

# Blackstone River Theatre



## Solstice Festival

about BRT  
what's new  
directions  
ticket info  
schedule  
classes  
volunteer  
art gallery  
contact us  
pendragon



## 2015 Schedule

[current schedule](#)   [2014 past schedule](#)   [2013 past schedule](#)   [2012 past schedule](#)  
[2011 past schedule](#)   [2010 past schedule](#)   [2009 past schedule](#)   [2008 past schedule](#)

### JANUARY 2015

- **We will continue our popular Zumba classes with April Hilliker on Mondays** at 6:30 p.m. starting Jan. 5.
- **We are offering TWO NEW DANCE CLASSES - a 4-week session in Beginner Cajun two-step and Beginner Zydeco** with Jody Rudnick starting Jan. 8
- **Look for details about another eight-week round of Irish step dance classes** (11 different classes including beginner children and adults) with Erika Damiani beginning Jan. 9, 10 and 11.
- **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. 13 & Jan. 14. A TOTAL BEGINNER class will be offered on Thursdays.

**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.

### **Mondays in January starting Jan. 5, \$5.00 per class, 6:30-7:30 PM ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

#### **Thursday, January 8**

6:30-7:30: 4-week session in **Beginner Cajun Two-Step** with Jody Rudnick begins  
7:30-8:30: 4-week session in **Beginner Zydeco** with Jody Rudnick begins

#### **Friday, January 9**

4:30-5:30 PM: 8-week class **Tir Na Nog 'NOG' TROUPE** with Erika Damiani begins  
5:30-6:30 PM: 8-week class **BEGINNER HARD SHOE** with Erika Damiani begins  
6:30-7:30 PM: 8-week class **ADVANCED BEGINNER HARD SHOE** with Erika Damiani begins

#### **Saturday, January 10**

9:00 AM: 8-week class in **BEGINNER IRISH STEP DANCE for children 5-10** with Erika Damiani begins  
10:00 AM: 8-week class in **CONTINUING BEGINNER IRISH STEP DANCE for children 6-12** with Erika Damiani begins  
11:00 AM: 8-week class in **BEGINNER IRISH STEP DANCE FOR ADULTS/TEENS**

with Erika Damiani begins

**Saturday, January 10, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance / \$15.00 day of show  
THE KROPPDUSTERS**



The KroppDusters are a group of veteran musicians featuring banjo master **Mike Kropp**, guitarist and singer **Bill Henry**, bassist and vocalist **Jeff Horton**, mandolinist and singer **Monty McClanahan**, and claw-hammer banjo player **Lisa Schmitz**. Mike Kropp is New England's premier finger-style banjoist. As a member of the critically acclaimed Northern Lights he performed nationally and recorded with Vassar Clements, Don McLean and Jonathan Edwards. Lisa Schmitz has been playing 5-string banjo for 20 years and is regarded as one of the top melodic

clawhammer players in the country. Guitarist Bill Henry joined Northern Lights in 1981 and he has also recorded with Peter Rowan and Jonathan Edwards. Bassist/vocalist Jeff Horton also currently performs in the Pegheads. He was a founding member of the Neon Valley Boys, and for six years in the early '90s he played with Northern Lights. Monty McClanahan is an alumni of the New England bands Southern Rhode and Shady Creek. He is most noted for his lead and tenor vocals in the high lonesome style. The band's vocal blend culminates in beautiful 4-part harmonies augmented by some impressive instrumental work. *A great night of bluegrass and Americana music to kick off BRT's new season!*

**Sunday, January 11**

9:00 AM: 8-week class **TIR NA NOG GREEN TROUPE** (performance troupe) with Erika Damiani begins

10:00 AM: 8-week class **SOFT SHOE TECHNIQUE** with Erika Damiani begins

11:00 AM: 8-week class **TIR NA NOG GOLD TROUPE** (performance troupe) with Erika Damiani begins

NOON: 8-week class in **ADVANCED HARD AND SOFT SHOE** with Erika Damiani begins

1:00 PM: 8-week class **TIR NA NOG TRISKELE TROUPE** (performance troupe) with Erika Damiani begins

**Tuesday, January 13**

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

**Wednesday, January 14**

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

**Thursday, January 15**

5:00 PM: 6-week class in **COMPLETE BEGINNER FIDDLE** with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins

**Saturday, January 17, 8 PM, \$15.00**

**MATT & SHANNON HEATON / TORRIN RYAN & MARK OIEN**



Boston's powerhouse duo and BRT favorites **Matt and Shannon Heaton** have once again assembled an album of smartly-arranged traditional ballads with deep Irish

roots and fresh, modern sensibilities. "Tell You in Earnest" is their fifth duo CD and

features well-traveled "dialogue ballads" (each song is a conversation between two people, fitting for a husband-and-wife duo). As always, there is bright instrumental work and traditional-style singing from the Heaton's. Unexpected additions include mild Thai spices (from the Thai music Shannon learned in school in Suphanburi), and harmony singing and rootsy Americana rhythms. Shannon (*Live Ireland's Female Musician of the Year 2010 and 2011*) has been compared to Alison Krauss and Altan's Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh for her combination of vocal grace and instrumental prowess (Irish flute, button accordion). Matt is a 2013 Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant recipient and provides a firm foundation on the guitar and bouzouki. Like Richard Thompson, Donal Lunny and Bill Frisell, he's always searching for the perfect chord. Since their move to Boston in 2001, the Heaton's have become an integral part of Boston's vibrant Irish music and neo-Celtic Acoustic scenes.

Centered around the admiration each musician has for regional European roots music, **Torrin Ryan** and **Mark Oien** create a unique sound by combining the Norwegian Hardanger fiddle, Irish fiddle, and Irish uilleann pipes and whistles. Torrin Ryan has competed in several Mid-Atlantic Fleadhs where he's won first place on both whistle and pipes. In Ireland, he has competed at the All-Ireland Fleadh held in Tullamore and Derry. ***In the summer of 2013 Torrin was named All-Ireland Uilleann Pipes Slow Airs champion, also coming in third place overall.*** Through the years, Mark has refined his style by utilizing the long bow strokes and agile fingerwork of the Boston-Galway and New York-Sligo musicians. He has performed at numerous festivals throughout New England including ICONS and he can often be found hosting sessions and performing in Southeastern Mass. and Cape Cod.

### **CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER FORECAST! THIS SHOW WILL BE RESCHEDULED AT A LATER DATE.**

**Saturday, January 24, 2 PM matinee, \$10.00 advance / \$12.00 day of show  
THE DIXIE DIEHARDS JAZZ BAND**



Join the Dixie Diehards Jazz Band for a raucous, Mardi Gras-style show as they dish out a thick gumbo of traditional New Orleans Jazz! The Dixie Diehards, whose lineup includes a medical doctor, a retired college professor and an investigative reporter among others, shares at least one thing in common: a passion for the "hot jazz" and blues of the early 20th century. The era, typified by such greats as Louis Armstrong, Fats Waller and Jelly Roll Morton, firmly

established jazz as "America's music" and set the direction for much of subsequent pop culture. The term "Dixieland" refers to a form of small group jazz which typically includes a trumpet, a clarinet and a trombone and often a tuba combined with a rhythm section that may include a banjo, percussion or bass player as well as a piano. In most arrangements, the trumpet plays the melody while other elements freely improvise around it or paraphrase the melody in creative solos. The Dixie Diehards have won an enthusiastic reception across southern New England for bringing an irrepressible sense of fun and frolic to their shows. That attitude almost always includes audience sing-alongs, spontaneous dance outbursts (remember the Charleston?) and a spirit of "wonderful nonsense." The lineup includes: **Rick Foster** on trumpet & vocals, **Dolly Fruzzetti** on vocals, **Bill Dube** on reeds, **Dale Ellenberg** on drums, **Paul Peterson** on reeds, **Steve Shaw** on tuba, **John Zawislak** on trombone, **Tom Fee** on banjo, **Bill Kiesewetter** on bass, and band leader **Alan Shapiro** on trumpet. *Don't miss a rare BRT matinee show sure to be fun for all ages!*

**Saturday, January 31, 8 PM, \$15.00  
FELLSWATER / WILL WOODSON & ERIC MCDONALD**



**Fellswater** is a dynamic instrumental Celtic music ensemble based out of Boston playing a wide range of music from traditional to modern compositions, drawing from the music of Scotland, Ireland, Brittany and Canada. Instrumentation includes whistle, flute, guitar, bouzouki, violin and

smallpipes. Fellswater has delighted audiences at New Hampshire Highland Games (2010, 2012, 2014), Maine Highland Games (2014), Blackstone River Theatre (2012 & 2013), Club Passim (BCMFest 2012) and Colonial Williamsburg (2014). The band will be performing at the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo in 2015. Fellswater has released two well-received albums, "Fellswater," in 2010 and "Thursday Night," in late 2013. The band features **Betsy Ketudat** on fiddle, **Jim MacConduibh** on guitar and bouzouki, **Sarah MacConduibh** on Irish Flute and whistle, and **Andrew McIntosh**, a former pipe major of the Stuart Highland Pipe Band, on smallpipes.

**Will Woodson** and **Eric McDonald** are two of the finest young proponents of traditional Scottish music today. With an unusual blend of wind and plucked strings, they bring a breath of sensitivity to a tradition that is often known for its high velocity. Their unique approach, while rooted in the indigenous music of Scotland, is also informed by the vibrant traditional music scene of their native New England. Border pipes, wooden flute, tin whistle, guitar, mandolin, and voice fuse together to create a detailed fabric of tunes and songs. Soaring reels and swinging jigs give way to more contemplative ballads, each displaying the organic chemistry of the duo. Woodson is an innovative and powerful performer of traditional and contemporary music on border pipes, flute, and tin whistle. He holds a master's degree in the performance of Scottish music from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow. Eric McDonald a member of the Scottish power trio Cantrip and is one of New England's premier acoustic performers and instructors, known for his versatility in many styles.

