitar adding so much to the mix. **Ewen Henderson** on fiddle, Highland bagpipes, vocals and more is the latest recruit to the group, hailing from the Scottish West Highland town of Fort William. Now in his early twenties, he started learning the fiddle at the age of five, and has since mastered an impressive array of instruments, having had the privilege of being taught by many of the true masters of West Highland traditional music, whilst also being influenced by his strong family musical heritage. He has quickly established himself as a strong musical force within the band. Battlefield Band is touring behind their exciting new CD, "Line-Up."

Friday, October 21, 7-10 PM
PRIVATE EVENT - COMMUNITY SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

Saturday, October 22, 8 PM, \$15.00
THE GUY MENDILOW BAND - Sephardi Songs of
Imagined Migrations

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union



Get ready for a musical voyage starting in ancient Spain and winding through Sarajevo, Smyrna, Salonica and Jerusalem as this award-winning quintet breathes new life into centuries-old Sephardi romanzas and canticas. When the Sephardi Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492, they eventually settled in communities from Northern Africa and the Middle East to the Mediterranean and the Balkans. In each new home, their language, food, customs and songs soaked in local flavors of new cultures, and came to be known as Ladino culture. *Voted Boston's Best World Music Act in the Boston Phoenix's Best Music Poll 2011*, **The Guy Mendilow Band** is continuing the vibrant Ladino tradition. Drawing on the dynamic world music expertise of each of its players, the Guy Mendilow Band's Ladino Project explores

imagined, cross-cultural journeys: as if Sephardi music continued traveling and landing in Appalachia, or the streets of Salvador in Northeastern Brazil. What will these songs sound like when they both preserve their essence but also become steeped in these new, imagined homes, as they have throughout their historical migrations? Colorful tales of sailors seduced by sirens at sea, murder, intrigue, fantastic dreams and the treachery of kings and queens abound in arrangements that go from gritty and spare to sweepingly cinematographic, and through a presentation that is at once captivating and down-to-earth in its humour and charm. Led by Israeli performer **Guy Mendilow**, the charismatic quintet makes this ancient music fresh for modern audiences by drawing on the dynamic world music expertise of each of its players and by framing the project through the lens of imagined musical migrations. The result is a dynamic blend of Sephardi tempered with Brazilian street beats and blues in musical storytelling awash with warm vocal harmonies, intricate textures and spellbinding rhythms. Joining Guy Mendilow are **Tomoko Omura** on violin, **Aubrey Johnson** on vocals, **Keita Ogawa** on percussion, and **Andy Bergman** on electric Mbirra, clarinet, Jaw Harp, flutes, and sax.

"The buoyant, life-affirming, sweetly acoustic music of Israeli-born Mendilow incorporates influences from across the Middle East, South America and beyond. It's a folk music of hope and affirmation, sophisticated in its delivery but easily accessible to listeners anywhere," says the *Chicago Tribune*. "The glory of what Mendilow does is finding a common ground among different cultures. And that's what makes his music so exciting."- *Jewish Advocate*.

Tuesday, October 25

5:30 PM: 6-week class in BEGINNER FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

6:30 PM: 6-week class in CONTINUING BEGINNER FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

7:30 PM: 6-week class in ADV. BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

Wednesday, October 26

6:30 PM: 6-week class in ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

7:45 PM: 6-week class in ADVANCED FIDDLE with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

Tonight's show is postponed due to upcoming storm; new date will be announced!

Saturday, October 29, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of
LISSA SCHNECKENBERGER/MATCHING ORANGE



