



TROUBADOUR

Acoustic music news from Six String Concerts • Vol. 9, Issue 1, Sept. 2003

Kate Campbell's singular style brings her songs and stories to life

Since her recording debut in 1995, Kate Campbell has been compared to a lot of famous people. Her gift for storytelling in the Southern tradition has been likened to that of Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor and William Faulkner. Her songwriting and musical vision have brought Lucinda Williams and Emmylou Harris to mind for more than one critic.

All of these accolades, and her ever-increasing legions of fans, are proof that she is a formidable talent with the skill and integrity to deliver the goods.

Campbell's character and convictions are very much a product of her upbringing. The daughter of a Baptist preacher, she grew up in Sledge, Mississippi, where she witnessed firsthand the struggles of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. She also was steeped in the music of the time—Southern rock, gospel, soul, R&B, country and folk.

From the moment her first CD, *Songs From The Levee*, was released, the buzz about Campbell and her prodigious talent began. One critic said that she "belongs in the company of literati like Mary-Chapin Carpenter and Lucinda Williams."

She is praised for her clear-water vocals and command of a wide range of music styles, and the critical acclaim is stronger and louder with each new CD.

There are six recordings to date; the latest, *Monuments*, was inspired by the monu-

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Kate Campbell

photo by Michael Wilson



Six String
Concerts
celebrating our
16th season!

In This Issue

3 John Gorka returns for another evening of songs and stories

5 Brooks Williams brings new songs and amazing new guitar licks

6 By popular demand, Darryl Purpose returns to take the chill off winter

A message from the president

Sixteen years and still going strong

Welcome to our 16th season. We are back from summer vacation and gearing up to bring you another great season of concerts by some of the finest singer-songwriters in the country. We have booked a few tried and true favorites, brought back others that you told us you enjoyed and wanted to hear again and mixed in a few new artists that you are sure to enjoy.

Six String Concerts is healthy and strong thanks to your continued support. We are grateful to you for being a part of our Six String Concert family. Even in this time of economic uncertainty and world unrest, you have found our concerts an enjoyable, worthwhile and reasonably priced way to spend a Friday evening. Our attendance has actually grown while many arts organizations are unfortunately experiencing a decline. We do know, however, that there are still many music fans out there who would love the Six String Concert experience, but have not yet discovered us. Although we continue to publicize our

organization and events to the extent we can afford, we find that the most effective method is personal testimony. Try to remember when you first discovered Six String Concerts and consider introducing a friend to us during the season.

Finally, thank you for your participation in our mailing list reduction project. Most of you received a notice from us either via email or postal mail asking how you would like for us to communicate with you about upcoming concerts. We have received many responses and are still working to update our records. If you received this newsletter in a format different than you requested, be patient. We have not yet processed your change. If you have not returned your form, or if you never received one, please email or mail us at: info@sixstring.org or Six String Concerts, P.O. Box 9330, Columbus, Ohio 43209. Thanks for your cooperation.

See you and your friends this season!



Twin Rivers

Music Company

Steel string guitars by Huss & Dalton, Collings, Lakewood, James Goodall, C. F. Martin

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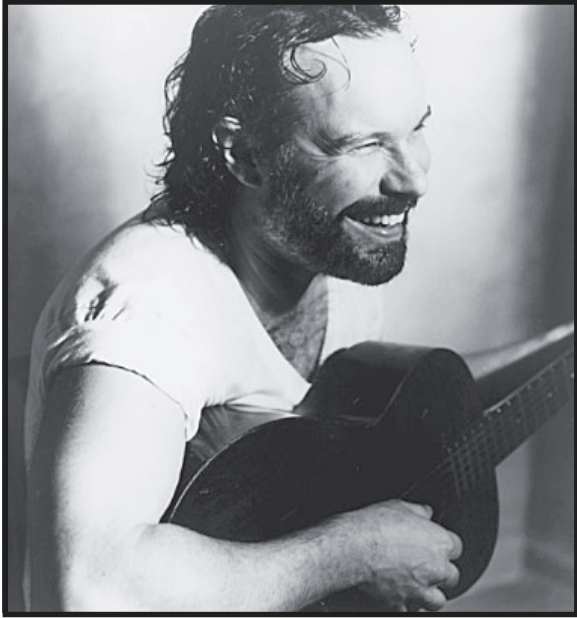
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**In the Kenny Center on Kenny Road
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Gorka's talent continues to shine

For more than 15 years, John Gorka has been a defining presence in contemporary acoustic music. *Rolling Stone* called him “the preeminent male singer/songwriter of the new folk movement.”



