

# TONIGHT'S PROGRAM IS VERY MUCH A WHITMAN'S MUSIC SAMPLER

#### By Richard Harrington

Think about the origins of that classic candy box: an array of its most popular confections in homespun packaging inspired by a cross-stitch sampler crafted by the great-aunt of the company's president in the early 1900s. It remains a staple, particularly around Valentine's Day as a way to say I Love You!

And this is exactly what we have here, an I Love You concert representing some of the many threads of music that have coursed through Washington in the past century, jazz, rock, blues, country, pop, soul and go-go among them. It's a celebration of talent both homegrown and resettled, inevitably informed by time. long or short, spent here.

The best exemplar is Duke Ellington, the greatest figure in 20th century American music, born here in the last year of the 19th century. At 14, he wrote his first composition, "Soda Fountain Rag"--while working as a soda jerk. Ellington didn't yet know how to read or write music, but he knew how to play in different styles so folks wouldn't realize it was the same tune. At 17, he formed (and booked!) his first band, Duke's Serenaders, prophetically advertising it as playing "IRRESISTIBLE JASS." Ellington's writing was minimal until 1923, when he took a bunch of his Washington cohorts to New York--for a while, they called themselves the Washingtonians. Within a few years, he was on his way to establishing himself not only as the leader of the greatest big band in jazz but as the greatest composer in modern American music. His music remains timeless and he is celebrated not just as a true legend but one who, in his own definition of ultimate excellence, remains beyond category.

Another original, and originator, Bo Diddley, Mississippi-born and Chicago-bred, lived here from 1959 to 1966, mostly because it was halfway between the Northern and Southern markets and, unlike the beat that took his name, Diddley hated driving! That beat became a rhythmic cornerstone of rock and roll and got Diddley elected to the inaugural class at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. In his Rhode Island Avenue basement studio, he recorded 1960's classic *Bo Diddley Is a Gunslinger* album. as well as local acts like Billy Stewart, the Jewels and the Marquees, whose doublesided single "Hey Little Schoolgirl/Wyatt Earp" flopped. One of the Marquees would soon audition for the Cleveland-based vocal group The Moonglows. He got the job. Bye, Marvin Gaye.

Gaye attended Cardozo but he called the Howard Theater "my real high school. I studied singers like my life depended on it." He turned out to be a very good student though it took a move to Detroit and four years before he began a prolific solo career at Motown, becoming one of the great voices of his times, a master of both sensual ballads and social commentary.

Chuck Brown? Another original, the Godfather of Go-Go, cornerstone and building-block of the homegrown funk music that thrived in the 80s and 90s and is still evolving today. Thanks to Brown, that beat goes on and on and on. He also recorded a wonderful duets album with another of tonight's featured artists, Eva Cassidy, whose critical renown and astounding commercial success came posthumously but continues to grow almost three decades on.

Our venerable blues brothers, the Nighthawks, are enjoying enviable longevity—still working past the half century mark—though the unbreakable record belongs to another Washington institution: The United States Marine Band. America's oldest professional music organization was founded in 1798 and is still working (different personnel of course and that government funding helps). Incidentally, Hohner's Marine Band Harmonicas have long been the gold standard for blues musicians worldwide and the Nighthawks' Mark Wenner proudly plays them--custom-tuned of course.

Three women featured tonight would have great influence in country music, starting in the '50s with Winchester, Virginia's Patsy Cline, the first solo female artist elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame, and a major influence of generations of female artists, Like Cline, Emmylou Harris, who spent her formative years in Woodbridge, got her start in small local and regional clubs before moving to Nashville in the 70s and finding her own astonishing voice while displaying an unerring instinct for great songs and collaborative musicians. Mary Chapin Carpenter passed the hat at Food for Thought as a fresh-out-of-Brown-University singersongwriter and built her reputation in local venues; Country claimed her early on but Carpenter's inherently borderless identity eventually won out.