Join us for the return of a BRT favorite and the BRT debut of an exciting new trio! The traditional music of New England can be as warm and comforting as a winter fire or as potent and exhilarating as a

summer thunderstorm. Fiddler and singer **Lissa Schneckenburger** is a master of both moods, a winsome, sweet-voiced singer who brings new life to old ballads and a skillful, dynamic fiddler who captures the driving rhythm and carefree joy of dance tunes old and new. Lissa's fiddling is uplifting and lively, and her singing is gentle and evocative. Both in concert and in the studio she is regularly accompanied by some of New England's best musicians, including guitarist **Bethany Waickman** who joins Lissa tonight. In 2001 Lissa graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music with a degree in contemporary improvisation, and since then has been performing around the US and internationally for a growing audience of enthusiastic listeners. "Schneckenburger's playing is... quietly virtuosic... her voice is pure and clear, full of simple emotion" says the All Music Guide. Whether playing for contra dances or giving a concert, **Matching Orange** offers a refreshing approach to traditional fiddle music combining a repertoire of traditional and original material with a brotherly stage presence. **Eric McDonald** (guitar, mandolin, vocals), **Julie Vallimont** (piano and accordion), and **Brendan Carey Block** (fiddle), play traditional music from around the world, including Ireland, Scotland, Quebec, Appalachia, New England, and Cape Breton and they create a swirling level of intensity, sometimes gritty, sometimes pure, and always engaging. The band released its debut, self-titled CD, in January, 2010. In 2001, Block became the U.S. National Junior Scottish Fiddle Champion, and he is a three-time New England champion. He has been a member of the renowned Glengarry Bhoys and also performs with the Boston-based Annalivia. McDonald, a student at Berklee College of Music, was a founding member of Jaded Mandolin, a teen string band that became a local phenomenon in the Boston area. He plays regularly with Ari & Mia Friedman and also tours with the Dave Rowe Trio.

NOVEMBER

- **Irish step dance classes** with Erika Damiani continue on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon, through November 19. *(NO class Nov. 5!)*
- **Five levels of fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch continue on Tuesdays and Wednesdays through November 29 and 30.
- **Zumba and Zumba Tone classes** with April Hilliker continue on Mondays throughout November. *We will take December off from Zumba but it will return in January AND we will be adding a Sunday 9:30 a.m. zumba class option as well!*
- **BRT's Art Gallery will hold the photography exhibit "It Began With A Blue Jay..." by Frank O'Donnell** from Nov. 5 through Dec. 11. *A meet-the-artist reception and sale will be held Nov. 19, 5-6:30 p.m.* All proceeds from these sales go directly to the Keri Anne O'Donnell Memorial Fund.
- **Please let us know if you would like to donate a gift certificate or item for our upcoming silent auction** to be held Nov. 26 before and during our annual Homecoming Concert. *We would really appreciate it!*

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TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, CALL BRT AT: 401-725-9272

Leave your name, number of tickets desired, for which show, your phone number and please let us know if you would like a confirmation phone call.

Friday, November 4, 7-10 PM, \$20.00

CUMBERLAND LAND TRUST WINE & BEER TASTING FUNDRAISER

To purchase tickets contact Ann at 401-334-4643. Wine and beer provided by Cumberland's Mendon Wines and More. Visit: <http://www.cumberlandlandtrust.org>

Saturday, November 5, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show

LONG TIME COURTING - CD release!



Take four individually accomplished traditional musicians and singers with fresh attitudes. Combine them and you have the rich, soaring four-part vocal arrangements and fiery Irish jigs and reels that is **Long Time Courting**. This all-female band brings heavenly harmonies to old and new ballads and also serves up a zesty side of high-energy dance tunes. Combining the talents of **Sarah Blair** on fiddle/vocals, **Liz Simmons** on guitar/vocals, **Shannon Heaton** on flute/vocals, and **Ariel Friedman** on

cello/vocals, this Boston-based ensemble shares a love of traditional Irish and American music, as well as contemporary folk and pop. Together, they bring elements of these various genres to their traditional repertoire with sensitivity, beauty and a bit of mischief, too! Sarah Blair first started fiddling at sessions in Providence and now lives in Vermont; she is known for playing with The Sevens and as a leader at New England sessions and contra dances. Liz Simmons has developed a unique style that incorporates the sounds of Appalachian traditional singing and pop. She is currently the lead singer of Annalivia, a band that infuses a contemporary edge with the traditional sounds of Ireland, Appalachia and Cape Breton. Shannon Heaton has toured nationally with her husband, guitarist Matt Heaton, for twelve years and her exquisite Irish flute style has been featured with numerous other Boston groups. Ariel Friedman is an inventive folk and classical cellist from Boston, a winner of the American String Teachers Association's 2009 Alternative Styles Award, and also performs and records with Hanneke Cassel and Childsplay. **Tonight is the Rhode Island release of Long Time Courting's debut CD, "Alternate Routes."**

