

Blackstone River Theatre



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JANUARY

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **THANK YOU! Blackstone River Theatre saw over 6,600 audience members attend 115 events in 2007.** September marked the 7-year anniversary of the reopening of Blackstone River Theatre after over four years of volunteer renovation efforts from July, 1996 to September, 2000. Since reopening, BRT has now presented over 660 events in front of over 45,000 audience members! An additional 2,000 people attended the first-ever BRT Celtic Festival held at Diamond Hill Park in July!
- **Look for details about another six-week round of fiddle classes for beginner, continuing beginner, advanced beginner and intermediate students** with Cathy Clasper-Torch beginning Jan. 15 and Jan. 16.
- **There will be an exhibit of watercolor paintings by Jerry Aissis in BRT's Art Gallery Jan. 11 through Feb. 10.** Jerry, a Director and Artist Member of the Rhode Island Watercolor Society (and a BRT volunteer!) will also teach watercolor classes at Blackstone River Theatre in the near future.
- **Blackstone River Theatre is proud to be working in partnership with Cumberland's Office of Children, Youth and Learning in the presentation of several events in 2008.** Their mission is to promote improved quality of life for Cumberland youth through programs, projects and advocacy. The first of these takes place at BRT on Saturday, January 5 as we present the first **Cumberland Chess Festival** from 9 am - 3 PM. On Wednesdays beginning January 9 through February 13 from 3:30-4:30 PM we will offer a **program for K-2 called "Mind Lab."**

Friday, January 11, 8 PM, \$15.00 **The April Verch Band**

We are very excited to kick off our winter season with one of the most dynamic bands to come out of Canada in a long time. When you see 28-year-old April Verch perform, the first thing that strikes you is the pure energy that infuses her fiddle playing and step dancing. When you listen to "Take Me Back," her third CD for Rounder Records, though, what draws you in are more subtle things - her confident, tender singing, the finely detailed elegance of her fiddle phrasing, and the depth of a repertoire that ranges through material from Americana to simple country songs and rollicking tunes from her native Ottawa Valley to sparkling original instrumentals. Produced by Dirk Powell, "Take Me Back" finds virtuoso fiddler (she counts over 400 competition awards on her résumé, including Canadian Open Fiddle Champion and Canadian Grand Masters Champion - the first and only woman to win both), vocalist, and step dancer April Verch continuing to broaden the scope of her music while maintaining close ties to the music of her Canadian home. April and her band - **Marc Bru** on percussion, **Cody Walters** on upright bass and **Lincoln Meyers** on guitar - made a huge splash at BRT's Celtic Festival last July... *don't miss a chance to see a star in the making!*

Saturday, January 12, 8 PM, \$20.00

Martin Hayes And Dennis Cahill

Irish fiddle virtuoso **Martin Hayes** and American guitarist **Dennis Cahill** possess a rare musical kinship, ranking them among the most memorable partnerships of our era. Together they have garnered international renown for taking traditional music to the very edge of the genre, holding listeners spellbound with their slow-building, fiery performances. Hayes has been an All-Ireland fiddle champion six times over and has taken home a National Entertainment Award, the Irish equivalent to the "Grammy." Possessing the slow, lyrical style of his native East County Clare, Martin grew up playing traditional music with his father, P.J. Hayes, leader of the famed Tulla Ceili Band. Dennis Cahill is a master guitarist, as well versed in classical, blues and rock as he is in traditional music. A Chicago native, Cahill's innovative accompaniment is acknowledged as being a major breakthrough for guitar in the Irish tradition. The musical rapport between Hayes and Cahill is so strong that it is often said they appear to be playing one instrument; while Martin pursues a melody, Dennis explores the harmony and rhythms within the tune. Their live performances can weave tunes that stretch up to thirty minutes long, in what Hayes describes as "a three-way conversation between the two of us and the music." *Not to be missed!*

Thursday, January 17, 7-10 PM, \$5.00

BRT Drum & Dance Circle

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 20-35 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. Bring your own hand drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!

Saturday, January 19, 11 AM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults

Rosalita's Puppets - "The Sea Story"

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union

Ideal for ages 4-and-up. **Rosalita's Puppets** brings another original show with some of your favorite puppet characters and many new ones to the Blackstone River Theatre. Today's show, "The Sea Story," is an adventure under the sea featuring pirates, a mermaid and all kinds of sea creatures. As always, expect plenty of songs and audience participation featuring English puppeteer **Charlotte Dore** and her beautifully hand-crafted marionettes.

SOLD OUT!

Saturday, January 19, 8 PM, \$12.00

Paul Geremia - DVD release

Acoustic Guitar magazine calls **Paul Geremia** "One of the best country blues finger-pickers ever." Geremia is possibly the greatest living performer of the East Coast and Texas fingerpicking and slide styles and has been called a national treasure. Paul has created a style which is very much his own combining his interpretations of the music of Blind Lemon Jefferson, Robert Johnson, Blind Willie McTell and Blind Blake. His superb recordings have made him a critical favorite and place him firmly among the legends who inspired and influenced him over the past four decades. With his six and twelve-string guitars, harmonica and a husky, soulful voice - and with an innate sense of the humor as well as the drama of the music - Geremia keeps traditional blues fresh and alive with his performances. Paul has recorded ten solo albums, and has also appeared on numerous anthologies and compilation discs. Tonight's concert will celebrate the release of his new DVD out on Rounder Records - "Guitar Artistry of Paul Geremia, Six & Twelve String Blues."

SOLD OUT!

Saturday, January 26, 8 PM, \$20.00

Roomful of Blues - CD Release Party!

Here's a VERY rare chance to hear this amazing band in an intimate listening room setting! USA Today says Roomful of Blues plays "marvelous wall-to-wall grooves... between the wicked guitar work and the brassy horn section, things never stop swinging." With their masterful combination of jumping, hard-edged blues and R&B, it's no wonder why DownBeat said the band is "in a class by itself." Since 1967, the band's horn-driven blend of swing, rock 'n' roll, jump, blues and soul has earned it five Grammy Award nominations and a slew of other accolades, including four W.C. Handy Blues Awards. The band won two 2004 W.C. Handy Blues Awards, Instrumentalist of the Year: Horns, as well as the coveted Blues Band of the Year. Over the years,

Roomful's lineup has changed but the band has always been one of the tightest blues ensembles in the world. Currently an eight-piece unit led by guitarist **Chris Vachon**, the band has never sounded fresher or stronger. With new vocalist/harpist **Dave Howard**, bassist **Dima Gorodetsky**, drummer **Ephraim Lowell**, pianist **Travis Colby**, and baritone and tenor saxophonist **Mark Earley** along with long-time tenor and alto saxophonist **Rich Lataille** (the longest-standing member of the group) and trumpeter **Bob Enos**, the group will be celebrating the release of their new CD, "Raisin' A Ruckus."

NOTE: Blackstone River Theatre would like to express our sincere condolences to family, friends and Roomful bandmates on the recent passing of Bob Enos. Bob, who played trumpet in Roomful of Blues for 26 years, died at a Georgia hotel while touring with the band at age 60. Enos joined Roomful in 1981, adding the powerful soloing voice of his trumpet to the eight-piece ensemble's horn section and stylistic mix of blues, jazz, swing, R&B and soul. A native of Boston and resident of Wareham, Mass., Enos took up the trumpet at 14 and studied at the New England Conservatory of Music. Before joining Roomful of Blues, he toured with The Platters and the jazz-fusion group Channel One. He also played with the Roomful horn section on session recordings for Stevie Ray Vaughn, Pat Benatar and Colin James. His superb playing and energy will be greatly missed by all.

FEBRUARY

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **The exhibit of watercolor paintings by Jerry Aissis in BRT's Art Gallery runs through Feb. 10.** A new exhibit of photography by Irish artist Fionan O'Connell will run February 16 through March 20.
- **Blackstone River Theatre is proud to be working in partnership with Cumberland's Office of Children, Youth and Learning in the presentation of several ongoing events in 2008.** Their mission is to promote improved quality of life for Cumberland youth through programs, projects and advocacy. On Wednesdays through February 13 and beginning again in March-April from 3:30-4:30 PM we will offer **a program for K-2 called "Mind Lab."**
- **There will be a new round of Irish step dance classes for adults and children, including hard shoe for advanced beginner/intermediate levels,** beginning February 2nd and 5th with instructor Terry Songini. Visit the [classes link](#) for full information.

Saturday, February 2, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show
The Atwater-Donnelly Trio

BRT favorites **Aubrey Atwater** and **Elwood Donnelly** return with multi-instrumentalist **Cathy Clasper-Torch** on fiddle, cello and vocals to present another 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, limberjack and other musical surprises. Their performance appeals to all ages with humor, audience participation, and a relaxed stage presence. The duo has performed widely in the Northeast and other parts of the United States for 19 years.

Saturday, February 9, 8 PM, \$10.00
Superchief Trio

The Rhode Island roots/blues band Superchief Trio features **Keith Munslow** on piano and vocals, **Pam Murray** on trombone and vocals and **Johnny Coté** on percussion. Able to leap seamlessly from New Orleans grooves to hot swing to smooth, sultry ballads, Superchief Trio proves that big sounds do indeed come in small packages. On their debut CD, "The Devil Knows Me Better," the high-energy trio serves up 14 original tunes that spin tales of dancing and devilment, bad luck and trouble, vanity and vice, love and... sandwiches. Superchief Trio were named the winners of the Motif Magazine Best Music Poll for Best Local Roots Act (2005) and Best Local Release (2006). Pianist Keith Munslow met trombonist Pam Murray at the Providence arts incubator AS220, where they performed together in the Smoking Jackets and the Neo 90s Dance Band. Keith and drummer Johnny Cote played together in the Big Nazo

band, and soon Johnny became the drummer for the Neo 90s. Having cut their teeth on rough-and-tumble dance blues with the Smoking Jackets, Keith and Pam began playing gigs at a dim and smoky basement bar (now defunct) called The East Bay Regatta Club. Owing to safety in numbers, Johnny Cote was recruited, and Superchief Trio was born. The casual nature of the place and its heckling denizens encouraged recklessness and experimentation with new songs, new arrangements and inspired a higher level of daredevil musical abandon. Emerging from this subterranean honky-tonk, Superchief Trio continues the tradition of good-time music and barrelhouse hijinks at all their concerts. A fun-filled night of music with room to dance in the back if the spirit moves you!

Sunday, February 10, 2 PM, \$12.00

**The Dixie Diehards Jazz Band
with special guest Maria Ventura**

Teen vocal sensation Maria Ventura, named Female Vocalist of The Year for 2007 by the Providence Phoenix and Motif Magazine, will be joining the Dixie Diehards Jazz Band for a raucus, Mardi Gras week 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 **Jim Kelleher** on trombone, **Santo Pullara** on clarinet; **Paul Peterson** on sax, **Alan Shapiro** on trumpet; **Steve Shaw** on tuba; **Dolly Fruzzetti** on piano; **Dale Ellenberg** on drums; **Chris Wadsworth** on banjo, and **Rick Foster** on vocals/cornet. **Maria Ventura**, at 16 already an established singer-songwriter-guitarist, released her debut album "Tear Bird Train" - recorded when she was only 14 - that reveals a distinctive soprano and a songwriter possessed of beyond-year-years wisdom. Her young resume includes opening for David Johansen in New York City as well as for the Blue Man Group comedy trio. With The Dixie Diehards, the versatile teen displays another side of her musical personality, rendering such classics as "Pennies From Heaven" and "St. Louis Blues" with a texture and flair befitting an Ella Fitzgerald or a Thelma Middleton. Don't miss a rare BRT matinee show sure to be fun for all ages!