Guitar players? We've had a few! There's a whole rogues gallery of candidates but the ones celebrated tonight are

the incomparable Danny Gatton and the irrepressible Bill Kirchen, and we should probably include Nils Lofgren, who started his career in the late 60s with a Grin and as a 17-year-old wowed Neil Young in his Cellar Door dressing room, the start of a friendship and musical relationship that continues to this day. Did we mention he's been with Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band for 40 years while pursuing a terrific solo career?

We'll also feature other aspects of rock, from the carefully crafted power pop of Tommy Keene and punkpsychedelia of the Slickee Boys to the renegade bluesrock of Root Boy Slim. There's also Joan Jett, who grew up in Wheaton and was lead singer for the Runaways before topping the charts in 1982 with a testimonial that anybody who'd ever heard her had long recognized: "I Love Rock and Roll."

On the vocal side, there's the elegantly soulful Roberta Flack, born in North Carolina but raised in Arlington so precocious that she was given a music scholarship to Howard University at age 15. Starting as a publicschool music teacher, she supplemented her meager salary by singing in local restaurants, where she was discovered by jazz pianist Les McCann in 1969. Flack's breakthrough came three years later when Clint Eastwood used her slow, sensual recording of a modern folk ballad, "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face," in "Play Misty for Me." It ended up topping the pop chart and won the 1980 Grammy for Song of the Year. A year later, "Killing Me Softly with His Song" repeated that impressive double and cemented a brilliant career.

And what's better than one voice? How about the four featured in The Starland Vocal Band, which gave us the inevitable "Afternoon Delight," and, via songwriters Bill Danoff, Taffy Nivert and John Denver, the inescapable "Take Me Home, Country Roads," which earlier this year became West Virginia's fourth official state song.

Tonight you'll hear music from all these artists and just as the original Whitman's Sampler would showcase some its most popular candies, you'll be sampling some of the tastiest pieces of Washington music history.

#### **PRODUCER'S NOTES**

A lot of amazing musical talent has come out of the DC music scene over the years. This area has been the home of nationally and internationally renowned

rhythm and blues, bluegrass, rock, country, go go, pop, jazz, and soul virtuosos. BandHouse Gigs has annually been paying tribute to iconic artists including Paul Simon, Stevie Wonder, Joni Mitchell, and others, utilizing the talents of the best performers in the area. We decided our 20th anniversary show should honor some of the legendary artists who were born here and made important music here.

When we began discussing which of the DC "legends" we would include on the show, we began by using the WAMA Hall of Fame list as a guide. There were 74 artists or groups inducted into the Washington Music Hall of Fame between 1985 when the inaugural class included Duke Ellington, Marvin Gaye, Patsy Cline, and Emmylou Harris and 2015 when John Jennings was the last honoree. We knew this was going to be a very difficult challenge when we realized we could only include tributes to about two dozen of those 74 Hall of Famers in a single show. Yikes!

We also wanted to honor not only some of the internationally known superstars, but also pay tribute to some of the many incredible local bands and musicians who may lack worldwide acclaim but who are the ones who inspired us and showed us what could be done with hard work and a rock and roll spirit. Many of our favorite performers and bands could not be included in tonight's show and we know some are disappointed that some of their favorite musicians are missing. We feel the same. In fairness you could produce a couple entirely different shows, all worthy of being called DC legends.

So this show isn't intended be a definitive statement about exactly who is and who isn't a DC legend. Instead, we think of this as our valentine to the DC music scene that has inspired us and that we are so proud to be part of. Many of the 60 incredible performers paying tribute to DC Legends tonight are themselves legendary to those of us who have thrilled to their musicianship in dingy bars, classy dives, decent clubs, and big stages over the course of their careers playing music here.

Tonight, we are honored to celebrate the great music that has sprung from this area. We are grateful to be able to perform this at Strathmore which helped launch BandHouse Gigs in 2004. And we are happy to celebrate our lifelong passion for hearing live music in this town with so many of you who have done the same. You gotta check out the DC music scene. . . it's quite a place.

