

NEWS FROM
CALLIOPE:
THE
PITTSBURGH
FOLK MUSIC
SOCIETY

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CALLIOPE

Rootz

Mark your calendar:

**Calliope's
Open House
Party--
Friday,
Nov. 11, 7pm**
*(see page 3 for
details)*



Over the River and Through Squirrel Hill, Calliope Office Moves to Shadyside

Pittsburgh Center for the Arts Campus Is Our New Home

The Pittsburgh Center for the Arts (PCA) and Calliope recently reached a 5-year agreement to provide Calliope office and meeting rooms in the Marshall Mansion of the PCA campus on the corner of Shady and Fifth Avenues.

PCA Executive Director (and Executive Director of Pittsburgh Filmmakers) Charlie Humphrey and PCA board member Ian James worked with Calliope Managing Director Patricia Tanner, and Calliope board members Steve Weber, Phil Smith and Ken Doyno to make this exciting move a reality.

Calliope concerts will still be held at the Carnegie Lecture Hall and Calliope School classes (with a few exceptions) will remain at Chatham College.

The moving truck arrived on August 15, and like any move, it's been an expensive endeavor to re-locate office furniture, files and computers. We are happy to accept donations from the community to help with the hard costs associated with the move.

For the entire Calliope community, the move to PCA is a wonderful opportunity for collaboration. "We are thrilled about our move," says Tricia Tanner. "With our new physical space and proximity to the PCA, I anticipate a surge in our growth as we make new friends and share music with their artists and members. That's what I call progress."

Stage fright

By John Hayes



What? Me perform? I think I stammered a bit when Calliope managing director Tricia Tanner asked if I'd play at the group's January singer-songwriter showcase at Downtown's La Prima Espresso. I'd been writing songs for as long as I can remember and strum a few chords, but performing in public terrified me. I don't even talk in the elevator.

Melodies, however, have always materialized pretty easily in my mind. As a kid I took guitar lessons without practicing, but as an adult I bought a used acoustic six-string and began by making up confessional folk-country-rocky boo-hoo ballads written for women who'd never hear them. But in time my repertoire grew to include musical biographies of people in my life, tributes to songwriters that I admire, story songs, funny songs and, OK, more boo-hoo ballads.

Over the years, a few of my songs started leaking out late nights around campfires or after most of the party guests had gone. "That's a good song," said a friend whose musical opinions I'd always respected. "Who wrote that?" "I did." "No, really..." he said. "Whose song is that?"

The CDs started as family Christmas gifts. Fortunate enough to have some of the region's best musicians as friends, I invited them to perform on my albums. In six years I recorded five albums of original songs. I was surprised, flattered and mostly terrified, however, when Tanner called to thank me for the CD I'd sent her and to ask if I'd play at the Calliope songwriter series. "You know I don't play out." "Yeah," she said, "but I've seen you around with your friends, sharing songs, making music. Not for money or for business or to get famous, but just because it's human to make music and it feels good. And that's what Calliope's all about." She had me there. I didn't say anything. "And besides," she said, "you're better than you think you are."

Before I could think of a million reasons to say no, I said yes. I had lots to learn about performing live and less than three months to learn it. A week later, I showed up at Calliope's long-running Tuesday-night open stage at the Bloomfield Bridge Tavern. The place was empty. The bartender said the guys who'd been volunteering for years to run the open stage had retired the week before. If I could figure out how to plug in the wires and turn the dials for the other players, I could run the stage myself.

For the next two months, with Calliope's consent, I hosted Calliope's open stage. I slipped onto other open stages across town, too. For each performance, I gave myself a different mission: Remember the words. Don't muffle the chords. Open my eyes while I sing. Speak to the crowd... I even rented an amp, microphone and mike stand so I could practice at home hearing how I sounded through speakers.

My friends, musical geniuses that they are, needed only a couple of rehearsals to learn my tunes. Opening night, La Prima was packed with friends, family, business colleagues and people who'd heard my CDs. I guess it should have been intimidating to see some of Pittsburgh's best singer-songwriters in the crowd, but I was way too determined to worry about it. My 2 1/2 hours on stage was kind of a blur, but when it was over people were clapping, shaking my hand, talking about my songs. My wife gave me a hug, said she was proud of me.