Saturday, February 16, 1 PM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults

The Toe Jam Puppet Band Pirate Show - Rhode Island debut!

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union

Face or hand paintings by Ellen will be available 30 minutes before the show and 30 minutes after the show!

Ideal for families with children ages 5-and-up. Formed in 2000, the Toe Jam Puppet Band is great with kids, but best when parents are also there having fun with the little ones. The shows are always very active, encouraging kids and parents to sing and dance along with the band as they entertain with a unique combination of original songs, puppetry, storytelling and just plain old fun! Big kids **Vinny Lovegrove** and **Tom Poitras** will lead the crowd during Toe Jam's newest theme show - The Toe Jam Pirate Show! Arrrrrrrgh! Dance piratey jigs with the Toe Jam crew like, 'The Skull & Crossbones Square Dance,' and a line dance called 'Pirates Arrrr Funky,' where the kids become dancing lobsters, seagulls and even dancing sharks! Join us in all your pirate gear and climb aboard - a great time for kids of all ages!

Saturday, February 16, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show

Nerissa and Katryna Nields

Sisters **Nerissa and Katryna Nields** have been the darlings of the coffeehouse/festival scene since 1991, with tunes ranging from off-the-hook idiosyncratic to kicking to heartbreaking. To the songwriter who has neither burned, bailed nor sold out, there comes a time when he or she turns from writing about who they are in the current moment to writing about who they have always been, addressing head-on their roots and influences. "Sister Holler," their newest and 14th

CD, is a "roots album," but with a difference. Rather than simply reinterpret or re-record, the sisters decided to retool, assimilate and flat out burgle the music they grew up with to create something new. The Nields plead guilty to grand theft on "Sister Holler," a celebration of recycled folk traditions and the notion that good artists borrow, great artists steal!

Thursday, February 21, 7-10 PM, \$5.00

BRT Drum and Dance Circle

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 20-35 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. Bring your own hand drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!

Saturday, February 23, 8 PM, \$12.00

Trouz Bras - Music of Brittany

Trouz Bras (pronounced True Brazz) means "Big Noise" in the Celtic language of Brittany, the northwestern region of France. It also translates as "Great Sound" and both of these descriptions fit Trouz Bras perfectly. Firmly rooted in the trance-like medieval spiral dances of Brittany, Trouz Bras catapults traditional Breton dance tunes into the 21st century with blistering bagpipes, soaring fiddle and a dynamic rhythm section. Led by bagpiper and vocalist **Ray Price**, a globetrotting expert in Breton music and dance, Trouz Bras includes **Barry Hall** on fiddle, vielle, bouzouki and vocals, **Brian Rost** on bass, **Mance Grady** on bodhran and percussion, **Eric Peterson** on percussion and new vocalist/flautist **Sharynne MacLeod NicMhacha**. Called Brittany in English, Bretagne in French, or Breizh in the Celtic language of Breton, this magical place is an ancient Celtic country that now finds itself in the northwest region of contemporary France. It's a place of barren landscapes, Celtic myths and legends, and unique music and dance. Until recently, there were no musicians representing the fascinating music of Brittany in the USA. That all changed when Trouz Bras was born. Brought together by Ray Price, a longtime supporter of all things Breton and now a Rhode Island resident, Trouz Bras gets any place jumping when they begin to play.

Sunday, February 24, 5:00-8:30 PM, \$8.00 adults/\$3.00 kids

Irish Ceili Dance with The Broad Street Ceili Band

Sponsored by Open MRI of New England

The Broad Street Ceili Band plays a variety of traditional Irish dance music while mixing in occasional waltzes. **Laura Travis** and **Barry and Pat Callahan** will be on hand from 5:00-5:30 p.m. to teach total beginners and those new to the dance tradition. From 5:30-8:30 p.m., Irish set dances will alternate with ceili dances and waltzes for the rest of the evening. The Broad Street Ceili Band features **Bob Drouin** on fiddle, **Ron Lister** on concertina, **Chuck Papini** on tenor banjo, **Josh Kane** on flute, **Marianne Kane** on bodhran and newest member **Kevin O'Brien** on piano. The emphasis is on fun... learn by doing! No partners are necessary. Try a dance or simply come down to listen to some great music!

Friday, February 29, 8 PM, \$18.00 advance/\$20.00 day of show

The Cathie Ryan Band

Irish American **Cathie Ryan**, with her crystalline vocals and insightful songwriting, is an original and distinctive voice in Celtic music. Since her acclaimed seven-year tenure as lead singer of Cherish the Ladies, Ryan has established herself as one of Celtic music's most popular and enduring singer-songwriters. Since moving to Ireland, Cathie is in the U.S. much less frequently these days so we are thrilled to welcome her back to our stage after many years! Ryan has released 4 critically-acclaimed CDs on Shanachie Records including her latest, "The Farthest Wave." She is also featured on more than 40 compilations of Celtic music and is a captivating and deeply affecting performer. Cathie was voted one of the Top 100 Irish Americans by Irish America Magazine and Chicago's Irish American News honored her as "Irish Female Vocalist of the Decade." She'll be joined tonight by **Patsy O'Brien** on guitar and vocals and **Duncan Wickel** on fiddle, uilleann pipes and pennywhistle.

MARCH

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **The exhibit of photography by Irish artist Fionan O'Connell in BRT's Art Gallery runs through March 20.** A new exhibit of blues and jazz photographs by Michael Kurgansky will run March 22 through April 19.
- **Blackstone River Theatre is proud to be working in partnership with Cumberland's Office of Children, Youth and Learning in the presentation of several ongoing events in 2008.** Their mission is to promote improved quality of life for Cumberland youth through programs, projects and advocacy. On Tuesdays March 4 through April 8 from 3:30-4:30 PM we will offer **a program for K-2 called "Mind Lab."** This six week course is an innovative hands-on program that teaches kids HOW to think through carefully selected international games. Children will learn the fundamental of planning, problem solving, decision making, teamwork and communication. On Wednesdays during this same time period we will host an afterschool program on videomaking/editing for high school age students.
- **Five levels of Irish step dance classes for adults and children, including hard shoe for advanced beginner/intermediate levels,** will continue through March with instructor Terry Songini. A new round of classes will begin again in April-May. Visit the classes link for full information.

SOLD OUT!

Sunday, March 2, 7:00 PM, \$20.00

LUNASA

One show only! Advance ticket purchase recommended!

Named for a Celtic harvest festival in honor of the Irish god Lugh, patron of the arts, Lúnasa is indeed a gathering of some of the top musical talents in Ireland. Its members have formed the backbone of some of the greatest Irish groups of the decade: bassist **Trevor Hutchinson** was a key member of The Waterboys, and fiddler **Sean Smyth** is an All-Ireland champion who played with Donal Lunny's Coolfin. **Kevin Crawford**, considered to be among the finest flutists in Ireland, played with Moving Cloud and piper **Cillian Vallely** comes from the same talented musical family as brother Niall of Buille and the Karan Casey Band. Guitarist **Paul Meehan** performed for years as a member of Karan Casey's Band. Inspired by legendary Irish group The Bothy Band, Lúnasa uses melodic interweaving of wind and string instruments pairing flutes, fiddle, whistle and pipes in breathtaking arrangements. Their newest CD, "Sé" (pronounce "shay") was released to incredible critical acclaim. Don't miss an amazing night of Irish music!

Friday, March 7, 8 PM, \$12.00

THE HANNEKE CASSEL BAND

We're thrilled to bring back U.S. National Scottish Fiddle Champion **Hanneke Cassel**, guitarist **Christopher Lewis** and cellist **Natalie Haas**. "Exuberant and rhythmic, somehow both innocent and wild, delivered with captivating melodic clarity and an irresistible playfulness," says The Boston Globe about Hanneke's playing. Hanneke holds a Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance from Berklee College of Music, and she has performed and taught across the U.S., Scotland, China, France and England. Hanneke also often plays for the Cathie Ryan Band and is a member of Boston-based fiddle bands Childsplay and Halali. She's joined tonight by long-time guitarist Lewis as well as the dynamic Natalie Haas, well-known for performing throughout the U.S. and Europe with Alasdair Fraser.

Saturday, March 15, 11 AM, \$5/\$7.00

MARVELOUS MARVIN'S "HOW THE BODY WORKS"

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union

Face or hand paintings by Ellen will be available 30 minutes before the show and 30 minutes after the show!

Ideal for families with children ages 7-13. As a youngster, do you remember that one special person in your life who inspired you, who urged you to look beyond the obvious, beyond the words written in books, in order to discover a whole new world of knowledge? Well, Marvelous Marvin remembers. At the Blackstone River Theatre on Saturday morning, in his one-man show entitled "How The Body Works," a program that combines education and entertainment, Marvin brings to life that same spirit of creativity and inspiration. With a mixture of magic, juggling, scientific facts, and a great deal of humor, Marvin keeps his audience enthralled as he explains, all in rhyme, how the human body actually works. Using a 6-foot house that unfolded to 25 feet

wide, which contains a series of interactive panels explaining various parts of the body, Marvin teaches everything from the brain's role in regulating the senses to the workings of the human heart. Marvin asks the audience members questions, dances, juggles and always has both children and adults giggling out loud.

SOLD OUT!

Saturday, March 15, 8 PM, \$20 advance/\$24.00 day of show

KARAN CASEY with BUILLE

One show only! Advance ticket purchase recommended!

It just doesn't get better than this: **Karan Casey** on St. Patrick's Day weekend! The former longtime lead vocalist with Irish supergroup Solas has always exhibited the grace, pacing and richness of an old soul. The Associated Press says Casey has "a voice so beautiful, it's almost impossible to avoid falling under her spell." On this tour Karan is accompanied by Buille - Niall Vallely on concertina, his younger brother **Caoimhín Vallely** on piano, and **Paul Meehan** of Lunasa on guitar. The Irish Times says, "Buille is as fresh a breath that's blown through traditional and roots circles in a long, long time." A rare chance to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with one of the best Irish performers ever to grace a stage.

Sunday, March 16, 7 PM, \$15.00

PENDRAGON - Celebrate St. Patrick's Day!

New England has long had a rich tradition of Celtic-inspired music. Looking forward to their 25th anniversary in September, 2008, Pendragon has embraced that tradition and created a timeless sound of its own, performing roots music with an unmistakable contemporary edge. Pendragon is step dancer and percussionist **Kevin Doyle, Bob Drouin** on fiddle, bouzouki and tenor banjo, **Russell Gusetti** on guitar and concertina; **Josh Kane** on flute and whistles and **Mary Lee Partington** on vocals. Pendragon's music celebrates the lives and lore of generations of New Englanders who brought traditions from Ireland, Scotland, French Canada and other distant shores to the banks of the Blackstone River. The band performs their original songs and dance tunes on an exciting combination of fiddle, flute, bouzouki, concertina, banjo, guitar, whistle, and percussion. Past tributes include three straight Boston Music Award nominations for Outstanding Celtic Act and a Governor's Tourism Award. Pendragon has been voted Rhode Island's Best Celtic Act in the 2007, 2006 and 2005 MOTIF Magazine's Best Music Poll. Pendragon has also been voted Best Local Folk Act of the Year in the Providence Phoenix' Best Music Poll eight times.

Tuesday, March 18, 7:30 PM, \$10.00

6:30 PM reception included in admission!

TRICOT MACHINE - In celebration of La Semaine de la francophonie

Co-sponsored by the Consulate General of Canada and the Québec Delegation in Boston.

