



Heather Pierson Acoustic Duo at Jan. 29 Americana/ Folk Concert Series

Heather Pierson is a pianist, multi-instrumentalist, singer/songwriter and performer whose inspiring live performances and growing catalog of releases delve into Americana, blues, New Orleans jazz, vocal chants, instrumental piano, and folk. Best known for her virtuosity at the piano and her bell-tone vocals, her songs and musicianship embody joy, honesty, playfulness, and a desire to share from the heart. In twenty years on her own record label, Vessel Recordings, she has released thirteen albums of original music including *Lines and Spaces*, her most ambitious and most personal release. **Note:** Heather Pierson's Trio was originally scheduled, but due to current circumstances, it will be a Duo.

Bill Cohen interviewed Heather Pierson for this issue.

Bill: There are so many different labels that people attach to various musical genres. Is there one label that applies to you? How do you describe the music you write and perform?

Heather: "Music played from the heart." I guess that would be my elevator pitch. But there really isn't one label that fits me. I've always been someone who doesn't fit neatly in one place, musically or otherwise. In regards to my music, I often say that I am a kid who couldn't decide what she wanted to be when she grew up. So for that reason I do a little bit of everything!

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Heather Pierson Concert at Mennonite Church, Jan. 29. Pre-registration via Eventbrite. To register, click on

[http://bit.ly/HeatherPierson-](http://bit.ly/HeatherPierson-CFMS)

[CFMS](http://bit.ly/HeatherPierson-CFMS)

Heather Pierson: Americana Music from the Heart



Picture by Eddie Ferranti

Most of what I do could live under the umbrella of “Americana,” and yet that isn’t really descriptive enough, either. So much of what I do at the piano, for instance, when I’m improvising or composing solo piano pieces, is heavily informed by the years of classical study I had growing up. Then there is the influence of New Orleans jazz, and of country, folk, and pop. And though I don’t compose in these other genres (yet!) I am still influenced by the many other genres of music that I listened to growing up, including metal, punk, and rap. This might be surprising to folks, and yet I always heard and still hear the classical, pop, folk, jazz, and soul influences in those genres of music. It’s all there if you listen carefully! All music is a language, and there are so many dialects. I love to speak and explore as many of those dialects as my skills will allow.

Bill: CFMS folks have had the opportunity to see and hear you before right here in Columbus. This time, you’re bringing along a fellow musician. Please tell us

about him, his musical background, and what he contributes to the act.

Heather: Yes! This time, I’ll be traveling with my partner in all things, Shawn Nadeau, who plays upright bass and sings harmony. He and I have been making music together since the night we met at an open mic nearly 12 years ago. While I was trained classically by an Oberlin grad, he is entirely self-taught—but like me, he also had a wildly varied listening diet growing up, everything from punk rock to The Carpenters to Jaco Pastorius. And also like me, he grew up an only child in a small town in New England. Shawn is my best friend, and we live and work and play and travel together, all of which adds up to one of the biggest blessings of my entire life!

Bill: How has the Covid crisis affected your songwriting?

Heather: Well, it has certainly opened up more time for writing, that’s for sure! It’s also slowed me down too. I spend more time with each new song as I’m writing it. I sense more focused intention and attention in these last nearly two years, and not just with songwriting, either. These last couple of years have brought so much suffering to so many, yes, and they have also given many of us an opportunity to get a much closer look at our day to day habits and choices. I have really enjoyed these opportunities, however challenging they can be!

Please see next page

Watch Heather Pierson and friends perform her song, “Singin’” live: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oo0_Y_SAXU

Heather Pierson Concert, Jan. 29: Due to COVID-19, all attendees MUST be vaccinated, wear a mask and bring proof of vaccination. Current capacity limit of 50%. You must pre-register via Eventbrite.com: <http://bit.ly/HeatherPierson-CFMS>

Heather Pierson: Americana Music

One specific song that happened during COVID: the week that we came home from our doomed tour in March 2020, I wrote a song that has become, so far, my most popular one, at least online, called “The Toilet Paper Song,” which briefly went viral in those first days of isolation when everyone was feeling scared and in need of a good laugh—myself included!

Bill: What other singer-songwriters have energized and inspired you, and who are your musical heroes?

Heather: In no particular order, my favorite songwriters and musical heroes are: Joni Mitchell, Oscar Peterson, Ella Fitzgerald, Ray Charles, John Prine, Gregg Allman, Tom Lehrer, Johnny Cash, Dave Brubeck, Vince Guaraldi, David Torkanowsky, Oliver Wood, Mike Patton, Weird Al, Leah Wolfson, Frank Zappa, and my dad.