### **FEATURED ARTISTS**

#### \*Denotes this is their first BandHouse show

Arch Alcantara is a singer, guitarist, and bassist in eight DC-area bands and acoustic combos. His stylistic agility has made him a sought-after sideman and a mainstay in Bandhouse Gigs and Newmyer Flyer productions. When asked what he does when not on stage, he confesses there is no such thing.

**\*The Barretones** are a group formed to tribute DC bluegrass legends The Seldom Scene. The group is led by Big Howdy Bluegrass leader, **Randy Barrett** (vocals, banjo) and includes **Tom Gray** former bassist for The Seldom Scene along with **Tom McLaughlin** (vocals, guitar), **John Seebach** (mandolin), and **Alex Send** (dobro).

**Billy Coulter's** (vocals, guitar) distinctive voice and songwriting have earned him 20 WAMMIE Awards including Album, Song and Songwriter of the Year and several for his jump blues band, The Natty Beaux. His inspired performances with these bands--and more recently with The HalFSmokes--have graced the stages of the region's top venues.

Song slinger/Telecaster twangler **Bill Kirchen** has been playing the DC area regularly since 1970, living here for about 25 of those years. Delighted to be back, he will try to finally get it right tonight.

**Bill Starks** is an award-winning songwriter and keyboard player, known to DC audiences as a member of Ruthie and The Wranglers, and as a BandHouse regular. Bill has released two CDs of his own music as well.

Cincinnati born vocalist **Brandon Combs** rejoins BandHouse proving again that there's nothing that he cannot sing. From jazz standards and Broadway musicals to the soulful sounds of Donny Hathaway and Bill Withers, Mr. Combs delivers in performance like few others.

Moving from North Carolina to Washington, D.C., **Bruce Swaim** (sax) worked professionally with many notables including Keter Betts, Carl Allen, Danny Gatton, Rosemary Clooney, Martha Reeves, Millie Jackson, The Spinners, Michael Feinstein, Houston Person, The Four Tops, The Temptations, Dick Morgan, and Ronnie Wells. He is also an active studio musician with many independent pop, jazz and blues recording projects along with numerous film, T.V. soundtracks and jingles. **Buddy Griffin** (pedal steel) plays with the Buds, The Mcduffees, Cairo Fred and Suburban Country. He also does recording projects and pickup gigs as often as there is need for a pedal steel player.

\*The Chuck Brown Band, Wiley Brown (lead vocals), KK Chuck Baby (vocals), Treasure Joy (vocals), Brad Clements (trumpet), Elijah Balbed (sax), Greg Boyer (trombone), Doug Crowley (bass), Danny Henderson (drums), Mighy Moe Hagans (percussion), Vince Evans (keys and vocals), and Stan Cooper (guitar) toured the world with the Godfather of Go Go for the most prolific period of his life, when he had 5 Billboard charting releases and a Grammy nomination over a ten-year period. They continue to honor him performing the best of the Godfather and the best of Go-Go in an uplifting, show stopping performance. The Godfather may be gone, but his legacy continues as the Chuck Brown Band carries his funky groove forward without missing a B-E-A-T... Wind Us Up, Chuck!

**Chuck Sullivan** (drums/percussion/songwriter), cofounder of BandHouse Gigs; drummer with Big Yankee Dollar, Newkeys, Soul Crackers, Nils Lofgren; author of *About Time: The Unsung Genius of Steve Winwood*; just released his first solo album Behind the Mask.

**Craig Considine** will be your trombone player this evening. You may have heard him with Chopteeth, All Mighty Senators, The Players Band, Boister, or if you're lucky, The Kaiju Demolition Squad.

**Dave McKittrick** has played guitar for roots-rock band Gunsmoke and Cheap Perfume the past 12 years. Dave previously played with The Meghan Hayes Band and coproduced two CDs for her as well as producing two CDs for Dennis Jay.