We are thrilled to once again host a reception/music concert brought to us by our friends at the Consulate General of Canada and the Quebec Delegation in Boston. This year is all the more special as the province of Quebec, Canada, is celebrating its 400th anniversary. Knitting, mittens, winter and red cheeks: welcome to Tricot Machine's universe. **Catherine Leduc** and **Matthieu Beaumont** form Tricot Machine, a duo from Trois-Rivières in Quebec. Daniel Beaumont, Matthieu's brother, also writes most of the lyrics and his skills were rewarded in 2005 at Petite-Vallée Festival in the "best songwriter" category. Matthieu won in the "best composer" category at the same festival the following year. In 2007, Tricot Machine won the awards for "Best new artist" and "Best Folk Album" at the GAMIQ (Gala de l'Alternative Musicale Indépendante du Québec), as well as numerous others. The best way to describe their sound is gentle and happy folk/pop songs, with beautiful harmony vocals, accompanied by piano, guitar and some special effects.

Thursday, March 20, 7-10 PM, \$5.00

BRT DRUM & DANCE CIRCLE

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 20-35 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. Bring your own hand drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!

Saturday, March 22, 8 PM, \$12.00

MARTIN GROSSWENDT/JOHN THIBODEAU and BARRY BROWN

Martin Grosswendt has been a blues performer and teacher for more than three

decades. A multi-instrumentalist and singer, Martin is equally at home playing the old-time music of the Southern Appalachians or the Cajun and Creole music of Southwest Louisiana. He plays six- and twelve-string guitar, five-string banjo, mandolin and fiddle. In late 2004, Martin released his first solo recording in 24 years, "Call and Response," featuring solo performances of songs from the Golden Age of blues - the late 1920s and '30s. Amongst musicians and fans of country, blues and folk, Martin is sort of an underground legend. Don't miss this great split concert which also features the country blues, original and ragtime music of **John Thibodeau** and **Barry Brown**.

Music with a French Accent from New England and Canada

Saturday, March 29, 2-4 PM, \$15.00 - Fiddle and Step Dance Workshops

Saturday, March 29, 8 PM, \$18.00 - Concert

CHANTERELLE AND THE BEAUDOIN LEGACY

For many Rhode Islanders, French was the language their elders spoke and there was a fiddle that came down off the wall after supper for music with the family. Those fond memories will come alive this weekend as we present a great day of French-Canadian songs, fiddling and step dancing with two of New England's première performing groups, **Chanterelle** and **The Beaudoin Legacy**.

Saturday, March 29, 2-4 PM, Workshops, \$15.00 each

MUST call BRT at 401-725-9272 by Friday 10 AM to pre-register! Each class needs at least 5 students to be held.

Saturday events start with 50-minute workshops between 2-4 PM Franco music fans, singers and musicians can study:

2-2:50 p.m.: Advanced Fiddling in the French tradition with with George Wilson, Glenn Bombardier and Donna Hébert

3-3:50 p.m.: Beginner level French-Canadian stepdancing/foot tapping with siblings Glenn Bombardier, Elena Alexander and Nicolle Charbonneau

Saturday, March 29, 8 PM, \$18.00, Concert

The Saturday evening Soirée Concert will feature both **Chanterelle** and **The Beaudoin Legacy**. Using the stage and the floor of the theater, more than a dozen musicians and dancers will take the audience into the heart of French-Canadian joie de vivre at their old-time house party. "C'est le temps de s'amuser... It's time to have a good time!" Chanterelle are regulars at BRT and lead singer **Josée Vachon** is beloved of French-speaking audiences throughout the state and region. Josée will host the Saturday evening Soirée Concert. Fiddler and singer **Donna Hébert**, singer/guitarist **Liza Constable** and bass/accordion player **Alan Bradbury** will help Josée mix Québécois and Acadian songs and fiddle tunes with French jazz and Cajun two-steps. Distinctively beautiful voices, virtuoso French fiddling and trio harmonies are hallmarks of Chanterelle performances, taking the listener on an unforgettable French journey.

The Beaudoin Legacy, recently named to the National Endowment for the Arts' American Masterpiece Roster by the Vermont Arts Council, is carrying on the family traditions of song, fiddle music and step-dancing of Vermont's renowned Beaudoin family as daughters and grandchildren of fiddler Louis and singer Julie Beaudoin are performing again with musicians and friends who were nurtured and apprenticed by the family in the '70s and '80s. Onstage will be Louis Beaudoin's 86-year old widow, **Julie Beaudoin**, their daughters, singers **Carmen Beaudoin Bombardier** and **Nina Lacourse Beaudoin**, and Carmen's children, **Glenn Bombardier** (fiddle, stepdance), **Elena Alexander** (stepdance) and **Nicolle Charbonneau** (stepdance). Joining them are former Beaudoin fiddle apprentices **George Wilson** and **Donna Hébert**, with young RI singer and fiddler and composer **Daniel Boucher**, who is creating comic havoc with his French songs. **Liza Constable** (guitar and vocal) and **Selma Kaplan** (piano) round out the ensemble. Maryland folklorist **Andy Wallace**, who presented Louis Beaudoin and his family at National Folk Festivals, the Smithsonian and the Carter Inaugural in the 1970s, will also speak at the Soirée Concert. For more information, please visit: www.dhebert.com/Blackstone_08.html

APRIL

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **An exhibit of blues and jazz photographs by Michael Kurgansky** will be on display and for sale in the BRT Art Gallery through April 19. Kurgansky, born in Germany of Russian parents, immigrated to the United States at a young age and attended art schools in Pennsylvania. Though his personal vision takes him in many artistic directions, this exhibit combines his passions for music and photography. Says Kurgansky, "I strive to capture the emotions that musicians convey through their art... their feelings, their passion, their soul. In essence, I'm photographing creativity... of artists who are not only entertaining people but are investing their total selves into their music. Through my photographs, I also try to capture my own emotional response to the music and hopefully convey my passion for the music to my photographic audience." **From April 20 through May 24, pastel paintings by Cumberland artist Karole Nicholson** will be on exhibit and for sale in the BRT Art Gallery.
- **Blackstone River Theatre is proud to be working in partnership with Cumberland's Office of Children, Youth and Learning** in the presentation of several ongoing events in 2008. Their mission is to promote improved quality of life for Cumberland youth through programs, projects and advocacy. On Tuesdays through May we will offer a program for K-2 called "Mind Lab." This course is an innovative hands-on program that teaches kids HOW to think through carefully selected international games. Children will learn the fundamental of planning, problem solving, decision making, teamwork and communication. On Wednesdays during this same time period we will host an afterschool program on videomaking/ editing for high school age students.
- **Five levels of Irish step dance classes for adults and children**, including hard shoe for advanced beginner/intermediate levels, will continue through mid-April with instructor Terry Songini. **A new round of classes will begin again in mid-April through mid-June.** Visit the classes link for full information.
- **Four levels of fiddle classes for adults** with instructor Cathy Clasper-Torch will begin on April 8 and April 9. Visit the classes link for full information.

Saturday, April 5, 8 PM, \$12.00

ÁINE MINOGUE

As traditional Irish music continues to enjoy phenomenal success both here and in Ireland, **Áine Minogue** is an artist who has long explored its themes and who captures its very essence. Her singing reflects the lyricism and richness to be found in Irish music, mythology and poetry with a voice undeniably her own. Born in County Tipperary, Áine's family encouraged her to pursue a number of instruments but it was at age 12 that Áine discovered her true love - the harp - which she decided to pursue in lieu of the others. Áine takes this ancient art form, exploring its underpinnings but adding her own creativity to each piece. With a combination of harping, singing and storytelling with a touch of poetry, her concerts have an intimate "getting away from it all" feel. Tonight's show celebrates the release of her new CD, "Celtic Pilgrimage." Few events change one's life as deeply as a sacred pilgrimage - a journey that recharges the spirit, returns us to wholeness of mind and body, and brings clarity to our relationship with the divine. On *Celtic Pilgrimage*, Áine Minogue uses instrumental music and rich lyrical poetry to capture the full emotional spectrum of a pilgrimage, from the initial fears of unknown territory and the longing for home to the new perspective and the rediscovery of joy we gain when the journey is complete.

Friday, April 11, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show

HARVEY REID AND JOYCE ANDERSEN

Harvey Reid is a former national acoustic guitar and autoharp champion as well as an amazing multi-instrumentalist. He began performing and recording with fiddler/singer/songwriter **Joyce Andersen** in 2000, and in addition to pursuing solo careers they do a great deal of touring and have released four highly-acclaimed CDs together. Their newest, "The Song Train," is a landmark recording and new resource for anyone who wants to play more music. The four-CD project contains 56 two-chord folk, blues, gospel, rock, country, bluegrass and Celtic songs arranged and performed for basic acoustic guitar, but sung and played with Reid & Andersen's usual passion and expertise. An 80-page color hardback book also offers chords, charts, tips, history, photos, and all sorts of useful information. *Don't miss their first non-seasonal concert at BRT in many years where they'll be able to stretch out and perform all types of great music!*

Saturday, April 12, 8 PM, \$12 advance/\$15.00 day of show

BILL HARLEY AND KEITH MUNSLOW "IDs Required"

*Don't miss this special show designed for those of us who have managed to reach adulthood. (It sold out last year!) This special evening brings together two of New England's finest children's entertainers - Grammy winner **Bill Harley** and **Keith Munslow**, and lets them cut loose with a show aimed at us older folks who are still young at heart! They'll be joined tonight by **Johnny Cote** on drums and bassist **Bryan Rizzuto**. Keith and Bill have been musical compatriots for 15 years, writing, performing and recording together. Yeah, sure, they both are known for work with kids and families, but those in the know recognize Munslow as a talented blues pianist and bandleader (Superchief Trio), and Grammy winner Bill Harley as an insightful commentator on the cultural scene and songwriter of the first order. Blues, folk and running inane commentary on life itself make for a show you won't see anywhere else... *Don't miss it!**

Sunday, April 13, 7 PM, \$12.00

RAQUY AND THE CAVEMEN - Concert/dance

(Also afternoon workshops in drumming and dance...see below for details.)

Raquy Danziger is one of America's most popular performers, teachers and composers of Middle Eastern drumming. Audiences worldwide are not only surprised by this young woman from America, but captivated by her virtuosity, profound musicality and the passion she brings to performances. Her varied repertoire includes traditional Middle Eastern music as well as her own compositions. In 2005, Raquy was invited by Egypt's most famous drummer, Saiid El Artist, to perform as a soloist with his troupe. Raquy first discovered hand drumming during her travels in India where she immersed herself in the study of Indian rhythmic cycles. Later, in Israel, Raquy was drawn to the dumbek and the groove of Middle Eastern music. She, along with **Liron Peled**, then formed Raquy and the Cavemen, a group in which she also plays the Iranian kemenche, a rare and exotic bowed instrument. Raquy's infectious enthusiasm for Middle Eastern music has made her a popular teacher of Middle Eastern drumming, instigating a wave of "Dumbek Fever" across America. To learn more about Raquy visit: <http://www.raquy.com> For this evening concert/dance, Raquy and the Cavemen will be joined by the tribal dance duo **Kassar**. Kassar - Melanie Wood and Karin Hein-Parks, began their history together as a collaboration for a New Jersey Renaissance Kingdom performance. From there, the duo Kassar was born. They have been dancing together as Kassar for the past eight years, all the while studying with numerous tribal dance instructors. Between them, they also bring a background rich in formal ballet training, West African dance, tango fusion and Indian dance technique. This has culminated in the development of their own unique, highly-acclaimed style of tribal bellydance. To learn more about Kassar, please visit: <http://www.kassartribal.com>

SUNDAY AFTERNOON DRUM AND DANCE WORKSHOPS

1-3 PM, \$30.00: Raquy will teach a dumbek workshop geared towards more experienced dumbek players.