John Gorka

Music has been a driving force in his life for a long time. He was still in high school when he wrote his first songs, and spent his college years as soundman and opening act at Godfrey Daniels coffeehouse in Pennsylvania.

In 1984, he won the Kerrville New Folk competition, and soon he was performing with those he had looked to for inspiration: Suzanne Vega, Nanci Griffith, Bill Morrissey, Christine Lavin and Shawn Colvin. His first album was released in 1987.

Gorka has a sharp eye for detail, and the ability to parlay that into songs in which his quirky characters come to life. His music is sophisticated, honest to a fault, and sometimes more than a

little deliciously twisted. His rich chocolate baritone, easy charm and unassuming manner always ring true, and help to create an intimacy with the audience that makes for a very special evening.

He admits that his focus has changed a bit since he married, moved to Minnesota, and fathered two children, but the essential Gorka remains; he's simply more joyful. The latest of his nine albums is *the company you keep*, and it continues to maintain his high standards of performing and songwriting that capture slices of life in the modern folk tradition.

So maybe you think you've never heard Denice Franke? Think again. That's her singing harmonies with Nanci Griffith on *Once in a Very Blue Moon* and *One Fair Summer Evening*, and with Robert Earl Keen, Jr. on *No Kinda Dancer*. She has been writing and performing her Texas music in the Griffith and Townes Van Zandt tradition for nearly two decades.



Denice Franke

Her voice is a marvel; Iain Matthews gushed that her “unconventional vocal excursions pin me to the wall.” Among her more famous fans are Lyle Lovett, Tom Rush, John Gorka, and Eric Taylor, who produced both of her solo recordings, *You Don't Know Me* and *Comfort*.

A Texas native now living in Houston, Franke has performed the world over, from

Kerrville to the streets of Taiwan, Kennedy Center, the Bottom Line, and Rattlesnake Saloon in Munich.

“There is no way to describe the dichotomy that is John Gorka's music...he's his own evil twin. And any way you slice him, be it unsentimental ballad or rare and witty insights, you get full-bodied flavor and variety in every bite.” *Philly Rock Guide*

**John Gorka,
Denice Franke**

**Fri., Oct. 24, 8 pm,
First Unitarian
Universalist
Church**

Sherpas lead a musical journey

Nearly a decade after they started playing together, The Sherpas finally got to record their first CD. The reason it took so long is that Tom Kimmel, Michael Lille, and Tom Prasada-Rao—who make up the group—have been too busy with their own successful solo careers, and occasional Sherpas performances, to find time to cut the disc.

They met in 1993, when all three were winners of the Kerrville New Folk Contest, and soon became fast friends. They have

developed a strong fan base as The Sherpas, based solely on their live performances. *Honor Among Thieves*, their first CD, was released just a few months ago. The recording illustrates the best each artist has to offer—smooth lyrics, great guitar work, and an interest in the topics of love, religion, politics, and darn near everything in between.

Tom Kimmel is a 30-year veteran of the music business whose songs have been covered by Linda Ronstadt, Joe Cocker, Johnny Cash, Shawn Colvin, and a host of other artists. You might also have heard his tunes in motion pictures such as *Runaway Bride*, *Serendipity*, and *Twins*, and on TV shows including *Captain Kangaroo*, *Miami Vice* and *Touched By An Angel*. Once a rock and roller, Kimmel shifted to the role of acoustic singer-songwriter when he opened Nanci Griffith's 1991-92 world tour. It didn't take long to learn that it was a better showcase for his poetry and storytelling skills.