Picture by Tim Schellmer

Watch Heather Pierson perform “The Get Up and Go”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6OdRCu5W58>

Welcome Our New and Returning Members

Brandon Lawson	Don Newton
Bobbie Pruik-	Jennie Newton
ma	Steve Sheets
Ed Tatum	Cathy Sheets
Erin Tatum	Cindy Ramsey
Mike Zajano	Alan Newman
Nancy Zajano	Deniese New-
Linda Bolles	man
R.L. Frees	Ralph Gordon
R. Studzinski	Frank Shyjka
Joanie Patter-	Dan Clarke
son	Marian Harris
Janet Chandler	Nancy King
Anne Mischo	Eugene King
Ryan Warner	Ray Pauken
Keith Larsen	Charles Pollock
Glenn Myres	Gregory Apple-
Jacquie Pisauro	gate
Mary Finney	

Folk Festival Preview

Central Ohio Folk Festival May 7& 8, 2022:
Plans are underway; we are returning to a LIVE event!

Your donations to the Year-End Challenge, along with grants, business sponsors and festival donations help us bring a robust offering of folk arts experiences to the Central Ohio community and beyond!

Yep, and it is a bucket load of fun too!

- 30+ instructional workshops
- Scheduled Jam Groups Tent – representing various roots genres (open participation)!
- Kids’ programming

Ongoing music performances in 3 performing tents

A Saturday evening Headliner Act (HINT – their recently released album is on the Grammy ballot in 4 categories). To announce who they are: we have arranged with the artist’s agency an official release date of December.

Benefits of Playing Music At an Advanced Age

THE BENEFITS OF MUSIC FOR OLDER ADULTS

Once you retire, you suddenly find that you have plenty of time on your hands. This is the perfect time to pick up a new hobby.

Perhaps you always wanted to learn an instrument but never had the time until you retired. Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to be young to start learning — you can pick up an instrument at any age.

In fact, learning to play music is quite a constructive hobby for seniors, providing many physical, mental, and emotional benefits.

Here are some ways learning an instrument can help you, as well as some recommendations on what you should start learning to play.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION RELIEVES STRESS

Many musicians feel that music is the best medium for expressing themselves — it provides some catharsis.

Research tends to agree, as some studies show that the brain release dopamine and serotonin when we play instruments.

Set aside some time at the end of every day to express yourself through music and you'll feel good.

KEEPS THE MIND SHARP

Playing music requires numerous skills:

- Finger dexterity and strength
- Reading sheet music
- Understanding music theory
- Timing
- Memorizing notes/chords

It might be exhausting, but think of it like exercise for your brain. Constantly challenging your mind to do all

these things at once keeps your mind strong, similar to how lifting weights keeps muscles strong.

PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO SOCIALIZE

Every so often, you'll feel lonely in retirement. It's an unfortunate reality, but playing an instrument can help.

If you start on an instrument, you'll find it easier for other people to get in on playing that instrument as well.

You can even find other musicians that play different instruments and start a little music group as a hobby. Working together to jam to pieces of music can be incredibly rewarding for everyone involved as you all play your respective instruments.

PROVIDES GOALS TO ACHIEVE

At times, you may not feel a sense of direction or purpose in retirement. With music, you can set goals that you can work towards every day.

Be realistic with your goals, as you don't want to burn out. For example, start by learning notes and chords, then progress to simple songs. Master those, and move to slightly more complex theory or music. Take things a day at a time. Each time you achieve a goal, you'll feel satisfaction and fulfillment.

SOME INSTRUMENTS FOR SENIORS TO TRY

Here are some instruments that can provide a great stepping stone for seniors into music, as well as things to keep in mind when starting.

GUITAR



Please see next page

Playing Music At an Advanced Age

Guitars are one of the most accessible instruments, but there's a lot to consider. Do you want to play acoustic or electric? The former is more challenging, but the latter requires cables and amplifiers.

You have plenty of genre options as well — from country to rock to bluegrass and more.

PIANO



Piano's great for learning music theory, as the keys and the music are both in front of you. If a piano is too bulky or out of your budget, consider a piano with weighted keys.

UKULELE



Ukuleles are easy to learn and incredibly portable. These instruments sound very "tropical" when played, as they come from Hawaii. Ukulele skills also carry over to guitar, so it's a great instrument for guitar beginners.

BONGOS



If you want to play some drums but a full drum kit is too loud for your living situation, bongos are an excellent alternative. They're compact and they don't cost much, yet they're fun to play.

BANJO



The banjo is a lively, fun instrument. It can be easy to play (in G tuning you already have a G chord) or more involved, if you want to play Scruggs style or clawhammer style. But if you can play banjo you'll always be welcome in a folk music jam or a sing-along.

There are other instruments you could learn, even if you're in your golden years: mandolin, dobro, upright bass, recorder.....So if you've always wanted to learn to play a musical instrument, and you've got some leisure time, thanks to retirement, take a stroll down to your local music store and see what might be in store for you.

Reprinted courtesy of Main Line Adult Day Center
<https://www.mainlineadultdaycenter.org/2020/04/20/the-benefits-of-playing-music-at-an-older-age/>

Bill Cohen's Valentine Concert: Songs Tell the Ups and Downs of Love



les, Nat King Cole, Johnny Mathis, and others.

