



House of Hamill Will Headline Coffeehouse Concert Oct. 31

Rose Baldino and Brian Buchanan met 10 years ago, late one night backstage at a theatre in rural Pennsylvania. Their paths crossed a dozen times over the next decade on the road, but it wasn't until 2014 that they finally became musical collaborators and The House of Hamill was born.

Brian and Rose are both accomplished traditional fiddle players and classical violinists, and despite being young, have over 25 years of writing and performance experience between them. Together, they write unusual new fiddle tunes and exciting, unpredictable original songs while

also breathing new life into traditional and contemporary songs. Both are confident and unique lead vocalists, and the blend of their two voices in harmony is hypnotic and irresistible.

Bill Cohen interviewed Brian and Rose for this issue of the newsletter.

Bill: House of Hamill has never performed for the Columbus Folk Music Society, so many of our members may not be acquainted with you. Please describe the kind of music you do. Labels are sometimes weird, but how do you categorize your musical genre?

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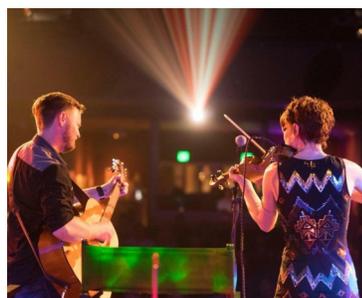
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House of Hamill On Oct. 31

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Brian: We've had the luxury of an audience who enjoys a wide variety of music, so we've never felt the pressure to stick to just one genre. In a general sense, most of our music is influenced by Irish or Celtic traditional music, but not always in the way you'd expect - sometimes it's a fiddle tune in the middle of an original song; sometimes it's a reimagining of an old traditional piece of music. Sometimes a song or set of tunes is completely original, but incorporates influences or chord progressions you wouldn't ordinarily hear at an Irish session. Rose grew up going to folk festivals and listening to folk artists, so that's been a major influence on her writing. I have been playing with a Celtic-rock band for 20 years, so my instincts are probably a little more aggressive.

Bill: Obviously, you have your own unique style, but will we hear traces of other well-known musicians in your voice, your themes, and your performance style? I guess another way to phrase the question might be: who are your musical heroes and heroines who have influenced your work?

Brian: We first bonded over a shared obsession with the band Radiohead - I don't know if audience members will necessarily draw that parallel, but we definitely count them as a major influence in our writing! Lyrically, our songs often tell a story of some kind, which is very common in Irish and folk music. We tend to be drawn to more progressive traditional and folk musicians like Liz Carroll, John Doyle, Flook, Ashley MacIsaac, and Nickel Creek. There was just something so much "cooler" about what these artists were doing when compared to the classical music we both grew up playing.

Rose: I remember seeing so many folk artists perform growing up, and I always felt much more of a connection to

artists who made the effort to tell stories, crack jokes and make their audience feel like they were part of a conversation. I love performers like Vance Gilbert who make their storytelling a big part of their show, and we try to do that too! I remember seeing one of my favorite rock bands in college, and they basically ignored the audience the entire show. It was so alienating and such a turn-off that I kind of stopped listening to them for a while. Feeling engaged and entertained is a huge part of the musical experience, and I try to keep that in mind whenever I have an audience in front of me.

Bill: What's your musical history? When did each of you begin performing? And how did you wind up becoming a musical duo?

Rose: I started playing violin classically when I was 8, but I fell in love with Irish fiddle when I was 13. My dad is an amazing guitar player and he learned how to back up Irish music, so we asked my friend Genevieve Gillespie to jam with us and by the time I was 15 we were performing under the name Burning Bridget Cleary. We played a ton of folk venues and Irish and folk festivals for 12 years.

Brian: I started violin and piano really young, and started performing on fiddle at barn dances in Ontario when I was 13. I taught myself guitar in high school so I could play in rock bands. I planned to go to college but got conscripted into a band called Enter The Haggis when I was 18, and here I am 20 years and 10 albums later still living a life of lavish subsistence! I used to see Rose with her band at festivals around the Northeast, but we didn't really meet properly until Burning Bridget Cleary was booked to open an ETH show at the Colonial Theater in Phoenixville, PA.

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www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org



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Contact us at: Voicemail 614-470-3963

House of Hamill Will Headline Oct. 31

Our paths crossed a dozen times over the next decade on the road, but it wasn't until the Folk Alliance 2014 conference in Kansas City that we finally became musical collaborators. Burning Bridget Cleary's guitarist and drummer had their flights canceled at the last minute, and Rose (in desperation) asked me to grab a guitar and join her onstage. We performed with virtually no rehearsal for over an hour (it was terrifying). A few months later I moved from Canada to Philadelphia, and as a tribute to the first tune Rose ever taught me, "House of Hamill" was born.