Michael Lille has toured as opening act for such luminaries as Bob Dylan, Allison Kraus, Leo Kottke and Little Feat. He has recorded three solo albums which feature support from friends Kraus, Mary-Chapin Carpenter and Eddie From Ohio, among others. Besides his solo recording and touring, he is the "L" in one of Washington, D.C.'s best-loved groups, SGGL, who have released their fourth disc, *On The Shoulder*. Lille's songs embrace the folk, pop and country traditions, all perfect backdrops for his strong guitar work and thoughtful, insightful and poetic lyrics.

Tom Pasada-Rao, who performed solo for Six String Concerts last season, has a performing schedule that includes nearly as many shelters, halfway houses and benefits as it does such august venues as the Kennedy

"You can't find fault with sparking melodies, great singing, and sympathetic backing. Sherpas has given each one of us musical travelers a truly enlightening, wondrous experience!"

The Music Monthly



The Sherpas

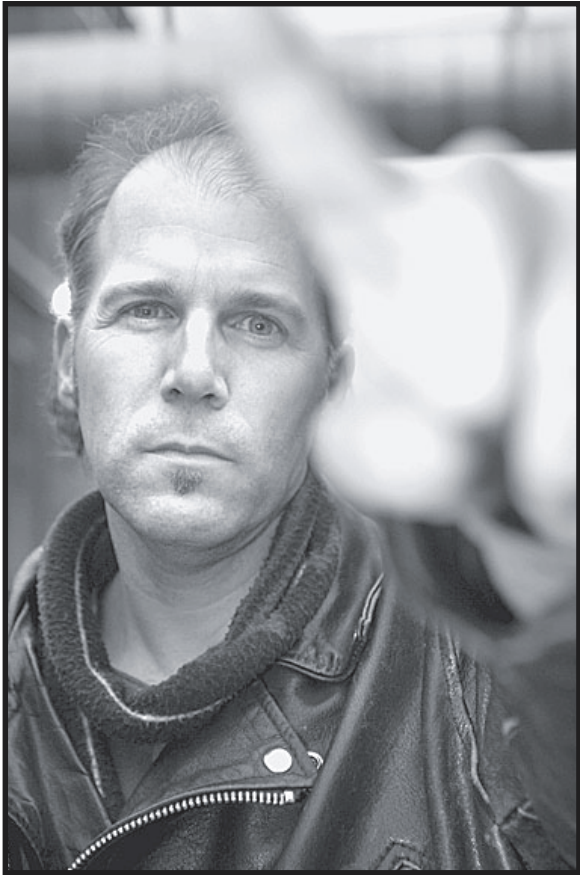
Center and nearly every folk festival and listening room in the US and abroad. His commitment to social issues runs deep, such as his involvement in the Community for Creative Non-Violence.

Prasada-Rao's CDs include *The Way of the World*, *Hear You Laughing*, and *Christmas in the Ashram*, all chock-full of his warm, joyful, no-holds-barred music. 🎸

The Sherpas

Fri., Nov. 21, 8 pm,
Columbus
Music Hall

Williams never fails to amaze



Brooks Williams

He began playing the violin at age three, and picked up his first guitar seven years later. Brooks Williams listened to his older brothers' albums—Hendrix, Yes, Tuna, Clapton—on the sly and taught himself to play the overdubbed parts on a singer guitar, something that should be impossible to do. The “fret monster” was born. This one-of-a-kind playing is what led *Guitar Player* magazine to ask in awe, “What IS that thing?”

Although his guitar playing consistently turns heads, it's not the only thing about Williams that is remarkable. One writer said that he sings like the “Angel of Soul,” and his lyrics are praised as smart, literate, and heartfelt.

Williams has recorded 14 albums, the latest being *Nectar*, hailed by critics as “breathtaking” and “a rich achievement, lush and melodic.”

In addition to his solo career, he sometimes tours as a duo with Rani Arbo. He has produced CDs by Salamander Crossing, Rollyn Zoubek and Spinoza. Williams is also a respected teacher, conducting fingerstyle guitar workshops at the Club Passim School of Music in Cambridge, MA, and songwriting workshops at the University of Virginia and the New England Young Writers Conference. His slide and acoustic guitar chops are heard frequently between news segments on NPR, PBS and the BBC.