Sunday, November 6, 12-6 PM

PRIVATE EVENT

Saturday, November 12, 8 PM, \$15.00

TONY McMANUS - Scottish guitar virtuoso

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union



To find a unique voice on so ubiquitous an instrument as the acoustic guitar is quite an achievement: to do so within a centuries-old idiom where the instrument has no real history is truly remarkable. In just over ten years as a professional musician, **Tony McManus** has come to be recognized throughout the world as *the* leading guitarist in Celtic music. From early childhood his twin obsessions of traditional music and acoustic guitar have worked together to produce a startlingly original approach to this ancient art. In Tony's hands the complex ornamentation normally associated with fiddles and pipes are accurately transferred to guitar in a way that preserves the integrity and emotional impact of the music. It was with the release of "Ceol More" in 2002 that Tony's stature as a first-class

musician reached a new level. Critics hailed the focused, spell-binding nature of the music, from the plaintive Jewish hymn "Shalom Aleichem" to the ingenious arrangement of the Charles Mingus tune "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat." Having been nominated as *Musician of the Year* by both the *BBC Folk Awards* and *The Scottish Traditional Music awards*, in 2002 "Ceol More" hit the Critic's Album of the Year list in *Acoustic Guitar* magazine and was named "Live Ireland Awards" Album of the Year. In a relatively short time Tony's music has come to define a new role for the guitar in Celtic music. Come hear the Rhode Island solo debut of this virtuoso musician!

Saturday, November 19, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show

PATRICK BALL - Celtic Harp & Spoken Word



Patrick Ball is one of the premier Celtic harp players in the world and also a captivating spoken word artist. In playing the ancient, legendary brass-strung harp of Ireland with its crystalline, bell-like voice, and in performing marvelous tales of wit and enchantment, he not only brings new life to two cherished traditions, but blends them to create a richly theatrical and hauntingly beautiful performance. He has recorded nine instrumental and three spoken word albums which have sold well over one-half

million copies internationally and won national awards in both the music and spoken word categories. Whether in the stronghold of a Galway chieftain in the years before history began or yesterday in the snug corner of a pub in Dublin, the Irish have always delighted in storytelling. Their passion for eloquence and wordplay, their deep devotion to their mythical past, their ability to find joy and humor in a dark world, and their belief that the supernatural world could appear between one breath and the next made their stories and the telling of them unrivaled in the world of the oral tradition. And always, amidst the storytelling, there was music. Jigs, reels and haunting airs graced the spaces between the tales. And first among Irish instruments, and the most honored, was the legendary Celtic harp. With its bell-like voice and lavish resonance, it would soothe its listeners and lead them deeper into the realms of the imagination. In "Celtic Harp and Story" Patrick Ball rekindles the fire and wonder of an evening of Irish music and storytelling.

Saturday, November 26, 8 PM, \$20.00

BRT HOMECOMING CONCERT & SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER

featuring Atwater-Donnelly, Blue Around the Edges, Sheila Falls-Keohane, The Miller Family, Robbie O'Connell, Torrin Ryan, and Pendragon!

Advance ticket purchase recommended!



At 7:00 p.m. and during intermission, Blackstone River Theatre will also hold a silent auction featuring CDs, jewelry, original artwork, Christmas items and gift certificates. With family and friends in town for Thanksgiving,

BRT's 11th annual fund-raiser features some of the best of Rhode Island's homegrown talent as well as others who now live in the Ocean State. It is also a great way to experience upcoming performers at Blackstone River Theatre! *100% of the proceeds from both the concert and the silent auction will go to support Blackstone River Theatre's programming and operating expenses.* Having celebrated their 11th anniversary in

September, Blackstone River Theatre has now presented more than 1,150 concerts, festivals, dances, arts classes and children's events in front of 74,500 people.