Bill: Before the virus hit, you did a lot of touring, right? Tell us how extensive that was, and then tell us how you've adapted to this new world where in-person concerts are limited or, in some cases, non-existent

Rose: We played well over 100 shows last year, and when we weren't on the road for gigs we were usually traveling for fun - Ireland, Portugal, multiple trips to Canada (including an amazing trip to Banff National Park). Travel is by far our favorite hobby. We played gigs in Alberta, Texas, New Mexico, Maine, Florida and basically all points in between. It's definitely been quite an adjustment being home all the time. The week before the shutdown we drove from southern Maryland to Ottawa, playing four shows in two days. Going from a schedule like that to quarantine was definitely jarring. In some ways it was good for our mental health to be forced to slow down and breathe a little. We bought a house in November and we've barely even been in it.

The biggest challenge is a lack of inspiration - our experiences on the road tend to trigger creativity for us. Boredom is an issue, and it's sometimes hard to motivate ourselves to work on musical things when the future of the music industry is so uncertain. I guess our creative urges have moved to different things for the last few months - cooking, gardening, even photography. It's been nice to have a little time to devote to other hobbies, but we're itching to get back on the road.

Brian: Performing virtually is definitely not the same. It's more challenging to connect with the audience and our cat doesn't clap. That said, music fans are amazing and the support we've gotten from friends and fans over the last few months is really humbling.

I do want to say, though - it's really not going to be a matter of adjusting to these new circumstances. There's no way for music venues to exist for long without being able to operate at full capacity.

Bill: You write your own songs. Tell us about the creative process in that. Where do you get your inspiration? What comes first, the music or the lyrics?

Rose: Definitely not the lyrics, at least not 90% of the time. Sometimes we'll have one specific phrase or lyrical idea that we start to build from, but most of the time we'll have a song completely written, arranged and even recorded before we sit down to write the lyrics.

In other genres of music, you can get away with "stream of consciousness" lyrics, but fans of Irish and Folk music tend to really listen to lyrics. I think as a result we put a lot of pressure on ourselves to write lyrics that tell a story, or get across a specific emotion or theme that will connect with people. I love writing melodies way more than lyrics, so I tend to gravitate towards that.

Brian: It's been a really interesting challenge writing with Rose, because she doesn't play any chordal instruments - I've only ever written with guitar or piano players. When Rose writes a melody, she doesn't think of the chord progression (or sometimes even a time signature). She's very instinctive about it. That means it falls to me to crack the code and fill in the holes around her melody, which often results in chord progressions I'd never have thought of.

This is going to be a strange comparison, but sometimes Rose reminds me of Kurt Cobain in her approach to songwriting: find an interesting melody, then make the chords fit afterwards. If the melody is compelling enough, if it leads the ear in a natural way, you can get away with some really unusual progressions.

For me, it really does feel like a puzzle when I'm writing, or like there's a thin wall I keep pushing against until I break through. I definitely have very strong preferences, even if I couldn't define them - when something is right, it's RIGHT. If it's wrong, it feels almost offensive.

Bill: Is there an overall message, theme, or emotion you want your audiences to come away with?

Rose: It feels cliché, but we really just want our audiences to feel energized and connected to the show. We want to immerse people in the show fully and give them a break from the world outside (especially right now, when everyone is in a hyper-anxious state).

Member Profile: Hugh Farthing

Interview by Peter Insabella

Editor's note: Hugh Farthing has been one of the most durable members of the informal group of musicians known as the Worthington Squares. At any given event or jam session he can be counted on to bring sound equipment and microphones and share them freely.

PI: How and when did you get involved with the Columbus Folk Music Society?

Hugh: I have been coming to CFMS functions for about 14/15 years. I started by coming to coffee houses at Aeropagetica and it all started from that. The whole group of people in the Society are very nice and great fun. Some of my memories that stand out are seeing Fred as Cupid at Bill Cohen's Valentine concert and the next year telling the young lady performing the role that she was replacing an eighty year old man in a diaper.... you can't make this stuff up!

I also remember sitting with the likes of John Gorka, Bing Futch and others at the Festival, discussing musicianship and songwriting. That was wonderful.

PI: When did you start playing music?

Hugh: I lettered in choir in high school. Yep, a straight up music beast! Then in the army I started playing guitar and have been at it since then. Also my father had a solid mahogany Silvertone Baritone ukulele. I still have that uke. The picture stuck between the strings (below, center) shows me and my dad having a jam.

PI: What instruments do you play? Do you have a favorite?

Hugh: I have way too many guitars; just ask my wife. I have other instruments, but the guitar is the only one I play.

PI: What was your experience in the military?