## FEBRUARY 2015

- **We will continue our popular Monday Zumba classes** with April Hilliker at 6:30 p.m.
- **We are offering a six-week session of continuing tin whistle on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. and continuing 5-string banjo at 7:30 p.m.** with Aubrey Atwater starting Feb. 26.
- **Irish step dance classes** (13 different classes including beginner children and adults) with Erika Damiani continues Fridays 4:30-8:30 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m.-noon, and Sundays 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **Fiddle classes** for beginner, continuing beginner/ intermediate, advanced intermediate and advanced students with Cathy Clasper-Torch continues through Feb. 24 and Feb. 25

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**Mondays in February, \$5.00 per class, 6:30-7:30 PM  
ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

**Saturday, February 7, 8 PM, \$15.00  
OCCIDENTAL GYPSY**

Opening set at 7:30 by singer-songwriter Cesar Santana



**Occidental Gypsy** delivers an exhilarating blend of gypsy swing, jazz and world music with a powerful acoustic sound and sultry vocals reminiscent of the first era of swing. They also add to the genre with many notable covers like a "gypsyfied" take on Michael Jackson's "Thriller." Celebrated musician David Bromberg said of the group, "great singing, fantastic guitar and violin work, with high energy originals that leave the crowd crazy. An awesome band." Occidental Gypsy is pioneering the sound of world Gypsy

music. Nationally recognized as capable heirs of Django Reinhardt, Occidental Gypsy was recently invited to play the 2015 DjangoFest in Mill Valley, California. The band has sold out legendary venues such as Nighttown in Cleveland, offered concerts and workshops at the Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago and Bluebird Cafe in Nashville among many other notable venues in over 25 states. The band has shared the stage with such greats as Rikki Lee Jones, Stanley Jordan, Tony Rice, and many others. Occidental's violinist **Eli Bishop**, back from a tour with Wynton Marsalis, rouses audiences with his award-winning lightning-fast violin, while lead guitarist **Brett Feldman** drives the sound with swinging gypsy guitar. **Jeremy Frantz** - a protege of legendary jazz guitarist Joe Negri - brings his sultry, "retro" vocals and expert jazz guitar to the front line, and serves as an exquisite counterpoint to the down-and-dirty sound brought by Brett. Guatemalan percussionist **Erick "Banny" Cifuentes** and bassist **Jeff Feldman** fill out the band's rich sound and keep feet stomping with beats and complex rhythms that make their audiences dance in their seats. Occidental Gypsy's unique approach to pop, jazz, and dance music stems from the influence of Gypsy Swing founders, Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli. The members of the group possess a deep knowledge and reverence for the Gypsy style and feel honored to bring their music to the ears of new audiences. The name Occidental Gypsy (Western gypsy) embodies the concept behind Gypsy Pop. The group has taken the Gypsy sound that originated in Eastern Europe and seek to blend it seamlessly with contemporary American music. Interestingly, Gypsy Swing was created by taking American Jazz to the East and blending it with the Gypsy Folk tradition. Now almost a century later Occidental Gypsy is bringing the music back home.

## **Due to snow/ice forecast, tonight's show will be RESCHEDULED TO THE FALL!**

**Saturday, February 21, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance / \$15.00 day of show**  
**ROSSONI**



Providence performing songwriter **Mary Ann Rossoni's** slightly smokey voice conveys incredible depth and meaning without trying to impress you. She uses it gently, but always with character and attention to the words she is singing. In addition to also being a visual artist, she is an avid reader and this is reflected in many literary references in her lyrics. Rossoni turns her affinity for ordinary people into beautiful portraits of people in moments of meaning and discovery. After 30 years of touring nationally, RI songwriter Mary Ann Rossoni is now

back to her roots with the recent release of her newest album, "Edentown." Mary Ann is a two-time chair and founding member of the Rhode Island Songwriters Association, now in its 20th year, and is also on the board of directors of the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame. Born and raised in Johnston, RI, and after years of touring in Fuzek Rossoni, with Rossoni, and also with the Rossonians, Mary Ann is now back to her roots. She says, "It's all about the song," and she remains very active in the songwriting process. To this day, Mary Ann does not record a song without first running the tune by her RISA critique pals. Tonight, Mary Ann will perform solo, in duo settings and also as a band featuring **Mederick Bellaire** on guitars, mandolin and vocals; **Jeff Keithline** on stand-up bass and vocals, **Paul Dube** on harp and accordion, **Matt Dube** on percussion, and **Betsy Ritz** on violin.

**Sunday, February 22, 7 PM,**  
**\$18.00 advance / \$22.00 day of**  
**show**

## FULLSET

Funding for FullSet's tour provided by  
Culture Ireland



Culture Ireland  
Cultúr Éireann



**FullSet** are one of Ireland's most accomplished and sought-after bands in Irish traditional music today. This young and exciting group creates a sound that is full of energy and innovation, while remaining true to their traditional roots. FullSet have received much critical acclaim in recent years, even being

compared to super groups such as Danú and Altan by respected *Irish Music Magazine*. Their meteoric rise in the music world began when they received the "Best New Group Award" from well-respected *Irish American News*. Following the tremendous success of their debut album "Notes At Liberty," the group's profile was further raised with the release of their follow-up, "Notes After Dark" in 2013, named "Album of the Year" by US radio program "Celtic Connections." FullSet is comprised of six of the most talented and versatile young musicians in the traditional Irish music scene today - **Michael Harrison** on fiddle, **Martino Vacca** on uilleann pipes, **Eamonn Moloney** on bodhrán, **Andy Meaney** on guitar, and vocalist, accordionist and dancer **Marianne Knight**. (Janine Redmond is not able to be on this tour.) FullSet have performed at some of the most prestigious Celtic and world music festivals across North America and Europe and have shared the stage with some of the biggest names in folk and world music. FullSet's ability to showcase Irish music, song and dance of the highest quality in an energetic and fun-filled manner has proved immensely successful as they continue to thrill audiences around the world. 2015 is shaping up to be an extremely exciting year for the group with work on their third studio album having already begun. *Don't miss their BRT debut!*

**Saturday, February 28, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance / \$15.00 day of show**

### THE GNOMES

*Special appearance by members of The Broad Street Fiddlers*



**The Gnomes** special brand of World-Folk-Fusion is sure to get you on your feet and dancing! The band features **Phil Edmonds** (Irish whistle and button accordion); **Cathy Clasper-Torch** (fiddle, keyboard, er-hu, vocals); **Mike Fischman** (guitar, mandolin, bouzouki, banjo, vocals); **Peter Breen** (bass, vocals); and **Matt Niebels**

(percussion/drums). Together they combine their varied and extensive musical

backgrounds into arrangements that have been described as "exotic, fresh, and unique." Instrumentation includes fiddle, Irish whistles, er-hu, 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 and 2012 Motif Magazine Music Award for Folk/World performance, you can't help but "Get Gnomed" when you hear them play!

## MARCH 2015

- **We will continue our popular Monday Zumba classes** with April Hilliker at 6:30 p.m.
- **Continuing tin whistle on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. and continuing 5-string banjo at 7:30 p.m.** with Aubrey Atwater continues in March.
- **A new 8-week session of Irish step dance classes** (13 different classes including beginner children and adults) with Erika Damiani begins Friday, March 27, 4:30-8:30 p.m., Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m.-noon, and Sunday, March 29, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

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**Mondays in March, \$5.00 per class, 6:30-7:30 PM**

**ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

**Due to snow forecast, tonight's show will be RESCHEDULED TO THE FALL**

***RUNA will be a featured band at the Summer Solstice Festival June 20 too!***

**Sunday, March 1, 7 PM, \$18.00 advance / \$22.00 day of show**

**RUNA**



RUNA burst onto the Celtic music scene during the summer of 2008 and has been taking audiences by storm ever since. 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. Vocalist and step-dancer **Shannon Lambert-Ryan**, from Philadelphia, has a broad musical background including Celtic, folk, classical, and musical theatre and fronts RUNA with rich, vibrant vocals. She co-founded RUNA with her husband, Dublin-born guitarist and composer, **Fionán de Barra**, who started playing guitar professionally with "Riverdance" and has worked as musical director for Moya Brennan (of Clannad) and her band. Percussionist **Cheryl Prashker** studied classical percussion at McGill University in her native Montreal, Canada. She now lives in Philadelphia and has a well-deserved reputation as a "go-to" percussionist for folk recordings. They are joined by Galway's **Dave Curley**, a singer, dancer and multi-instrumentalist (guitar, banjo, mandolin, and bodhrán) and the brilliant Kentucky fiddler, **Maggie Estes White**. RUNA's most recent recording "Current Affairs" has received lavish praise on both sides of the Atlantic. They were recognized on an international level by winning "Top Group" and "Top Traditional Group" in the Irish Music Awards and in the 12th Annual Independent Music Awards, winning both the fan ballot and judges' votes for "Best Song" in the World Traditional category. The band also appeared as the featured Cover Artist in the October, 2014 Issue of Irish Music Magazine. *Don't miss this amazing group as we kick off St. Patrick's Month!*

**Saturday, March 7, 8 PM, \$15.00 advance / \$18.00 day of show**

**ROBBIE O'CONNELL / CAITLIN NIC GABHANN & CIARAN O MAONAIGH**



THIS will be an amazing night of Irish music as we welcome back BRT favorite Robbie O'Connell in a rare solo performance as well as present the return of a dynamic fiddle/concertina duo from Ireland that brought the house down last year! Singer-songwriter **Robbie O'Connell** was born in Waterford, Ireland, and grew up in Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. In

1977, he joined the legendary Clancy Brothers with whom he recorded 3 albums. With the 1982 release of his first solo album 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. He 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." Says Robbie, "**Caitlín Nic Gabhann** and **Ciarán O Maonaigh** are two of the finest instrumentalists on the Irish traditional scene. Individually they are stunning but together they bring a freshness and excitement to the music that is uniquely their own." Three times winner of the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil on concertina, Caitlín is a regular performer at festivals and in concert halls from North America all the way to Asia. She is also an accomplished dancer and in 2009, joined Riverdance as troupe dancer. Her debut solo CD release, "Caitlín," was voted the 2012 'CD of the Year' award by [tradconnect.com](http://tradconnect.com) as well as being labelled the 'top Irish traditional album of 2012' by *The Wall Street Journal*. Caitlín is currently concentrating on musical collaborations with the award-winning fiddle player and documentary maker, Ciarán Ó Maonaigh, a nephew of Altan's celebrated fiddle player and lead singer Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh, and a brilliant fiddle player in the Donegal style who released a remarkable solo CD a few years ago. They'll be celebrating the release of their first duo album on this tour. *Not to be missed!*

### **SOLD OUT!**

**Sunday, March 15, 7 PM, \$15.00 advance / \$18.00 day of show**  
**PENDRAGON & FRIENDS - Celebrate St. Patrick's Day!**



New England has long had a rich tradition of Celtic-inspired music. For 31 years, 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, and **Josh Kane** on flute and whistles. (vocalist **Mary Lee Partington** will not be appearing at tonight's show). They will be joined tonight by uilleann piper **Torrin Ryan** and guest dancer **Erika Damiani**. 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 was voted Rhode Island's Best Celtic Act in the 2013 and 2005-2011 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.