Pendragon will act as hosts this evening and will perform a set of their Celtic-inspired music joined by prize-winning step dancer **Erika Damiani** and talented uilleann piper/whistle player **Torrin Ryan**. **The Miller Family - Evelyn, Ruby Mae, and Samuel** - will perform Irish music as well as Irish step dancing. Other featured performers, who are all donating their time, include celebrated Irish singer-songwriter **Robbie O'Connell, Atwater-Donnelly**, featuring Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly, who will perform Appalachian, original and Celtic-inspired folk music and dance, dynamic fiddler and step dancer **Sheila Falls-Keohane**, and the bluegrass trio **Blue Around the Edges**. *Don't miss this great night of music as you help support BRT's programming!*

DECEMBER

- **"It Began With A Blue Jay..."** photography exhibit by **Frank O'Donnell** continues through Dec. 11 in BRT's Art Gallery.
- **There will be no BRT classes offered in December.**
- **Blackstone River Theatre will shut down for the holiday season starting December 12 and will reopen again on January 13** with a great concert featuring Robbie O'Connell, Ed Miller and Dan Milner. *We wish everyone a very happy and safe holiday season with best wishes for a peaceful new year!*
- **Blackstone River Theatre gift certificates make a great gift** for friends and family of all ages!

- **Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to BRT before the year ends!**

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Leave your name, number of tickets desired, for which show, your phone number and please let us know if you would like a confirmation phone call.

**Saturday, December 3, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, FREE admission!
BRT HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR & FESTIVAL**



Blackstone River Theatre invites the community to our 4th annual Holiday Craft Fair and Festival fundraiser! *Please come out and support BRT programming as well as area craft vendors and home-based businesses while you do your holiday shopping locally!* **We will have 24 vendors on site** and the event will also feature **continuous live music** by members of Pendragon, The Broad Street Fiddlers, and others, plus raffle prizes, a bake sale table, refreshments and more. *Door prizes will be*

raffled off from each vendor with the raffle proceeds to benefit BRT's programming. Think out of the box (store!) Vendor/crafters/artisans include: **Moosup Valley Designs, SilverLeaf Studios, Scentsy Wickless Candles, Shaker Shoppe, Cheryl Dwyer Designs, Eco-woolies, Paula Horton Designs, Pampered Chef, The Scrappy Quilter, TKC Creations, Tina Kenney Creations, Swisse Just, Short & Sweet Design, Mary Kay, mpic studios, Tastefully Simple, Ann Lilley Recycled Tote Bags, Arbonne, Waterbead Wonders, Beads with Heart, Tree's Creations, Lague Felted Pocketbooks, Sarah Mitchell Designs, The Drum and Whistle, Phyllis Cabral Designs, and more!**

**Saturday, December 3, 8 PM, \$15.00
MOIRA SMILEY & VOCO - A Winter Gust of Song**



Armed with cello, banjo, accordion, ukulele and body percussion, VOCO beautifully warps old American shape-notes, sizzling hambone and strains of Eastern European music with an avant-garde, experimental spirit, lush originals and warm wit. Tonight's all-new program, A Winter Gust of Song, is a beautiful collection of American folk songs about winter, stars, evergreens and parallel celebration songs from Eastern Europe. A huge hit at BRT this past January, VOCO is a visionary blend of voices redefining harmony