Tanner walked past with a big grin, pointing at her head. "See," she said, "I know it when I hear it."

Since then I've played out once or twice a month, whenever a gig falls into my lap. I'm still not much of a picker, but I've found that if I don't try too hard my songs sort of carry themselves. With Calliope's help, I think I may have finally beaten this whole public speaking thing.

I host most of the Tuesdays at the BBT and start each open stage with a half-hour set by an invited "featured performer." And every now and then, when a newbie shows up completely terrified about performing in public, I have a great story to tell.

Calliope's Acoustic Open Stage begins at 9 p.m. Tuesdays at Bloomfield the Bridge Tavern, 4412 Liberty Ave., Bloomfield, 412-682-8611. No cover charge.

Upcoming featured performers: October 25-Danger; November 8-Scott Milner/ Rick Kobertz; November 15-Autumn Ayers; November 22-Hobby Weiss.

Calliope Legends Series

Oct. 29--Ken Waldman
www.kenwaldman.com

Jan. 28--Lee Murdock
www.leemurdock.com

March 4--Lorna Bracewell
www.lornabracewell.com

March 25--Isla
www.islamusic.com

April 8--Coyote
www.coyotemusic.net



Legends Concert Committee Needs You

If you want to attend a gem of a concert by a musician you will be surprised and delighted to discover, then Calliope's Legends Concerts are for you. Calliope has been sponsoring Legends concerts at the Unitarian Church in Shadyside for years. After shows, we often hear comments like "I can't believe I heard this amazing performer in a church in Shadyside!"

Not only can we can promise you a one-of-a-kind musical experience, but you can have it at a very affordable price. At \$15 a ticket, you can treat the whole family and a few friends too. Legends concerts allow for a rare opportunity to engage with the performers in a wonderfully intimate setting.

As we head into our seventh season, we're looking for your help. First, come to the concerts for all the reasons we've given. If you want to do more, you can consider: 1) hosting a performer(s) by providing housing for Friday and Saturday nights; 2) volunteering to help at the door and CD sales the night of the concerts; and 3) training to work the sound system.

Be sure to listen the morning of a Legends show to Larry Berger on the Saturday Light Brigade, WRCT – 88.3 FM. You'll hear a live interview.

Finally, if you still want more, join the committee. Contact Wilburn Hayden, 412-431-6029 or whayden@dsdial.net.

Calliope Open House Party

Friday, Nov. 11
7:00pm

Minimum donation: \$10

Join us as we celebrate our new home at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

The party will feature classic & country blues by the Monongahela Sheiks, traditional Irish tunes by Hooley, and more!!

Hors d'oeuvres provided by the East End Food Co-op.
ID required for drinks.

Artists & Communities: Calliope's Artists in Residency

Calliope has been awarded an Artists & Communities grant from the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation that has allowed the organization to bring artists LE McCullough (Woodbridge, NJ) and Burr Beard (Emmaus, PA) to Pittsburgh to complete a six month artist residency; during their residency, the artists have composed six new pieces of music inspired by the history of early Pittsburgh settlement during the French and Indian War.

LE McCullough and Burr Beard have composed both songs and instrumental tunes, drawing inspiration from the social history of this era to create new music relevant to the 21st century. Beard says, "From the 18th century to the 21st century, Pittsburgh has witnessed an on-going crossroads of cultural influences. The new works will not be historical songs but will be inspired by the similarities in cross-cultural experience over time in Pittsburgh."

A key element of the Artists & Communities program is the residents' collaboration with local Pittsburgh artists. McCullough and Beard's primary community collaborators have been fiddler Jan Hamilton Sota, banjo player and singer-songwriter Sue Powers, and mountain dulcimer player, percussionist and composer Jeff Berman.

Join our visiting artists on Saturday, Oct. 29 as they conduct a **Composing & Arranging Workshop**. Check the Calliope website for details.



Calliope:

The Pittsburgh Folk Music Society

6300 Fifth Ave., 3rd Floor

Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Tel 412.361.1915

calliope@calliopehouse.org

www.calliopehouse.org