**Daryl Davis** (vocals, keyboards), known as The Rock'n'Roll Race Reconciliator fosters musical harmony on stage and forges racial harmony offstage. Look him up!

**David Chappell** (guitar) 20-time WAMA award winner, has performed with Percy Sledge, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Johnson, Bobby Whitlock, and Sam Moore. He is happy to be here to celebrate the music of DC Legends, with this fine crew of fellow musicians. He recently released his new CD entitled *Almost Gone*.

**EL Torro Gamble**: Sabian Artist, DC Native Musician/ Drummer for local and international artist over a span of 35 years, Root Bot Slim All Star and 16 years with Sean Chyun and the DCeivers performing for the National's Bullpen Shows. **Gina Cocco** (bass/percussion/drums) has been involved in various projects in the DC Area including 40 Dollar Fine, Revelator Hill, David Kitchen Band, Drew Gibson, Dangerbird, AMFM, Newmyer Flyer Tribute to The Last Waltz, Long Time Coming, Wicked Jezebel, and Tony Denikos Band. She's been a part of the BandHouse core team for 17 years. She's also the general manager at Hank Dietle's Tavern, a music venue in Rockville.

\*Grin Again is a reprise of Nils Lofgren's vintage rock band, Grin, from the early 70s. Grin released four classic albums to high critical acclaim and put Nils on the map as a great rock guitarist and singer-songwriter. Grin Again features two original Grin members, **Bob Berberich** on drums and vocals; and **Tom Lofgren** on guitar, keys, and vocals; along with newcomers **Mike** and **Mark Lofgren** (vocals, guitars, keys); and local bassist and concert producer extraordinaire **Ron Newmyer**.

**Jess Eliot Myhre** (she/her) is an award-winning multiinstrumentalist best known for fronting Americana band Bumper Jacksons and producing *Seven Voices: A Tribute to Patsy Cline*. Her favorite activity in the world is throwing her guitar and clarinet on the back of her cargo bike and biking to local DMV gigs.

Johnny Castle has been rocking the bass for many of the area's most revered bands since the late 1960's. Some of his more notable highlights include The Nighthawks, The Thrillbillys, Switchblade, Bill Kirchen and Too Much Fun, and Crank.

Award-winning bassist **John Previti** grew up in the Southern Maryland-D.C. area immersed in the region's bubbling cauldron of musical styles: swing, country, jazz, R&B, soul, and the roots of rockabilly. He is perhaps best known as Danny Gatton's bassist for 18 years but he has also performed and recorded with; Paul Simon, Doc Cheatham, Charlie Byrd, Joey DeFrancesco, Buddy Emmons, Herb Ellis, Les Paul, Emmylou Harris, Arlen Roth, Johnny Winter, Dave Chappell, and many other DC-based artists.

Musician/Songwriter/Producer **Jon Carroll** (vocals, keys) is a proud native of Washington, D.C., a founding member of Starland Vocal band, a long-time touring member of Mary Chapin Carpenter's band and has songs recorded by Linda Ronstadt and Tom Jones. He's a multiple Grammy and Wammie recipient who is most grateful to be a part of the Bandhouse Gigs family and is thrilled to help celebrate its 20-year anniversary. A new collection of his songs is due to be released this fall. **Justine Miller**, is a well-seasoned global freelance trumpeter, vocalist and award-winning songwriter. Have horn, will travel. Peace Out

\*Kaiyla Gross is a singer-songwriter fusing gospel, R&B, and musical theater. She is a passionate advocate for self-love and empowerment through music. Her new single *Love Jones* is available everywhere. Catch her performing in many theatre productions. Recently, *Little Shop of Horrors* at Fords Theatre (Ronnette) and *The Color Purple* at Signature Theatre (Nettie).

**Keith Grimes** is familiar to many local music enthusiasts through his work with Eva Cassidy, Chuck Brown, the Soul Crackers, and Pittsburgh R&B singer Billy Price. When not onstage, he keeps up a busy schedule as a guitar teacher.