singing with the power and physicality of folksong. **Moira Smiley** leads these extraordinary musicians who share a passion for powerful, emotional music with lush three-part vocal harmony, performing original improvisation-built songs steeped in Appalachia and Eastern Europe. Joining Moira tonight will be **Emily Eagen** (voice, ukelele, body percussion) and **April Guthrie** (cello, voice, body percussion). *Named #1 a cappella group in the U.S. in 2007*, VOCO combines the energy of street singing and the elegance of a string quartet. VOCO has released two critically acclaimed CDs, "Small Worlds" and "Circle, Square, Diamond & Flag." Singer-composer Smiley leads VOCO, travels the world as a soloist, and creates new work for dance, theatre and film. Her voice can be heard in films, television (BBC, PBS), NPR, and on more than 40 recordings. She has sung with leading ensembles and artists around the world, including Ladysmith Black Mambazo, and New World Symphony. While studying piano performance and Early Music at Indiana University, Moira toured extensively with her vocal group, VIDA. Praised for her musical depth and noted as a musical "shape-shifter," Moira also explores the depths of early American, Irish and Balkan traditional song. Her song "Stand in that River" is performed by thousands of choral ensembles and singers of all stripes. *Join us as we kick off the holiday season with sweet and*

hard-driving Americana music combined with body-stompin' percussive movement and hair-raising harmonies!

**Sunday, December 4, 7:00 p.m., \$30.00 advance/\$35.00 day of show
CHERISH THE LADIES - CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

Advance ticket purchase recommended! This WILL sell out quickly!



They have grown from a one-time concert concept to an Irish traditional music sensation, literally the most successful and sought-after Irish-American group in Celtic music. Organized by folklorist/musician Mick Moloney and sponsored by the Ethnic Folk Arts Center and the National Endowment for the Arts, Cherish the Ladies began as a concert series featuring the brightest lights in Irish traditional music. Taking their name from the name of a traditional Irish jig, the group initially won recognition as the first and only all-women traditional Irish band.

In a relatively short time, they soon established themselves as musicians and performers without peer and have won many thousands of listeners and fans of their music. With their spectacular blend of virtuosic instrumental talents, beautiful vocals, captivating arrangements and stunning step dancing, this powerhouse group combines all the facets of Irish traditional culture and puts it forth in an immensely humorous and entertaining package. Cherish the Ladies - **Joannie Madden, Mary Coogan, Grainne Murphy, Mirella Murray and KT Boyle** - have been named Best Musical Group of the Year by the BBC, Entertainment Group of the Year by the Irish Voice Newspaper, chosen as the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall's International Group of the Year Award at the Celtic Connections Festival in Scotland, and voted the Top North American Celtic act by NPR Radio's "Thistle and Shamrock." Two years ago at BRT they debuted their new Christmas album, "A Star In The East," which was a follow up to "On Christmas Night," hailed by critics as one of the best Christmas albums of 2007. The CD continues the theme with old Christmas favorite singalongs - given their unique Celtic touch - and some new Christmas songs with jigs, reels, polkas, airs and slides. *For tonight's Christmas show, the band will be joined by several step dancers... do not miss a VERY rare small room appearance by this amazing group!*

Two Holiday performances!

**Saturday, December 10, 8:00 PM, \$18.00 advance/\$20.00 day of show AND
Sunday, December 11, 7:00 PM, \$18.00 advance/\$20.00 day of show
A BLACKSTONE RIVER THEATRE CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION**



Blackstone River Theatre will present our 4th annual Christmas Celebration featuring Aubrey **Atwater, Cathy Clasper-Torch, Erika Damiani, Elwood Donnelly, Bob Drouin, Russell Gusetti, Josh Kane, The Miller Family, Mary Lee Partington, Torrin Ryan, and the Swamp Meadow Victorian Carolers**. Audiences can expect the unexpected - familiar and unfamiliar songs, high energy clogging and step dancing, ancient carols, spoken word, jokes and more - as musicians and dancers perform in varied combinations or join together on beautiful Christmas and winter-themed pieces. "That's one of the nicest things about this show," explains Russell Gusetti, BRT executive director and a member of Pendragon. "We all get a chance to perform with each other in several different configurations, something audiences simply do not get to see at any other point in the year." Special guest performers will include the Swamp Meadow Victorian Carolers from Foster, BRT's Irish step dance instructor Erika Damiani, acclaimed 16-year-old Irish bagpiper Torrin Ryan, from Attleboro, and music and step dancing by the dynamic The Miller Family - Ruby May, Evelyn and Samuel.