Hugh: I was in the US Army in the mid 1970s. I was stationed in Germany and was in the Signal Corps. I traveled a lot and started learning to play my guitar on the 26th of July 1976. I used the GI Bill to go to OSU.

PI: Talk a little about your working career.

Hugh: I am a retired high school business teacher and the last several years at my school I sponsored The Guitar Club there. I usually had a good time every day. The kids were great, they made my day, usually, very good!

PI: You've been playing in the various folk music jam sessions around the area for years, from the Worthington Farmers Market to the outreach sessions at nursing homes. How would you characterize those sessions?

Hugh: At the Saturday morning events we might have 20 or more musicians..... that is a lot of people. As far as skills go, we get musicians with a full range of skills., from those with highly developed musical skills to people with no skills who want to make themselves better. We like them all. I heard someone talking about the Saturday jams, and how when we would do "Wagon Wheel," everyone watching (typically 50/60 people) would stop, listen, sing along and dance. What a great time!

PI: Since the pandemic began, the outreach activities of the Worthington Square players have been exclusively online, via computer. How has that been?

Hugh: Since the quarantine we have not been able to perform at our usual Farmers Markets, Memory Units and other gigs. What we have done is to have Zoom Jams to substitute and keep our skills sharp. We have several jams a week and they are great fun. They also are not live, which is not as fun as live. However, we are going to be safe and this arrangement is pretty good. I would compare it to an open mike rather than a jam. I would also say it helps your individual skills more than a jam. Nonetheless it is a good time and much better than no jams. Be safe, make music and have a good time.

PI: You've been involved in various capacities with the Folk Music Society, from sound man at the coffee house concerts to troubleshooter at the Folk Festival to president of the organization. How has the experience been for you?

Hugh: I am not much of a joiner of anything, but I can tell you that being in the CFMS is a blessing. Great people, great events and a lot of fun promoting and performing music!!!!

PI: Who are your favorite people to play music with?

Hugh: I find new ones all the time! If I had to list my favorites, Bill, Charlie, Mike, Jenn, Dan, Newark Dave, Commodore Dave (when you can get him away from his damn boat), Linda the Flautist and Drummer Girl Diane (on her 6th year in a row as Central Ohio's Quietest Drummer). Great Music all the time!!!!



The Other Folk Instrument....Your Voice

By Peter Insabella

As a folk musician, you pay a lot of attention to your guitar, or banjo, or fiddle, or whatever instrument you play. Perhaps you spend a little money to get a Martin guitar, or a Taylor, or some other well-made instrument. You take time to master finger picking techniques on your guitar and you probably practice songs at home.

But how much time do you devote to that other important folk instrument....your voice? If you're serious about music, if you really want to be the best you can be, consider taking a few vocal lessons to get the most out of your singing. Learning about the techniques of singing, and the mechanics of making vocal sounds, can strengthen your voice, increase your vocal range, and help you sustain notes longer. The right technique, or the right teacher, can bring your voice out and help you develop it and reach your full potential. No matter what kind of folk songs, or Gospel songs, or bluegrass or pop songs you like to do, your performance can be significantly improved if you take a little time to develop your voice.

Vocal Exercises

You can find a wealth of information on training your voice just by doing a Google search for "vocal exercises" or "training the voice." For the most part, it's free.

Anything you do toward developing your voice will pay dividends. Just as athletes stretch out their bodies and muscles before a big game, vocalists should warm up their singing voice before a jam session or a performance. If you want to excel as an athlete, you must train, and work at it. It's no different if you're a singer.

One of the best books available on voice development is *Secrets of Singing*, by Jeffrey Allen. Jeffrey Allen is an internationally known voice coach who has trained professional and amateur singers and been on the faculty at the University of Southern California. His book describes the mechanics of singing and also provides CDs with vocal exercises you can do at home or in your car. When you purchase his book (\$49.95), you specify either the edition tailored for the female voice or the male voice.

Whether you purchase Jeffrey Allen's book, or some other book, or whether you take advantage of the variety of vocal development instructions available on the Internet, you'll find that the time you spend training and exercising your voice will give you more confidence and enjoyment when you take part in the various folk singing opportunities provided through the Columbus Folk Music Society.



New Membership Chair: Jennifer Cohen-Jordan

Editor's Note: Jennifer Cohen-Jordan has recently taken over the CFMS Membership Chair from Carl Yaffey, who held the position for a number of years. Many thanks to Carl for his efforts during that time. Jennifer contributed the following article about membership.



Greetings lovers of the folk arts. I hope that this edition of the newsletter finds you and yours well. It has been a challenging past few months for all of us, and the Columbus Folk Music Society is no exception. As we look forward to the new season, the society is working to take on the challenges that face us.