4-6:00 PM, \$35.00: Kassar will teach a workshop of their signature East Coast Tribal Style Belly Dance. Join Kassar for a fast-paced high energy class learning combinations that can be incorporated into improvisation or choreography. In this workshop you learn several of Kassar's unique and intricate signature combinations. Every combination will be outlined and drilled, then combined to form the final choreography. This challenging workshop is open to belly dancers of all levels. For more info on Kassar please visit <http://www.kassartribal.com>

Workshop registration and ticket purchase is an easy two-step process. (A person is not registered or guaranteed a ticket until their check is received.) The workshops are filling fast and this will sell out so please act soon!

1. Email Russ at russell@riverfolk.org with your name, phone number and email address. Indicate which workshop(s) you will be taking and/or number of hafla tickets needed.
2. Then, send a check or money order payable to: The Blackstone River Theatre and mail to: Blackstone River Theatre, 549 Broad Street, Cumberland, RI 02864

Thursday, April 17, 7-10 PM, \$5.00

BRT DRUM AND DANCE CIRCLE

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 20-35 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. Bring your own hand

drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!

Friday, April 18, 8 PM, \$12.00

LISSA SCHNECKENBURGER - CD RELEASE!

Lissa will be joined tonight by guitarist **Keith Murphy** and accordionist **Jeremiah McLane**, both of Nightingale, and double bassist **Corey DiMario**. New England fiddler and folk singer **Lissa Schneckenburger** grew up in Maine as an active member of the folk music community. She has continued to explore music throughout her life, leading to her graduation from The New England Conservatory of Music in Boston in 2001. While embracing diverse musical influences, she still stays true to her New England roots and has been performing around the US and internationally for a growing audience of enthusiastic listeners. She has recorded seven CDs, (four solo and three with various groups). Her latest project is a pair of CDs dedicated to reintroducing some wonderful but largely forgotten songs and tunes from New England that she uncovered through archival research at the University of Maine and elsewhere. "Song," to be released tonight in Rhode Island, contains ten timeless ballads that go back as far as the 18th century that she set to carefully crafted modern arrangements, while "Dance," scheduled for 2009, will feature fiddle tunes. "There is currently a lot of focus on traditional American music from the South," she explains, "and many bands are exploring and recording that repertoire, but no one is getting to hear the amazing repertoire of traditional music from the North. This is my first attempt at getting some of that music out there for people to enjoy."

Saturday, April 19, 1 PM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults

KEITH MICHAEL JOHNSON'S "Science Isn't Always Pretty"

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union

Ideal for families with children ages K-5th grade. Why? How? That's what science is all about! Exploration. Observation. Curiosity. Investigation. The world isn't flat, it just looks that way. Fire isn't magic, but it took a scientist to prove otherwise. Sir Isaac Newton would have been shocked by Silly Putty. In "Science Isn't Always Pretty," Keith Michael Johnson shares his enthusiasm for the beauty that can be found in the strangest of places. Among other demonstrations, you will meet the oddball scientist Antoine Lavoisier at the moment of his greatest achievement. A lucky assistant will help dissect an owl pellet (scat) accompanied by Keith's unforgettable food chain narration. He will break the sound barrier (safely) with a machine that travels over 700 miles per hour. And then he'll explain why it happened in a way even the most junior audience member can appreciate. Finally, Keith will brew up a batch of green non-Newtonian fluid, expound on its unique physical properties and reveal how even the smartest scientist can sometimes get it wrong. Slime flies in this 50 minute adventure as Keith Michael Johnson challenges the audience with outrageous questions and amuses them with stunning demonstrations. Johnson is a graduate of Roger Williams University and Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Clown College- where he fine tuned his comedy skills and earned a BFA (Bachelor of Fun Arts). *Lots of fun and you just may learn something too!*

Saturday, April 19, 8 PM, \$15.00

DUKE ROBILLARD'S SWING GUITAR EXTRAVAGANZA

WITH SPECIAL GUEST CHRIS FLORY

Duke Robillard is one of this era's most acclaimed guitar players, having won four W.C. Handy Awards as "Blues Guitarist of the Year," and receiving a Grammy Award nomination for his 2006 release, "Guitar Groove-A-Rama." In 2007, Duke received a Rhode Island Pell Award for Excellence in the Arts (named in honor of Senator Claiborne Pell), which recognizes artistic excellence in R.I. and on the national level. 2007 also saw the release of a new double CD, "World Full of Blues." Not surprisingly, Duke has been called "one of the great players" by the legendary B.B. King. Tonight's concert is going to be a special classic jazz guitar show featuring special guest Chris Flory from NYC. Chris, originally from Providence, is a guitarist who made his name playing with Scott Hamilton in the '70s and then went on to be Benny Goodman's guitarist in his last great quartet. The concert will consist of Duke opening with **Mark Teixeira** and **Marty Ballou** who will then be joined by Providence guitarist **Paul Kolesnikow**. For the second set, Chris Flory will perform with Marty and Mark with Duke joining in for a few tunes with Paul joining in for a finale. *Don't miss this special guitar show!*

Sunday, April 20, 5:00-8:30 PM \$8.00 adults/\$3.00 children

IRISH CEILI AND SET DANCE

Sponsored by Open MRI of New England

The Broad Street Ceili Band plays a variety of traditional Irish dance music while mixing in occasional waltzes. **Laura Travis** and **Barry and Pat Callahan** will be on hand from 5:00-5:30 p.m. to teach total beginners and those new to the dance tradition. From 5:30-8:30 p.m., Irish set dances will alternate with ceili dances and waltzes for the rest of the evening. The Broad Street Ceili Band features **Bob Drouin** on fiddle, **Ron Lister** on concertina, **Chuck Papini** on tenor banjo, **Josh Kane** on flute, **Marianne Kane** on bodhran and newest member **Kevin O'Brien** on piano. The emphasis is on fun... learn by doing! No partners are necessary. Try a dance or simply come down to listen to some great music!

Friday, April 25, 8 PM, \$12.00

BROOKS WILLIAMS - CD release!

With an opening set by Emily Elbert

If you're a fan of great guitar music, DO NOT miss this concert! **Brooks Williams** is a stunningly soulful and blues-soaked guitarist. His music includes swingin' slide and rootsy flatpicking and manifests itself in a hybrid of funky chords, walking bass lines, and fiery leads. His unique combination of traditional and original music inspired *Dirty Linen* magazine to call Brooks Williams one of "America's musical treasures." His guitar skills also won him a place on the *Top 100 Acoustic Guitarists* list, in company with the likes of Michael Hedges, Chet Atkins, Leo Kottke and David Bromberg..Over the years, Williams has recorded 17 CDs for labels like Green Linnet Records, Signature Sounds, Red Guitar Blue Music and Solid Air Records. His new CD, "*The Time I Spend With You*," is a high-energy, up-beat recording of rootsy originals, blues classics, and fingerpicked instrumentals (including Williams' unique arrangement of the classic *Beaumont Rag*). It was recorded simply and directly at Signature Sounds with special guests like Dave Mattacks, Richard Gates, Karen Tweed, Dave Dick, and Gail Wade. Brooks is as diverse and versatile a musician as you are likely to encounter; indeed, it is pleasantly difficult to pin him down. He's a guitarist, a songwriter, and an interpreter and quite simply one of the most entertaining and engaging performers on the circuit today.

Saturday, April 26, 8 PM, \$12.00

THE PEGHEADS

This high-energy ensemble, featuring **Mike Kropp** on banjo, **Martin Grosswendt** on guitar and vocals, **Jeff Horton** on bass and vocals, **Karl Dennis** on fiddle and **Ben Pearce** on mandolin has been called a "Rhode Island bluegrass supergroup." The Pegheads draw from a wide repertoire of bluegrass standards, obscure mountain tunes, laments and traditional songs, and present them all with the stunning instrumental skill and tight harmonies. Mike Kropp is one of the country's premier three-finger-style banjoists. A member of Northern Lights for 17 years, Mike is fluent in all styles of five-string banjo playing, including traditional Scruggs picking and modern newgrass, as well as folk, old time and classical. Martin Grosswendt has been a presence on the folk and traditional music scene for three decades. A musician's musician and singer, he plays guitar, fiddle, bass and dobro. In recent years he has pursued his obsession with Cajun and old time music as the bassist with Magnolia. His 2005 solo release, "Call and Response," is filled with reasons Martin brings blues to bluegrass. Jeff Horton has been playing and singing bluegrass for almost 30 years. A founding member of the Neon Valley Boys, Rhode Island's premiere bluegrass band, Jeff played with Northern Lights for six years, touring nationally and recording three CDs. Fiddler Karl Dennis has long been a fixture in Rhode Island folk and bluegrass circles. Also a founding member of the Neon Valley Boys, he has performed with a number of other bands through the years including The Lost Melody Ramblers. Ben Pearce makes his musical magic on an F-5 mandolin. *A great evening of bluegrass!*

MAY

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **From April 20 through May 24, pastel paintings by Cumberland artist Karole Nicholson** will be on exhibit and for sale in the BRT Art Gallery. This exhibit includes floral, landscapes and still life subjects, all rendered in hard and soft pastels. Many of the landscapes in this series depict area scenes as well as coastal New England.
- **Blackstone River Theatre is proud to be working in partnership with**

Cumberland's Office of Children, Youth and Learning in the presentation of several ongoing events in 2008. Their mission is to promote improved quality of life for Cumberland youth through programs, projects and advocacy. On Tuesdays through May we will offer a program for K-2 called "Mind Lab." This course is an innovative hands-on program that teaches kids HOW to think through carefully selected international games. Children will learn the fundamental of planning, problem solving, decision making, teamwork and communication. On Wednesdays during this same time period we will host an afterschool program on videomaking/ editing for high school age students. Additionally, BRT is hosting literacy classes for children Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. through early June.

- **Five levels of Irish step dance classes for adults and children**, including hard shoe for advanced beginner/intermediate levels, will continue through early June with instructor Terry Songini. Visit the classes link for full information.
- **Four levels of fiddle classes for adults** with instructor Cathy Clasper-Torch will continue through May. Visit the classes link for full information.

Friday, May 2, 8 PM, \$15.00

The Barra MacNeils

2007 marked 20 years in the recording and touring career of **The Barra MacNeils**. To celebrate this, the group released a special 20th Anniversary CD which covers the span of their entire career. As a group, the six MacNeil siblings are widely regarded as one of the greatest live acts in the Celtic world. Hailing from Sydney Mines, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, the family group is deeply rooted in Celtic music, culture and history. Their numerous critically acclaimed recordings have included their own original songs as well as tried and true standards, both instrumental and vocal. A Barra MacNeils live concert experience brings so much more to the stage than most live acts ever can. Multiple lead vocalists, beautiful sibling harmonies, top drawer instrumental prowess on a wide variety of acoustic, stringed, percussion and wind instruments, dancing, storytelling, Gaelic songs and a journey through an ancient culture. Family entertainment at its highest level. Steeped in Cape Breton tradition with strong Celtic roots and musical artistry, this diverse and talented family group continues to wow audiences around the world with their captivating vocals, harmonies and extraordinary musicianship. Canada's Celtic ambassadors, the Barra MacNeils continue to perform to sold out audiences throughout Canada, the United States, the Caribbean and the United Kingdom. From headlining major festivals, concerts, and special guest appearances they have set the course with a solid foundation for success.

This concert is postponed to a future date.

Friday, May 9, 8 PM, \$10.00

The Stefan Couture Trio

Within the first seconds of listening to the music of **Stefan Couture**, audiences find themselves submerged in a mixture of American roots and acoustic driven soul along with honest and passionate lyrics. It's been six years since this North Smithfield released his debut solo CD, "Great Big Somewhere." He subsequently formed The Campfire Orchestra and toured far and wide behind the group's CD, "Ghost In The Rearview" and the band became known for their high-energy jazz/funk/blues/jam band sound. During this time, Stefan was voted "Best Male Vocalist" in the 2005 Providence Phoenix Best Music Poll and they played to enthusiastic crowds all over the East Coast. Tonight's show will see Stefan continue his return to his acoustic folk roots, performing new music and old favorites accompanied by **Chris Montecalvo** on drums and percussion and **Tim Couture** on bass.