Ann Fisher will be on hand to add some romantic flute accompaniment on several songs. And the all girl trio, the Harmonettes, will add some tight vocal back-ups on other tunes. David Maywhoor will keep the beat on percussion, and Brian Szuch will add extra sparkle on lead guitar.

While the songs will reflect the ecstasy, warmth, heartache, and pain that love can bring, there will be a lighter side too, as Bill challenges the audience with trivia questions about famous and infamous couples and love songs throughout the decades.

Serious love songs, a humorous trivia quiz, and surprises will highlight the 13th annual Valentine concert by Bill Cohen and friends at the Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 E. Oakland Park, Columbus. The show runs from 7:30 to 9:30 pm on Friday February 4.

A \$15 donation per person is being requested at the door, with proceeds going to help produce the upcoming Central Ohio Folk Festival in May.

With guitar and piano, Bill will sing favorites from the 1950s through the 1970s, made famous by John Denver, the Everly Brothers, Sam Cooke, Bette Midler, James Taylor, the Shirelles, the Eagles, the Beat-

IMPORTANT NOTE: To attend, you must pre-register at <https://bit.ly/Valentines-CFMS> Due to Covid safety guidelines, the audience size will be limited to 125. At the door, concert-goers must show proof of vaccinations and must wear masks.



The Harmonettes: Teresa Schleifer, Jackie LaMuth, Renilda Marshall

CFMS Year-End Matching Fund Challenge

The Columbus Folk Music Society is reaching out to all of our CFMS members and friends who have enjoyed our programming over the years. As an organization we seek to bring you engaging and thoughtful experiences of folk music performances and other activities throughout the year.

For the past five years, we've had an anonymous donor come forward towards the end of the year. This year they have come forward once again AND they've "upped" their generous offer.

The offer is to match all donations to our organization beyond those of regular membership dues, that are received before December 31, up to a total of \$1,000.

That means if we are able to raise \$1,000, it will be matched by our generous member to a grand total of \$2,000.

As the 2022 Central Ohio Folk Festival efforts are now in full-swing, your donations will help!

This is a great opportunity to give \$25, \$50, \$75 or more (and before year-end). Please give now in order to get the match. Last year the match amount was \$800, with the addition of another \$200 by another member – and we more then reached our goal by raising over \$1,000! For those who have already generously donated....**THANK YOU!**

There are 4 easy ways to donate:

1. Visit our website and donate via PayPal: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/contact-donate.html>. Just click the DONATE button.
2. Donate through The Columbus Foundation website (100% of donations come to CFMS): <https://www.columbusfoundation.org>. Just search Columbus Folk Music Society.
3. Send a check made payable to Columbus Folk Music Society (a 501c(3) tax-exempt organization). Mail to: Columbus Folk Music Society, P.O. Box 20735, Columbus Ohio 43220.

OR you can

- 4) Contact our Treasurer, Greg Denby at: treasurer@columbusfolkmusicsociety.org to work out payment.

Save the Date

Concerts

Saturday, Jan. 29, 8:00 pm. Heather Pierson, folk/jazz singer songwriter duo in concert. Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Ave., Columbus. Donation at door: \$15 general public; \$10 CFMS members & students; under 12 free.

Friday, Feb. 4, 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Bill Cohen's in-person Valentine Concert at the Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Ave., Columbus. Bill will sing favorites from the 1950s through the 1970s. Ann Fisher will be on hand to add some romantic flute accompaniment and the Harmonettes, will add tight vocal backups. David Maywhoor will keep the beat on percussion, and Brian Szuch will add sparkle on lead guitar. \$15 per-person donation.

For both concerts all attendees **MUST** pre-register via Eventbrite, be vaccinated, wear a mask and bring proof of vaccination. Current capacity limit of 50%. Donation at door: \$15 general public; \$10 CFMS members & students; under 12 free.

Jam Sessions

Daily Zoom Jam Sessions

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 10:00 am to noon; Wednesday, Friday, Sunday: 2:00 to 4:00 pm. To see the current link to these sessions, send an email request to Jane VanAuken vanaukj@gmail.com

In-Person Jam Sessions

Saturday morning jam sessions from 9:30 to 11:30 at All Saints Lutheran Church, 6770 North High Street, Worthington. It is located about a mile north of the Village Green on the east side of High across from Ethan Allen Furniture.

The Columbus Folk Music Society

P.O. Box 20735
Columbus, OH 43220



We're on the web!

www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org

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Phone: _____ (Cell): _____ If Band, website: _____

E-mail Address(es) (if a household / band membership): _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Membership renewals are due annually on September 30th. Check one of the membership levels listed below.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Band Membership \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Good Friend \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$200 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$500 |

For credit card transactions, visit CFMS website at: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/member-application.html>
Membership amounts may be tax-deductible. *My place of work matches donations:*

Like to volunteer? Please click all that apply. We are an all-volunteer driven organization!

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> May festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking / Baking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CFMS events | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing/Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal | <input type="checkbox"/> Desktop Publishing | <i>Please send completed membership form with payment to: Columbus Folk Music Society, P.O. Box 20735, Columbus, OH 43220</i> |
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