**Saturday, March 21, 2 PM matinee, \$12.00 (\$6.00 for children)**

### **EASTERN MEDICINE SINGERS**

*Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union*



The Eastern Medicine Singers are an Algonquin drum group from Providence, RI, dedicated to keeping the eastern woodlands native American culture alive. The drum group is made up of RI, NY, NJ & Southeastern Massachusetts Tribes and they take pride in drumming and singing in the language of Massachusetts and Wampanoag dialect. The Eastern Medicine Singers, led by Daryl Black Eagle Jamieson, create new music and combine stories and culture into the drum experience. Eastern Medicine Singers started in

2008 to support the NAPEWA Native Youth Program at the RI Indian Council in Providence. They have played at the 2013 Summer Solstice Festival, the Providence Art Club, RI Department of Tourism, RI State Council on the Arts, NH Intertribal Council Powwows, Ramapough Nation, Mashantucket Pequot Nation, Nipmuc Nation,

Woonsocket Autumnfest, and many others. *A great afternoon of drumming, song, stories and culture for the whole family!*

**Saturday, March 21, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance / \$15.00 day of show**  
**MARTIN GROSSWENDT & SUSANNE SALEM-SCHATZ / BERTRAND LAURENCE**



*We are thrilled to pair two BRT favorites who play amazing blues and country blues but so much more!* **Martin Grosswendt** has been exploring the roots and branches of American acoustic music for more than 40 years. Musicians and critics have called him, among other things, a national treasure and a rumor in his own

time. In fact, a single label can't do justice to Martin's dynamic musical talents. An extraordinary instrumentalist and powerful singer best known as an interpreter of 1920s and '30s blues, his mastery of numerous regional styles on guitar, mandolin, five-string banjo, and fiddle make his concerts events that audiences don't soon forget. His performances encompass the breadth and depth of Southern roots music, from classic Delta and East Coast blues to early country music to Creole and Cajun music. His love for a good song also moves him to perform material from such modern songwriters such as Townes Van Zandt and Richard Thompson. In addition to his teaching and solo work, Martin performs frequently as a duo with the remarkable singer **Susanne Salem-Schatz** who will also perform tonight. Martin plays and sings with Salem-Schatz in the Boston-based band Honky Tonk Masquerade.

**Bertrand Laurence** is a master of the art of country blues fingerpicking and slide guitar, but he's no purist. His live shows featuring traditional, contemporary, and original blues are full of surprises including swing tunes, jump blues, ragtime, boogie, bluesy show tunes, 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." His CD, "La Vie en Bleu" shows Laurence at his best, fingerpicking his way through a diverse collection of instrumentals on six-string, twelve-string and slide guitar, and singing blues in both English and French. *Audiences all over have responded with warmth to Bertrand's performances; tonight is a great chance to see what all the fuss is about!*

**Saturday, March 28, 8 PM, \$15.00 advance / \$18.00 day of show**  
**HANNEKE CASSEL with MIKE BLOCK & KEITH MURPHY**



Former U.S. National Scottish Fiddle Champion **Hanneke Cassel** will team up with virtuoso contemporary cellist **Mike Block** and guitarist **Keith Murphy** to bring you a night of innovative Scottish and Irish fiddle music and

songs from Eastern Canada and Quebec. Hanneke and Mike are at the forefront of the contemporary fiddle / cello scenes in America... playing and composing new tunes that retain the integrity and soul of traditional music. "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, "Dot the Dragon's Eyes," features an all-star cast of musicians. 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. A native of Newfoundland, singer/guitarist Keith Murphy, known for his work with Nightingale, Childsplay and Assembly, has a sophisticated approach to old ballads and songs, and fills out fiddle tunes with his grooving guitar style as well as contributing great songs. Hailed by Yo-Yo Ma as the "ideal musician of the 21st Century," Mike Block is a pioneering multi-style cellist, composer, and educator. While still studying at the Juilliard School, Mike joined Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, and shortly thereafter also joined Mark O'Connor's Appalachia Waltz Trio, which he played in for over three years. Mike has also toured extensively with Darol Anger's Republic of Strings and The Knights orchestra. After becoming one of the first wave of cellists to adopt a strap in order to stand while playing, Mike was the first standing cellist to perform at Carnegie Hall, which the *NY Times* called "Breathless ... Half dance, half dare."

## APRIL 2015

- **We will continue our popular Monday Zumba classes** with April Hilliker at 6:30 p.m.
- **Beginning and continuing mountain dulcimer classes** with Elwood Donnelly and Aubrey Atwater take place Saturdays, April 4 and 18 (also May 9 and May 16).
- **A new 8-week session of Irish step dance classes** (13 different classes including beginner children and adults) with Erika Damiani began Friday, March 27, 4:30-8:30 p.m., Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m.-noon, and Sunday, March 29, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and runs through April.
- **A new 8-week session of group fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins Tuesday, April 7, Wednesday, April 8, and Thursday, April 9.

**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.

### **Mondays in April, \$5.00 per class, 6:30-7:30 PM ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

### **Saturday, April 4, 8 PM, \$15.00 LOW LILY (formerly Annalivia) / TIM CONNELL**



Low Lily, formerly called Annalivia, is an American 'roots and branches' string trio which draws from tradition and today to create their own brand of new acoustic folk music. The members - **Liz Simmons**, **Flynn Cohen** and **Lissa Schneckenburger** - are masterful players and have long histories with traditional music, ranging from bluegrass to Irish, Scottish, New England and Old Time Appalachian music. This background, combined with each member's stellar compositional skills and arranging talents, makes for music which sounds rooted yet contemporary. Folk and string-band enthusiasts alike will be drawn in by the expert vocals and songwriting, excellent musicianship, and innovative approach. The members of Low Lily have individually toured and performed with the likes of Ruth Moody, Cathie Ryan, John Whelan, Aoife Clancy, Adrienne Young, Childsplay and Solas, among others. The Noise (Boston) says "An energy that can only be described as contagious. In a word: charming." Northern Sky Radio (UK) calls their music "Richly textured... equally as slick as Alison Krauss and Union Station."

**Tim Connell** is a rising star in the acoustic music scene and we are proud to have him for his BRT debut! A graduate of the prestigious New England Conservatory of Music

and a virtuoso multi-instrumentalist with 25 years professional performing experience, he has forged a sophisticated and worldly voice for the mandolin in his work with Mike Marshall, Avi Avital and Radim Zenkl in the international mandolin supergroup The Ger Mandolin Orchestra. In the last year, Tim's work with the mandolin has found him trading licks onstage with his heroes Mike Marshall and David Grisman, performing pre-war Yiddish music to standing-room-only audiences in synagogues in Poland, and appearing as guest artist with the Oregon Mandolin Orchestra. Tim currently lives in Portland, Oregon and regularly performs choro with Rio Con Brio, twin mandolin arrangements of Celtic and other world musics with Jack Dwyer, and adventurous string jazz and funk with Eric Skye. His in-depth study of both Brazilian and Irish music, combined with his earlier years as a professional bassist and pianist have helped Tim synthesize a personal style on the mandolin which is harmonically advanced, rhythmically diverse and brimming over with sparkling ornamentation and romantic intensity.

**Saturday, April 11, 8 PM, \$15.00**  
**INTERNATIONAL STRING TRIO**



*We are thrilled to have this group back for a 2nd time... they are one of only two groups at BRT to receive a standing ovation in the middle of their first set!* The International String Trio was founded in 1999 by its musical director and guitarist, **Slava Tolstoy**. The band also features **Ippei Ichimaru** on acoustic bass and **Jakub Trasak** on violin. During the last 10 years the group has performed at more than 1000 venues across the USA and has gained national recognition for its distinct sound and

stylistic diversity. The trio's repertoire includes classical, jazz, popular and world music (Italian, French, Russian, Jewish, Spanish, Latin American, Gypsy and Irish). The International String Trio has developed a unique concert program that is both highly entertaining and educational, energetic and musically gratifying. The group enjoys using the diverse cultural backgrounds of its members - hailing from Russia, Japan and the Czech Republic - to influence its stylistic diversity and unique performance aesthetic. The group's latest CD release, "Appalachia," is an acoustic collection of refined and articulate arrangements, exclusive to this rare instrumentation. Such collective proficiency, both instrumental and conceptual, is seldom seen or heard in today's ever growing market of gimmicks and one dimensional music making.