Saturday, May 10, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show

Ken Lyon and Acoustic Tombstone

Local legend **Ken Lyon** is known as the "godfather of Rhode Island blues." This Lyon Roar Production will be a special "unplugged" performance by Ken Lyon and Tombstone featuring original Tombstone members **Mark Taber** and **Brenda Mosher Bennett** joined by drummer **D.C. Culp**, guitarist **Gary "Guitar" Gramolini**, bassist **Justin Lyon**, guitarists **Rick Bellaire** and **Josh Lyon** and singers **Lori Lacaille Martin** and **Adrian West**. Ken Lyon's musical history is legendary with recordings for Epic, Decca and many more. Through over 44 years of performance, Lyon has recorded 11 singles and 8 albums. Authentic blues requires real authority and life experience and Ken has certainly earned that reputation. Scott Freeman, senior editor

at Atlanta Monthly Magazine and author of "Midnight Riders: The Story of The Allman Brothers Band," wrote that Ken Lyon "possesses Rhode Island's most authentic blues voice - whiskey-tinged, and as rich as the black Mississippi mud."

Thursday, May 15, 8 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show

David Francey with Craig Werth

David Francey, accompanied tonight by guitarist **Craig Werth**, is an amazing storyteller who establishes a personal rapport with his audience in minutes. His wry humor and astute observations combined with his openhearted singing style have earned him a loyal following across Canada and now into the U.S. Francey seemed to come out of nowhere when he released his debut "Torn Screen Door" in 1999. "Far End of Summer" picked up where "Torn Screen Door" left off and received a 2002 Juno Award in the Best Roots and Traditional Album solo category. His third acclaimed CD, "Skating Rink," was the 2004 Juno winner and was followed by "The Waking Hour" which was nominated for a 2005 Juno award. On December 1, 2007, Francey received a Canadian Folk Music Award for Best Singer - Contemporary and he was also nominated for Best Album and Best Songwriter. His new CD, "Right of Passage," has been nominated for a JUNO as well and David was also voted one of WUMB's top 100 Artists of the past 25 years! "Right of Passage" is Francey's much anticipated, all original material CD. "The songs on this album address the different paths my life has taken, both good and bad. Some were written from experience gained aboard an Algoma Central ore carrier. Some were written about people I met out on the road or the places I ended up. Some are memories recalled and described. All deal with transitional moments in life, mileposts on the hopefully long march where we all earn our 'right' of passage." Francey was born in 1954 in Ayrshire, Scotland where he got his first taste of the working life as a paperboy. David learned to read at an early age, and by age 10, was devouring the newspapers he delivered, establishing a life long interest in politics and world events while developing the social conscience that forms the backdrop of his songs. At age 12 he and his family immigrated to Toronto. David's attachment to Canada grew with his travels. He hitched across the country three times and then thumbed his way to the Yukon. This attachment surfaces in his songs of rail lines, farms and the St. Lawrence Seaway. His understanding of the people grew as he worked in Toronto train yards, the Yukon bush and as a carpenter in the Eastern Townships.

Saturday, May 17, 1 PM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults

Aubrey Atwater - Traditional Music for Children

Sponsored by Navigant Credit Union

Ideal for families with children ages 6-and-up. **Aubrey Atwater**, half of the acclaimed folk duo Atwater-Donnelly, presents a captivating program of original and traditional folk music for children performed on the guitar, Appalachian mountain dulcimer, Irish tin whistle, and old-time banjo. Drawing her repertoire from original songs, as well as those collected in New England, Ireland, Appalachia and beyond, Aubrey emphasizes participation as she jokes and interacts throughout the show encouraging folks to sing, dance, clap, use body movements, and even play instruments when possible. This fun-filled show answers questions such as What is folk music? What did people do for entertainment before electricity? and How was folk music used in daily life and work?

Saturday, May 17, 8 PM, \$12.00

Matt and Shannon Heaton

Guitarist/singer **Matt Heaton** and Irish flute player/singer **Shannon Heaton** have been making music together since their first meeting in 1992. Together, they built up their traditional Irish music skills on Irish flute and guitar in the Chicago sessions. When they began bringing in singing, they focused on their favorite aspects of both Irish and American traditions, ending up with new songs that sound traditional, alongside centuries-old ballads with fresh new melodies. For years, the two worked as active side players for several major Celtic acts including Robbie O'Connell, Aoife Clancy, Boys of the Lough, Emily Smith and Halali. During a three-year "sabbatical" in Boulder, CO, Matt and Shannon formed the band Siucra with Colorado singer Beth Leachman and later, Vermont fiddler Sam Amidon, putting out three acclaimed recordings. Scott Alarik of *The Boston Globe* calls "Blue Skies Above," the Heatons' 2006 release, "masterful and inventive, their arrangements city-smart and spacious." This, their second duo CD, contained more singing and tackled a wide range of subjects: lovers lost at sea, a conversation with death, the summer harvest in Nebraska, a twentieth century disaster, and learning to ride a bicycle. Matt and Shannon make traditional music relevant to American audiences. They embrace the solid Irish roots in their music, play the heck out of their instruments, and aren't afraid

to step out and sing from their American musical and social experiences. "We're out to get everything we can out of two musicians. The more we put into it, the more we get out of it - and so, we think, do our audiences."

Sunday, May 18, 5:00-8:30 PM, \$8.00 adults/\$3.00 kids
Irish Ceili and Set Dance with The Broad Street Ceili Band
Sponsored by Open MRI of New England

The Broad Street Ceili Band plays a variety of traditional Irish dance music while mixing in occasional waltzes. **Laura Travis** and **Barry and Pat Callahan** will be on hand from 5:00-5:30 p.m. to teach total beginners and those new to the dance tradition. From 5:30-8:30 p.m., Irish set dances will alternate with ceili dances and waltzes for the rest of the evening. The Broad Street Ceili Band features **Bob Drouin** on fiddle, **Ron Lister** on concertina, **Chuck Papini** on tenor banjo, **Josh Kane** on flute, **Marianne Kane** on bodhran and newest member **Kevin O'Brien** on piano. The emphasis is on fun... learn by doing! No partners are necessary. Try a dance or simply come down to listen to some great music!

Thursday, May 22, 7-10 PM, \$5.00
BRT DRUM AND DANCE CIRCLE

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 20-35 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. Bring your own hand drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!

Saturday, May 31, 8:30 AM-3:30 PM
CUMBERLAND SUMMER CHESSFEST
Sponsored by the Cumberland Office of Children Youth and Learning
E-mail: RhodeIslandChess@yahoo.com

JUNE

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- Blackstone River Theatre will be taking June through August off from full-time concert and dance programming to continue renovations on the building and focus on July's Blackstone River Theatre Celtic Festival. There WILL be a few special events added as well as several Heritage Arts Studio offerings including Celtic stonecarving and blues guitar classes.

Saturday, June 21 AND Sunday, June 22, 9:30 AM-3:30 PM
Celtic Relief Stonecarving in Limestone for Beginners Class

JULY

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- You don't HAVE to travel far for a great music festival this summer! Please come out and support the 2nd Annual **Blackstone River Theatre Celtic Festival** sponsored by the Town of Cumberland to be held at Diamond Hill Park, Cumberland, RI on July 19, 2008, from 11 AM to 7 PM (rain date is July 20.) Last year's first-ever festival saw over 2,000 people attend. We will be adding a stage this year and you'll be able to catch many of your favorite Celtic performers on *five* stages including **Robbie O'Connell, Aoife Clancy & George Keith, Paddy Keenan, Pendragon, Bua, The Hanneke Cassel Trio, The Atwater-Donnelly Trio, The Emerald Rae Trio, Solas An Lae, Trouz Bras, the Publicans, the Broad Street Ceili Band and many more including a full stage of children's entertainment!** Please check back often for more information. There will also be an after-festival music session Saturday night at Blackstone River Theatre from 8:30-11:30 PM. **We are still seeking**

craft and food vendors, program advertisers and festival volunteers; if interested call 401-725-9272 or email russell@riverfolk.org.

AUGUST

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

Blackstone River Theatre will be taking August off from full-time concert and dance programming to continue renovations on the building.

SEPTEMBER

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **THANK YOU! Blackstone River Theatre had our best attended 5-month period ever with over 4,100 audience members attending events January-May 2008. September marks the 8-year anniversary of the reopening of Blackstone River Theatre** after over four years and two months of volunteer renovation efforts from July, 1996 to September, 2000. *Since reopening, BRT has presented 775 events in front of more than 51,000 audience members!*
- **BRT is looking for 4-6 new volunteers for the Fall 2008 season** (and beyond we hope!) If you are interested, please email volunteer@riverfolk.org. We will be holding a new BRT Volunteer orientation session in September so please let us know if you are interested so we can be in touch!
- **There will be an exhibit of acrylic paintings by Margo Lemieux in BRT's Art Gallery** beginning September 14 and running through October 12.
- **Check the Classes link for details about another round of 8-week beginner, advanced beginner and intermediate level Irish step dance classes for adults and children** starting in late September with Terry Songini! *There will be a workshop on Sept. 27.*
- **Check the Classes link for details about another round of 6-week beginner, continuing beginner, and advanced beginner fiddle classes** starting in mid-September on Tuesdays and Wednesdays! All classes are taught by Cathy Clasper Torch.

Sunday, September 14, 7:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show JEZ LOWE AND THE BAD PENNIES

We are thrilled to welcome back one of BRT's favorite acts to kick off our Fall season! Jez Lowe and The Bad Pennies have been playing their songs and music of Northern England for 15 years around the folk festivals, clubs and concert stages of the world. "Acoustic simplicity coupled with electric vitality" was how they were described in their early days, and their following has continued to increase every year. **Jez Lowe** is a remarkable songwriter using wit, sensitivity and keen perception to paint colorful portraits of ordinary people with ordinary lives who may be specific to Northeast England, but through Jez's eyes and verse become universal characters. He's joined by the Bad Pennies - **Kate Bramley** on fiddle and whistle, new member **David de la Hays** on bass, and **Andy May** on Northumbrian smallpipes, Irish Uilleann Pipes and whistles. Jez hails from Northeast England, an area rich in working-class values, with a wealth of songs and music unique to that windswept corner of the British Isles. Born to a coal mining family with Irish roots, Lowe was raised and still lives in an area close to the English/ Scottish border where coal mining was the dominant occupation. This was to be the substance from which he would create a body of work that would make him one of the most popular and enduring of the many singer songwriters to emerge from Britain in the last 25 years. His songs have been covered by Fairport Convention, The Tanahill Weavers, The Dubliners, Cherish the Ladies, and a host of other acts. *Most recently, Jez Lowe was nominated for the 2008 BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards as 'Folksinger of the Year' and he was an Indie Acoustic Project USA "Album of the Year" finalist in 2008 for his solo CD, "Jack Common's Anthem."* *Do not miss one of folk music's best songwriters!*

Thursday, September 18, 7:00-9:00 PM, \$5.00

BRT DRUM AND DANCE CIRCLE

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 15-30 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. *Bring your own hand drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!*

SOLD OUT AS OF FRIDAY SEPT. 19, 5PM!

Celebrating Blackstone River Theatre's 8-year anniversary

Saturday, September 20, 8:00 PM, \$15.00

PENDRAGON - 25th Anniversary Concert and CD release!