**Ken Farren** (guitar) is celebrating 17 years with BandHouse, but says he is still in training. His musical heyday was during the Carter and Reagan administrations, but little league baseball forced him into an early retirement.

\***Kipyn Martin** is an Indie Folk singer-songwriter whose roots sink deep into the banks of the Shenandoah River. In addition to performing solo and with Newmyer Flyer, Kipyn and her musical partner Allison Shapira collaborate on *Joan & Joni: A Tribute to the Music of Joan Baez and Joni Mitchell*.

**Mark Noone** (vocals) holds the record for appearances at the 9:30 just behind his iconic, psychedelic, ever effervescent, punk roots garage rock- let's just say category defying band- The Slickee Boys. The beloved Slickee Boys broke up officially in 1991, but wowed audiences with yearly reunions for decades. Mark Noone sincerely hopes he helped corrupt your youth.

\***Maureen Andary** is an award-winning songwriter and former Strathmore Artist in Residence with her duo The Sweater Set and a music educator. She is currently the Executive Director of the School of Musical Traditions where you can jam, take workshops, and private lessons.

\*Formed in 2017, **The Messthetics** is an instrumental trio formed by former Fugazi members bassist **Joe Lally** and drummer **Brendan Canty** with avant-guitarist **Anthony Pirog**. The group has released two albums on Dischord Records and recently collaborated with saxophonist James Brandon Lewis for a release on Impulse Records. The Nighthawks originated right here in Bethesda in the spring of 1972. After working the Beltway circuit for two years they solidified personnel and began touring and recording, pausing only to occasionally change members. Current super star lineup includes **Dan** Hovey on guitar within a 100-mile radius and **Zach** Sweeney everywhere else, **Paul Pisciotta** on bass, Mark Stutso on drums and founding member Mark Wenner on blues harp.

**Patty Reese** is a Nashville recording artist who has been a favorite of critics and fans in the Mid-Atlantic Region for many years. Her work has been recognized by the Washington Area Music Association which has awarded her 17 WAMMIES, including Artist of the Year, Songwriter and Album of the year, and Roots Rock Band & Vocalist. With her melodic and sultry voice, she explores the broad scope of Americana including American roots, blues and soul showcasing her diverse vocal style and life experience.

**Pete Ragusa** has been performing music in the DMV and around the world professionally since the age of sixteen. Having played drums with the Nighthawks for thirty-six years he continues today as an in demand freelance musician.

**Ronnie Newmyer** is a lifelong Washington music fan, the co-founder of BandHouse Gigs and also produces shows under the Newmyer Flyer banner. He currently plays bass with the Soul Crackers and the Bingo Gigolos and has also performed with the Nils Lofgren Band and The Newkeys.

**Ray Apollo Allen**, a DMV legendary singer, formerly of the Apollo Brothers and the Hall of fame Orioles, he sings R&B, pop, gospel, and has four CDs of his own. He sings with a live band when needed.

\*The Root Boy Slim All Stars are all players with the shared experience of touring and recording with the outrageous, provocative, and unpredictable singer/ songwriter Root Boy Slim at various times during his 15year career: Tommy Lepson (lead vocals/Hammond B3), Dan Hovey (vocals/guitar), Ron Holloway (sax), Brent Mingle (bass), John Zidar (drums), Torro Gamble (percussion), Cherie Grasso (vocals/percussion) and Dick Bangham (vocals/trombone).

**Sean Chyun** is a Bethesda native and Berklee alumni who has been working as a professional musician in and around the DMV for the last 20 years. He performs both solo acoustic shows and fronts local band, The DCeivers. **Spencer Hoopes** (Keyboards) is an original BandHouse team member and keyboard tech. He also plays with Soul Crackers and formerly with Newkeys, Coyote Band, and Race the Rat.

**Tom Fridrich** is the long-time drummer for DC's Ruthie & The Wranglers as well as a music producer, engineer, and visual artist. He thrives on the creative process in both music production and live performance and collaborates with a variety of acts in the DMV.