**Sunday, April 12, 7 PM, \$18.00 advance / \$22.00 day of show**  
**MARTIN CARTHY & ELIZA CARTHY**



**Martin Carthy** is a legendary ballad singer and guitarist who has influenced a generations of artists while his daughter **Eliza Carthy** has been twice-nominated for the Mercury Music Prize and is a multiple-award winner at the BBC Radio Two Folk awards. For more than 40 years Martin Carthy has been one of folk music's greatest innovators, one of its best loved, most enthusiastic and, at times, most quietly controversial of figures. His skill, stage

presence and natural charm have won him many admirers, not only from within the folk scene, but also far beyond it. Trailblazing musical partnerships with Steeleye Span, Dave Swarbrick and his award-winning wife (Norma Waterson) and daughter Eliza Carthy have resulted in more than 40 albums. Whether in the folk clubs (which he continues to champion), on the concert stage or making TV appearances there are few roles that Martin Carthy hasn't played. He's a ballad singer, a ground-breaking acoustic guitarist and an authoritative interpreter of newly-composed material. Perhaps, most significant of all, are his settings of traditional songs with guitar, which have influenced a generation of artists, including Bob Dylan and Paul Simon, on both sides of the Atlantic. Martin received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards in 2014. Eliza Carthy is undoubtedly one of the most impressive and engaging performers of her generation. Twice nominated for the Mercury Prize and winner of innumerable other accolades over a 21-year career, Eliza has performed and recorded with a diverse array of artists including Paul Weller, Rufus and Martha Wainwright, and Bob Neuwirth. More than most, Eliza Carthy has revitalized folk music

and captured the most hardened of dissenters with intelligent, charismatic and boundary-crossing performance. Their first duo CD together, "The Moral of the Elephant," has been nominated 'Best Album' at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards 2015. *Do not miss this very rare chance to see Martin and Eliza performing together in an intimate theater setting... there are no Connecticut, New Hampshire or Maine dates on this tour!*

**Saturday, April 18, 8 PM, \$16.00  
advance / \$18.00 day of show  
THE MAIRTIN O'CONNOR TRIO**

*This tour is sponsored by Culture  
Ireland*



**Culture Ireland**  
Cultúr Éireann



If you love Irish traditional music you NEED to be here tonight! Virtuoso accordion player **Máirtín O'Connor**, just named Ireland's 2015 Traditional Musician of the Year (TG4 Gradam Ceoil Awards), brings his remarkable trio to BRT tonight; this is a very rare appearance by Máirtín and the first US tour as a trio. Widely respected and beloved among Irish musicians and fans, Máirtín O'Connor was a main musical force in Riverdance and a member of De Danann. Máirtín has graced projects by such artists as Mark Knopfler, Elvis Costello, Rod Stewart, and The Waterboys'

"Fisherman's Blues" album. His playing can be heard on the soundtracks of "Dancing at Lughnasa," "Some Mother's Son," and "Twelfth Night." His fluid style and wide musical influences blend perfectly with the fiddle playing of **Cathal Hayden**, an All-Ireland champion and founding member of Four Men and a Dog. **Séamie O'Dowd**, a former longtime member of Dervish, is one of Ireland's finest vocalists and guitarists. Individually recognized as figureheads of the tradition, All have built reputations as masters with astounding skill, diversity and virtuosity. Together they produce a vibrant and charged experience that redefines one's concept of Irish music. With sophisticated arrangements and subtle musicianship, they draw on elements of swing, bluegrass, and more. Máirtín, Cathal and Séamie toured the US for three years as members of Martin Hayes's Masters of Tradition, drawing standing ovations for their dazzling sets in venues from Lincoln Center to UCLA's Royce Hall. They have toured extensively through Ireland, Great Britain, Europe, and more recently in Australia and New Zealand. They've also toured with Irish singing legend Christy Moore. Their latest acclaimed CD is called 'Going Places.' *Don't miss this. Period.*

## **APRIL 2015**

- **We will continue our popular Monday Zumba classes** with April Hilliker at 6:30 p.m.
- **Beginning and continuing mountain dulcimer classes** with Elwood Donnelly and Aubrey Atwater take place Saturdays, April 4 and 18 (also May 9 and May 16).
- **A new 8-week session of Irish step dance classes** (13 different classes including beginner children and adults) with Erika Damiani began Friday, March 27, 4:30-8:30 p.m., Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m.-noon, and Sunday, March 29, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and runs through April.
- **A new 8-week session of group fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins Tuesday, April 7, Wednesday, April 8, and Thursday, April 9.

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**Mondays in April, \$5.00 per class, 6:30-7:30 PM  
ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

**Saturday, April 25, 8 PM, \$16.00 advance / \$18.00 day of show  
BURNING BRIDGET CLEARY**



Known for their captivating sound and engaging stage presence, **Burning Bridget Cleary** is currently one of the hottest young acts on the Celtic and folk music circuits and favorites at our last Summer Solstice Festival! Band-leader **Rose Baldino** drives this band, delivering a dynamic blend of charisma, crackerjack fiddle work, and tightly woven harmonies. The front of the band is shared with some of the best fiddle talent on the East Coast. Currently featured is **Amy Beshara**, a multi-talented musician, well respected in the New York Scottish fiddle circles. The band's driving rhythm and bass end is supplied by **Lou Baldino** on guitar and **Peter Trezzi** on percussion. Burning Bridget Cleary has earned a reputation for presenting high-spirited Celtic music at festivals, concerts, and music series all over the eastern half of the U.S., including a 2011 tour to Ireland. While in Ireland, the band had a unique opportunity to visit the rural County Tipperary cottage of their namesake, Bridget Cleary, who is remembered as "the last witch burned in Ireland." A tour to Northern Ireland is in the works for July 2015. The band broke new ground in 2013 when their fourth CD, "Pressed for Time," hit #1 on the Roots Music Folk and Roots Charts, and finished the year as one of the Folk DJ's most played albums. Their music is featured on hundreds of radio programs worldwide, including syndicated programs Thistle and Shamrock, FolkScene, SingOut Radio, and The Midnight Special. In 2013, Burning Bridget Cleary was nominated "Top Traditional Band in a Pub, Festival or Concert Setting" by the Irish Music Association. Jack Baker of The Irish American News calls them "One of the most exciting bands I've seen in the last couple of years!" *Don't miss them in their Blackstone River Theatre debut!*

**MAY 2015**

- **We will continue our popular Monday Zumba classes** with April Hilliker at 6:30 p.m.
- **Beginning and continuing mountain dulcimer classes** with Elwood Donnelly and Aubrey Atwater take place Saturdays, May 9 and May 16.
- **Irish step dance classes** (13 different classes including beginner children and adults) with Erika Damiani runs through May on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- **Group fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch continues through May on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

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**Mondays in May, \$5.00 per class, 6:30-7:30 PM  
ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

**Saturday, May 2, 1-4 PM; \$30.00  
BIKE & BLUES THE BLACKSTONE**



Grab your helmets and bikes, and get in gear - it's time for the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc.'s 2nd annual Bike and Blues the Blackstone event. Join the staff and partners of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor for a fun-filled bike ride through the scenic and historic Blackstone River Valley. Riders can then finish off their afternoon listening to live blues and Celtic artists while tasting regional and craft beers provided by

Mendon Wines and More. This year participants have two options to enjoy the day. Bicyclists can ride the entire 30-mile course as part of a Craft Brewery Tour and visit three Blackstone Valley breweries along the way: Bucket Brewery, Foolproof Brewing Company and Ravenous Brewing Company. Each brewery will be offering a tour of their facility including a sampling of their own unique brew. Participants will also receive a special memento from each brewery at the end of the ride. If 30 miles and sampling beer is not your thing, bikers can choose to take part in a leisurely ride along the historic Blackstone Canal on the 11-mile Blackstone River Bikeway, enjoying a visit to the Kelley House Museum, viewing the spectacular engineering of the Rt. 116 Viaduct, designed in the 1930s, and also the Pratt Dam where the powerful Blackstone River forges through the "tubes." Either way, at the end of your ride, participants can relax with refreshments, a craft beer tasting, and live music at Blackstone River Theatre performed by blues musicians Martin Grosswendt and Bertrand Laurence and the Celtic band Pendragon. Tickets and registration is \$30.00 per person and you may register in advance at [www.bikeandbluestheblackstone.org](http://www.bikeandbluestheblackstone.org). Check-in begins at 10:30 a.m., May 2, at Lonsdale Marsh, 116 John Street, in Lincoln, RI where the course starts. Bike and Blues the Blackstone will end off at Blackstone River Theatre, 549 Broad Street in Cumberland, RI. Music and refreshments at the theatre will go from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Contact Barbara Dixon at [bdixon@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org](mailto:bdixon@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org) or at 401-765-2211 with any questions.

**Saturday, May 2, 8 PM, \$13.00 advance / \$15.00 day of show**  
**GYPSY STAR**



A unique original band from the Tampa Bay area of Florida, **Gypsy Star** fuses American musical styles of folk, rock, pop and jazz with sounds and rhythms from around the world. Tapping into Latin, Celtic, Renaissance, Mediterranean and Caribbean flavors, Gypsy Star weaves a melodic tapestry of enchanting, uplifting music with acoustic instruments such as classical flamenco guitar and an array of hand percussion and drums. Add to the mix lush strings, dynamic arrangements, haunting

vocals and world-beat rhythms complemented by fiery castanets and the percussive footwork of folkloric dance and you've got a cultural feast for the eyes and ears! The mystique behind this American folk-rock band's songs lie at the creative hand of guitarist/composer (and Cumberland native) **Billy Keen** who combines his own musical roots in rock with an exotic global influence. Vocalist **Belinda Brodsky** breathes poetry into Keen's tunes with lyrics that capture the essence of ancient tales, modern storytelling and heartfelt sentiments. Along with band members **Carol "Corky" Sarao** on keyboards, **Vail Hayes** on drums and dancer **Pollyanna Garcia**, the result is an inspiring and eclectic experience appealing to both mainstream and world music audiences alike. Join us and follow Gypsy Star as they take you along on a mystical journey to faraway lands through song, rhyme and dance.