September renewal is upon us and we encourage you to support us in our efforts by renewing your membership. And if you are not already a member, please consider joining us. To this end, I would like to update you all on what we have been up to. In light of the pandemic, we have had to forego some events that are dear to our hearts, and maybe yours, and re-invent ways to compensate, while still bringing to you the entertainment and community you expect and enjoy.

We are working on providing digital concerts. We continue to engage in our usual fundraising efforts. Some of these will look different in the coming months but they are just as important to the society as they have always been. Supporting

young, promising musicians is still as important as ever, and we continue our work on the Kirby Scholarship Award program. We recently named a new recipient of the Kirby Scholarship Award.

Performing for residents of care facilities in the community has long been a regular practice of CFMS jammers. As a result of the pandemic, in-house performances have been halted. In their place, several of us meet on Zoom every Thursday morning for a formal jam to which several care facilities have been invited to join. We will continue these jam sessions until we can return to our in-person visits. In addition, we have set up an open, informal jam for the remaining days of the week. For more information about these jams, or to get involved, contact Jane VanAuken. Her email address is: vanaukj@gmail.com.

By becoming a member of the Columbus Folk Music Society, or renewing your membership, you show your appreciation for and enjoyment of folk music, song, dance, story telling, and other folk arts. You will also experience the pride of knowing that you are bolstering the growth and perpetuation of the folk arts in the Columbus area.

As we all work our way through this time of uncertainty CFMS will continue to provide you with entertainment, information and support. We hope you will, in turn, support us in these efforts. Please renew your membership. If you are not already a member, please consider joining us and showing your support for the exciting folk community here in Columbus. And don't forget to spread the word and encourage your friends to join as well. You can access membership forms on our website, or in our newsletter (page 8). You may use the following link to directly access a membership form.: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/member-application.html>.

Your patronage is valuable to us and we look forward to seeing you at our events as soon as we are able to again share in each other's company. Enjoy your membership, and enjoy the diverse folk culture that thrives in Central Ohio! Be well, and hope to see you soon!

Virtual John Prine Tribute Oct. 17

As the CFMS plans ways to accommodate Central Ohio Folk Festival fundraising and COVID-19, we've put together some exciting, innovative ways to bring the events to you! We've scheduled three (3) fundraisers that will be virtual (online), interactive (audience participation), AND feature acts many know and love! So log these dates onto your calendars: **Sat, Oct 17 (7pm) John Prine Tribute; Sun, Dec 6 (2pm) Whinestopper (including some holiday songs); and Sat, Mar 13 (7pm) The Delpin Sisters.**

Viewers can tune in on the platform of choice as concerts will be broadcast via Zoom, CFMS' Facebook page, and CFMS' YouTube channel. If you choose Zoom, you can greet one another at the opening; be part of it all with emcee Bill Cohen, and chat at the end with band members and other attendees. CFMS publicity for the events will include the necessary links as well as how to download the Zoom app.

The Sat, Oct 17 concert features a tribute to the folk world's beloved **John Prine**, who left us last April. *Rolling Stone Magazine* says: "For 5 decades [he] wrote rich plain-spoken songs that chronicled the struggles and stories of everyday working people and changed the face of modern American

roots music." A two time Grammy winning singer-songwriter, Prine was considered a *premier "phrase turner."*

On Oct 17, Mike Hale, Renilda Marshall, Ed Tatum and Patrick Casey will perform John Prine's tunes with the passion they deserve. Many remember their concert featuring Prine songs last year to a packed house.

\$10 is the suggested donation. Links will be provided to PayPal or paying via Square during the concert. Or you may mail in a check to our P.O. Box. Proceeds will help produce the upcoming 2021 festival, which may well be a live / virtual event combination.

So mark your calendars now and we will see you there!



Save the Date

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 e-mail request to **Jane VanAuken** vanaukj@gmail.com

Concerts

Sat, Oct 17, 7 pm John Prine Tribute.

Sat, Oct 31, 8 pm, House of Hamill, via CFMS Virtual Coffeehouse.

Sun, Dec 6, 2 pm Whinestopper (including some holiday songs).

Sat, Mar 13, 7 pm The Delpin Sisters.

Welcome New and Returning Members

- Marcus Beaty
- Charlie Flowers & Denise Bronson
- Dave Hawkins
- Martin Hertzendorf
- Peter Insabella
- Nancy Kovacs
- Larry & Sally Less
- Tom & Patti Liskay
- Howard & Vanja Mosley
- Bobbie Pruiksmas
- Barbara Wright

The Columbus Folk Music Society

P.O. Box 20735
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We're on the web!

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**Next issue:
November 2020**

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE COLUMBUS FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

Date: _____ New Renew Preferred Newsletter Format: Digital Hard Copy
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 _____, _____, _____

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

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Band Membership \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$250 |
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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!

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