Advance ticket purchase strongly recommended

This evening sees two anniversaries celebrated at the same time! While BRT celebrates its 8th anniversary since reopening in 2000, Pendragon will also celebrate 25 years of making music together. New England has long had a rich tradition of Celtic-inspired music. **Celebrating their 25th anniversary tonight, Pendragon** has embraced that tradition and created a timeless sound of its own, performing roots music with an unmistakable contemporary edge. *The band will also release their first CD in three years, "Still Standing,"* on Blackstone River Theatre's RiverFolk Productions label. 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. 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 2008, 2007, 2006 and 2005 MOTIF Magazine Music Poll. They have also been voted Best Local Folk Act of the Year in the Providence Phoenix' Best Music Poll eight times. While drawing on the ethnic music of the Blackstone River Valley, Pendragon fashions the music of tradition into the music of tomorrow performing their original songs and dance tunes on bouzouki, concertina, banjo, guitar, whistle, fiddle, flute and percussion. Pendragon is dynamic step dancer and percussionist **Kevin Doyle, Bob Drouin** on fiddle, bouzouki and tenor banjo; **Russell Gusetti** on guitar and concertina; **Josh Kane** on flute and whistles; and **Mary Lee Partington** on vocals.

Sunday, September 21, 7:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show

FINDLAY NAPIER & THE BAR ROOM MOUNTAINEERS

The Bar Room Mountaineers are a song-focused band taking Scottish traditional material and presenting it in a suave, sophisticated light. If this band were a cocktail they would be a Manhattan using the finest Scottish single malt... *think Burns with beats!* Vocalist and guitarist **Findlay Napier** is best known for his work with the award-winning Celtic group Back of the Moon and more recently for Queen Anne's Revenge, his highly-acclaimed song-writing project with Nick Turner. The Bar Room Mountaineers, which also features fellow Back of the Moon member **Gillian Frame** on fiddle and vocals, **Douglas Miller** on keyboard and vocals, and **Paul Jennings** (former Old Blind Dogs) on percussion and vocals, are taking their brand of acoustic music to the world touring behind their new CD, "Out All Night." Playing songs written by Napier as well as traditional Scottish material, The Bar Room Mountaineers have developed a rich, rootsy, progressive sound, drawing influence from genres such as blues, Americana and country but with a sound remaining uniquely Scottish... *Don't miss their New England debut!*

Saturday, September 27, 9 AM - NOON

Irish Step Dance Workshops for Adults and children

9-9:45 AM: children ages 6 to 11

10-10:45 AM: continuing beginners AND advanced beginners, ages 12+

11-11:50 AM: Intermediate dancers

Saturday, September 27, 1:00 PM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults

KEITH MUNSLOW

Ideal for families with children ages 5-13, children's performer **Keith Munslow** returns with a 45-minute show of original songs, way-cool stories, tongue-tangling poems and quick-as-a-wink cartoons. Keith's exciting piano playing, skillful cartoon drawing, and quick wit combine for an upbeat, positive experience with plenty of chances for audience participation. Multi-talented performer Keith Munslow has entertained thousands of children at shows throughout New England and beyond for 16 years. Keith can often be seen in a hilarious duo show with storyteller Bill Harley, and also with his band, Superchief Trio.

**Saturday, September 27, 8-11:00 PM, \$8.00/\$5.00 seniors & children
CONTRA DANCE with GET REEL!**

Traditional Southern Music for Contra Dancing, with some spice! **Get Reel!** features **Howie Bursen** on Banjo, **Martin Grosswendt** on Fiddle, **Marie Malchodi** on Guitar, and **Deck Nieforth** on Harmonica, Spoons, and Feet. Contra Dancing is the oldest form of American traditional social dancing, beginning in colonial times and still going strong after 250 years. Contra dancing is informal, friendly and good aerobic exercise. It's lots of fun and easy to learn. There will be a beginner workshop at 7:30 p.m. and all dances will be taught by Master Caller **Linda Leslie**. All are welcome - beginners and experienced dancers; singles, couples and families; old friends and new... Wear cool, comfortable clothing and flat, soft-soled shoes. Refreshments will be available. Get ready to tap your toes, stomp your feet, twirl your skirt, and smile. *GET REEL!* has been playing old time tunes for contra dancing for over a decade.... don't miss the fun!

OCTOBER

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **The exhibit of acrylic paintings by Margo Lemieux** is in BRT's Art Gallery through October 12. **There will be a collage exhibit, "Diane and George in Wonderland," featuring works by Diane Dellicarpini and George Sargent** in BRT's Art Gallery beginning October 18 and running through November 16. There will be a meet-the-artists reception on Sunday, Oct. 26 from 4-6 p.m.
- Check the Classes link for details about another round of **8-week beginner, advanced beginner and intermediate level Irish step dance classes for adults and children starting October 4 and October 7** with Terry Songini!
- Check the Classes link for details about **5-week continuing beginner, advanced beginner and intermediate fiddle classes** with Cathy Clasper-Torch beginning in late-October.

**Saturday, October 4, 8:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show
DAVID MALLET**

We are pleased to welcome back one of America's finest songwriters. **David Mallett** hails from a small town in northern Maine, and in a career that spans four decades, his music has traveled to all corners of the world. His songs have been recorded by more than 150 artists, including Pete Seeger, Alison Krauss, John Denver, and Emmylou Harris and his "Garden Song" has become an American folk classic. Mallett has performed in folk clubs across America and Europe in addition to major venues such as Barns of Wolf Trap, the Newport Folk Festival, and "Prairie Home Companion." The readers of FOLKWAX voted him 2003 Artist of the Year and "Artist in Me" 2003 Album of the Year. He has recorded 14 albums, including "The Fable True" (2007), based on Thoreau's last expedition in 1857, a spoken word CD with accompanying music. The songs Mallett writes and sings are filled with passion, evocative imagery, and a sense of the inevitable passage of time. The loss of American towns and rural landscapes is the subject of many of his songs, as are the issues of wilderness preservation and the struggle of the common man. "Midnight on the Water" is Mallett's most recent music CD. Recorded live at a series of shows along the Maine coast in the summer of 2005, it features 17 of the most memorable songs.

**Friday, October 10, 8:00 PM, \$15.00 advance/\$18.00 day of show
FRIGG - Nordic Folk Music: The next generation**

Acoustic Nordic folk music is advanced by the next generation through **Frigg** (the Norse goddess of love and fertility), a new group rich with folk heritage from Finland and Norway. Combining elements of their respective folk traditions with touches of American Appalachian and country & western music, they create an entirely new sound of Finnish/Norwegian fiddle music which feels simultaneously innovative yet familiar. The seven-piece band contains three young Järveläs, two sons and a daughter of the most famous fiddle family in Finland, whose fathers and uncles founded JPP, and two Larsen brothers, members of a comparable Norwegian Hardanger fiddle clan. The traditional sounds are then supercharged with innovative arrangements, and combined with mandola, cittern, double bass, guitar and dobro.

This young band has been dazzling festival audiences in Scandinavia and the US, creating a phenomenal buzz among listeners and fellow musicians. Playing both ordinary and Hardanger fiddle in Frigg are brothers **Gjermund** and **Einar Olav Larsen**. There are also three members of the Järveläs family's fourth generation of famous fiddlers: **Alina Järveläs**, **Esko Järveläs** and **Antti Järveläs**. Their grandfather Johannes Järvelä and great-grandfather Antti Järvelä were both legendary master players. *Don't miss the Rhode Island debut of this exciting young band!*

Saturday, October 11, 8:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show

JAYME STONE AND MANSA SISSOKO

Africa to Appalachia: The Routes of the Banjo

Jayne Stone may be unfamiliar to many, but he has spent considerable time mastering the art of the 5-string banjo. A student of many - Tony Trischka and Béla Fleck are but two who have spent time guiding Jayme in the ways of modern banjo - Stone has released two previous albums that display his propensity for complex arrangements and jazzy fare. *In early 2008, Stone was awarded a Juno - the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy Award - for Instrumental Album of the Year.* The Ontario native's third CD is even more organic in nature as it is closely tied to the history of the banjo and the African instruments from which it developed. Stone spent time last year in Mali exploring the roots of the 5-string banjo. The result of the relationships forged overseas is *Africa to Appalachia*, a dynamic new project that successfully blends traditional African sounds - kora, percussion, ngoni, and vocals - with the fiddles and banjos of the Appalachian region of the southern U.S. While on his musical mecca to Africa, Stone rarely let locals know of his accolades and recording career in North America as he went to immerse himself in the high-spirited soundscapes, the daily life and the lore of Africa. On *Africa to Appalachia*, his collaborative project with **Mansa Sissoko**, a griot singer and master player of the kora (a 21-string African harp), Stone and Sissoko blur the lines of time and location. Africa and America come closer together with the banjo being the bridge. *Africa to Appalachia* serves as a beautiful introduction to world music while providing those already attracted to African music a new twist, that being the unobtrusive and natural incorporation of the fiddle and banjo into the blend. For those who love the banjo, the album provides an insight to where the banjo has been, and where it might again go within parameters that have not frequently been explored.

Thursday, October 16, 7:00-9:00 PM, \$5.00

BRT DRUM AND DANCE CIRCLE

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 15-30 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. *Bring your own hand drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!*

Saturday, October 18, 1:00 PM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults

MARVELOUS MARVIN - Bugging Out

Ideal for families with children ages 5-13, BRT favorite **Marvelous Marvin** returns with his new 45-minute show "Bugging Out" ...all about bugs, insects and outdoor exploration. Using Marvin's unique rhyming text, you'll learn about some bug habits that you may not believe (or even want to know!) Marvin has written rhyming poems about dragonflies, ladybugs, worms and a host of other crawly, creepy creatures. Mixing in circus arts, magic tricks and music, **Marvelous Marvin** has constructed this show to look like a large book, revealing engaging illustrations inside drawn by artist, Paul Olson with photographs by Brian Jones. *Fun and educational for the entire family!*

Saturday, October 18, 8-11:00 PM, \$8.00

IRISH SET DANCE with THE BROAD STREET CEILI BAND

The Broad Street Ceili Band plays a variety of traditional Irish dance music while mixing in occasional waltzes. **Barry and Pat Callahan** will be on hand to help those new to the set dance tradition. From 8:00-11:00 p.m., Irish set dances will run continuously for the evening. **The Broad Street Ceili Band** is led by **Bob Drouin** on fiddle and features **Chuck Papini** on tenor banjo, **Josh Kane** on flute, **Marianne Kane** on bodhran and **Kevin O'Brien** on piano. The emphasis is on fun... No partners are necessary. Try a dance or simply come down to listen to some great music!

Sunday, October 19, 2:00 PM, \$12.00

THE DIXIE DIEHARDS JAZZ BAND

Join the Dixie Diehards Jazz Band for a raucus, 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 **Jim Kelleher** on trombone, **Santo Pullara** on clarinet; **Bill Kiesewetter** on sax, **Alan Shapiro** on trumpet; **Steve Shaw** on tuba; **Dolly Fruzzetti** on piano; **Dale Ellenberg** on drums; **Chris Wadsworth** on banjo, and **Rick Foster** on vocals/cornet. *Don't miss a rare BRT matinee show sure to be fun for all ages!*

Friday, October 24, 8:00 PM, \$15.00 advance/\$20.00 day of show
THE HIGHWAYMEN

Advance ticket purchase strongly recommended!

