

Rootz

CALLIOPE



Calliope Develops Outreach Program at Kentucky Avenue School

During 2006 and 2007, Calliope initiated an outreach program at Kentucky Avenue School in Shadyside. Teaching artist Emily Pinkerton was engaged to teach basic guitar technique to 6th, 7th and 8th graders through popular and folk music repertoire. Each grade met once a week for 45 minutes throughout the school year.

Pinkerton introduced students to basic concepts of music theory and guitar technique. With a background in ethnomusicology, Pinkerton also took the class beyond simple technique and encouraged them to consider what music means culturally to different people.

“Although the class started out focusing on technique, I was pleased to see how energetically students engaged in our intense listening sessions,” says Pinkerton. “The students really learned to talk about music, and to see how different styles are related. We were able to listen to folk, popular and international artists, discussing cross-fertilization of styles. The kids then did their own projects, doing this kind of in depth analysis of their favorite songs.”

This outreach experience will culminate with a final performance for schoolmates, parents and visitors in June. Calliope will continue its program in the coming school year, and also hopes to create an after school program for all ages.

Following the Blues: from Mississippi to Memphis

by Phil Smith, Calliope Board of Directors

Four Calliope board members accompanied Managing Director Patricia Tanner to the 2007 Folk Alliance conference held in Memphis, February 21-25, 2007. Maggie McDonald, Tim Cunningham, Rick Landesberg, and Phil Smith arrived in time to take a Delta Blues Tour into northern Mississippi on the 21st. We traveled on a small bus complete with a guide and an on-board blues singer. Highlights of the trip included a stop at the Stovall Plantation Store for an authentic lunch with greens and cornbread, a view of the location of Muddy Waters' cabin on the Stovall Plantation, and then a stop in Clarksdale, Mississippi to see the actual cabin in the Delta Blues Museum. There was time to walk across the street to Red's Bar for an impromptu blues performance before the tour had to head back to Memphis, by way of the famous crossroads of routes 49 and 61 made famous in Robert Johnson's "Crossroads Blues."



Photo by Rick Landesberg

The following days were full of showcase performances by musicians who may one day appear at one of Calliope's venues. Showcases began at 8:00 pm in 12 different locations in the hotel – as well as more locations in the convention center. The performers changed every 30 to 45 minutes and kept going until the wee hours of the morning in special "guerrilla showcase" rooms on "music floors" of the hotel. We could, and did, hear as many as eight or ten different artists each evening. There were also panel presentations, exhibits, workshops, and meetings. Pittsburgh guitarist Ernie Hawkins appeared in several showcases and Ken Batista, DJ of the *American Sampler* show on Calliope's media sponsor, WYEP-FM, attended meetings of folk DJ's as well as new artist showcases.

We were all impressed by the number of young and exciting performers in every genre, including Celtic (several great bands from Scotland and Ireland), old-time, blues, singer-songwriter, Klezmer, and bluegrass (this was the year of teen-age sister bands). You'll be hearing more from them – one of our favorites, the Carolina Chocolate Drops, an African-American string band, will be featured in next year's Calliope Concert series.

Folk Alliance is a wonderful opportunity to discover new talent, and enjoy performances by old favorites. For more on the annual Folk Alliance conference, visit: www.folkalliance.org

To those fans of the blues, don't miss our second annual Blues at the Crossroads event with Steve James & Del Ray at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts on September 30!

Guitar Gathering

by Emily Pinkerton



Last spring I taught Guitar I and II for Calliope and had the privilege of working with a diverse group of highly motivated students. Besides enjoying the experience of joining the teaching staff, I was struck by how naturally a musical community can grow in a Calliope class. Every Tuesday night we gathered in a cozy room off the entry hall of Chatham College's Mellon Center. I was always pleased by the degree of patience with which everyone worked and the encouragement that they

consistently provided one another. As one of my students, Rich Blattenberger, told me, Guitar I became the highlight of his week, and the social side of music-making made his class experience very valuable: "I enjoyed learning more about the guitar, but I equally enjoyed my new friends, all with a common interest."

We crowned our 12 weeks of work with not one, but two performances at the Bloomfield Bridge Tavern Open Stage. At the second performance (the student showcase for all Calliope classes), members of Guitar I and II met and were able to see the fruits of each other's musical labor.

It was a beautiful finale to a truly enjoyable 12 weeks, and all were sad to see the class end. So sad, in fact, that a group of students kept going! Almost every Tuesday last summer, a small group of Guitar I and II students has gathered, sometimes at the Brillobox in Lawrenceville, sometimes at someone's home. I stopped by one of these gatherings in August, and was amazed at how their repertoire had expanded over the summer. These meetings have also been a wellspring of plans for future musical projects. Inspired by their ideas and energy, Calliope began a new ensemble class called the "Seeger Song Session" which ran for the first time this spring.

As I continue teaching for the Calliope School, I look forward to similar sessions of music-making and community-building. So join us for a class sometime...you might get more than you bargained for!!

For more information about the Calliope School visit www.calliopehouse.org/school, or give us a call at the office (412) 361-1915.

Mark Your Calendar!

May 3—Fundraising House Concert with Rani Arbo & Daisy Mayhem
May 18—A Celebration of Live Music at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts

*Check out the Calliope website for more on each of these events
www.calliopehouse.org.*

A Celebration of Live Music!



As part of our 30 for 30 fundraising campaign, Calliope will be presenting a celebration of live music at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. Show your support for Calliope and join us for this event, featuring some of the best folk music in the region!

Friday, May 18

\$20 admission (includes snacks and locally brewed beer from the East End Brewing Company)

Location: Pittsburgh Center for the Arts

Doors open at 6:30pm

Music begins at 7:00pm

From Singer-songwriter to Bluegrass to Cajun.....Don't miss the party!

Featuring performances by: Pairdown, Kevin Finn, Anna Vogelzang, Josh Clary & Friends, Cathasaigh, Pittsburgh Mandolin Orchestra, Lohio, The Deliberate Strangers, Mick Martin, Venez au Bal, The Monongahela Sheiks, Dennis McCurdy.....and more!



Calliope:

The Pittsburgh Folk Music Society
6300 Fifth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Tel 412.361.1915
calliope@calliopehouse.org
www.calliopehouse.org