**Saturday, May 9, 8 PM (doors open 7:30 PM), \$12.00 advance / \$15.00 day of show**

**LONGSHOT VOODOO / CROCODILE RIVER MUSIC**  
**DRUM WORKSHOP WITH WEST AFRICAN DRUMMERS 4-5 PM, \$10.00**  
**DRUM WORKSHOP AND CONCERT - \$18.00 advance price**



In 2007, guitarist **Carl Eddy**, bassist **Matt West** and vocalist **Adrienne West** joined forces to form The West-Eddy Trio. For four years, the Trio wrote together and gigged in many of the smaller clubs of R.I. and Massachusetts. In 2011, they felt it was time to evolve to another level and added percussionist **Don "DC" Culp**, Motif Magazine's "2010



Percussionist of the Year" and R.I. Music Hall of Fame inductee (Steve Smith & The Naked, 2013). To compliment the Trio's unique style, Culp designed the Dun Dun Percussion set, the first known of its kind, which is a drum kit made entirely out of African Hand drums. Melding the essence of '60s and '70s classic rock, blues, and New Orleans R&B, Longshot Voodoo combines the

very best of acoustic rock, blues, folk and original music while entertaining audiences with their infectious rhythms and jams. Longshot Voodoo has just been nominated for the 2015 Motif Music Awards Best Americana Act. *They will be joined on sax by R.I. Music Hall of Fame inductee **Michael "Tunes" Antunes** from the Beaver Brown Band.*

**Crocodile River Music** promotes African and African-influenced music including Brazilian, Caribbean and Flamenco by connecting their roster of distinguished performers with audiences of all ages, backgrounds and experiences making them a leading source of African music and cultural activity in New England. **Tonight's program is called Trinidad 2 Timbuktu**, an interactive musical geography lesson for people of all ages. Expert musicians take the audience on a journey that starts in Africa with the music and rhythms that originated there in African tribal and ritual drumming. From there, they travel around the world, exploring the calypso, reggae, flamenco, Brazilian, and Afro-Cuban music and dance styles that have blossomed from these African musical roots. The band will demonstrate how regional "dialects" have found their way into the original African language of rhythm and song. Through discussion, song and dance performance, and opportunities for audience participation, this program invites listeners to see how our very wide world is, in some ways, a very small one indeed.

**Saturday, May 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. Clasper-Torch plays regularly with The Gnomes and is also the fiddle instructor at Blackstone River Theatre.

**May 16-May 17, 9 AM to 3 PM**

#### **CELTIC STONE CARVING IN LIMESTONE WITH LAURA TRAVIS**

**This event has sold out! Watch for it again in the near future...**

**Friday, May 22, 8 PM, \$15.00 advance / \$20.00 day of show**

#### **AN EVENING OF GHOST STORIES AND NEW ENGLAND LEGENDS**

*This show WILL sell out... reserve your tickets soon!*



a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and private funders.



Do they really have to make it look so easy? So remarked one reviewer having just seen the trad superstar ensemble of Matt Molloy, Arty McGlynn and John Carty on stage. You can decide for yourself as the most exciting trad combination of recent times embark on *their first ever tour of the USA as a trio* with a stop at Blackstone River Theatre. **Matt Molloy** is a native of Ballaghaderreen in County Roscommon - the Mecca of traditional Irish flute playing. Considered by many as the greatest

flute player of our time, Matt over the years has been a member of the such luminaries as the Bothy Band, Planxty and currently the Chieftains since 1979. Born in London, **John Carty** has established himself among the elite of Irish traditional musicians. With numerous recordings under his belt, John Carty's musical prowess has grown to great heights. He is also a member of the bands At the Racket, Patrick Street and the John Carty Festival Band. *Both Matt and John are recipients of the highest honour in traditional music, the prestigious TG4 Musician of the year Award.* Matt and John come together to explore the rich and varied tapestry of the fiddle and flute tradition which they both love. They released their seminal album "Pathway to the Well" in 2008 where they were joined by Ireland's number one guitar player, Arty McGlynn. Completing the trio is indeed Ireland's number one guitar player, **Arty McGlynn**, who has played with Planxty, Patrick Street, De Danann and the Van Morrison Band, and has recorded and played with Christy Moore, Paul Brady, Donal Lunny, Liam O'Flynn, the Chieftains and Tim O'Brien's The Crossing. His subtle and imaginative guitar playing is the perfect accompaniment to Matt and John's unique duet. *Reservations are strongly advised... Don't miss this show!*

## SEPTEMBER 2015

- **We will continue our popular Monday Zumba Toning classes at 5:30 p.m. and Zumba classes at 6:30 p.m.** with April Hilliker.
- **An 8-week session of 15 levels of Irish step dance classes** for children, teens and adults with Erika Damiani begins September 10, 11, 12 and 13.
- **A 6-week session of 6 levels of group fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch begins September 8, 9 and 10.
- **The first class in a new monthly series of roots music appreciation classes** with Duke Robillard will take place September 6.

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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.

**Mondays in September**, \$5.00 per class, \$8.00 for both classes same day

5:30-6:15 PM - **ZUMBA TONING CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

6:30-7:30 PM - **ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

**Sunday, September 6, 4-6 p.m., \$25.00 (includes CD of music covered)**

**ROOTS MUSIC APPRECIATION CLASS WITH DUKE ROBILLARD**

*PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED! For all music lovers, not specifically geared toward guitarists.*



Every Duke Robillard roots music appreciation class will feature listening, discussion, and Q&A on a wide variety of musical styles and rare recordings. A CD of the material covered will be included in the class fee as Robillard touches upon all types and aspects of the Blues and all of its styles and influence on other music forms. Classes will investigate folk and country music and explore the earliest recorded examples and development of each genre and style from

within each form. Upcoming classes will study early dance bands, society orchestras and the origin of jazz and big bands from the mid-'30s through the '40s and much more. *While Robillard is world-renowned as a blues and jazz guitarist, he emphasizes that these classes are not solely for guitarists but aimed at anyone who loves music and wants to learn its history, connections and influences.* This roots music appreciation series will kick off with a two-part class - Sept. 6 and Oct. 4 - devoted to exploring the broad definition and far-reaching influences of what is known as the blues. When did it start? Why are there tunes from the early 1900s with blues in the title that are closer to popular tunes of the day or that utilize a ragtime-type structure? Is blues Southern black music derived exclusively from the field hollers of slaves to relieve the stress of intensely hard, long hours in the Southern heat? Or, is it a form of early jazz founded by New Orleans black and creole musicians that created a new music based on improvisation on simple melodies and strains of sounds the musicians picked up on the street? Blues is truly a part of all these things and certainly in the last century, the blues has shown up as acoustic music played by a lone guitarist or piano player or group of players. It is found in the sound of many a jazz player who picks up a horn of any type. It's heard in the dance band music of the '20s, '30s and '40s and is a factor in the development of Bop, Rock and Roll, Country music, R&B, Soul music and more. Indeed, the far-reaching influence of the blues is heard just about everywhere whether you immediately recognize it or not. These first two classes in this monthly series will be spent listening to and talking about obvious and also obscure examples of blues-infused music. The Blues Foundation has named **Duke Robillard** "Best Blues Guitarist" no less than four times and B.B. King said "Duke's one of the great players." Leading up to his induction into the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame in 2014, Robillard has not only maintained his status as one of the world's finest blues guitarists, he has become known worldwide as one of our greatest jazz players as well. His next album is due to be released on September 25 and is called "The Acoustic Blues and Roots of Duke Robillard."

**Tuesday, September 8th - 6-week group fiddle classes begin** with Cathy Clasper-Torch

**Wednesday, September 9th - 6-week group fiddle classes begin** with Cathy Clasper-Torch

**Thursday, September 10th - 10-week COMPLETE BEGINNER group fiddle classes begin** with Cathy Clasper-Torch

**Thursday, September 10th - 8-week session of Irish step dance classes begin** with Erika Damiani

**Friday, September 11th - 8-week session of Irish step dance classes begin** with Erika Damiani

**Saturday, September 12th - 8-week session of Irish step dance classes begin** with Erika Damiani

**Sunday, September 13th - 8-week session of Irish step dance classes begin** with Erika Damiani

**Saturday, September 12, 1:30-4 PM, \$20.00**

**WORKSHOP FOR INTERMEDIATE / ADVANCED STRING PLAYERS  
WITH BOHEMIAN QUARTET**

*The workshop is made possible thanks to the generosity of Dennis McCarten,  
McCarten Violins, LLC*



We are looking for intermediate and advanced string players - violinists, cellists, violists and bass players - for an afternoon workshop with Bohemian Quartet. The \$20 registration fee includes the tuition, a T-shirt and a snack.

**TO REGISTER FOR THE WORKSHOP VISIT:**

[http://mccartenviolins.com/bohemian-](http://mccartenviolins.com/bohemian-quartet-workshop/)

[quartet-workshop/](http://mccartenviolins.com/bohemian-quartet-workshop/)

**Saturday, September 12, 8 PM, \$15.00  
BOHEMIAN QUARTET**

*Pre-Concert presentation on Romani culture/musical styles at 7:30 p.m.; doors open 7:15 p.m. tonight*



Experience an amazing performance of gypsy music! The mission of keeping a rare musical flame alight is a noble and often challenging one, but the Bohemian Quartet is more than up to the task. In this case, the acclaimed Providence, Rhode Island-based ensemble featuring violin, viola, cello, and bass specializes in music of the "Romany" or "Gypsy" tradition, along with related Eastern European folk styles. The Bohemian Quartet was formed in 2005. Violinist **Stan Renard**, a composer and virtuoso player with an impressive list of credentials, assembled the group with the idea of preserving the

tradition and indulging in the virtuosic playing of classic gypsy music. Renard recruited like-minded and ambitious friends: **Christine Harrington** on cello, **Nancy Richardson** on viola, and **Dave Zinno** on upright bass. Together, they've made a commitment to the genre, and aspired to performing it with both reverence and adventure. Indeed, like every good curator, the ensemble embraces tradition, and still wanders off in newer, unpredictable directions. The name "Bohemian Quartet" was borrowed from the original Bohemian Quartet (also known as the Czech Quartet after 1918), a string quartet of international repute that was founded in 1891 and disbanded in 1934. Both groups share a passion for the deep-rooted authenticity of the Romany tradition, as well as the ability to play that historic repertoire with extraordinary *joie de vivre*. On the aptly titled "Beyond Tradition," the quartet's 2010 recording, the group's intentions are on full display. The project was recorded live at Blackstone River Theatre and St. Paul's Church in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Produced by Harrington and the quartet, the recording is a journey through the musical vernacular of gypsy life, with zippy tempos, virtuosic playing, and above all the flair of performance that makes this music so utterly riveting. *Always an amazing evening of music!*