We are proud to welcome back the original Highwaymen, one of the seminal folk groups of the '60s, who first rejoined in 2004 to play the classic tunes of the '60s revival and their interpretations of popular music since then. Unlike some folk revival groups, The Highwaymen who play today are all the original members of the group that recorded and performed in the 1960s (**Steve Butts, Dave Fisher, Steve Trott and Bob Burnett**. Chan Daniels passed in 1974; their friend **Johann Helton** now plays bass). The group appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show, the Johnny Carson Show, and released 8 albums. In 1961, their first single, "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," shot to the top of the charts and sold over 3 million copies, followed by "Cotton Fields," which sold over one million. They also contributed a couple of future standards to the folk repertory ("Big Rock Candy Mountain," "All My Trials") and played a key role in the unearthing of a major, overlooked Leadbelly song, which later became a major addition to the repertoires of both Creedence Clearwater Revival and the Beach Boys, and also made the first American recordings of important songs by Buffy St. Marie and Ewan McColl. Recent appearances include the PBS special "This Land Is Your Land," and at Milwaukee's Irish Fest as the only not-strictly-Irish group to appear. "The Best of The Highwaymen" CD is part of the Legendary Masters Series released by EMI Records. Last year they celebrated the release of "When the Village Was Green," a CD recorded live at BRT in 2006 over the course of their two concerts. Their shows have sold out the past four years... *don't miss a rare chance to see one of the '60s most popular folk ensembles in an intimate theater setting!*

Saturday, October 25, 8:00 PM, \$15.00 advance/\$20.00 day of show
THE HIGHWAYMEN

Advance ticket purchase strongly recommended!

We are proud to welcome back the original Highwaymen, one of the seminal folk groups of the '60s, who first rejoined in 2004 to play the classic tunes of the '60s revival and their interpretations of popular music since then. Unlike some folk revival groups, The Highwaymen who play today are all the original members of the group that recorded and performed in the 1960s (**Steve Butts, Dave Fisher, Steve Trott and Bob Burnett**. Chan Daniels passed in 1974; their friend **Johann Helton** now plays bass). The group appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show, the Johnny Carson Show, and released 8 albums. In 1961, their first single, "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," shot to the top of the charts and sold over 3 million copies, followed by "Cotton Fields," which sold over one million. They also contributed a couple of future standards to the folk repertory ("Big Rock Candy Mountain," "All My Trials") and played a key role in the unearthing of a major, overlooked Leadbelly song, which later became a major addition to the repertoires of both Creedence Clearwater Revival and the Beach Boys, and also made the first American recordings of important songs by Buffy St. Marie and Ewan McColl. Recent appearances include the PBS special "This Land Is Your Land," and at Milwaukee's Irish Fest as the only not-strictly-Irish group to appear. "The Best of The Highwaymen" CD is part of the Legendary Masters Series released by EMI Records. Last year they celebrated the release of "When the Village Was Green," a CD recorded live at BRT in 2006 over the course of their two concerts. Their shows have sold out the past four years... *don't miss a rare chance to see one of the '60s most*

popular folk ensembles in an intimate theater setting!

Sunday, October 26, 7:00 PM, \$15.00

DUKE ROBILLARD presents SUNNY AND HER JOY BOYS

Advance ticket purchase strongly recommended!

Award winning guitarist **Duke Robillard** has traveled the world over for the last 40 years entertaining audiences with his special blend of blues and classic jazz. He's recorded with, played with, or produced many of the most important artists of the last several decades including Bob Dylan, Tom Waits, Ruth Brown, and the Fabulous Thunderbirds. With 20 albums under his own name and many more as guitarist with countless artists, Duke has achieved what many only dream of - working with many of his legendary musical heroes. But there is one project that has been in the back of Duke's mind since he heard Ivie Anderson, Helen Humes and Billie Holiday nearly 40 years ago - to celebrate the rich era of women song stylists from the thirties to the fifties - women who brought poise and class to the great American songs of the time, and who interpreted the best lyrics of the American master songwriters with depth, sincerity, and a personal flair that's all but forgotten today. That project has never been realized until recently when he heard **Sunny Crownover** sing at a show at Harvard University. Duke says "Her relaxed style and natural stage presence started the wheels turning. I felt I had finally found the vocalist I had been hoping to discover for so many years." Duke wasted no time finding material and enlisting a crew of great musicians to join forces, and Sunny and Her Joy Boys were born. **Billy Novick** joined in on clarinet and alto sax, an acknowledged master of his instruments. Billy has toured for 35 years, has been a member of the acclaimed New Black Eagle Jazz Band for two decades, and has five solo CDs and nine duo CDs with Guy Van Duser. Bassist **Jesse Williams** has played and recorded with Duke for five years. He is also currently recording and performing with Al Kooper and Jay Geils. Guitarist **Paul Kolesnikow** and Duke have been playing together in duo, trio and quartet situations for many years now and he helps with the group's arrangements. He also performs with the Bohemian Quartet. Duke is proud of and excited about this new musical venture, which for him is the realization of a lifelong dream. *Don't miss the debut performance of Sunny and Her Joy Boys!*

NOVEMBER

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **The collage exhibit by George Sargent and Diane Dellacarpini will continue in BRT's Art Gallery** through November 22. **From November 29 to December 14, the BRT Art Gallery will showcase photographs of Ireland by Russell Gusetti.**
- **Check the Classes link for details about another round of 5-week fiddle classes** starting in late October through November 25 and 26! All classes are taught by Cathy Clasper Torch. Our **Irish step dance classes** taught by Terry Songini will continue on Saturdays and Tuesdays in November through November 25.
- **Blackstone River Theatre will hold its annual Homecoming Concert and Silent Auction fund-raiser on November 29th this year!** *As always, we welcome any donations of artwork, goods or services, or gift certificates from local businesses and individuals who support our mission.* Contact russell@riverfolk.org if you'd like to help!

Saturday, November 1, 8:00 PM, \$12.00

THE EMERALD RAE TRIO

Emerald Rae was a hit at the 2nd annual Blackstone River Theatre Celtic Festival...don't miss her BRT debut! The Boston Globe says, "If her charismatic debut disc "Contemplation" is any proof, Rae may be Boston's next fiddle wunderkind. Her sound is rooted deep in the robust Cape Breton style, but delivered in an enticingly modern and personal way. Her fiddling is technically spot-on, yet elegantly earthy, her bow merrily bouncing along the strings, as though unable to resist joining the dance." Besides having an effervescent stage personae and a flair for writing tunes, **Emerald Rae** is U.S. National Scottish Fiddle Champion (2004), and graduate of Berklee College of Music (2006) where she majored in Film Scoring. She is currently

completing a Masters Thesis in Early Scottish Fiddle Sources through the University of Glasgow after spending a year researching in Scotland. Emerald is also a talented Cape Breton Step dancer and has danced for such fiddling giants as Alasdair Fraser and Natalie MacMaster. She brings youthful vigor and energy to ancient melodies while forging new pathways for her own clever compositions. Live performances feature an eclectic mix of fiddle styles, pulling influences from Scotland, Ireland and Appalachia and Scandinavia, all delivered with her unique style and grace. Emerald will be joined by two fine musicians, **Chris Stevens** on accordion and **Flynn Cohen** on guitar.

**Friday, November 7, 8:00 PM, \$20.00 advance/\$22.00 day of show
ROOMFUL OF BLUES**

Advance ticket purchase strongly recommended! This show has sold out in advance the past four times... don't wait to reserve your tickets!

Here's a VERY rare chance to hear this amazing band in an intimate listening room setting! USA Today says **Roomful of Blues** plays "marvelous wall-to-wall grooves... between the wicked guitar work and the brassy horn section, things never stop swinging." With their masterful combination of jumping, hard-edged blues and R&B, it's no wonder why the great Count Basie called them "the hottest blues band I've ever heard." DownBeat said the band is "in a class by itself." Without a doubt, Roomful of Blues is all this and more. Since 1967, the band's deeply rooted, horn-driven blend of swing, rock 'n' roll, jump, blues and soul has earned it five Grammy Award nominations and a slew of other accolades, including four W.C. Handy Blues Awards. The band has always boasted great musicianship featuring a stellar horn section - they won two W.C. Handy Blues Awards in 2004: Instrumentalist of the Year - Horns, as well as the coveted Blues Band of the Year. Remaining together for so long is not simply a matter of survival, but rather a testament to Roomful of Blues' commitment to its originality and its ability to evolve. Over the years, Roomful's lineup has changed but the band has always been one of the tightest, most joyful blues ensembles in the world. Currently a 8-piece unit led by guitarist **Chris Vachon**, the band has never sounded fresher or stronger. With vocalist/harpist **Dave Howard**, new bassist **Bryan "Frankie" Rizzuto**, drummer **Ephraim Lowell**, keyboardist **Travis Colby**, and baritone and tenor saxophonist **Mark Earley** along with long-time tenor and alto saxophonist **Rich Lataille** (the longest-standing member of the group) and new trumpet player **Doug Woolverton**. Their newest CD "Standing Room Only" swings with urgency and purpose.

**Saturday, November 15, 1:00 PM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults
The Toe Jam Puppet Band Pirate Show - Back by popular demand!**

This show played to a standing room only crowd this spring and we sadly had to turn many families away... don't wait this time...order your tickets today!

Ideal for families with children ages 4-and-up. Formed in 2000, the **Toe Jam Puppet Band** is great with kids, but best when parents are also there having fun with the little ones. The shows are always very active, encouraging kids and parents to sing and dance along with the band as they entertain with a unique combination of original songs, puppetry, storytelling and just plain old fun! Big kids **Vinny Lovegrove** and **Tom Poitras** will lead the crowd during Toe Jam's newest theme show - The Toe Jam Pirate Show! Arrrrrrrrgh! Dance piratey jigs with the Toe Jam crew like, 'The Skull & Crossbones Square Dance,' and a line dance called 'Pirates Arrrr Funky,' where the kids become dancing lobsters, seagulls and even dancing sharks! Join us in all your pirate gear and climb aboard - a great time for kids of all ages! *Face or hand paintings by Ellen will be available 30 minutes before the show and 30 minutes after the show!*

SOLD OUT

**Saturday, November 15, 8:00 PM, \$12.00
A SWING DANCE WITH SUPERCHIEF TRIO
(Beginner lessons from 7-7:30 p.m. with members of Providence Swings)**

Tonight we bring back the always zesty Superchief Trio for their first official swing dance at BRT! They'll be co-hosting the event with the amazing **Providence Swings**, a group of dancers dedicated to the advancement of swing dancing in the RI area. Beginners and experts alike are sure to enjoy themselves and there will be a free beginner's lesson from 7-8:00 p.m. Superchief Trio features **Keith Munslow** on piano and vocals, **Pam Murray** on trombone and vocals and **Johnny Coté** on percussion. Able to leap seamlessly from jump blues to hot swing, ragtime to smooth, sultry ballads, Superchief Trio proves that big sounds do indeed come in small packages. Superchief Trio were named the winners of the Motif Magazine Best Music Poll for Best Local Roots Act (2005) and Best Local Release (2006). *A fun-filled night of music with plenty of room to dance!* There will be some seats set up along the sides of BRT for

spectators, wallflowers and to let dancers catch your breath! Visit www.providenceswings.com.