“Brooks Williams is a man blessed with multiple talents... doing what he does best: merging acoustic guitar wizardry with the singer-songwriter tradition.” *All Music Guide*

Caroline Herring went to Austin to pursue a PhD in American Studies. Encouraged by some of the locals (namely Peter Rowan, Ray Wylie Hubbard and Tish Hinojosa), she instead turned her energies to honing her singing and songwriting skills. A weekly gig at Shubb's Bar-B-Q turned into an offer to record a CD on Blue Corn Music. This CD, *Twilight*, got a lot of local airplay, and before long, Herring was being invited to play the Newport Folk Festival, Kennedy Center, and other major venues. She took home the Austin Music Award for Best New Artist at the 2002 South x Southwest Festival.

Herring's second CD, *Wellspring*, has just been released, and one critic said, “it takes the intelligent country/folk of the first disc and improves on it in every respect—this is a disc certain to create an even bigger impact.” ♪



Caroline Herring

**Brooks Williams,
Caroline Herring**

**Fri., Dec. 5, 8 pm
Shedd Theater**

A master of storytelling and song

Much has been written about Darryl Purpose's former life as the best blackjack player in the world. But since he began making music full time, much has also been written about the beauty and power of his songs.

Professional gambling was lucrative, but left him feeling empty. In 1986, he joined the Great Peace March, a group of activists who marched across the country in protest against nuclear weapons. Another march followed in what was then the Soviet

Union, and the first-ever outdoor stadium concert there found him sharing the stage with the likes of Bonnie Raitt, Santana and James Taylor.

Purpose continued to gamble for several more years, finally making the leap to full time performing and recording in 1996. He has recorded five CDs since then, most of them full of original songs that show his knack for drama and gift for telling a good story. Of the latter he says, "It emerged when I started doing live shows.

I discovered that I could tell a gambling story or a story about the Peace March, and people would react. Then the stories started seeping into the songs."

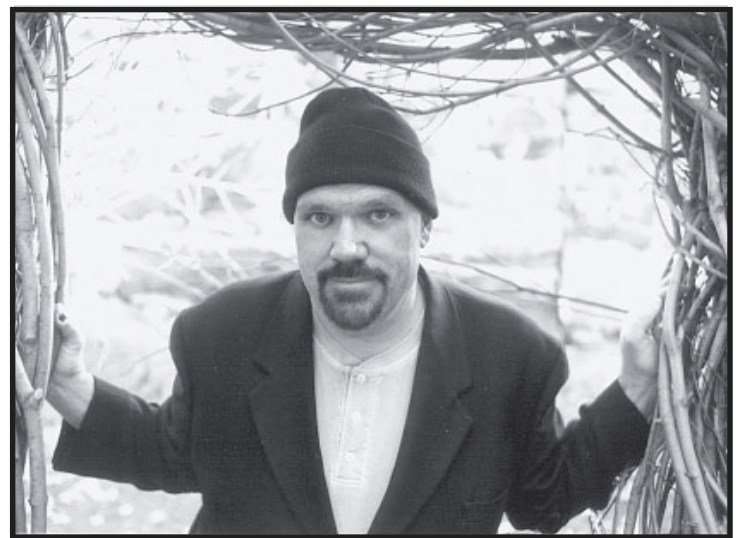
His smooth baritone, natural charisma and versatility captive an audience.

Despite his burly appearance, he puts a gentle spin on nearly every story or song, so it wasn't a stretch for him to record his latest CD, *Gift of the Magi*, a collection of covers of holiday-themed songs by such people as Dave Carter, Dar Williams, John McCutcheon, Enya and Pete Seeger.

Always a social activist at heart, Purpose and a friend also formed The Second Strings Project, which collects used guitar strings and distributes them to needy musicians in Mexico, Ecuador, Mali, Russia, Latvia and several other countries.