**Saturday, September 19, 8 PM, \$15.00 adv / \$18.00 day of show  
THE FRETLESS**

*2014 Canadian Folk Music Awards - Ensemble of the Year!*



The Fretless is a new approach to folk music that is quickly gaining high acclaim around the world. This unique Canadian band is taking string music to fascinating places as it transforms fiddle tunes and folk melodies into intricate, beautiful, high-energy arrangements. In late 2011, **Karrnel Sawitsky** (fiddle), **Ivonne Hernandez** (fiddle), **Eric Wright** (cello) and **Trent Freeman** (fiddle) got together for the first time on Vancouver Island to start rehearsing this project. After 10 days straight of writing, arranging, practicing and an absurd amount of tea, The Fretless emerged as a band. With the release of their debut

album "Waterbound" in early 2012, the quartet grabbed the attention of critics and fans across many genres. The year was capped with 3 awards, bringing the album, and the band further into the public eye; Instrumental Album of the Year at the Western Canadian Music Awards, and at the Canadian Folk Music Awards, the Fretless walked away with both Ensemble of the Year, and Instrumental Group of the Year. 2014 saw them again win a Canadian Folk Music Award as Ensemble of the Year. Musically, the goals of the group are to expand the rhythmic, harmonic and structured

arrangement style of the many folk genres they play using only string instruments. There are countless fiddle styles across Canada and around the globe that have been stagnating over time, and The Fretless is working to incorporate a new approach and a new audience. As a band, all four members have come from very different traditional and contemporary backgrounds, and are influenced by a vast array of art. However they are unified in their goal to continually develop their sound in order to push traditional music as far as possible. The group harbors all the energy of fiddle tunes, while shattering all expectations in writing, creativity and performance. *Don't miss their Rhode Island debut!*

**Saturday, September 26, 8 PM, \$15.00**  
**SPUYTEN DUYVIL**



Seeing a **Spuyten Duyvil** (pronounced SPITE-en DIE+vul) show for the first time is like "throwing a cherry bomb into a lake." It wakes you up. Their brand of original and traditional American Roots music blends Old Time, Blues, Bluegrass, and Folk Rock with a pinch of punk energy to create a uniquely modern mix. Led by songwriting couple **Mark Miller** and **Beth Kaufman**, this six-piece powerhouse brings barn-burning energy to venues throughout the Northeast and Midwest. It's an exciting time for the Hudson Valley-based band. They have just released their 3rd CD, "The Social Music Hour Vol 1." A love letter to the Anthology of American Folk Music, the project features lyrically relevant, known but not worn out, open for suggestion songs that thrives with re-interpretation. Familiar, forgotten words find new meaning in this historically informed but thoroughly contemporary treatment. Old wood, plaster, real spaces, vintage guitars and hot tubes are captured in warm, analog tones by studio designer and engineer Jim Keller (Willie Nelson, Nellie McKay). 2014 saw the band tour the Northeast, Midwest and Northern California with featured shows at Citi Field (Formerly Shea Stadium), Winter's Eve at Lincoln Center, and The Philadelphia Folk Festival's main stage. The group features **Beth Jamie Kaufman** on vocals, **Jim Meigs** on harmonica, **Lou Geser/Jagoda** on drums, **John Neidhart** on bass, **Rik Mercaldi** on guitar, and **Mark Miller** on tenor guitar and vocals. *Don't miss their BRT debut!*

## **OCTOBER 2015**

- **We will continue our popular Monday Zumba Toning classes at 5:30 p.m. and Zumba classes at 6:30 p.m.** with April Hilliker
- **An 8-week session of 15 levels of Irish step dance classes** for children, teens and adults with Erika Damiani continues in October on Thursday, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- **A 6-week session of 6 levels of group fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch continues in October on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- **The 2nd class in a new monthly series of roots music appreciation classes** with Duke Robillard will take place October 4.
- **A two-day class in Celtic stone carving in limestone for beginners** with Laura Travis takes place Oct. 3-4.

**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.

**Mondays in October**, \$5.00 per class, \$8.00 for both classes same day  
5:30-6:15 PM - **ZUMBA TONING CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**  
6:30-7:30 PM - **ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

## CELTIC STONE CARVING IN LIMESTONE FOR BEGINNERS

A two-day class - October 3 and October 4



Blackstone River Theatre will offer a two-day class in **Celtic Relief Stone carving in Limestone for beginners** with instructor Laura Travis, outside, behind the Blackstone River Theatre. The class will be held on Saturday, October 3 AND Sunday, October 4, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day (with a half-hour lunch break.) Teenagers (age 16 and up), college students and adults are all welcome and no experience is required. (Note: Laura WILL also be able to accommodate students who have taken this class in the past and want to build on

their skills!) A minimum of six is needed to run the class. The course fee is \$125 plus a separate \$12 materials fee which is payable directly to instructor Laura Travis (includes several pieces of stone, sandpapers, and access to finishing tools.) Prepayment is necessary. *IF you want to purchase your own chisel so you can keep carving at home, we will need to know to pre-order them by September 15.* The additional cost would be \$18 so let us know and add that to the \$12 materials fee already being paid. For more information, visit the instructor's site, [campus.digication.com/lauratravis](http://campus.digication.com/lauratravis). Relief carving is a satisfying and useful skill which has numerous applications for gardens, landscaping, and creative expression. The saga of The Celt and The Stone is as old as time. If you have seen a photo of the High Crosses in Ireland and Scotland, or British well-shrine covers, you've seen Celtic relief carving in stone. In this 12-hour introductory-level course, students will use manageable scraps of limestone and carve them with an initial, a knot, or an animal motif - bring your own idea or utilize teacher references - and in the process learn something of one of the signature arts of the Celts. Included will be plenty of stone lore, tips for scrounging up materials and tools for practically nothing, and information about techniques including polishing and finishing. **Laura Travis** has been carving for 23 years, bringing her knowledge and love of Irish and Celtic traditions firmly into her work in stone. As an artist, Laura walks between the worlds of fine and folk art, utilizing traditional iconography in some very contemporary contexts. Travis has shown her work in Providence, Maryland, Toronto, Worcester and New Bedford. She holds an MFA in sculpture from the Maryland Institute College of Art, and maintains her studio just a stone's throw from the ocean in Rhode Island. She's also known for originating and hosting the Irish traditional music radio program, In The Celtic Realm, for the past 32 years on WRIU-FM.

**Saturday, October 3, 8 PM, \$15.00**

**NORTH SEA GAS - Music from Scotland**



North Sea Gas is a folk band from Scotland who have been performing their blend of poignant and rousing songs and high-energy instrumentals for three decades. With a combination of fiddle, guitar, mandolin, bodhran and bouzouki, complementing strong three-part vocal harmonies and a keen sense of humor, an entertaining evening is always guaranteed! North Sea Gas has now recorded 17 albums and played to audiences all over Great Britain, Europe, Scandinavia, the U.S.

and Canada. This marks their 11th appearance at BRT as they tour behind their newest CD, "Fire in the Glen." Their previous project "The Fire And The Passion Of Scotland" won the 2013 Album of the Year award from Celtic Radio in the U.S. as well as first place in the "Jigs and Reels" category for a set of tunes on the album. 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 **Grant Simpson** on high-energy fiddle and vocals. 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." *Always a great show!*

**Sunday, October 4, 4-6 p.m., \$25.00 (includes CD of music covered)**

**ROOTS MUSIC APPRECIATION CLASS WITH DUKE ROBILLARD**

*PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED! For all music lovers, not specifically geared toward guitarists.*



Every Duke Robillard roots music appreciation class will feature listening, discussion, and Q&A on a wide variety of musical styles and rare recordings. A CD of the material covered will be included in the class fee as Robillard touches upon all types and aspects of the Blues and all of its styles and influence on other music forms. Classes will investigate folk and country music and explore the earliest recorded examples and development of each genre and style from

within each form. Upcoming classes will study early dance bands, society orchestras and the origin of jazz and big bands from the mid-'30s through the '40s and much more. *While Robillard is world-renowned as a blues and jazz guitarist, he emphasizes that these classes are not solely for guitarists but aimed at anyone who loves music and wants to learn its history, connections and influences.* This roots music appreciation series will kick off with a two-part class - Sept. 6 and Oct. 4 - devoted to exploring the broad definition and far-reaching influences of what is known as the blues. When did it start? Why are there tunes from the early 1900s with blues in the title that are closer to popular tunes of the day or that utilize a ragtime-type structure? Is blues Southern black music derived exclusively from the field hollers of slaves to relieve the stress of intensely hard, long hours in the Southern heat? Or, is it a form of early jazz founded by New Orleans black and creole musicians that created a new music based on improvisation on simple melodies and strains of sounds the musicians picked up on the street? Blues is truly a part of all these things and certainly in the last century, the blues has shown up as acoustic music played by a lone guitarist or piano player or group of players. It is found in the sound of many a jazz player who picks up a horn of any type. It's heard in the dance band music of the '20s, '30s and '40s and is a factor in the development of Bop, Rock and Roll, Country music, R&B, Soul music and more. Indeed, the far-reaching influence of the blues is heard just about everywhere whether you immediately recognize it or not. These first two classes in this monthly series will be spent listening to and talking about obvious and also obscure examples of blues-infused music. The Blues Foundation has named **Duke Robillard** "Best Blues Guitarist" no less than four times and B.B. King said "Duke's one of the great players." Leading up to his induction into the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame in 2014, Robillard has not only maintained his status as one of the world's finest blues guitarists, he has become known worldwide as one of our greatest jazz players as well. His next album is due to be released on September 25 and is called "The Acoustic Blues and Roots of Duke Robillard."