Sunday, November 16, 7:00 PM, \$15.00

BUA

Bua was a big hit at the 2nd annual Blackstone River Theatre Celtic Festival...don't miss their BRT debut tonight! A quintet comprised of some of America's most talented, young musicians (four are All-Ireland winners), **Bua** have been described by Irish Music Magazine as "the essence of a superb band," their sound "a throwback to the playing of the 1960s and 1970s, keeping the music down the path of tradition" and of their 2006 release, "Live at Martyrs'," "a work without gimmicks, where the musicianship is of the highest quality." It is no surprise then that Bua, lending to its Irish Gaelic meaning of 'innate gift,' have quickly risen to the status of one of America's premier traditional Irish music ensembles. From his upbringing in the Chicago Irish music community, co-founding member **Chris Bain** not only rooted himself within the fiddle traditions of Ireland but the traditions of Scotland and Wales as well. He toured Europe and North America with legendary Welsh triple harpist Robin Huw Bowen, and currently tours with Robin's band Crasdant. **Seán Gavin's** ornate, driving syncopations on flute, whistle and uilleann pipes clearly reflects his immersion in Irish music. Born in Detroit to Co. Clare fiddler Mick Gavin (an inductee to the Irish Traditional Music Hall of Fame), Seán is the youngest member of Bua. Co-founding Bua member **Jackie Moran**, born in Thurles, Co. Tipperary, immigrated to Chicago with his family when he was ten. A highly sought-after bodhrán player, Jackie has toured with Riverdance, the Trinity Irish Dance Company and others. **Brian Miller's** DADGAD backing and song accompaniments have earned him a strong reputation as one of the best guitarists on the scene today. **Brían Ó hAirt's** evocative voice stands as another hallmark of Bua's unique sound. He is the youngest and only American to become a champion All-Ireland singer. *Don't miss a high-energy night of Irish traditional music!*

Thursday, November 20, 7-9:00 PM, \$5.00

BRT DRUM AND DANCE CIRCLE

Blackstone River Theatre's open drum circle focuses on tribal and multi-ethnic rhythms. Beginners and novices are always welcome... the emphasis is on fun and learning! Since its inception, we have regularly had between 15-30 drummers and on many occasions, members of the bellydance community join in. *Bring your own hand drum or rhythm instrument or just your dancing feet!*

Friday, November 21, 8:00 PM, \$10.00

FOREVER YOUNG plays a tribute to OURSELVES!

featuring Mark Cutler, Becky Chace, Dan Lilley, John Fuzek, Pete Vendettuoli, Jon Amitrano and Phil Hicks

This is the 6th annual show at BRT where audiences get to hear Rhode Island songwriters performing in an "in the round" format. Tonight's show is a little different in that it features seven performers who have been playing together the past three years as **Forever Young**, performing and interpreting the music of Neil Young. The twist tonight is that these same musicians will be performing their original music instead of cover songs **This event is co-sponsored by the Rhode Island Songwriters Association and Hear In Rhode Island for more info about Forever Young and the members, visit:**

www.ForeverYoungNeilYoungTribute.com

www.risongwriters.com

SOLD OUT

Saturday, November 22, 8:00 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$14.00 day of show

JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD WITH THE BOHEMIAN QUARTET

Experience an amazing evening of gypsy music! **The Bohemian Quartet** is a four-piece string band composed of violin, cello, guitar and an upright bass. The Quartet was founded by violinist Stan Renard in 2005. The name "Bohemian Quartet" was borrowed from the original Bohemian Quartet (also known as the Czech Quartet after 1918), a Czech string quartet of international repute that was founded in 1891 and disbanded in 1934. The new Bohemian Quartet performs a vast and unique repertoire revolving around 'Gypsy' or 'Romany' music as well as traditional Eastern-European folk music which has been collected via recordings, transcription, interviews, and has been arranged by Stan. Tonight's show highlights a new aspect of their performance; the ensemble will work in collaboration with narrator and storyteller **Steve Lynch**. Lynch delights audiences with folk tales, legends and Romany Poems by the famous

Polish poet, Papusza, whose words address beautifully the music performed by the Bohemians. French violinist, conductor/arranger **Stan Renard** is joined by **Paul Kolesnikow** on gypsy guitar, who teaches at Brown University and performs all over New England with musicians such as Duke Robillard. **John DeBossu**, upright bass, performs in numerous jazz ensembles throughout New England as well as in the Rhode Island Big Band. **Christine Harrington**, cello, performs regularly with pianist Joe Parillo and is also a member of the Hartford Festival Orchestra.

SOLD OUT

Saturday, November 29, 8:00 PM, \$18.00

BRT HOMECOMING CONCERT AND SILENT AUCTION

featuring Aoife Clancy, The Atwater-Donnelly Trio, Matt & Shannon Heaton, Bertrand Laurence, Robbie O'Connell, Cory Pesaturo, Pendragon, and John Thibodeau & Barry Brown

Advance ticket purchase strongly recommended!

With family and friends in town for Thanksgiving, BRT's 8th annual fund-raiser features some of the best of Rhode Island's homegrown talent as well as others who now live in the Ocean State. **100% of the proceeds from both the concert and the silent auction will go to support Blackstone River Theatre's programming and operating expenses.** Having celebrated their 8th anniversary in September, Blackstone River Theatre has now presented more than 800 concerts, dances, arts classes and children's events in front of 52,000 people. **At 7:00 p.m. and during intermission, Blackstone River Theatre will also hold a silent auction featuring CDs, jewelry, original artwork, Christmas items and gift certificates.** Pendragon will act as hosts this evening and will perform a set of their Celtic-inspired music. Featured performers, who are all donating their time, include celebrated Irish singer-songwriters Aoife Clancy and Robbie O'Connell, French singer and blues guitarist Bertrand Laurence, and country blues and ragtime performers John Thibodeau and Barry Brown. The Atwater-Donnelly Trio, featuring Aubrey Atwater, Elwood Donnelly and fiddler Cathy Clasper-Torch, will perform Appalachian, gospel and Celtic-inspired folk music and dance. Matt and Shannon Heaton will perform Irish and original music on flute, guitar and vocals and Cumberland native Cory Pesaturo, the youngest ever National Accordion champion, will perform a solo set.

Sunday, November 30, 12-4:00 PM, FREE!

BRT HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR AND FUNDRAISER

Blackstone River Theatre invites the community to our **first-ever Holiday Craft Fair!** Please come out and support local craft vendors and home-based businesses from the area and support the BRT while you do your holiday shopping locally! We expect to have at least 20 vendors on site and the event will feature door prizes, live music and information about BRT programming and upcoming events. Door prizes will be raffled off from each vendor with the raffle proceeds to benefit BRT's programming. Refreshments will also be available. *Think out of the box (store!)* Vendors include: Pampered Chef, Arbonne, Tastefully Simple, Majeau Handmade tote bags, Usbourne Books, Gourmet Chocolate pretzels, Hand-painted rocks, Scotho Lampwork & Sterling Jewelry, Uppercase Living, Wildtree Herbs, Michelle Ward Handmade Jewelry, Lia Sophia, Well Decked Halls, Home And Garden Party, Tall Tapers, too, Creative Memories, Blackstone River Theatre CDs, shirts and more, Photos of Ireland.

DECEMBER

Partial programming support provided by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

- **The exhibit of Russell Gusetti's photographs of Ireland continues in BRT's Art Gallery through December 14.**
- **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!
- *Blackstone River Theatre gift certificates make a great gift for friends and family of all ages!*

Saturday, December 6, 8:00 PM, \$18.00 advance/\$20.00 day of show
ATWATER-DONNELLY TRIO and PENDRAGON HOLIDAY SHOW

Advance ticket purchase recommended!

Though **Pendragon** is celebrating 25 years together in 2008 and **Atwater-Donnelly** has been together for over 21 years, tonight marks the first joint concert by these two well-known New England groups! Expect the unexpected... songs, poetry, carols, dancing... as each group will perform on their own and also join in on several holiday and winter-themed pieces together. Special guest performers will include **Victorian Carolers** from Jazz Up Your Party and music and step dancing by **Ruby May Miller, Evelyn Miller and Samuel Miller. Aubrey Atwater** and **Elwood Donnelly** along with **Cathy Clasper-Torch** on fiddle, cello and vocals are well-known for presenting engaging concerts of traditional American and Celtic American folk songs, a cappella pieces, dance tunes, and original works. Elwood, Aubrey and Cathy blend unusual harmonies and play guitar, Appalachian mountain dulcimer, Irish tin whistle, mandolin, old-time banjo, fiddle, and other musical surprises while also featuring Aubrey's amazing clogging and step dance. Pendragon, having celebrated their 25th anniversary with the release of a new CD, "Still Standing," features step dancer/percussionist **Kevin Doyle, Bob Drouin** on fiddle, bouzouki and tenor banjo; **Russell Gusetti** on guitar and concertina; **Josh Kane** on flute and whistles; and **Mary Lee Partington** on vocals.

Saturday, December 13, 11:00 AM, \$5.00 children/\$7.00 adults
ROSALITA'S PUPPETS - Mrs. Claus and the Ice Queen

Ideal for ages 4-and-up. Rudolph the Red-nosed Dragon is living happily at the North Pole with Mr. and Mrs. Claus. Everyone is getting ready to deliver presents for the holidays when tragedy strikes and Santa mysteriously falls ill. Was it the apple pie the stranger gave Santa to eat? Or was it the Ice Queen's evil spell? Will Rudolph be tempted by the Ice Queen to leave the North Pole and work for her? Will the Ice Queen use her gold to turn good hearts cold and spoil the spirit of the Holidays? Can Mrs. Claus save the day and make sure Santa is able to ride his sleigh? Come out and discover the answers to these questions this holiday season as Rosalita's Puppets brings another original show with many of your favorite puppet characters and a few new ones to Blackstone River Theatre. As always, this show includes songs, audience participation and is ideal for the whole family! *Face or hand paintings by Ellen will be available 30 minutes before the show and 30 minutes after the show!*

Saturday, December 13, 8:00 PM, \$18.00/\$20.00 day of show
Robbie O'Connell and Aoife Clancy Christmas Celebration

Advance ticket purchase recommended!



Tonight's Christmas show brings together two great voices of Irish music - **Aoife Clancy** and **Robbie O'Connell** - joined by fiddler **George Keith**. Aoife Clancy (pronounced "Eefa") brings a refreshing new voice to folk music, one that ranges from traditional Irish songs to ballads and contemporary folk. Aoife comes from the small town of Carrick-on-Suir, in Co Tipperary, where her musical career began at an early age. Her father Bobby Clancy placed a guitar in her hands at age ten, and by age fourteen was playing with her father in nearby pubs. She later moved to Dublin, where she studied drama at the Gaiety School of Acting. In 1995 Aoife was asked to join the acclaimed group Cherish the Ladies, one of the most sought-after Irish American groups in history. Since 1999, Aoife has pursued a solo career and clearly established herself as one of the divas of Irish and contemporary folk music. Robbie O'Connell was born in Waterford, Ireland and grew up in Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. In 1977, he joined the Clancy Brothers with whom he recorded 3 albums. With the 1982 release of his first solo album, "Close to the Bone," Robbie emerged as an artist of major stature. Soon after, he began touring with Mick Moloney and Jimmy Keane, and also with Eileen Ivers and Seamus Egan in the Green Fields of America. Robbie has taught songwriting at the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop in West Virginia and has earned international acclaim as a singer-songwriter by making it quite clear that there's more to being Irish than filling stereotypes. *Don't miss an amazing evening of songs and laughter as Robbie and Aoife celebrate the Christmas holiday and the traditions they grew up with in Ireland...*

Sunday, December 14, 2 PM, \$12.00 advance/\$15.00 day of show
A Musical Tribute to Conrad Depot

We hope you'll join Blackstone River Theatre as we celebrate the life of Conrad Depot who passed away Oct. 18 at age 86. Conrad was a well-known French Canadian fiddler

who ran quadrilles in the area throughout the 1970s, 80s, and early 90s as well as at the Blackstone River Theatre from 2000-2003. All of today's proceeds will go to Conrad's loving wife, Eva. This celebration of French music will feature Conrad's friends and fellow musicians including **Fleurs de Lis, Les Joyeux Copains, Pendragon, Jim Chapin, Colette Fournier, Dan Boucher, Don Dextrase** and **Alan Bradbury** and **Michelle Kaminsky** from Magnolia and French Roast.

Blackstone River Theatre wishes you a very safe and happy holiday season and a peaceful new year! We look forward to seeing you in 2009!