"Purpose has the voice of James Taylor, the brains of Bob Dylan, and the soul of Willie Nelson"

Attache, the USAir in-flight magazine, 2003



Darryl Purpose

photo by Elizabeth Hancock-Ungerliedner

Those of you who caught Purpose's Six String performance last year will recall how pleased he was when longtime friend J.D. Stillwater surprised him by showing up to play percussion. No surprise this time: the two have already arranged for Stillwater to play with him again. 🎸

Here's something you simply must have

We are not making this up. Look at it, in all its shiny, insulated, dishwasher-safe beauty. It's the brand new Six String Concerts travel mug, and we know you are going to want one *real, real bad*. You may even want each of your loved ones to have one. We know just how you feel: we fell in love with them at first sight, too.

Good news: we can help you obtain one (or more) of these sleek mugs. Simply come to a Six String Concert and you pick them up for only \$10.00 each. Your mug will give you warm feelings—and warm beverages—for years to come! 🎸



ments and folk carvings of William Edmondson, the first African-American artist to have a solo show at New York's Museum of Modern Art. As usual, the praise is heaped high.

Monuments has been called "superb," and one critic said, that Campbell "is clearly writing the best songs of her career."

Her next release, *Twang on a Wire*, is scheduled to hit stores at the end of September, so it's a sure bet that she will be bringing plenty of new songs to play at this performance.

Chuck Brodsky has never been an armchair observer. He has hitchhiked across the country, worked on an Israeli Kibbutz, was a migrant fruit picker, drove an ice cream truck, spent two years streetsinging in Europe, and was a bank courier (until he lost a check for \$10 million).

What he learned along the way is how to write a great song, full of honesty, humanity and humor, in the style of John Prine, Bob Dylan and Woody Guthrie. Larry Gross of NPR's *Mountain Stage* considers Brodsky "one of the finest singer-songwriters in America. There are a lot of good ones, but when it comes to the really great ones, it boils down to a select few—he's one of them."

Winner of the Napa Valley Folk Festival Emerging Songwriter award in 1992, he

"I can't think of many Nashville troubadours whose albums I look forward to more eagerly than Kate Campbell's. You need this woman's music in your life." *Music Row Magazine*

released his first CD, *A Fingerpainter's Murals*, in 1995. One of the cuts was "Blow 'em Away," named by The Maverick Report as "Song of the Year." David Wilcox covered the song on his CD *East*

Asheville Hardware.

One of Brodsky's passions is baseball; "I bleed Phillies red," the Philadelphia native said. His love of the Great American Pastime has spilled over into his song-writing. Nine of his songs have been included in the Sound Recording Library of the Baseball Hall of Fame, and his songs are also featured on four *Diamond Cuts* albums of baseball songs. Appropriately enough, his latest CD is called *The Baseball Ballads*, and is a collection of his songs—some old, some new—about the game and some of its more colorful players. 🎸



Chuck Brodsky

Kate Campbell & Chuck Brodsky
Fri., Sept. 26, 8 pm
Columbus Music Hall

Troubadour is published twice yearly by Six String Concerts, Inc., a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to promoting local, regional and national acoustic singer/songwriters not otherwise heard in Columbus. The concerts are primarily produced in intimate, smoke- and alcohol-free environments which provide mutual satisfaction to the audience and artists.

 Six String Concerts • P.O. Box 9330 • Columbus, OH 43209-0330
(614) 470-FOLK • info@sixstring.org • www.sixstring.org

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Our 16th Season

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& Chuck Brodsky**
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Columbus Music Hall
\$15 advance, \$17 door

**John Gorka
Denice Franke**
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First Unitarian
Universalist Church
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The Sherpas:
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**Brooks Williams
& Caroline Herring**
Fri., December 5
Shedd Theater
\$15 advance, \$17 door

Darryl Purpose
Fri., January 23
Columbus Music Hall
\$15 advance, \$17 door

Lucy Kaplansky
Fri., Feb. 13
First Unitarian Universalist Church
\$15 advance, \$17 door

Greg Brown
Fri., March 26
Fawcett Center
\$20 advance, \$22 door

Christine Kane
Fri., April 30
Columbus Music Hall
\$15 advance, \$17 door

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