**Tonight's show cancelled due to illness. A makeup date will be announced when available.**

**Saturday, October 10, 8 PM, \$15.00**

**DAVID FRANCEY**



**David Francey** is a Scottish-born Canadian carpenter-turned-songwriter, who has become known as "one of Canada's most revered folk poets and singers" (Toronto Star). Born in Ayrshire, Scotland to parents who were factory workers, he moved to Canada when he was twelve. For decades, he worked across Canada in rail yards, construction sites, and in the Yukon bush, all the while writing poetry, setting it to melodies in his head and singing it to himself as he worked. A truly authentic folk singer, Francey is a documentarian of the working person who never imagined earning a living from his music. But when he was in his forties, his wife, artist Beth Girdler, encouraged him

to share his songs and sing in public. The reaction was instant. His first album "Torn Screen Door" came out in 1999 and was a hit in Canada. Since then, he has released 10 albums, won three Juno Awards and has had his songs covered by such artists as The Del McCoury Band, The Rankin Family, James Keelaghan and Tracy Grammer. Francey also had the honour of receiving the prestigious SOCAN Folk Music Award as well as taking home the Grand Prize in both the International Acoustic Music Award and in the Folk category for the John Lennon Songwriting Award. In concert David is a

singer and a storyteller. His wry humor and astute observations combined with his openhearted singing style have earned him a loyal following. His newest album, "So Say We All" reflects his own journey through a period of struggle. "The lesson learned," he says, "was to celebrate every day spent on this side of the soil and to keep marching no matter what comes our way." *Don't miss this show if you appreciate excellent songwriting!*

**Saturday, October 17, 8 PM, \$15.00**  
**PATRICK BALL - Harp and Story**



**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... not to be missed!

**Saturday, October 24, 8 PM, \$15.00**  
**SUGAR RAY AND THE BLUETONES**



We are thrilled to bring back the dynamic **Sugar Ray and the Bluetones** who have received 7 Blues Music Award nominations this year! **Ray Norcia's** career kicked into high gear in 1979 when he formed the original Sugar Ray and the Bluetones line-up with guitar giant Ronnie Earl, and it's stayed there ever since. The elegant singer has appeared on more than 50 albums including discs with the Bluetones, Ronnie Earl, Roomful of Blues, Otis Grand, Michelle Willson, J. Giels, Duke Robillard, Pinetop Perkins, and his 1999 "Best Traditional Blues" Grammy-nominated collaboration with fellow harmonica virtuosos James Cotton, Charlie Musselwhite and Billy Branch

called Superharps. In the '90s Norcia spent seven high-profile years with the legendary Roomful of Blues cutting five albums with the group including 1996's Turn It On, Turn It Up, which also received a "Best Traditional Blues" Grammy nod. Now, Sugar Ray has led the Bluetones - guitarist "**Monster**" **Mike Welch**, drummer **Neil Gouvin**, bassist **Michael "Mudcat" Ward** and pianist **Anthony Geraci** - back into the studio to cut their newest CD, "Living Tear to Tear" which debuted at #1 on the Living Blues Radio Chart in late 2014. *A great evening of Chicago blues!*

**Saturday, October 31, 2 PM, \$10.00 advance / \$12.00 day of show**

**THE DIXIE DIEHARDS JAZZ BAND**

*This concert is sponsored by Navigant Credit Union*





Join the Dixie Diehards Jazz Band for a raucous, Mardi Gras-style show as they dish out a thick gumbo of traditional New Orleans Jazz! The Dixie Diehards share a passion for the "hot jazz" and blues of the early 20th century. The era, typified by such greats as Louis Armstrong, Fats Waller and Jelly Roll Morton, firmly established jazz as "America's music" and set the direction for much of subsequent pop culture. The term "Dixieland" refers to a form of small group jazz which typically includes a trumpet, a clarinet and a trombone and often a tuba combined

with a rhythm section that may include a banjo, percussion or bass player as well as a piano. In most arrangements, the trumpet plays the melody while other elements freely improvise around it or paraphrase the melody in creative solos. The Dixie Diehards have won an enthusiastic reception across southern New England for bringing an irrepressible sense of fun and frolic to their shows. That attitude almost always includes audience sing-alongs, spontaneous dance outbursts (remember the Charleston?) and a spirit of "wonderful nonsense." The lineup includes: **Carl Gerhart** - trumpet and musical director, **Paul Peterson** - reeds, **Bill Dube** - reeds, **Ron L'Herault** - trombone, **Bill Kiesewetter** - piano, **Dolly Fruzzetti** - vocals, **Steve Shaw** - tuba, **Lorri Ingliss** - drums, and **Chris Wadsworth** - banjo. *Don't miss a rare BRT matinee show sure to be fun for all ages!*

## NOVEMBER 2015

- We will continue our popular **Monday Zumba Toning** classes at 5:30 p.m. and **Zumba** classes at 6:30 p.m. with April Hilliker
- A **4-week session of 15 levels of Irish step dance classes** for children, teens and adults with Erika Damiani continues in November on Thursday, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- A **6-week session of 6 levels of group fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch continues in November on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- The 2nd class in a new monthly series of **roots music appreciation classes with Duke Robillard** will take place November 1.

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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.**

**Mondays in November**, \$5.00 per class, \$8.00 for both classes same day  
5:30-6:15 PM - **ZUMBA TONING CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**  
6:30-7:30 PM - **ZUMBA CLASSES WITH APRIL HILLIKER**

**Sunday, November 1, 4-6 p.m., \$25.00 (includes CD of music covered)**  
**ROOTS MUSIC APPRECIATION CLASS WITH DUKE ROBILLARD**

*PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED! For all music lovers, not specifically geared toward guitarists.*



Every Duke Robillard roots music appreciation class will feature listening, discussion, and Q&A on a wide variety of musical styles and rare recordings. A CD of the material covered will be included in the class fee as Robillard touches upon all types and aspects of the Blues and all of its styles and influence on other music forms. Classes will investigate folk and country music and explore the earliest recorded examples and development of each genre and style from

within each form. Upcoming classes will study early dance bands, society orchestras and the origin of jazz and big bands from the mid-'30s through the '40s and much more. While Robillard is world-renowned as a blues and jazz guitarist, he emphasizes that these classes are not solely for guitarists but aimed at anyone who loves music and wants to learn its history, connections and influences. When did the blues start? Why are there tunes from the early 1900s with blues in the title that are closer to popular tunes of the day or that utilize a ragtime-type structure? Is blues Southern black music derived exclusively from the field hollers of slaves to relieve the stress of intensely hard, long hours in the Southern heat? Or, is it a form of early jazz founded by New Orleans black and creole musicians that created a new music based on improvisation on simple melodies and strains of sounds the musicians picked up on the street? Blues is truly a part of all these things and certainly in the last century, the blues has shown up as acoustic music played by a lone guitarist or piano player or group of players. It is found in the sound of many a jazz player who picks up a horn of any type. It's heard in the dance band music of the '20s, '30s and '40s and is a factor in the development of Bop, Rock and Roll, Country music, R&B, Soul music and more. Indeed, the far-reaching influence of the blues is heard just about everywhere whether you immediately recognize it or not. This ongoing series will be spent listening to and talking about obvious and also obscure examples of blues-infused music. The Blues Foundation has named **Duke Robillard** "Best Blues Guitarist" no less than four times and B.B. King said "Duke's one of the great players." Leading up to his induction into the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame in 2014, Robillard has not only maintained his status as one of the world's finest blues guitarists, he has become known worldwide as one of our greatest jazz players as well.

**Saturday, November 7, 8 PM, \$15.00**  
**THE RHYTHM FUTURE QUARTET**



When four young jazz virtuosos decided to join forces, **The Rhythm Future Quartet** was born. Named after a Django Reinhardt tune, the Rhythm Future Quartet performs dynamic and fiery arrangements of Gypsy jazz standards and original compositions that draw from rhythms heard around the world. **Jason Anick** and **Olli Soikkeli**, the front-men and lead soloists of the group, have been receiving critical acclaim this past year and are considered 'rising stars' in the world of

Jazz and Gypsy Jazz. Soikkeli, who recently made the move from his home country of Finland to New York City, is rapidly becoming a top call guitarist in the bustling Brooklyn jazz scene and has been aptly coined "the Finnish boy wonder." Anick, who is also an award-winning composer, is one of the youngest professors at the esteemed Berklee College of Music in Boston. Over the years they have individually been performing alongside notable musicians like John Jorgenson, Frank Vignola, Tommy Emmanuel, Bucky Pizzarelli, and Howard Alden and have now joined forces to form this special group along with **Max O'Rourke** on guitar and **Greg Loughman** on bass. For their debut self-titled album, the Rhythm Future Quartet decided to re-visit and record classic jazz and Gypsy jazz favorites. Through their intricate and creative arrangements, they have brought new life to songs like "Night and Day" and "Summertime." Coupled with musical sensitivity and virtuosity, the Rhythm Future Quartet's debut album acts as an enticing example of the future of Gypsy jazz music. *Don't miss their Rhode Island debut!*

**Friday, November 13, 7-9 PM, \$20.00 or two for \$35.00**  
**9th annual CUMBERLAND LAND TRUST WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER**



For tickets, call Joe at 658-1766. Winetasting event includes raffles and cheeses and light appetizers. The Cumberland Land Trust is a private, non-profit, charitable conservation organization run by a dedicated group of volunteers. Their mission is to preserve the natural resources of Cumberland for present and future generations by preserving land for open space. Since incorporation in 1989, CLT has protected 354 acres of land acquired through purchase, donation and conservation easements. The Land Trust applies for grants from private foundations and organizations and from government sources to help acquire select properties including streams, ponds, wetlands,

open space, working farms, scenic and natural sites and historically significant properties. For more information visit [www.cumberlandlandtrust.org](http://www.cumberlandlandtrust.org)

**Saturday, November 14, 8 PM, \$15.00 adv / \$18.00 day of show  
AN EVENING OF MUSIC OF THE SEA & SHORE FEATURING  
THE JOHNSON GIRLS, ROBBIE O'CONNELL AND DAN MILNER**

*Funding provided in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts,*

*through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly,*

*a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and private funders.*



This very special concert brings together The Johnson Girls, Robbie O'Connell and Dan Milner who will explore U.S. and other world traditions dealing with the

specific focus of songs of the sea and shore. The sea shanties especially - a cappella songs done while working aboard ships - are an unusual example to most audiences of how music was used in everyday life. Sea music may well have been the first "world music." Ships were often melting pots, with crew-members from many countries who were heavily influenced by the music they heard while traveling around the world and from other crew members. These sailors incorporated into their work songs and other shipboard music the different rhythms and styles from their own diverse cultures as well as those they encountered during their voyages.