**Tommy Lepson**, award-winning vocalist, instrumentalist, songwriter, and producer. A proud member of the Washington Area Musician Association Hall of fame.

**Trevor Specht** is an arranger and a performer on saxophones, flute, and vocals. Trevor is honored and thrilled to have been part of both the 10th and 20th anniversary BandHouse Gigs shows, plus many others over the years.

#### **ABOUT BANDHOUSE GIGS**

BandHouse Gigs founded in 2004 by area musicians Ronnie Newmyer and Chuck Sullivan; and joined later by David Sless, Danny Schwartz, Greg Hardin, David McKittrick, Gina Cocco and Tom Fridrich, is the DC area's premier producer of tribute concerts. Past concerts have included tributes to Nils Lofgren, Joni Mitchell, Stevie Wonder, George Harrison, and Linda Ronstadt among others. These tributes also serve to shine a light on the area's richly talented musicians demonstrating that the DC music scene is second to none.

BandHouse Gigs is a not-for-profit entity and contributor to *The After Dark Fund* who aid area musicians following surgery or illness.

BandHouse has produced 36 tributes shows and over 800 musicians have participated. These shows would not be possible without the help of many kind volunteer writers, graphic artists, videographers, photographers, make-up artists, stage prop consultants, lighting designers, marketing professionals, stage management, and audio engineers. 2024 is the 20th anniversary of BandHouse Gigs!

Music from past shows is available wherever you purchase your music and on our website. In addition, we have lots of professional four-camera videos by Happy Medium posted on YouTube. Please visit us on Facebook or our website bandhousegigs.org.

Please visit the merchandise area or our website to purchase CDs and posters from many of our shows. Tonight, we debut our latest CD: A BandHouse Gigs *Tribute to George Harrison*, recorded live at The Hamilton on April 2014

#### THE BANDHOUSE TEAM

**Masters of Ceremonies** Ronnie Newmyer and David "Dude" Sless

**Audio Engineering** Jim Reynolds

Stage Manager **Tom Fridrich** 

**Stage Assistants** Ken Farren, Spencer Hoopes, Chuck Sullivan, Sully

**Technical Director** David McKittrick

Guitar Technician Mike Dove

Merchandise Dan Moskowitz — emeritus Tamara Meyer, Carol Moskowitz, Jana Castle

**Wranglers** Rona Fitzgerald, Phil Jones, Stephanie Allgaier, Terri Burroughs, Anita King

**Poster Design** Dick Bangham and Rip Bang Pictures

**Liner Notes Richard Harrington** 

**Technical Support** Bruce Moyer

Hair and Make-up Barbara Roybal and Beauty at Your Door

Photography Beth Harrison, Brooke Lowe

**Marketing Support** Gina Cocco, Bruce Samuelson Coming this fall to STRATHMORE

**ROSANNE CASH** Sun, Sept 22

MARIZA Thu, Oct 3

**MESHELL NDEGEOCELLO: NO MORE WATER/** THE GOSPEL OF JAMES BALDWIN Sat, Oct 5

**NEKO CASE** Wed, Oct 9

**AFRO-CUBAN** ALL STARS Fri. Oct 18

**RICHARD THOMPSON** SHIP TO SHORE TOUR 2024 FULL BAND SHOW Sun, Oct 20

MALEVO Sun, Oct 27

JUDY COLLINS AND MADELEINE PEYROUX Fri, Nov 1

LEGEND DORADO SCHMITT AND SONS SAMSON & AMATI DJANGO'S JAZZ MANOUCHE Sun, Nov 10

THE WOOD BROTHERS WITH LINDSAY LOU Sat. Nov 16

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Rosanne Cash by Pamela Springsteen, Afro-Cuban All Stars, Meshell Ndegeocello by Andre Wagner, Neko Case

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Strathmore extends its gratitude to Kathleen Knepper for generously supporting Monuments and our programming that amplifies distinctive and diverse artistic voices.

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