**The Johnson Girls** have been a force on the folk and maritime music scene for almost two decades as the leading all-woman, a cappella maritime group in the world. Having burst through the barrier of this previously male dominated genre, **Joy Bennett, Alison Kelley, Bonnie Milner** and **Dierdre Murtha** each bring a special influence to the group. Whether performing at packed international folk festivals, intimate venues, or presenting school and library programs, The Johnson Girls remain true to their mission of keeping chantey singing alive, bringing women's voices to the fore, and encouraging everyone to join in the revelry. The Johnson Girls have performed at major festivals, clubs, coffeehouses, schools, and more across the United States, in Canada, England, Wales, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, and France. Widely acclaimed for their powerhouse performances of rousing work songs, sensitive renderings of haunting ballads and laments, and hair-raising harmonies, The Johnson Girls sweep their audiences along in a tidal fervor.

Joining together to perform the first half of this split concert will be Robbie O'Connell and Dan Milner. Singer-songwriter **Robbie O'Connell** grew up in Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. In 1977, he joined the legendary Clancy Brothers with whom he recorded 3 albums. With the 1982 release of his first solo album Robbie emerged as an artist of major stature. 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 and songwriters in Celtic music." **Dan Milner** has been involved in traditional song all his life as a singer, author, collector and organizer. He teaches "Storytelling in Song: The Ballad Tradition" at New York University and is on the staff of The Journal of New York Folklore. Dan has made six recordings; his 2009 CD, "Irish Pirate Ballads," received Indie Awards nominations for Best Album and Best Song - World Traditional.

**Saturday, November 21, 8 PM, \$15.00**

**MARY ANN ROSSONI & FRIENDS**



Providence performing songwriter **Mary Ann Rossoni** has a slightly smokey voice that conveys incredible depth and meaning without trying to impress you. She uses it gently, but always with character and attention to the words she is singing. A graduate of Rhode Island School of Design, she has been a freelance illustrator and graphic designer most of her adult life. Right alongside that, she has written songs and has toured the country both as a solo vocalist/ acoustic guitarist and with her full band. Rossoni turns her affinity for ordinary people into beautiful portraits of people in moments of meaning and discovery. After 30 years of touring nationally

and seven recordings, Mary Ann is now back to her roots with the recent release of her newest album and her first acoustic recording, "Edentown." Mary Ann is a two-time chair and founding member of the Rhode Island Songwriters Association, now in its 20th year, and is also on the board of directors of the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame. Born and raised in Johnston, RI, and after years of touring in Fuzek Rossoni, with Rossoni, and also with the Rossonians, Mary Ann is now back to her roots. She says, "It's all about the song," and she remains very active in the songwriting process. To this day, Mary Ann does not record a song without first running the tune by her RISA critique pals. Tonight, Mary Ann will perform solo and also in a band setting featuring **Mederick Bellaire** on guitars, mandolin and vocals, **Fred Wilkes** on bass, **Paul Dube** on harp and accordion, **Matt Dube** on percussion, and **Betsy Ritz** on violin. In addition to her cross-generational, original Americana music on BRT's stage, Mary Ann will have her paintings and illustrations exhibited in BRT's Art Gallery. *Join us for her opening art reception at 6:00 p.m. followed by her concert at 8:00 p.m!*

**Saturday, November 28, 7:30 PM, \$20.00**

**BRT HOMECOMING CONCERT AND SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER**

**featuring Eastern Medicine Singers, John Fuzek, Robbie O'Connell, Pendragon, Grant Maloy Smith, Ed Sweeney, and The Vox Hunters!**



With family and friends in town for Thanksgiving, BRT's 16th annual fundraiser features some of the best of Rhode Island's homegrown talent as well as others who now live in the Ocean State. Starting at 6:30 p.m. and during intermission, Blackstone River Theatre will also hold a silent auction featuring CDs, jewelry, original artwork, Christmas items and gift certificates. 100% of the proceeds from both the concert and the silent auction will go to support Blackstone River Theatre's programming and operating expenses. Says BRT executive director Russell Gusetti, "this is not only BRT's one big fundraiser for the year but it also serves as an excellent

sampler as audiences get to see seven different acts in one evening, all who will be performing full concerts in the coming months." **Pendragon** will act as hosts this evening and will perform a set of their Celtic-inspired music joined by Irish step dancer **Erika Damiani**. Other featured performers, who are all donating their time, include the BRT debut of Americana musician **Grant Maloy Smith**, Irish songs and tunes with **The Vox Hunters (Armand Aromin and Benedict Gagliardi)**, celebrated Irish singer-songwriter **Robbie O'Connell** and the **Eastern Medicine Singers** who will present Algonquin and Native American song, drumming and dance. Rounding out the lineup is Providence singer-songwriter **John Fuzek** and celebrated guitarist and 5-string banjo player **Ed Sweeney**.

**DECEMBER 2015**

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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.**

- **Zumba on Mondays** continues in December.
- **Blackstone River Theatre will shut down for the holiday season starting December 15 and will reopen again on January 9.** *We wish everyone a very happy and safe holiday season with best wishes for a peaceful new year!*
- **Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to BRT before the year ends!**
- **Blackstone River Theatre gift certificates** make a great gift for friends and family!

**Saturday, December 5, 9 AM to 3 PM, FREE admission!  
8th annual BRT HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR AND FESTIVAL**



Blackstone River Theatre invites the community to our 8th 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 27 vendors on site and the event will also feature continuous live music by members of **Pendragon, The Broad Street Fiddlers, and The Swamp Meadow Victorian Carolers** 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!)*

Vendors will include: **The Opulent Squid** ("posh and peculiar handmade jewelry"), **Scentsy** (warmers, aromatic wax and personal care items), **Ann Lilley Designs** (bags & totes made from recycled materials/seasonal decor), **Thirty-One Gifts** (organizational items for home and accessories for on the go), **Starlite Jewelry Designs, Laura Travis Carving** (Celtic stone carving, rubbings, and Brigid Crosses), **Sandra-Lynn Custom Jewelry Designs, BoydHolms** (whimsical handmade birdhouses and sculptures), **Ducharme Creations in Wood** (handmade wooden ornaments and more), **SilverLeaf Studios** (handcrafted jewelry in Sterling silver and copper and repurposed vintage items), **Judy Carroll Stained Glass, Tree's Creations** (cancer awareness earrings and bracelets), **Starlite Jewelry Designs, Bright Edge Candles, Uncle J's Monsters** (prints of "monsters who don't know they are monsters"), **LnKDesigns** (hand-carved wooden LED Star Lights, crystal jewelry, novelty soaps), **Bells on My Toes** (decorative Christmas stockings), **Bead Dazzled, mpic designs, Li'l Smunchie Dolls** (handmade sock baby dolls), **Charles & B Boutique** (custom antique window panes/rustic home decor), **The Merry Blacksmith Press** (artwork, prints, limited edition books), **Jewels by Crissy B, The Drum & Whistle**, and more!

**NOTE: These shows will take place at ALDRICH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL in Warwick, R.I.**

**Sunday, December 6, 1:30 PM and 5 PM performances, \$14.00  
4th annual IRISH DANCE CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR featuring TIR NA NOG  
IRISH DANCE**



We hope you'll join Tir Na Nog Irish Dance for a fun afternoon and evening of Irish dance, and live Celtic and Christmas music. All dances have been choreographed and taught by instructor **Erika Damiani** and will be performed by dancers from **Tir Na Nog Irish Dance**, based out of Blackstone River Theatre. In the past year, Tir Na Nog has grown so much that Erika decided she would need a bigger stage to accommodate so many dancers and also a bigger auditorium so all family members could

attend the shows. *Part of today's proceeds will go towards sponsorship of the dance stage at the 2016 Blackstone River Theatre Summer Solstice Festival where Tir Na Nog Irish Dance will perform.* The shows will be filled with Christmas cheer, beautiful traditional and modern Irish dancing, live Celtic music, and will conclude with a visit from our friend from the North Pole! Performances will be sprinkled with the magic of Christmas and the love of Irish dance demonstrated by all of the dedicated dancers and their parents. Tir Na Nog Irish dancers are very dedicated to learning Irish dance traditions and have a great deal of fun while doing it. Erika wants Tir Na Nog to grow so she can continue to spread her love of Irish dance to many students for years to come! If you are interested in Irish Dance classes at Blackstone River Theatre, call 401-725-9272 or visit <http://www.tirnanogirishdanceri.com/>

### **BOTH PERFORMANCES ARE SOLD OUT! THANK YOU!**

*Two Holiday performances!*

**Saturday, December 12, 8 PM, \$20.00 advance / \$24.00 day of show**

AND

**Sunday, December 13, 7 PM, \$20.00 advance / \$24.00 day of show**

#### **BLACKSTONE RIVER THEATRE CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION**

**featuring Cathy Clasper-Torch, Robbie O'Connell & Rose Clancy, Erika Damiani and members of Tir Na Nog Irish Dance, Kevin Doyle, Bob Drouin, Josh Kane, Russell Gusetti, Ed Sweeney, and the Swamp Meadow Victorian Carolers**  
*Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union*



Blackstone River Theatre will present our 8th annual Christmas Celebration featuring **Cathy Clasper-Torch, Robbie O'Connell & Rose Clancy, Erika Damiani and members of Tir Na Nog Irish Dance, Kevin Doyle, Bob Drouin, Josh Kane, Russell Gusetti, Ed Sweeney, and the Swamp Meadow Victorian Carolers** Audiences can expect the unexpected - familiar and unfamiliar songs, high energy 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 thing about this show," explains Russell Gusetti, BRT executive director. "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."